



XSTRATA MANGOOLA PTY LIMITED

MANGOOLA COAL WYBONG ORAL HERITAGE REPORT

for

Xstrata Mangoola Pty Ltd

November 2008

Hansen Bailey

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

XSTRATA MANGOOLA PTY LIMITED

**MANGOOLA COAL
WYBONG ORAL HERITAGE REPORT**

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10 November 2008

for:

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MANGOOLA COAL WYBONG HERITAGE REPORT

For
Xstrata Mangoola Pty Limited

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Project Approval 06-0014 was granted by the Minister for Planning on 7 June 2007 to construct and operate Mangoola Coal (formerly the Anvil Hill Coal Mine). The Project Approval is supported by the “Anvil Hill Project Environmental Assessment” (EA) dated August 2006.

Mangoola Coal is located near Wybong, approximately 20 km west of Muswellbrook and approximately 10 km north of Denman in the Muswellbrook Local Government Area (see **Figure 1**). Mangoola Coal will extract coal from an undeveloped coal reserve of approximately 150 million tonnes (Mt). Up to 10.5 Million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) will be extracted and processed for a period of 21 years from the granting of a Mining Lease.

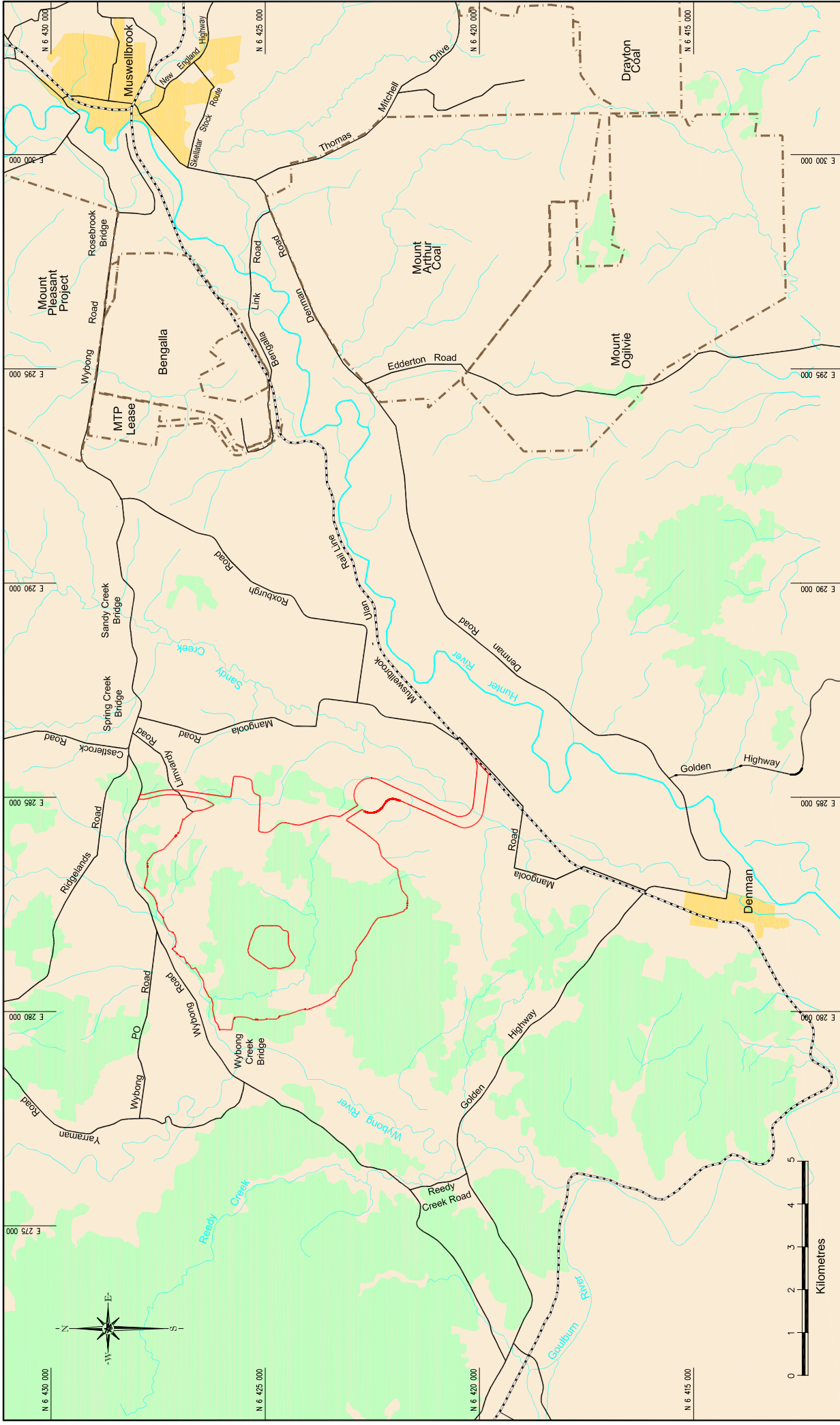
1.2 REPORT PURPOSE

Hansen Bailey Environmental Consultants was engaged by Xstrata Mangoola to prepare a report documenting the oral history of the Wybong community in accordance with Schedule 3, Condition 47 of the Mangoola Coal Project Approval (PA) 06-0014. In addition, expert assistance was provided from Rob Tickle from Veritas Archaeological & History Service.

Relevant sections of Condition 47 to which this report pertains is reproduced in **Table 1** which also indicates where each condition is addressed in this report. The detailed historical research component is addressed in a separate report and is not the subject of this report.

Table 1
Report Requirement

Project Approval Condition	Report Section
<i>47. Prior to starting mining operations on site, the Proponent shall prepare a report documenting the history of the Wybong community to the satisfaction of the Director-General. This report must:</i>	This Report
<i>(a) be prepared in consultation with the Wybong community and NSW Heritage Office; and</i>	Section 3.1.2 and Appendix A & B
<i>(b) include: ...oral history for all the land within the 40dBA noise contour (see the EA).</i>	Section 2.0 & 3.0 and Appendix C



MANGOOLA COAL

Regional Locality

Hansen Bailey |



Co-ordinate System: MGA Zone 56
Sources: DoL (2007) & XCN (2008)

- EA Disturbance Boundary
- Roads
- Creeks
- - - Mining Leases

1.3 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This report is divided into the following sections:

- **Section 2.0** provides an overview of the history of land settlement and land use within the Wybong area and presents the historical setting for the oral history interviews as compiled by Rob Tickle;
- **Section 3.0** details the methodology employed in the oral history interviews and provides a brief summary of the interviews undertaken; and
- **Section 4.0** provides a brief conclusion to the report.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF THE WYBONG AREA

2.1 LAND SETTLEMENT

At the beginning of European settlement, the land was considered terra nullius by the British Government and all ownership of land was vested in the Crown. While this belief was found to be flawed in the 20th century, it governed the sale and lease of Crown land during the early period of land settlement by Europeans in the 19th and early 20th century.

