



– Thursday March 21, 1889

South Gawler Football Club is born. A meeting of people interested in the formation of a football club in the Gawler South area is held at the Mill Inn with about thirty people attending. James Fitzgerald chairs this first meeting, explaining that the object of the meeting is to form a junior club in the locality for now, to join a senior association that was likely to be formed in Gawler in the near future.

Fitzgerald is elected as the first Captain, with George Sanderson appointed as his Vice Captain. TH. Willett is declared the first Secretary and Patron. The colours decided on are blue and red, with white bands. About fifty names are handed in for membership.

– April 6, 1889

Gawler South plays its first game – a scratch match at Sedgeley's Paddock in Gawler West with about forty potential players turning out.

– April 20, 1889

South's first official game is a trial just prior to the inaugural Gawler Junior Football Association, versus Salisbury at Salisbury Oval, where we begin our history with a win.

– Thursday May 14, 1889

Forty members on another Thursday evening at the Mill Inn form a second Gawler South Football Club. Basically an affiliated club for junior footballers, it is this entity which for much of the twentieth century will compete in a separate seconds or B Grade competition as an independent body, sharing the South name and colours but often with different emblems.

– May 31, 1889

South seconds play their first game at Para Para.

– 1890

Gawler Football Club withdraws from the South Australian Football Association and disbands. The GJFA becomes the Gawler Football Association proper. Foundation clubs include Gawler South, Willaston and Gawler Central.

A seconds club called Wanderers merge with Gawler South, adopting their royal blue and white hoop gurnsey. Throughout the 1890s Gawler South become nicknamed the Barbarians.

Along with the regular GFA, South's senior team first play invitational games against Salisbury and Kapunda.

– 1891

South wins its first senior premiership of the Gawler Football Association.

– 1892

A serious breach of rules sees South penalised for game points and therefore missing out on an appearance in the Grand Final.

– 1893

It had previously been thought that Gawler Central were premiers with South runners-up in this year, as South had declined to challenge Centrals for outright honours. However, recent research by local historian Robert Laidlaw has uncovered that due to a controversial points discrepancy caused by a rescheduling of the latter part of the season, in fact both Centrals and South were awarded the 1893 premiership in a tie posthumously.

– 1894

In a premiership year, Fred May and Toby Arthur become the first South players to graduate to league football with South Adelaide.

– 1896

The Conquerors Football Club is formed as a revival of the second South team.

– 1897

The Conquerors change their name to the Gawler South Pirates.  
Roseworthy College become the fourth team to join the GFA.

– 1899

The seconds competition remains unorganised, little more than stop-start thing of makeshift fixtures outside of the GFA that are simply practice for those who do not get a game in the clubs' first teams competing in the A Grade.

The Gawler South Pirates strengthen however, arranging games against the seconds sides of Hindmarsh, Angaston, Roseworthy College, Kapunda, Greenock and Salisbury.

– 1900

After College withdraws, a new senior club called Shamrocks joins South, Central and Willaston in the GFA, drawing players from the Gawler South Pirates – ultimately bringing about their demise.

– 1901

For the first time ever in the history of the GFA, South wins the premiership undefeated.

– 1902

The seconds clubs are finally coordinated into the Gawler Junior Football Association, with South fielding a Reserves team against the seconds of Central, Willaston, Shamrocks and a B Grade club called Rivals. Souths Seconds Football Club is formally named. While the senior sides play at Gawler Oval, most of the GJFA fixtures are played at the North or West Parklands.

South continues its domination of the GFA with an undefeated premiership back to back. A combined team of all the other clubs challenges South to a match, only just winning.

– 1903

Shamrocks fold, leaving the GFA with just South, Centrals and Willaston.

Peter Swift, now playing league football with South Adelaide, becomes the first South son and only the third player from Gawler to play for South Australia, judged best on ground for SA against Victoria. Around this time the Gawler South senior team are known as the Blues.

Without several of their established stars from recent years, the South seniors finish bottom for the first time in history.

– 1904

College return as the fourth team in the GFA, while another new B Grade club called Imperials joins the GJFA.

– 1905

Gawler South seconds win their first GJFA premiership.

– 1906

South A Grade compete with Willaston, Centrals, College and a new senior club called North Gawler. Both first and second teams enjoy our first double premiership.

– 1907

In 1907 South put together a "Thirds" side, probably somewhat like a colts team today, to play a match against another team called the Ramblers as a curtain-raiser for a one off senior game against Broken Hill Central.

North Gawler fold.

– 1908

The South seconds become officially known as the Gawler South Rovers. They meet Prospect Reserves, South Adelaide Ramblers and Roseworthy, as well as the regular GJFA.

