



**Altona Laverton  
Historical Society Inc.**  
PO Box 236 Altona 3018

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# NEWSLETTER

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## WELCOME TO 2023



**T**he year 2023 has arrived, and this Newsletter is intended to cover some of the past history and events that relate several of the activities within Altona, Laverton, Hobsons Bay and the Western Suburbs during periods of the 1920s through the 1950s.

In 2023 Covid still remains within the community and has limited many activities of the Society and the public in general over the past three years.

The activities of the Historical Society have therefore been restricted and limited to opening the Homestead at various times, the continuation of Devonshire Tea being made available when possible, and the continuing research and development of projects, including the data held by the Truganina Explosives Reserve committee and other local history projects.

Topics covered in this issue of our Newsletter include:

- 1.Red Robin Hosiery-Altona and its parent company Roseley Hosiery Mill Brunswick East.**
- 2.C.O.R. (Commonwealth Oil Refinery) Australia's first refinery opened in 1924.**
- 3.Some of the Bakers, Bread-carters and Pastry Cooks in the Western Suburbs during the 1920-1950s.**

*Archibald Laird- Altona*

*Bill Noonan - Altona*

*Len Broadway-Spotswood West (now South Kingsville) and Yarraville/Footscray*

## Red Robin Hosiery.

### THE BEGINNING

The story of what was to become Red Robin Hosiery Mills begins with the arrival of a Jewish immigrant in Australia ,from Poland in 1905.

His name was **Arthur Solomon Rose**, born about 1880.

The first record of a registered **Trade Mark**, is number 240815 issued on July 17,1907 ,and later held by Red Robin Hosiery Mills until 1991, when renewal was not made as the fee remained unpaid, and this registration was cancelled.

The first registration was registered with the name “**Knee Teasers**”,no further information has become available as to the name of the company at that time, nor who applied for the registration, but it seems logical to assume that Arthur Rose then aged 27 had commenced a hosiery business and that this was one of the starting products.

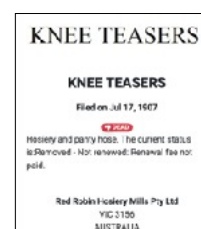
It is understood that the term Knee Teasers at the time referred to ladies stockings or socks that came up to a level just below the knee.

It is recorded in his tributes after his death that he had “built up a flourishing manufacturing business”.

He became known as one of the most influential Jewish business men in Melbourne, and assisted in many fund raising activities and benefit groups, and assisted many people in finding employment.



Arthur Rose



### ROSELEY HOSIERY MILLS P/L AND THE RED ROBIN BRAND NAME

The Argus ,Tuesday 28 August,1928 reported that a company had been registered as **Resole Hosiery Mills Pty.Ltd**, office 365 Cardigan Street Carlton to acquire as a going concern the business carried on under the style of the **Roseley Hosiery Mills**.Capital, was £20000 pounds in £1 pound shares, names subscribed to the memorandum, were, Arthur Solomon Rose, two shares,Joseph Isaac Rose two shares and Sara Rose ,two shares.

A Moreland City Council Heritage Citation Report indicates that the building occupied by Roseley Hosiery Mills was located at 170-176 Lyon Street Brunswick East (identified in Vines and Churchwood Factory study,1992, as 162 Lygon Street) this later correction of the address seems to be correct as in correspondence and advertisements available, the company is addressed as being located at **160-168, or 162 Lygon Street**.

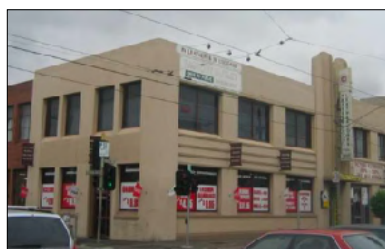
The building a substantial one was designed by Melbourne Architect Leslie J.W.Reed, who designed it in the style known as Moderne or Art Deco and it remains in existence to this day although with different tenants.

The building was occupied by Roseley Hosiery from 1931-1949 and the business was deregistered in 1950.


**Arthur Rose died in 1948.**Leslie Reed also designed the private dwelling for Arthur Rose and his family at 326 Orrong Road Caulfield.