Following the closure of Newcastle as a convict settlement in the early 1820s, the distribution of land within the Hunter Valley began in earnest. In the early 1820s, following the release of the Bigge reports into the state of New South Wales, there was a push to stimulate the economy and encourage a better class of settler to Australia (in 1820, only 2,802 of the 23,927 inhabitants of New South Wales could claim to be free of the convict 'stain').¹ The British Government therefore implemented a policy of free land grants. The size of the grants was based on the amount of capital held by the settler and the ability of the settler to develop the land and maintain a number of assigned servants (convicts). This policy would develop the country and relieve the British government of the cost of maintaining convicts.

By 1826 all the land with river frontage along the Hunter as far up as the Pages River and the lower parts of the Williams and Paterson Rivers had been alienated or reserved for villages or church and school estates. After this, early settlers followed the Goulburn River and its tributaries such as Wybong Creek. The first person to select land in the Parish of Wybong was Charles Hunter McIntosh. On 4 April 1827 he was promised 640 acres by Governor Richard Bourke. The land was selected on the east bank of Wybong Creek and he was allowed to take possession on 21 September 1827. It is not known if McIntosh settled on his

¹ C.J.King, *An Outline of Closer Settlement in New South Wales*, Dept of Agriculture, Sydney, 1957, p.26

block or if he leased it to others. He was granted the land 30 September 1834². There was often a long period between taking possession and obtaining the deeds. On 18 March 1836 McIntosh sold the 640 acres to John Pike of Pickering for £320. The land was described as, 'bound on the west by Wybong Creek, on the north by a line east 112 chains then east by a line south 72 chains to a chain of ponds and by these ponds to Wybong Creek and back by that creek to commencing point'.³

In 1831 the British Government passed an Act which allowed the sale of Crown land in New South Wales and ceased to provide free grants of land. The land could be selected, but it was then put up for auction with a reserve of five shillings per acre.⁴ At the same time the Government allowed the leasing of Crown land annually by auction with a minimum of £1 per section of 640 acres. This was increased to £5 per section in 1840.⁵

John Pike was one of the original settlers in the Denman area. His base station was Pickering, but he took up a number of blocks along the Goulburn River and Wybong Creek under lease and purchase. Pike had a number of leasehold blocks from 1834 along Wybong Creek, but their exact location is difficult to determine. They could have been between the junction with the Goulburn River and the foothills of the Liverpool Range.⁶ In 1840, Pike indicated that he wished to purchase two 640 acres blocks in the Parish of Wybong. They were put up for auction and Pike paid £384 for each block. He received his deeds on 5 January 1841.⁷ Pike was to remain the sole owner of land within the Parish of Wybong until 16 April 1859 when he sold the three 640 acre blocks (Portion 1-3) to Henry Nowland of Muswellbrook. Nowland paid £1440 for the properties.

In 1861, John Robertson's land reform became law under the Crown Land Alienation Act⁸ and the Crown Lands Occupation Act⁹. This radical land reform introduced the concept of conditional purchase, which is actually a purchase on terms subject to conditions such a residency, fencing and improvements. A deposit was paid and the balance paid off with annual instalments. When all debts to the Crown had been paid, the holder received freehold title to the land. Along with the conditional purchase were additional conditional purchases and conditional leases which allowed the holder of a conditional purchase to take up further land.¹⁰ There were a number of changes to the Acts, but they were the system of acquiring land from the Crown in the Parish of Wybong from 1861. The normal sale and lease of land between individuals continued.

² Department of Land, LTO, Grant Index Series 34 p.103

³ Department of Lands, LTO, Old System, Book J No. 479

⁴ King, p. 41

⁵ King, loc. cit.

⁶ *NSW Government Gazette*, 1834, p. 201

⁷ Department of Land, LTO, Grant Index Series 73 p.44-5

⁸ 25 Vic No.1

⁹ 25 Vic No.2

¹⁰ King p. 80

Prior to 1861, there had only been three owners of freehold land within the Parish of Wybong: Charles H McIntosh, John Pike and Henry Nowland. Following Robertson's 1861 Land Act, settlers moved into the area as shown on **Table 2**.¹¹

Table 2
Wybong Land Settlers between 1861 – 1889

Name	Year land taken up
Wybong Land Settlers between 1861 - 1869	
Joseph Ashburn	1866
WH Bannister	1868-9
AA Clark	1869
Michael Cody	1869
James Cook	1867
WJ Dickerson	1869
S Gallagher	1867
Patrick Galvin	1865-9
J Maloney	1869
William Nowland	1862-9
AB Smith	1868
ED Sweeney	1864-8
SL Thornton	1869
Wybong Land Settlers between 1870 - 1879	
Charles Clark	1873-77
James Clark	1872
John Cody	1872
William Enright	1877
Martin Flanagan	1873-77
Patrick Galvin	1873-6
J Gannon	1870
P Godfrey	1875
Joseph Jones	1875
James Maloney	1873-7
J McHugh	1870-6
D, J, Michael & Patrick Moloney	1870-7
DA Nicol	1874
Nowland family	1873-8
S Saunders	1871-5
AB & RH Smith	1875-7
AR Stafford	1874
J Sweeney	1873
Wybong Land Settlers between 1880 - 1889	
William Almond	1886
William Bates	1881-6

¹¹ Names & dates taken from State Records, Map for Parish Wybong, 1st and 4th edition.

Name	Year land taken up
John Boorer	1885-6
George Clark	1887-8
William E Clark	1889
John Cody	1881
T Hogan	1880
JH & RT Keys	1880-2
ER & J McTaggart	1884-6
EH & W Nowland	1883-6
GF Rowland	1885-6
SL Thornton	1881-9

In 1906, the Shire of Wybong was formed. **Table 3** details the persons in the Parish of Wybong or who had land in a number of parishes that included part of Wybong.

