

THE GRAIN REVOLUTION

*Information kindly provided by
Dr John Radcliffe AM FTSE,
RA&HSSA Grain and Fodder Committee*



A revolution began from the 1950s with the progressive replacement of bags by bulk handing. This led to the widespread adoption of large self-propelled harvesters.



Harvesting, 2013, Mid-north SA – Belinda Cay

Grain is now augered from the harvester to big bins, taken to silos, then in bulk by train or B-double trucks to the port for loading.

Farmers initially bought trucks that could handle large tonnages of grain while others have used specialised contractors who developed grain carting businesses. Silos for bulk receipt of grain were erected in the 1960s and 1970s throughout the grain-growing areas by a growers co-operative – South Australian Cooperative Bulk Handling (CBH), becoming Ausbulk, then being acquired by ABB Grain, subsequently Viterra (a Canadian company) which itself was purchased by Glencore in 2012.



Grain train, Lameroo silos, – Ivan Marchant

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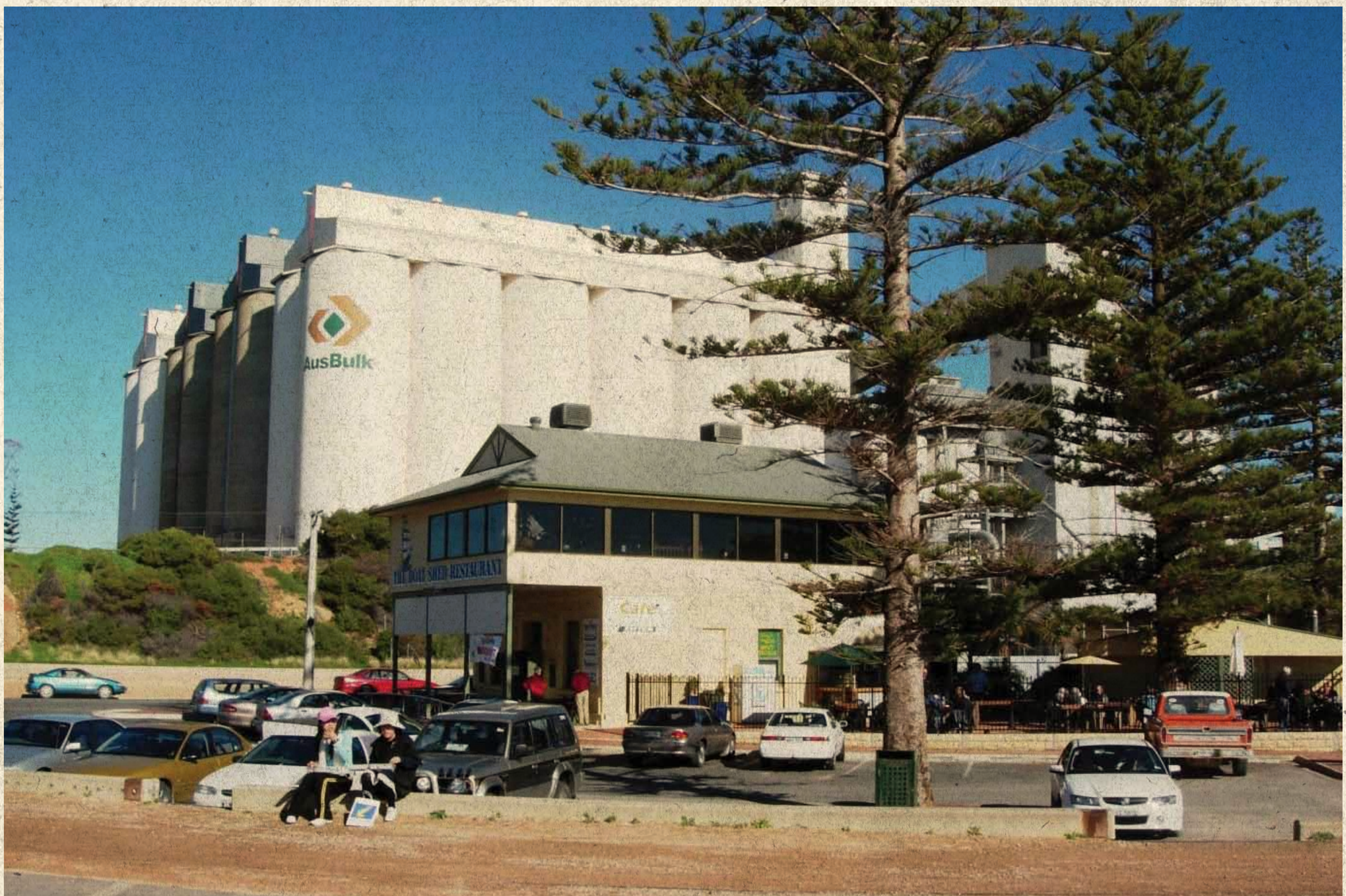
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New export grain terminals were built at Port Adelaide, Port Giles, Wallaroo, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln and Thevenard. Grain can be automatically unloaded directly from lorries and rail wagons – gone are the days of back-breaking manual handling.



Discharging grain from rail at a port terminal – Barry Marshall



Wallaroo grain terminal – JC Radcliffe

Panamax size bulk carrier ships are now used for transporting most of South Australia's grain. Some specialised grain consignments are shipped in containers.