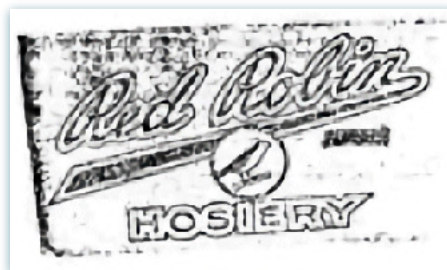
Advert 1934



162 Lygon Street — Image from Moreland Council Heritage report

Hosiery not made from wool, worsted, and hair.		RED ROBIN HOSIERY MILLS PROPRIETARY LIMITED		53660	9
		To be associated with Trade Marks Nos. 1161247; 1161133			
		TRANSFERRED FROM CLASS 38 (1005-48 ACT)			
					
		REMOVED FROM REGISTER			
		24 OCT 1985			
Accepted	11	4	30		
Registered	25	7	30		
REG. RENEWED	9	7	71		

The Red Robin Trademark Registered April 1930



Enlargement of the 1930 Trademark

Hosiery and knitting factories had grown around the Brunswick area from the 1920s, and Roseley Hosiery is noted as being among a group of industries that contributed substantially to the states industrial output.

Mr. Rose is reported to have testified to the need for tariff protection for the industry, to a Tariff Board enquiry in 1934.

*The building at 162 Lygon Street is considered to be of "Moderne Style" and one of the earliest built in that design in the City of Moreland.*

The Registration of the business name Roseley Hosiery Mills occurred in 1930



**RED ROBIN-ALTONA.**

The building at 119 Pier Street Altona, currently known as the Finnish Hall, was purchased, renovated by and has been occupied by the Finnish Society since 1969. It was originally occupied by Red Robin Hosiery Mills P/L who in March 1949 had permission approved by the Council for the premises to be occupied as a factory.

Research information indicates that the factory was a second one, it being a branch of the Brunswick East parent company operating from 162 Lyon Street Brunswick East, who were trading as Roseley Hosiery Mills P/L.

Although as the founder of Roseley Hosiery Mills had died in 1948, it seems that the Altona site was operated. under new ownership, by Rose. Family members and an on site Manager.

As mentioned earlier in these notes, the Brunswick East building for Roseley Hosiery had been designed by Architect,Leslie Reed in Moderne or Art Deco style and there are elements of this Moderne style apparent in the Altona building design, it therefore seems logical to assume that Reed also designed this building for the company.

At around the same period 1949, Reed is recorded as having designed a building for another hosiery company,Fetter Hosiery on the corner of Ann and Aitken Streets Williamstown.

A news clipping shows that the Finnish Society were beginning renovations within the building in 1971.

A report in the Williamstown Chronicle, Friday February 16, 1951, page 5 was headed “Altona Industry Grows”.

It had the sub heading **Progress at Red Robin Mills**

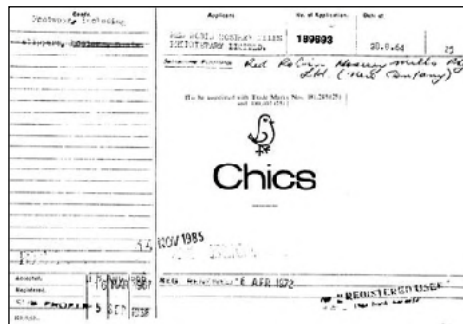
Comments included-“Equipped with modern amenities designed for the well being and comfort of employees, the Red Robin hosiery mill at Altona may be regarded as a splendid asset to a rapidly growing and well regulated district, ample natural lighting, perfect ventilation and air condition plant installed at considerable expense.

The mill has an active social club and management is about to install a basket ball court on land adjoining the mill for lunch hour recreation.

There is a strong demand for Red Robin products, the parent mill for Red Robin Hosiery is at Brunswick, where it was established about 25 years ago.

The Altona mill has been in operation for only two years and in that time has made great strides. For the past 14 months the Altona phase of the work has been under the capable management of Mr.K.Giebels. When he took over only four girls were on the staff, but the number has since grown. to 25.”