Table 3
Wybong Land Ownership

Given	Name	Property	Type
Frederick	Barwick	200ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
William Jnr	Bates	600ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
Henry W	Bell	418ac 2r freehold 1250ac Crown land Ph Wybong	Joint owner
F S	Bell	418ac 2r freehold 1250ac Crown land Ph Wybong, 467ac 2r f Clanricard	Joint owner
John R	Boorer	for Mrs Boorer, Millville, Wybong	Manager
Mary Ann	Boorer	2199ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
William E	Clark	300ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Benjamin	Cowan	160ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Martin	Flanagan	120ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
John P	Galvin	224ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Michael	Galvin	275ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
James	Googe	40ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
John T	Hogan	150ac CP Ph Wybong	Occupier
Thomas	Hogan	500ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
William	Huggins	60ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
JH	Keys	80ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
Richard T	Keys	19500ac CP 3455ac CL Ph Clanricard & Brogheda	Owner
James A	McHugh	200ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
Joseph	McHugh	390ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Amos A	McTaggart	180ac CP, 113ac PPL Ph Wybong	Owner
Margaret	McTaggart	200ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Charles	McTaggart	261ac 3r CPPH Wybong	Owner
John F	McLean	1565ac CP Ph Wybong	Joint owner
Patrick	Moloney	390ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner

Given	Name	Property	Type
John	Moloney	160ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Pauline	Nowland	1088ac freehold, 235ac CL, Ph Wybong	Owner
Walter V	Parkinson	1200ac lease, Ph Wybong	Joint occupier
Charles R	Ray	80ac CP Ph Wybong	Owner
Sidney J	Thornton	346ac CP Ph Brogheda	Owner
Stephen S	Thornton	40ac CP, 120ac CL Ph Brogheda	Owner
Sylvester	Thornton	1480ac CP 200ac CL, Ph Brogheda	Owner
Edward A	Tompson	1565ac CP Ph Wybong	Joint occupier
Alexander	Weidmann	560ac CP, 240ac CL Ph Wybong	Owner

2.2 LAND USE

By the end of the 19th century, most of the Crown land in the Parish of Wybong had been taken up. The Journal of the Legislative Council of NSW, Appendix 2, 1885, Vol. 39 Part 1 provides information on persons in the area along with acres held and stock numbers, as shown in **Table 4**. It is interesting that only William Bates held any sheep.

Table 4
Wybong Land Settlers' Land Use

Name	Acres	Horses	Cattle	Sheep	Pigs
M Cody	80	2	5		2
Charles McTaggart	660	12	10		1
T Hogan	40	8	16		1
W Bates	560	9	0	300	0
James Clark	200	14	24		3
EC Googe	40	5	7		2
JJ Googe	170	5	5		0
John Googe	80	1	4		3
E Sweeney	130	0	20		0
J McHugh	80	3	14		1
James Galvin	140	10	11		0
J Maloney	80	12	4		0
P Quinn	150	10	6		7
J McHugh snr	80	4	15		2
M Flanagan	620	16	35		4
J Sellings	160	2	5		2

Land use has varied during the period of settlement at Wybong. Pike started with sheep, but changed to cattle in part of his run. The early conditional purchase settlers appear to have concentrated on horses and cattle along with a few pigs for their own consumption.

John Boorer ran a sawmill on Millville for a number of years until his death and after that it was leased to JH Brown.¹² Benjamin Cowan of Minnie Vale had a few horses standing the season.¹³ Small amounts of wheat were grown; in 1904 Maloney had 114 bags from 14 acres while J McHugh had a crop that went 25 bushels to the acre.¹⁴

In 1905, dairying commenced on many of the farms. In July 1905 the *Muswellbrook Chronicle* reported that the following had started (the number is the cows being milked at each dairy):

- B Cowan (60 cows being milked);
- C McTaggart 60 cows being milked);
- W Clarke (20 cows being milked);
- H McHugh (26 cows being milked);
- T Hogan (20 cows being milked);
- Mrs McTaggart (40 cows being milked);
- M Flanagan (20 cows being milked);
- P Flanagan (20 cows being milked);
- W Ireland (35 cows being milked);
- W Power (15 cows being milked);
- J Galvin (20 cows being milked);
- J Hannan (50 cows being milked);
- Mrs Dann (11 cows being milked);
- A Googe (12 cows being milked); and
- Michael McTaggart (14 cows being milked).

Dairying was to have a major impact on the district as it provided the small farmer with a regular income.

It is best now to leave the history of the area to the people of the district who have been interviewed. It is their story of life, farming, post office, school, sports, roads and many other things that made up the Wybong community.

¹² *Muswellbrook Chronicle* 1 Jan 1898

¹³ *Muswellbrook Chronicle* 24 Aug 1901

¹⁴ *Muswellbrook Chronicle* 27 Feb 1904

3.0 WYBONG ORAL HISTORY

3.1 METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology employed in preparing an oral history of the Wybong community report which has been undertaken in accordance with the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) *Taking Oral History* guidelines (2004). This section also notes those community members who participated in the oral history study.

3.1.1 Geographical Scope

Figure 2 illustrates the study area for the oral history. As required by PA Schedule 3, Condition 47, the oral history study area encompasses all the land within the Anvil Hill EA 40 dBA noise contour.