– 1909

The Willaston Sharks form independently from the senior Willaston club, starting an intense rivalry with the Rovers just like the seniors.

The challenge final is introduced to replace the playoff. Since 1889, the GFA had decided its premier by an aggregate of points accumulated throughout the year. If two teams tied, a playoff decided who

went top. Now, the first and second team were to always playoff for the flag regardless, however if the first-placed team lost, they were entitled to a challenge match to regain the honour.

– 1910

South begin the year with a trial match win against fellow premiers of the Barossa and Light Football Association, Freeling. Hamley Bridge first join the GFA.

Around 1910 Souths meet in the Vinegar Works, a cellar at the bottom of the hill near the Butter Factory. From there we soon move to the rear of Laycock's Victoria Mill store room, and later to the Fodder Mill near the Gawler Railway Station.

– 1911

Salisbury officially join the GFA, while Hamley Bridge leave to be one of the founders of a new Wooroora Football Association.

South's A Grade are accused of throwing a match to make the Grand Final but escape disqualification. With the season split into two, South win the first half, and then Willaston the second. South lose to Willaston late in the season thereby keeping a strengthening Salisbury out, but then South defeat Willaston for the premiership.

– 1912

The first year a final round is conducted. Continuing throughout the 1920s, at the end of the minor round the first and third teams play off, as do the second and fourth teams, with the winners playing in the final. If the minor premier lost either the semi-final or final, it still had the right of a challenge match.

The seconds meet new B Grade side Williamstown.

Clubrooms are established at the southern end of High Street.

– 1913

The B Grade win two invitations against the Ramblers and Sturt juniors.

– 1914

The club moves to the Grain and Chaff Mill just before where the Adelaide Road bridge enters Murray Street.

By May 23, South withdraws from the Gawler Football Association following a dispute with the administration over the clearance of L.S. Dawe from Central to South.

– 1915

South rejoin the GFA.

During 1915 South establishes new clubrooms at Jeff's Mill at the Gawler Railway Station. Both teams train together at Wilcox's Paddock in Gawler West.

– 1919

The same five teams from 1915 – South, Willaston, Centrals, Salisbury and College, resume the GFA in 1919 after World War I.

The clubrooms are moved next door into the May Brothers Foundry, where the Club remains until about 1923.

South A Grade meet Angaston along with the regular GFA.

Seconds clubs at Lyndoch and Williamstown first unite to compete as a senior side in the Torrens Valley Football Association, but the arrangement is terminated after just this one season.

-1920

Wasleys joins the B Grade

– 1921

The term 'B Grade' is first coined to describe the GJFA competition.

South's B Grade meets Wasleys in the next few Grand Finals of the GJFA. Fledgeling clubs Lyndoch and Roseworthy also first enter teams in the B Grade.

– 1922

The A Grade first play a trial against Nuriootpa.

– 1923

The Club moves to “the tin shed on the riverbank” in Fourteenth Street, Gawler West.  
One Tree Hill and Smithfield temporarily participate in the B Grade.  
The A Grade play a trial against Saddleworth.

– 1924

When College pull out, Lyndoch first join the GFA A Grade but withdraw after the 1925 season.  
Salisbury forfeits a semi-final against us.  
Virtually a breakaway from South, Rovers form and first participate in the B Grade.

– 1926

Disinterest with South’s lack of competition and general unconfidence in the administration sees the A Grade of the Gawler Football Association disband. An article in The Bunyip, May 7, 1926, stated three abortive meetings had been held by the Gawler Football League, and a decision had been reached that senior football in Gawler would be abandoned for at least the 1926 season.

There was an attempt to enter two composite sides into the Barossa and Light Football Association, but this was rejected. Talk then resurfaced of the old time Gawler Football Club being revived to join the SAFA, but this never eventuated. Our own committee meetings of the day even pondered the creation of a composite Gawler side derived from South alone, a so-called Valhalla Football Club, but this venture was never pursued either.

Roseworthy College break away to enter an inter-collegiate competition with city schools, while Salisbury leaves to establish a new association with teams in the Prospect district.

The GJFA continues however, renamed as the GFA B Grade, with South opposing B Grade sides from Central, Willaston, Rovers, College and Lyndoch. No A Grade footballer is allowed to play. A junior football competition is temporarily organised this year. Sides from Gawler Methodist, Ramblers, Church of England and Saint George play fixtures against the “C Grades” of South, Roseworthy College, Willaston and Gawler Central, at the Evanston Racecourse.