Chics™ Registered 1964

Susan Priestley comments in her Book-Altona a Long View “Although Red Robin's founder died in the late 1940s, his Sons continued and expanded the family business. From 1961, the Altona mill made the folding slippers still familiarly known as Chics, **Four years later, the Brunswick factory was expanded and modernised, and all manufacture was consolidated there.** The Altona premises were sold to be reopened as the Finnish Hall in 1972, serving not only the 23 Finnish families then resident in Altona, but those from the rest of Melbourne.”

The majority had homes in the western suburbs.



The building in 2022

It would be interesting to know why Arthur Rose chose the Red Robin as his initial trademark perhaps as an immigrant arriving in a new country, the following sentiment could be the reason?

**The red robin is a beacon of hope, a symbol of renewal, and immense growth. It has been considered to be symbolic of new beginnings and a fresh start.**

**The Trademark lives on, so perhaps he was correct in his choice.**



**The red robin Brand name lives on in 2023**

The Trade Mark for Red Robin Hosiery still lives on as a current Trademark registered in Australia to Hanes Innerwear Australia, based in Kew, since 2017.

Hanes Innerwear as part of the International Hanes Group based in the USA is understood to hold over 600 Trade mark registrations on some of Australia's best known Brand Names, such as Kayser and Sheridan

Between 2016 and 2017 the company was known as Pacific Brands.

## Commonwealth Oil Refineries (C.O.R)



A news article appeared in the Williamstown Chronicle, Saturday, January 28 1922 with the heading:

### **LARGE OIL REFINERY**

### **SITE NEAR ALTONA BAY**

### **CHEAP FUEL FOR INDUSTRIAL POWER**

It stated that the Commonwealth Oil Refineries Ltd, had decided to establish its initial refinery in Victoria.

It was understood that a second refinery would subsequently be established in Sydney.



**Aerial View of the Site circa 1925-SLV Image**

The company had purchased 400 acres of land on the north side of the Geelong Railway in the neighbourhood of the railway bridge over the Kororoit Creek.

Arrangements were being made for wharfage (Spotswood), railway accommodation, water service, electric power supply and the laying of oil pipe lines.

The refinery to be under the control of a composite organisation known as Commonwealth Oil Refineries Ltd., which was created by virtue of an agreement entered into by the Commonwealth Government and the Anglo Persian Oil Co.

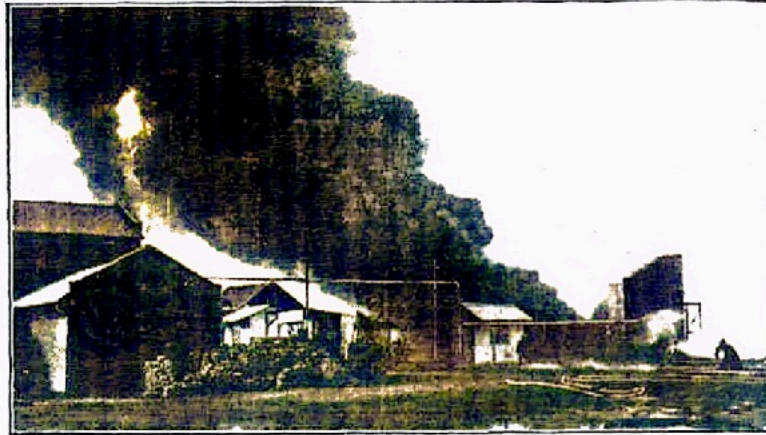
The Argus, Friday 13 July 1923, page 7 subsequently reported "The company decided to erect its initial refinery near Alton Bay, and construction work was put in hand last year.

Crude oil is to be imported from Persia in 10,000 ton tank steamers which will be berthed at the company's wharf under construction at Spotswood. The crude oil will be pumped from the Spotswood store tank installation by way of a pipe line which has been constructed, to a storage tank depot alongside the refinery.

The plant will initially produce (a) Motor spirit and other benzine products, (b) Lamp oil and other kerosene products (c) Residual oil for fuel and power producing requirements.