3.1.2 Consultation

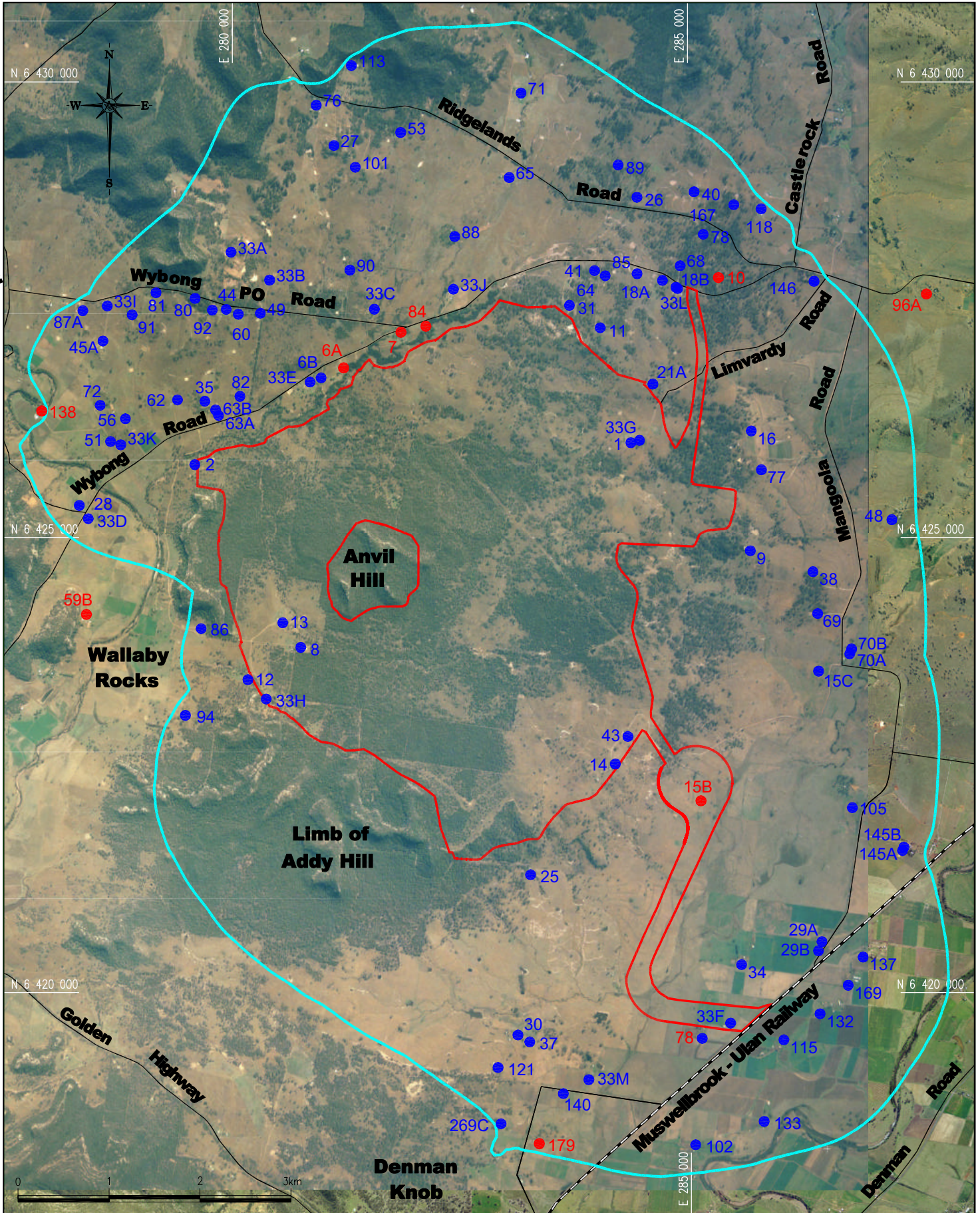
In order to ensure full consultation and awareness of the oral history report within the Wybong community, a public notice advertisement was placed in the Muswellbrook Chronicle on 1 February 2008 seeking expressions of interest (see **Appendix A**). In addition, an invitational letter was also distributed on 1 February 2008 to 30 specific landowners within the study area identified by Xstrata Mangoola outlining the project, proposed oral history methodology and enclosed a return pro-forma and envelope to provide expressions of interest (see **Appendix A**).







A letter was also provided to the NSW Heritage Council on 11 January 2008 outlining the project, its status and methodology and is shown in **Appendix B**. No response was received from the NSW Heritage Council in regard to this letter.


3.1.3 Interviews


Personal interviews were conducted and tape-recorded by Robert Tickle of Veritas Archaeological & History Service and Melissa Walker of Hansen Bailey in February, March, April, July and August 2008. Interviews were approached in a discussion manner, focusing on the interviewees' interest; however, the following themes and issues were discussed:

- History of the family (including childhood, adolescence, marriage, family life and housing of the family);
- History of the property (including purchase history, use of land, and buildings and sites on the property); and
- History of the area and community (including community interactions, community buildings and Aboriginal history).



	EA Disturbance Boundary
	Road
	Rail
	Study Area (40dBA Noise Contour)
	Interviewed Residences
	Residence Locations





Co-ordinate System: MGA Zone 56

MANGOOKA COAL

Wybong Heritage Study Area

Cad File: 03354A.dwg	Date: 08.09.08	Drawn: JD
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Figure **2**

3.1.4 Interview Transcription

Draft transcripts of the recorded interviews were produced and interviews were transcribed as closely as possible. However, where necessary, the following edits were made:

- Minor grammatical editing to ensure that the meaning of questions or responses is clear;
- Reordering of questions or responses to group topics of a similar theme together;
- Including explanatory notes or comments in square brackets; and
- Removing questions or responses that are unrelated to the theme of the oral history, such as general conversation or discussions about areas outside of the study area.

All interviewees were provided with the opportunity to review and edit the transcript of their interview for at least one month. Interviewees were specifically requested to check the spelling of Proper Nouns, confirm that the draft transcript accurately captured their knowledge of the study area, and remove any sections that they did not wish to be included in the final transcript. Interview transcripts were finalised to include any edits received from interviewees.

Copies of both the final interview transcripts and a MP3 file of the interview were provided to each interviewee. A final copy of this report will be provided to all interviewees upon its finalisation.

3.2 INTERVIEWS UNDERTAKEN

As discussed in **Section 3.1.2**, all landowners within the study area were approached to participate in the study via public notice and/or invitational letter. A total of thirteen community members agreed to participate in the oral history. Interviews were conducted with the residents as shown in **Table 5** who agreed to participate in the study. Residence IDs correlate to that shown in the Anvil Hill EA as shown on **Figure 2**.

Table 5
Heritage Study Participants

Interview Date	Name	Lot / DP	Residence ID
5 February 2008	Pat Hogan	88 / 750968	7
5 February 2008	Peter & Aileen Hogan	1 / 950763	6A
6 February 2008	Neville & Robin Bray	PT1 / 750919	96A
7 February 2008	John Cruickshank	72 / 631197	138
27 February 2008	Paul & Maureen Hurney	1593 / 809469	10
24 July 2008	Noel Ray	122 / 811176	179
24 July 2008	Roger & Shirley McTaggart	22 / 8090	15B

Interview Date	Name	Lot / DP	Residence ID
6 August	Sandra Whatling	6 / 750969	Formerly 59B*
7 August 2008	Harold Ray	42 / 805505	84

* Property owned by Hopkins.

All interviewees (with the exception of Harold Ray and Peter & Aileen Hogan) returned comments on their draft transcripts which have been included in this report. Follow-up correspondence via letters and phone calls were made, however no comments were received with the draft transcript subsequently included.

The final transcripts, which comprise the oral history component of this report, are included in **Appendix C**. The transcripts are arranged in date order in which the interviews were undertaken.

An index of all names mentioned throughout the transcripts has also been prepared in **Appendix C** to allow for ease of research in the future.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This report has aimed to collate the history of the Wybong community, through the recollections of local community members documented in an oral history. The gracious participation of all interviewees and Rob Tickle from Veritas Archaeological & History Service has been invaluable and will result in an oral history of the Wybong area for posterity.