– 1927

In the wake of South dominating the GFA throughout the last decade, a new A Grade club called Rovers is formed from the original B Grade club Gawler South Rovers. They wear black and white. Hamley Bridge also return.

– 1928

Roseworthy enter a seconds side in the B Grade.  
Williamstown graduate to and Roseworthy College rejoin the GFA A Grade.

– 1929

The GFA first apply for affiliation with what is today the SANFL.  
Williamstown amalgamate with Lyndoch.

– 1930

Williamstown/Lyndoch depart the GFA. They split and Lyndoch goes into the Barossa and Light B Grade.

The neighbouring Lower North Football Association creates Smithfield, Salisbury Rovers, Two Wells, Angle Vale, Virginia and Korunye.

– 1931

The Wednesday Unemployed Football Association sees the captains of all three Gawler clubs involved in social teams.

Lyndoch (alone) rejoin the B Grade.

The modern Page System of finals (a final four) that is typical to decide the premiership today is first instituted.

– 1932

The B Grade competition expands to include Smithfield and Sandy Creek.

Hamley Bridge leave to the Barossa and Light Football Association until 1936 when they again move on to the Adelaide Plains Football Laegue.

– 1933

Triple Mail Medallist Eddie Mahoney kicks a record 19 goals in one match as a rover changing in the back pocket.

– 1934

The A Grade and B Grade finally amalgamate into one Gawler South Football Club, although the GFA and GFA B Grade remain separate entities.

Along with the regular season, the B Grade first meet Angle Vale.

– 1935

The outside B grade clubs Lyndoch, Angle Vale, Smithfield and Sandy Creek are considered too strong for the GFA B grade teams, so they are ostracised. They move back to the inferior Lower North Football Association.

– 1936

Ironically, the GFA B Grade fails due to the short-sighted exclusions of the previous year.

To fill the void, a regular competition occurs between Gawler High School teams, under the names of Para, Angus, Murray and Barossa.

– 1937

Salisbury controversially leaves the GFA for the Lower North association.

– 1939

The Gawler Football Association decides to exclude Rovers for the 1939 season, to experiment with 'district' football, allocating three areas for the three Gawler clubs.

Rovers enter the Lower North Football Association, and win the premiership.

The B grade competition continues to struggle to find numbers with only four teams at South, Central, Willaston and College, so there is still no B Grade.

With Rovers exiled from the A Grade, leaving a total of four clubs in one competition, impending war threatens to kill off local footy altogether. In 1935 there were six A Grade sides and eight B Grade teams, for 14 teams in two grades, contrasting with this poor record of 1939.

– 1941

Perhaps fortuitously, the Lower North and Barossa and Light leagues fail resulting in an influx of new players to a staggering GFA.

Rovers come back, but Centrals withdraw. A four club competition remains, however each resurrects a B Grade.

– 1945

The Gawler Colts club forms (made up of juniors mainly from Centrals) playing some arranged football matches. By 1946 the team will expand its age bracket and include senior players. Wearing blue and gold colours, this club virtually substitutes for Centrals while they are out of the GFA. When Centrals again participates, it initially wears their blue and gold before reverting to black and gold colours.

– 1946

Gawler Colts and Sandy Creek expand the A Grade.

The B Grade rebuilds with South, Willaston, College, Kangaroo Flat, Smithfield and Virginia.

Virtually a C Grade competition, the Sunday football league resumes amongst the local pubs.

South B Grade defeat the A Grade in the J. Page Lightning Carnival.

Eden Valley join the BLFA until 1950.

– 1947

Centrals are re-admitted into the GFA as the Gawler Colts and Rovers clubs withdraw.

Rovers fold but leave a small legacy back at South where it had first begun in the form of a Rovers Social Club, made up of ex Rovers within the Gawler South Football Club.

Roseworthy College and Salisbury formally enter seconds sides into the GFA B Grade. Truro and Roseworthy first enter the B Grade competition dominated by Kangaroo Flat, while Centrals also resume a B Grade side.

A club is formed at Gawler River which joins the Lower North Football Association but only for season 1947.

– 1948

Sandy Creek are relegated to the B Grade as Two Wells first enter a seconds side into the GFA B Grade.

– 1949

Salisbury returns to the A Grade with South, Central, Willaston, College and Virginia. Kangaroo Flat, Lyndoch, Truro and Roseworthy seek more than a B Grade contest by joining Greenock (from the BLFA since 1937) in the sputtering Lower North association. However only Lyndoch and Roseworthy will survive beyond 1951.

– 1951

The GFA A Grade and B Grade are finally united as one league. After a drought of seventeen years, South claims its first premiership since 1934 with the B Grade title.