Australasian (Melbourne, Vic. : 1864 - 1946), Saturday 21 June 1924, page 36

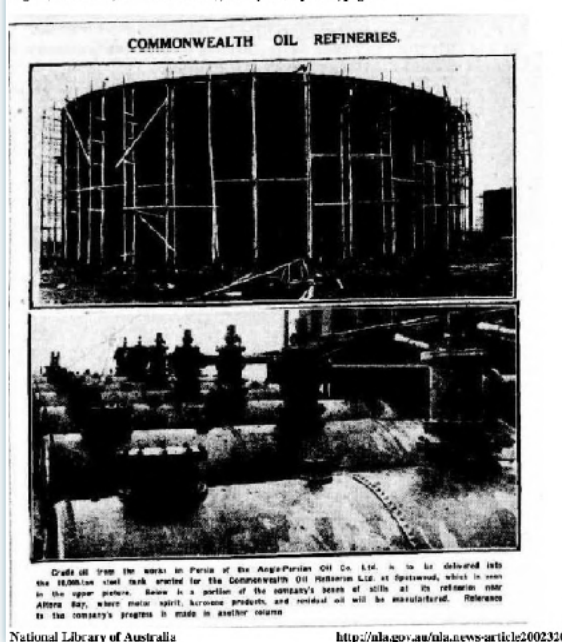
# FIRE AT COMMONWEALTH OIL REFINERIES.



Spectacular fire at the Commonwealth Oil Refineries, Laverton (V.), on June 13. The fire broke out in two of the containers, which each hold 17,000 gallons of oil. The oil in one tank was destroyed, but a part of the contents of the other was saved.

1924-The caption reads-Spectacular fire at the Commonwealth Oil Refineries,Laverton (V),on June 11.The fire broke out in two of the containers, each hold 17000 gallons of oil.The oil in one tank was destroyed, but part of the contents of the other tank was saved.

Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957), Friday 13 July 1925, page 7



The image above shows the 10000 ton steel tank erected for COR at Spotswood,and below is a section of plant at Altona Bay



A Hobsons Bay Council Heritage report contains an image of the only remaining section of the buildings on the site that were originally constructed there.It shows the former administrative offices now situate at 32-54 Toll Drive Altona North.a section of the timber bridge over Kororoit Creek also remains on the site



## **some of the Bakers, Bread Carters and Pastry Cooks in the Western Suburbs 1920s to 1970s**

(Jim Hevey-January 2023).

**B**read has always formed a major part of human existence, and the disappearance over time of the old style distribution of items such as Bread, Milk, Ice, Briquettes etc. still remains in the memory of many of that generation.

This topic is of particular interest to the writer as my grandfather, father and mother as well as other family relatives within the bread industry played an important part in my upbringing.



### **Baking the Old Fashioned Way**

Bakers in Australia from the early 1900s often used old style wood fired baking ovens to bake their bread and associated items, pictured below is an image of a Metters Brand oven circa 1925.

Loaves were removed using a long handled wood platter.

**This is similar to the oven that was in the Wembley Bakery in Yarraville.**



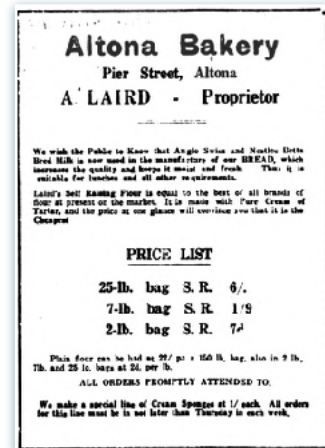
**Details follow in regard to some of the Bakers and Bread-carting companies that serviced the Western Suburbs from around 1920 until the 1970s.**



## Altona

### 1:ARCHIBALD LAIRD

The first mention of Archibald Laird, appeared in the Werribee Shire Banner on Thursday July 5,1923 when it reported under Council News that Archibald Laird was granted permission to erect a bakery in Pier Street Altona, on the motion of Cr.Maher ,seconded by Cr. Cunningham.