A final copy of this report will be provided to interviews, Rob Tickle from Veritas Archaeological & History Service, the NSW Heritage Office and Muswellbrook Historical Society.

*

*

*

for

HANSEN BAILEY



Melissa Walker
Environmental Scientist



Dianne Munro
Principal

APPENDIX A

Consultation Materials



Public Notice
Wybong Community
Heritage Study

Xstrata Mangoola is seeking to identify stakeholders who wish to contribute to a report being compiled on the history of the Wybong Community. This report is being prepared to fulfill a condition of the Anvil Hill Coal Mine Project Approval.

We are particularly interested in speaking to previous or current landowners who have information on the history of the area generally encompassed by the following roads:

- Wybong Road (between Mangoola and Yarraman Roads);
- Ridgelands Road (to the intersection with Yarraman Road);
- Mangoola Road (between Wybong Road and the intersection of the Golden Highway); and
- Wybong Hall Road.

The Environmental Consultancy firm Hansen Bailey has been commissioned to assist in compiling the Wybong Community Heritage Study. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to register their interest by writing to:

Ms Melissa Walker
Hansen Bailey
PO Box 473
SINGLETON NSW 2330

Tel: 02 6575 2000
Fax: 02 6575 2001

Email: mwalker@hansenbailey.com.au

We ask that expressions of interest include current contact details and be forwarded by 15 February 2008. Enquiries can also be made to the Xstrata Mangoola Stakeholder Relations Co-ordinator on 6542 6603.

1 February 2008

{Title Initial Surname}
{address1}
{address2}
MUSWELLBROOK NSW 2333

Dear {Title Surname},

WYBONG COMMUNITY HERITAGE REPORT

Project Approval 06_0014 was granted for the Anvil Hill Coal Mine by the Minister for Planning on 14 August 2007. Condition 47 of the Project Approval states the following:

“Prior to starting mining operations on site, the Proponent shall prepare a report documenting the history of the Wybong community to the satisfaction of the Director-General. This report must:

- (a) be prepared in consultation with the Wybong community and NSW Heritage Office; and*
- (b) include:*
 - detailed historical research and oral history for all the land within the 40dBA noise contour (see the EA); and*
 - archival recording, in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the NSW Heritage Office, for all items of heritage value within the project disturbance area and blast affectation area (including ‘Castle Hill’). ”*

Xstrata Mangoola would like to invite you to contribute to the compilation of the Wybong Community Heritage Report. The Wybong Community Heritage Report is proposed to include historical comment on all properties within the green line on the attached **Figure**.

Hansen Bailey has been commissioned to undertake the research and compilation of the draft Wybong Community Heritage Report. It is intended that the Wybong Community Heritage Report would be compiled through (at least):

- Detailed research of existing documentation in relation to the history of the area;
- Interviews with current and previous landholders who express an interest and
- The development of photographic and plan layouts of individual properties of interest, where required.

For any landholder within the green line on the attached Figure who wishes to participate, it is intended to compile an Individual Property Report for their personal records. This process is intended to include:

- Interviews at a time convenient to landholders with interviews recorded (if agreed to);
- A written copy of the transcript of the interview being provided as a draft for comment (not to be distributed to any other party until agreed to by landholder involved); and
- Individual reports would then be prepared and sent to individual landholders for comment and approval.

Each Individual Property Report would then be compiled into the complete Wybong Community Heritage Report as Appendices. This report would be provided to all contributors as well as the NSW Heritage Office for comment, and then finally to the Department of Planning for approval.

Should you wish to contribute to the Wybong Community Heritage Report, please feel free to either contact Hansen Bailey directly, or return the enclosed "Wybong Community Heritage Report – Landholder Contribution Proforma" via fax or in the attached self-addressed envelope:

Hansen Bailey Environmental Consultants
PO Box 473, SINGLETON NSW 2330
Tel: 02 6575 2000
Fax: 02 6575 2001
Email: mwalker@hansenbailey.com.au

Additionally, should you know of anyone else who you feel may wish to contribute to the Wybong Community Heritage Report, please do not hesitate to recommend that they contact me or otherwise provide their details and we can contact them.

Should you have any queries in relation to this letter please do not hesitate to contact us on 02 6575 2000 or Evelina Hendry directly, Manager Stakeholder Relations at Xstrata Mangoola on 02 6542 6603.

Yours faithfully

Dianne Munro
Senior Environmental Scientist

Return Fax:	02 6575 2001 (or return in the enclosed reply paid envelope via mail)
Attention:	Melissa Walker Hansen Bailey Environmental Consultants
Re:	Anvil Hill Coal Mine Wybong Community Heritage Report

Contact Name: _____

Property Reference No (from enclosed Figure): _____

I/We would like to participate

I/We do not wish to participate

Our preferred contact details are:

We do not wish to participate, but would like to make the following comments in relation to the history of the Wybong Area:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Regulatory Correspondence

11 January 2008

The Manager, Conservation Team
Heritage Council of NSW
Locked Bag 5020
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Attention: Mr Vincent Sicari

Dear Mr Sicari,

**ANVIL HILL COAL MINE
WYBONG ORAL HISTORY AND ARCHIVAL RECORDING REPORT**

1 BACKGROUND

Project Approval 06_0014 was granted by the Minister for Planning on 7 June 2007 to construct and operate the Anvil Hill open cut coal mine (Anvil Hill Coal Mine) located in the Upper Hunter Valley of NSW. The Project Approval is supported by the "Anvil Hill Project Environmental Assessment" (EA).

Project Approval 06_0014 requires the proponent to undertake various post-approvals in consultation with the relevant regulatory bodies. In particular, Condition 47 requires the preparation of an Oral History and Archival Recording Report for the Wybong community in consultation with the local community and NSW Heritage Office and states:

"Prior to starting mining operations on site, the Proponent shall prepare a report documenting the history of the Wybong community to the satisfaction of the Director-General. This report must:

- (a) be prepared in consultation with the Wybong community and NSW Heritage Office; and*
- (b) include:*
 - detailed historical research and oral history for all the land within the 40dBA noise contour (see the EA); and*
 - archival recording, in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the NSW Heritage Office, for all items of heritage value within the project disturbance area and blast affectation area (including 'Castle Hill')."*

2 PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

2.1 ORAL HISTORY

It is proposed that personal interviews will be conducted and tape recorded by Robert Tickle of the Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter Historical Society and Melissa Walker of Hansen Bailey in accordance with the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) *Taking Oral History* guidelines (2004). Interviews are intended to commence in early 2008 with local community members who have expressed an interest in participation. Interviews will then continue with all interested parties within the study area (defined by the EA 40 dBA noise contour).