– 1953

The GFA becomes the Gawler and District Football League, comprising the three original Gawler clubs, Salisbury, Roseworthy College, Roseworthy, Two Wells, and returning Lyndoch. Virginia drop to the B Grade.

– 1954

The GDFL expands with the admission of Salisbury North and Smithfield. Lyndoch are relegated to the B Grade.

– 1955

Gawler South adopts the Rampant Lion as its emblem. With the inclusion of Elizabeth North, the GDFL is now reaching its greatest height, dividing into three competitions – League, A Grade and B Grade.

– 1957

The original Gawler South name for the club taken from the suburb, is replaced by the title South Gawler to describe the area. Elizabeth move their A and B Grade sides into the GDFL, now considered the most reknown league north of Adelaide.

– 1958

Anticipating the inception of a new league club in the area, the Salisbury, Elizabeth and Gawler District Colts Football League is created to foster junior footballers. An under-13 and under 17 age limit is placed upon a Junior Colts and Senior Colts programme. Elizabeth joins the GDFL.

– 1959

Virginia and Two Wells amalgamate, creating now eight teams in the burgeoning GDFL: South, College, Elizabeth, Salisbury North, Centrals, Two Wells-Virginia, Willaston and Salisbury.

– 1960

While Centrals again falters and drops to the B Grade, they are replaced by new club Elizabeth North. The Junior Colts and Senior Colts grades are combined into a single Colts competition.

– 1961

Undefeated in both A and B Grades the previous year, South defects to the Adelaide Plains Football League following tensions arising with the GDFL over differences concerning the three competitions, financial mismanagement and perceptions of the new Central District Football Club. Fellow powerhouse Roseworthy College also defects.

Lyndoch, Gawler Central and Roseworthy are promoted from the B grade to the GDFL, but the creation of the Central Districts Football Association sees Salisbury, Salisbury North, Elizabeth, Elizabeth North and Virginia leave. This new League originally designed to foster players for Central Districts Football Club.

Ironically, the SEGDFL fails as a result.

– 1962

Williamstown join the GDFL again as a separate entity.

– 1963

South returns to the GDFL. Wasleys also joins the A Grade, although Williamstown withdraws. The GDFL reprises the Colts grade which ultimately leads to the modern Junior and Senior Colts football development of today.

– 1964

Peter Clark amasses a record 119 goals in an A Grade season.  
Bob Edmonds plays in the first Central District league side.  
Hamley Bridge and College return to the GDFL.

– 1966

Roseworthy and Wasleys amalgamate to form the ill-fated Rurals Football Club.

– 1968

The great Robin Mulholland makes his league football debut for Central District.  
Rurals withdraw from the GDFL, leaving South, Colleege, Willaston, Hamley Bridge, Centrals and Lyndoch.

– 1970

The modern South Gawler Cricket Club is formed.  
Legend Stephen Officer is recruited by South Melbourne to play in the Victorian Football League.

– 1972

Robin Mulholland represents South Australia in state-of-origin.  
Darts and eightball are finally recognised as affiliated sports of the SGFC.  
Williamstown re-enters the GDFL on its own.

– 1973

The Committee agrees to supply materials to a group of mens' basketballers forming the Gawler Lions Basketball Club (who initially used South as their clubrooms) which will eventually evolve into the Central Districts Lions Basketball Club, playing in the district grades of the South Australian Basketball Association – a feeder league to professional teams the West Adelaide Bearcats and later the Adelaide 36ers in the National Basketball League.

– 1974

Williamstown and Two Wells-Virginia are readmitted into the GDFL.

– 1975

After a fifteen year amalgamation with Virginia, Two Wells go it alone.

– 1976

The Lions farewell the "tin shed at Fourteenth Street" and acquire the Evanston Sports Centre at Eldred Riggs Reserve.  
Following the failure of the Mid-North Football Association, the three most southern clubs Riverton, Marrabel and Saddleworth unite to become RSMU and join the BLFA. Robertstown also venture south from the Mid-Murray Football Association, further strengthening the BLFA.

– 1977

The SGFC fosters a mens and womens hockey team in the Barossa Valley Hockey Association although it does not continue in the following year.

– 1978

The South Gawler Netball Club is formed, fielding teams in the A and D Grades of the Gawler and District Netball Association, with the A Grade winning their first premiership.  
South Gawler begins as a tennis club, which later evolves during the 1990s into the modern South Gawler Para Tennis Club.

– 1980

Williamstown and Lyndoch unite to create the Barossa District Football Club.

– 1981

The Lions play at home for the first time in history.  
Virginia return to the GDFL from the CDFA.