The image above sourced from Facebook shows an unnamed woman with the Laird Altona Bakehouse visible in the background.

The Sands and McDougall Directory for 1930 shows the location being on the East side of Pier Street, with buildings nearby being from Queen Street, the Strand Theatre, a Shop,Stables and Laird Bakers.

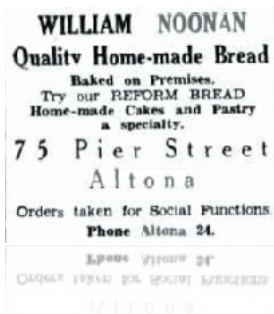
The image below held by the Altona Laverton Historical Society shows a Bread Cart in a flooded section of an Altona Street, possibly Upton Street nominally in the 1920s.this may have been a Laird Bakery Cart,



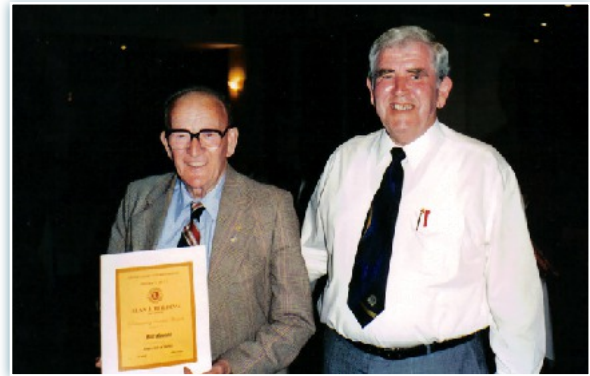
Archibald Laird died in 1939 and is buried at Footscray Cemetery.

## Altona

### 2.WILLIAM (BILL) NOONAN- NOONAN'S BAKERY



Noonan's Bakery operated from 75 Pier Street from around 1946, it was well known as an outlet for bread, pies and pastries for Altona Residents for many years.



Bill Noonan was a well respected business man and a long serving member of the St.John Ambulance Brigade.

He received a number of local awards including the City of Altona 1977 Citizen of the Year Award and the Lions Club of Altona-Alan J. Holding Award for Citizen Service, he is pictured right receiving the award from the Lions District Governor..

### 3 Spotswood West, Yarraville and Footscray LEN BROADWAY AND THE BROADWAY FAMILY.

The story of the Broadway family and their connection to the Bakery profession is unusual one, Leonard Edgar Broadway known as Len, was the writers grandfather, born in Lockwood, near Bendigo, he was the second of four brothers who went on to become bakers, together with some of his close relatives.



An article that appeared in "The Australian Baker" magazine May 31, 1925 under the heading **BAKERS ALL-AND OF ONE FAMILY**, showed an image of Broadway family members at a birthday function.

Back: Bob Broadway Yarraville, Herb Broadway Lindenow, George Herbert Broadway Jnr. Yarraville, David Joseph Broadway (Chick) Essendon, Alex Broadway Narre Warren

Front: Ern Broadway Essendon, George Allan Broadway Snr. Essendon, Len Broadway Narre Warren, Jim Broadway Footscray.



## Spotswood West, and Footscray/Yarraville

### 4. Leonard Edgar Broadway



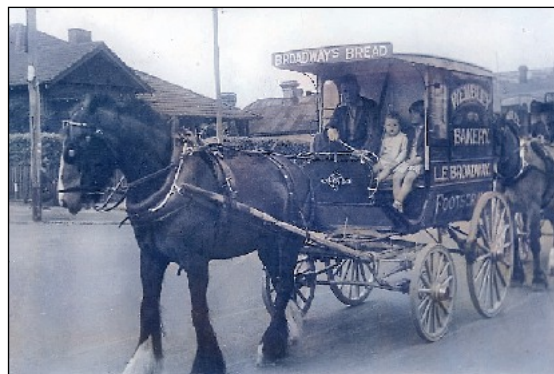
Leonard Edgar Broadway was my Grandfather who was born at Lockwood in 1881 and passed away in 1947, so I only knew him when I was a young boy. In the early 1940s, and his bakery operated under the name of Wembley Bakery from premises at 50 Hamilton Street Footscray (now Seddon).