Additionally, a public notice will be placed in the Muswellbrook Chronicle seeking expressions of interest to contribute to the report. An invitational letter will also be distributed to all landowners within the study area outlining the project, proposed methodology and enclosing a return proforma and envelope to provide expressions of interest.

An interview Consent Form will be completed for every interview in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). Questions will focus on the following themes and issues:

- History of the family (including childhood, adolescence, marriage, family life and housing of the family);
- History of the property (including purchase history, use of land, and buildings and sites on the property); and
- History of the area and community (including community interactions, community buildings and Aboriginal history).

Draft transcripts of the recorded interviews will be produced and interviews will be transcribed as closely as possible. All interviewees will be provided with the opportunity to review and edit the transcript of their interview prior to inclusion in the report.

The report produced will include available historical research and full details of information gathered in the interview process.

2.2 HERITAGE ARCHIVAL RECORDINGS

Archival recordings of all heritage items within the project disturbance area and blast affectation area will also be undertaken by Archaeology Australia in strict accordance with the NSW Heritage Office guidelines "*How to prepare Archival Records of Heritage Items*" (1998).

Upon completion, the draft report will be provided to the Heritage Office for review. Should you have any queries in relation to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Dianne Munro at Hansen Bailey Environmental Consultants on 02 6575 2000.

Yours faithfully

XSTRATA COAL NSW

Evelina Hendry

Stakeholder Relations Coordinator

APPENDIX C

Oral History Index & Transcripts

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APPENDIX C-1

Family Index

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APPENDIX C-2

Pat Hogan Transcript

Interviewee: *Pat Hogan*
Association with Study Area: *Residence 7 in Anvil Hill EA*
Date of Interview: *5 February 2008*
Interview venue: *27 Towarri Street, Muswellbrook*
Interviewers: *Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker*

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

Your full name and date of birth?

Patrick John Hogan, born on 4th July 1935.

Where were you born?

Brook Street, in the old hospital, which is not there anymore. It was a cold windy night, couldn't tell you the time though.

Your Parents, what were their names?

My Father - Oscar John and my Mother- Jessie Mildred. She was a Bray from Spring Creek, Oakwood.

Any brothers and sisters?

Six sisters alive, and one lost. No brothers.

And can you rattle off their names?

I will start from the youngest - Christine, Marion, Judith, Joan, Marie and Nancy.

Which was the one that died young?

Helen. She was only 2.5 years. It was at one of the Wybong sports day actually. She was there, well Mum was at home with the people cutting up sandwiches for the sports and she was outside with her little friend and climbed up on the open tank, and probably showing off I suppose, and fell into the tank, and by the time we found her it was too late. Poor little fella that was with her was even younger than that I think, and probably didn't know what was going on, no one blames him or anything.

I'll just deviate a little bit, you mentioned a sports day was that annual event?

Yeah, Wybong Sports was annual, every year, used to be.

Where were they held?

They were held on Brogheda land, which has all been cut up and sold now. There's still part of Brogheda there, but most of it's all been cut up. The old homestead's still there. I did know how many acres were left, but I am not too sure of that now.

So did it come in close to you, Brogheda?

No that was further up Wybong, towards the Manobalai Area. Just below Manobalai area. I am just not sure of where it is classed as Manobalai – but there used to be a school up there called Manobalai and they still call it Manobalai. That's where the sports were held every year.

Did your sisters marry into local families?

Two live here in Muswellbrook. The youngest one married into a Muswellbrook family and the other one married into a local family up at Wybong - the Flanagan's. They had a dairy farm up there. Out of my entire brother in-laws, only one is alive. They are at Kayuga Rd at the moment. Their Surname is Hayes - John and Christine Hayes. They moved closer to Rosewood, which is just next to Collins lane in Kayuga onto a few acres there. He still works in the mines and she is into horses.

Grandparents on your father's side, what were their names?

John Hogan and Lillian. They used to live at 22 Foley Street, in a house that in recent months has burnt out, I noticed. That's where they used to live. I spent 12 months living there when I was going to school, staying in there and going home on weekends for 12 months in the early years. I just lived with my Grandmother.

And your Grandmothers maiden name?

Dennawald. I suppose one time you didn't speak of that, but they were of German descent.

Did they have any problems during the various wars?

Not that I know of. Mum never mentioned it. At Springvale where my house is there – well, they used to live it that in the early years. Some of my uncles sort of lived there - I never knew them. I knew my grandmother. I can remember my grandfather, when I was about 4 years old, so I can remember him. At the back door at Foley Street – that is my only memory of him.

Did he die young?

No, I couldn't tell you off hand. Unless I go right back, and find out from records somewhere just when he did die. He was an older man. I mean, to me he was I suppose at that age, but even at the later years, but he must of died pretty soon after that because I was in 5th class when I went to school in there, and he certainly wasn't around.

What about your mother's parents?

They lived at "Oakwood" Spring Creek. I never knew her father, but her mother used to live in Barrett Street. Her Father's name was Edward George Bray. Her mother was Martha Elizabeth nee Wattus.

So the Hogan's were another generation back, weren't they?

Yes, my Grandmother, my parents mother - well they own a certain amount of the property, so that was always in her name, until she died, and Dad inherited that. There's one section of the property, then another section. I don't remember him doing it - but it belonged to the two brothers of Ham - George and Ben Ham (on the Mangoola side, when you go up the mountain). I remember though, somewhere along the line there was a relationship with the Ham's, but I remember him saying once how he bought a certain amount. Some other country he's from - the relatives brought it for (today's money) about \$3/acre. It was a long time ago; he had it all the time I know. I would have records somewhere.

So did you go to School at St James?

Yeah, it would have been St James - where the church was, that old convent there. I did 12 months there, and before that I was at Castlerock School that used to be there. I then finished 6th class back out there [*Castlerock School*] again, and I then went to the high school for 2 years. Then I went off to St Gregory's College at Campbelltown for another 2 years. They sent me down there to get me away from the girls. For the first 12 months I hated it, then the next 12 months, I wouldn't have minded going back for another year after I got used to it. It was an all boy's school.

So you would go backwards and forwards on the train?

I used to board down there, and stay down there. I had a relation in Five Dock I think it was. I had been there a couple of times, just on weekends and stuff like that. But I didn't see home until holiday time, when I would come up on the train then.

Where was the Castlerock school?

Well there is a bridge there at Oakwood - a cement bridge as you go out there, and Oakwood is on both sides of the road there. Just as you go up on the rise, it was on the left hand side - there is a block there and as far as I know the Education Department still own it. I never really enquired, but that's where I used to go to school. I used to ride from home on horses and bikes.