– 1984

Roseworthy College and Hamley Bridge leave to the APFL.  
After missing a number of seasons, by the new century College is later affiliated with Adelaide University Football Club, to play in the South Australian Amateur Football League C2 grade – known as 'the Farmers'.

– 1985

Gary Sutton surpasses Peter Clark's club record with 126 goals in a Junior Colt season.

– 1986

The final season of the GDFL is contested by South, Centrals, Two Wells, Willaston, Virginia and Barossa District.

– 1987

Two Wells leave to the APFL spelling the end of the GDFL.

The three Gawler clubs merge with the BLFA to form a new 'super' league – the Barossa, Light and Gawler Football Association. Robertstown exits the old BLFA back to the Mid-Murray Football Association, so the BLGFA is to consist of South Gawler, Willaston, Gawler Central, Tanunda, Nuriootpa Rovers, Riverton Saddleworth Marrabel United, Kapunda, Eudunda, Freeling and Angaston.

Barossa District temporarily join the Hills Football Association while Virginia go back to the CDFA. Between 1987 and 1990 the Bulldogs successfully dominate division two of the Hills Football League securing flags in 1987, 1988 and 1990. Virginia eventually arrive back at the Adelaide Plains Football League when what becomes of the CDFA folds in 1994.

As a condition of the merger, the South Gawler Football Club Netball Club is hurriedly formed, distinct from the original South Gawler Netball Club which had remained in the Gawler and District Netball Association but was no longer connected. The modern South Gawler Netball Club was to reclaim the name again once the old club folded in 1988.

– 1988

Having usurped the old GDFL and now boasting two divisions of A Grade from clubs spanning across the northern suburbs of Adelaide, the Central Districts Football Association is renamed the Northern Metropolitan Football Association.

– 1989

The three original Gawler clubs celebrate their Centenary.  
Eddie Schwerdt, probably South's greatest footballer ever, receives the first of his three Mail Medals.

– 1990

The Lions win their first A Grade premiership in the new BLGFA.

– 1991

Barossa District are finally accepted into the BLGFA.

– 1992

Eudunda move to the North Eastern Football League.

– 1993

South wins its 37th A Grade premiership.

South Gawler Softball Club is formed as an affiliate, achieving immediate success in the local softball association with a C Grade pennant followed by the B Grade title in the 1994-95 season, however due to financial difficulty the club later folds in 1997.

– 1994

The Northern Metropolitan Football Association folds, while the rival BLGFA surges ahead.

– 1995

The club is fined \$1000 and the A Grade stripped of twelve premiership points (from the start of the

season to June 24) , after the league finds senior player John Robins in breach of the import rule, deregistering him for the remainder of the 1995 season. President Roger Hutchins publicly appeals the decision, citing that the player in question had only temporarily moved away while building a new house in Gawler – a situation which the BLGFA were duly notified of. However, the league determines to make an example of South, unrelenting on its penalty. So in July, South slip from third position to second-to-bottom with just four points (two wins). Despite this season-ruining setback, a courageous A Grade still only just miss out on the finals.

– 1996

Against all odds, South makes its most recent A Grade Grand Final – but fall just short of a moral victory in a fairytale comeback, finishing runners-up to Nuriootpa.

– 1998

Riverton Saddleworth Marrabel United leave the BLGFA for the NEFL. The current BLGFA is reduced to nine teams – South, Centrals, Willaston, Freeling, Kapunda, Angaston, Tanunda, Nuri and Barossa.

– 2004

Sam Butler becomes the first South son to play professionally in the modern AFL, debuting as a midfielder for the West Coast Eagles.

– 2005

Alan “Alby” Obst, is drafted by local favourite AFL franchise the Adelaide Crows. Sam Butler reaches the pinnacle of footy by becoming the first Lion to play in an AFL Grand Final, although his Eagles are defeated by Sydney.

– 2006

Back-to-back Premiers, the Junior Colts defend their 2005 crown undefeated, for the first time in BLGFA history.

Sam Butler becomes the first Lion ever to play in an AFL premiership when West Coast reverse the fortunes of the previous year to defeat the Swans.

– 2007

With the demise of the Gawler and District Mini League, schoolboy football no longer is administered by the local primary schools and becomes the domain of the local clubs. The BLGFA expands to include a Little League and Modifieds grade. South inaugurates a Little League and Modifieds side into this program.

Alby Obst, delisted from the Adelaide Crows in 2007, is drafted by the North Melbourne Kangaroos.

– 2009

Yves Sibenaler plays in his sixth, and the third successive SANFL premiership for Central District, who have now claimed eight state league titles in ten years.