He first commenced a business in Narre Warren before returning with his family to the Metropolitan area and subsequently Footscray.

The Footscray site consisted of a dwelling facing Hamilton Street and behind this with access from Webster Street was the double storey brick building which was the actual bakery and the area housing the carts and horses.



**BAKEHOUSE WITH THE DWELLING FACING HAMILTON STREET  
1925C**



**Two carts in procession circa 1942**

The buildings had obviously been there since at least the early 1900s and according to Sands and McDougall directories of the era both **the postal districts have changed from time to time between Footscray, Yarraville and Seddon as have the house numbers.**

For example the site was occupied by George Broadway Snr. between 1895 and 1919 and it was then known as **69 Hamilton Street Yarraville, this is the site later known as 50 Hamilton Street.**

The trading name *Wembley Bakery* was acquired from a previously established bakery following the acquisition of the business when Broadways Bakers took over a pre existing business premises at 314-316 Williamstown Road Yarraville in about 1935 and coexisted with the Hamilton Street operation until around 1947, the premises is currently numbered 342 and is a Pizza Shop



Upon returning from Narre Warren, Len Broadway assisted his brother in Ascot Vale and Essendon and then commenced a bakery in Spotswood West. The premises at 29 Stephenson Spotswood West was apparently in operation from about 1931 until 1934 from this site and consisted of a bake house behind a dwelling on the East side of Stephenson Street in

what was then known as Spotswood West, little is known of this business operation, which was obviously servicing the area surrounding it now known as South Kingsville.

The purchase of the Wembley Bakery business obviously ended the use of the Spotswood site as a business, although the property remained as part of my Grandfather's will upon his death in 1947. The name "Wembley Bakery" came from the original business having been set up by Messrs Tangey and Anchen to service the then new area of the Wembley Estate off Francis Street extending west towards Geelong Road,

The Wembley Estate site was owned by Sir William Angliss the butcher and meat processing business owner of the day.



During World War 2 this cart pictured, was towed behind a vehicle for a time to carry on with bread delivery following the overturning of a cart when the horse fell on a slippery road surface.

During the period between World War One and Two and into the 1950s Bread delivery by Bakers was zoned with delivery to resident and shop owners with specific defined areas.

It was also relatively common for Inspectors to issue monetary fines for "short weight" bread.



## The Broadway Bakeries

Leonard Edgar Broadway (1881-1947) A basic timeline of his Bakery Business Operations			
Private residence prior to moving to Narre Warren-41 Ovens Street Yarraville			
Previous Owners	Year commenced	Location	Nominee bakers
Bissell	1925-1928	Webb Street Narre Warren	Len & Alex Broadway Jim Broadway
Ern Broadway	1929-1930	127 Maribyrnong Road Ascot Vale And Buckley Street Essendon	Assisting his brother Ern Broadway
A New Business	1931-1934	29 Stephenson Street Spotswood	Len & Jim Broadway
Tangey & Anchen	1935-1945	314 Williamstown Road Yarraville Acquired the name "Wembley Bakery"	Len & David J .Broadway (Chick)
George H. Broadway	1935-1947	Len operated from 50 Hamilton Street Footscray for the rest of the business life.	Len & David J. Broadway (Chick)
Len Broadway	1947-1950	Following Len's death in 1947 the business continued until about 1950 and was later sold to Cains Bakers in Kingsville	David J. Broadway



**The delivery man's only tool of trade (aside from his knowledge of the round) was the large wicker basket filled with warm bread and covered with a clean white linen cloth.**

**T**he image and quotation above sums up very well the operations of a Bread Carter during the days of delivery of bread, using horse and cart.  
(Bob Byrnes-Australia Remembered)

#### **Main ReferenceSources:**

Trove

ALHS Records

Facebook'

Hobsons Bay Council Heritage Reports

Broadway Family Images and Personal Records

State Library of Victoria

The Australian Baker Magazine Article 1925

Altona a Long View-Susan Priestley

(Some images have been colorised for effect)