That's a fair ride?

It was yes, when I first started, I doubled behind one of my sisters.

Where there many children going to that school?

There were six classes and only one teacher - that was Helena Doyle. It was a one teacher school. There were 3 in my class, I suppose. I just can remember just how many there were, but no more that 10, 12, 15 at the most. They were all from around the area.

Did you have things like Empire Day and Arbor Day?

Yes, we did all of those. I can remember the day the war ended. I didn't go down - but a lot of them went down to the Spring Creek church there, and started ringing the bells. Ms Doyle was into bird lovers and we went through all that sort of thing. We had our end of year concert and those sort of things and all your parents would come.

Did you have a prize night?

I think from memory that would be on that concert if there were any prizes they would be given out then. I don't remember ever getting any.

The reason I'd ask is that at Edinglassie, the wives used to go out at the end of the year and they'd hand out prizes and books to students. I just wondered if anyone did anything like that up there?

There were a few, but I don't remember - I couldn't be able to say who supplied them or anything like that. I often think Miss Doyle probably did it herself really - I wouldn't swear to that.

She was there a long while?

Yeah, she was still there for many years. I can't think whether she just retired, and they closed the school, or if the school didn't have enough pupils or what it was. But she was the only teacher. Oh that's right, she went up to Manobalai for a while, and she taught up there for a while, then the school closed down, and she retired then.

Where did she live when she was a school teacher?

She was at Bundabulla - well the road goes through the reserve up there. Well her boundaries are the same - that backed to my back country. We were next door sort of thing.

So did her family own that originally?

Yeah, the Doyle's owned it while ever I knew about it.

Was just wondering how a school teacher would acquire a property that was all?

Well, it would be her mother and father I should imagine. She had a bachelor brother living with her, and then the other one was actually opposite my place out there. Millville they called it then, now they call it Millvale. It was across the road, the other brother lived there.

Where they bachelors?

Yeah. They all owned it, I don't know. I couldn't swear to that, it wasn't really any of my business. They just lived there and they were neighbours.

Can I ask you about Joan and her family?

Well she came from the north coast. She was born up in Murwillumbah. Her father was a Wild - that's her maiden name. He's related to the Jerrys Plains Wild's. He was a policeman, and he was stationed at Tumbulgum. That's where she lived.

But she was also related to the Ayres of Mangoola, and that's how I come to meet her actually. At the time I was going out with her cousin, who was Margaret Ayres, and they worked a swiftie on me I think. I never regretted it. She reckoned she caught me at the Muswellbrook baths. We were in there swimming for a long time, and I can't swim fast enough. We always used to laugh about that. I think Margaret wanted to go out with someone else (I think this is what the story was) and I said "Right 'O, I'll go out with you" and I never looked back.

So you were married at St James?

Yes, on the 15th June.

Did you have a honeymoon?

Yes, up Katoomba way. I am just trying to think of the name of the place - I know we went (it wasn't that far) and had a look at Jenolan caves, and all that sort of thing. We rented a flat up there for the honeymoon. We were driving around, I remember one day we went out to Bathurst way one day and it was snowing, a snow storm there, and she wanted to have a look at the snow, and I didn't want to get out - it was too cold! So we drove along there, and we got to a rise there and there was a Shire workers fire there and I said "Right, this'll do me". So I stayed by the fire there, and she went and played in the snow. She came back and said it's all wet, and I said "what did you expect?" I didn't really want to see the snow. A number of years later when it [snow] got a bit near to town here, I took the kids up to have a look at it, but I am not really a snow person. I don't really mind the winter, but I don't really like the cold.

How many children did you have?

4 boys.

And their names?

Peter, Luke, Gerard and Owen. If you have read the Chronicle in the Chronicle in the last 2 or 3 weeks, you might have read about Owen. He was in the Star maker Contest up at Tamworth recently - he was one of the 20 finalists. He didn't get any further, but he made the 20. He has been singing since he was 2 or 3, I think. He used to sing every night, keep his brothers awake, and his mates. All the songs that he sang were his own - he used to write music. The first instrument he learnt to play was the saxophone in the Muswellbrook band - we used to bring him into the band quite often, and from there he taught himself every instrument he picked up, he just taught himself to play. He didn't get it from me. I tried to learn the guitar, but gave up at the end of the lesson. His mother was a good singer, and my mother, she used to play piano. She used to play piano for all Wybong dances for years. I would sleep behind the piano, and they thought I must have picked something up - but I reckon it went in one ear and out the other I think. But his mother, although she didn't play anything, she had a good voice. So he must have got it from her and my mother I think.

When your mother was playing in the band, was there any other people playing in the band with her, or did she just play the piano?

She only played the piano, there on her own. I think in the later years Alf Smith who used to live down near the Wybong Church and behind there, he used to play the violin. He would get up there and dance around, and play the violin. He was good too. But for many years, that's all there was - there was the piano. Then I think there was Bill Baker, who used to be a policeman in Muswellbrook, he used to play for many years too. He used come out and play the piano. Of course the Ray boys do it all now. It would be quite a few years, and they are still going, some of them.

Where were the dances held?

In the Wybong hall.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

So did you live at Springvale the rest of the time then?

No, when we were first married we lived further down the road, just towards the bridge there; the house is still there across the creek that Dad owned. So we lived there and spent some time there. When my uncles died, I inherited the Springvale section, and so we moved up there and started to work on that - tried to make that comfortable, it was an old home and still needs a lot doing to it. But anyway, we did what we could at the time, and had a happy life there.

Was it a very early building?

Yes it was. I remember the back room (which is the laundry now) it had the slab walls. I guess people (I think someone did comment there once) wanted me to leave the slab walls. I said "well you come out here and live in it, because the wind used to come straight through the walls". I suppose I sort of changed a lot of the house later, there is still some of the original framework there, like the kitchen area - I never did get that done properly. I think some of the mine's people came and had a look at that early in the piece - I showed them what was still there, and what I'd done. There is still a remnant of it there, but I couldn't leave the slab walls there.

I might ask you a little bit about the Hogan property. When did the original Hogan settle out there?

That's something I should know, and I have probably got it somewhere. We did find out when they first came out here. The original family is tracing back to 1640, but I'm not sure - I would have to delve through some things, and if I find it I can let you know just when Nancy took them up sort of thing. As I said earlier, my grandfather and grandmother on my father's side, had 700 acres out there in their name, in her name sort of thing, and it just sort of accumulated from then on. There was Anglevale, and Springvale which was my father's uncles, and they inherited that somewhere along the line, then I took that off them, and it gradually kept growing.

Did you inherit it, or did you buy it?

No, I inherited about 585 acres; I think it was at the time sort of thing. But they are all joined onto one another sort of thing, so when my father died I inherited the rest.

How big did it end up?

Approximately 2,500 acres, thereabouts.

So you inherited some from your uncle, I take it he didn't have any children?

No, they were bachelors. There were two of them that used to live there. They never married.

So who were some of the owners around you?

Well going sort of down the road and in behind the mountain there - Gordon and Doug Ray were the main owners there at the time - that's two brothers. They were on that side. Then joining my place on the Mangoola side there was another Hogan there - Michael Hogan. He had a niece, Joyce who inherited that place. She married Collin Barry. He's not around now, but he was one of the Barry's from Denman area. It was overlooking Mangoola, and that's as far as it went that way. Opposite Springvale, there was Frank Doyle's place, and a lot of that's been cut up since too, different ones have bought. Then when you go up the back road towards the [Wybong] Hall there was nobody there when I was growing up.

I remember going out further past the Hall to a friend's place which was another Flannagan, and I was on the horse coming home one night; it's pretty eerie through there at night. Not a soul. I think down towards the bridge on the opposite there, that was all one place, it belonged to Geoff Simpson - his wife was a McMullen. Clive McMullen, he's still out in Denman, in a home there, his sister owned that. Clive owned some land further right up the Wybong. I think his sister might be still alive, but I think Geoff Simpson died and they sold out and moved away, and the place is just all cut up. Most of the little blocks up towards the Hall - they were all part of it, right up there.

You mentioned Michael Hogan, was he an uncle?

Yeah, he was one of Dad's uncles. He was a brother to the ones that used to live in the house that I was in.

He was a single man too?

Yes, to my knowledge. He was pretty old when I was growing up.

What was the property used for in your father's time?

Only sheep. Started off with sheep, then he sort of cut down on the sheep a bit and got into cattle. Sheep did better than the cattle, I think - but they didn't do too badly. But the 130 acres down towards the bridge, there is a bit of black flat there near the bridge. Later years there, my son and I put some irrigation in there - some pipes in under the ground. So we

utilised it for a while. Even grew some Lucerne. But he [father] wasn't around to see it unfortunately, but only because of the irrigation is it growing.

Were the sheep pack lambs, or for wool?

No, Merino's for wool.

Did you have a wool shed out there?

Yeah, it's still there. It's on the way out to the original homestead. Peter is there at the moment, and the other one was just across the paddock. Built that - in about 1954 I think we shifted over there. I was there in the '55 flood and the water came over, overflowed the gully down the side there, overflowed then it came in. I was the only one at home - mum and dad were stuck in town. It was flowing about 4 inches under the front of the house for a while until it went down.

Where there many saw mills out that way?

One at Sandy Hollow. I think many years ago there used to be one on Springvale - they used to have one there. I never saw it operating - it was just 4 posts in the ground, which would have been what they used before a pit saw. It was a saw mill at one stage. I know when they came there, when Aborigines came in looking for this and that from the place, a chap said to me "what about, you know, looking around for European heritage" and I told him "oh well, that was an old saw mill" and he was interested in that. Dad had an old saw bench out at the old homestead he used to cut out whatever he wanted on that.

What sort of timber where they cutting?

There were a lot of pines growing out there, if you wanted pine. He would cut that. I remember down the road there was a chap used to work for dad - he's moved to Newcastle now - but his brother, he's gone now, but his wife's still alive, and he was a Bailey. They had a saw bench out there, and they cut all the timber for his first house. I'm not sure where the house was but they got the pine logs and cut it all up. They did a good job too.

What about Millville, I assume that was a mill by the name of the property?

Don't know really why it was called that. I don't know, never in my lifetime I didn't see anything like that up there. Don't know why it was named that.

So what was the water supply out there, wells?

There are still a couple of wells out there on Old Anglevale - on the old homestead one, the one at Springvale - but they are salty, they are not fresh water. We did have a freshwater spring over the hill from the house - I remember one drought there that's all the water we had. There was no rain, and it eventually ran dry. I used to bring it home in the tank, in a tank on a slide. People are probably horrified, if you had to drink water the water we had to drink it. It was good fresh water, it could get a bit stirred up at times, but you drank it.

Did you use horses much out there?

Yeah, I have still got three out there. I've got to find somewhere for them.

What, stock horses?

Yes.

What about draft horses, did they use draft horses out that way?

My father used to and probably my grandfather. I can remember one old draft horse I used to drive in a dray - I used to drive it when I was going out to get wood in. It was more sort of past time, so we never ever got any more; we got tractors then and trailers. Although the old draft horse I had - I remember once, I can remember at the Wybong sports, my mother riding him in a race. We called it the Draft Horse Derby.

Did you have problems out there with prickly pear?

Yeah, I have got photo of what it used to be like. There was a lot of prickly pear; there are still bits and pieces of it, but nothing that sort of is any bother. Certainly years ago we had a lot of trouble with them.

What about rabbits?

Rabbits, there were always rabbits. Rabbits and Kangaroo's.

Did they have professional trappers out that way?

I did quite a lot of it. I remember that's probably why I didn't like the winter - I would ride around on the horse with an overcoat on, setting traps, and checking them. That was nearly all week I would be on that. Ah yes, everyone used to do it - catch the rabbits and bring them in. A truck used to come out every so often and hang them in the screen and take them and utilise them.

So was there a freezing works in Muswellbrook?

I'm not sure; they used to come towards Muswellbrook. I know there was one in Denman. I'm not sure just where they brought them, a truck just used to come and pick them up. I never found out just where they went. I know in Denman they used to have it out there, but I am sure they didn't go that way, but I don't know.

Can you remember who had the one in Denman?

No I don't.

What about dairying, was there much dairying out that way at all?

There was a dairy, or there used to be (I can't remember, but I know there used to be a dairy, probably before my time) on Callatoota. There was another one down at the bridge. The main dairies out there were in the Manobalai area. There's still one up there I think, although it might not be operating now. They had all the dairies up there.

Are there any remains of any buildings on other properties that you've noticed?

On my place - in my Grandmothers section, they used to have a dairy there. I never knew of it. But they would have only had cream because they never had no bins for milk.

They started to build a house there, and never finished it. The roof and everything was there, the walls, that's all there was, there was no floor in it. In later years since, it was still there, the roof had just flopped. Then they had on the Ham's side an old dairy out there too - there remains of posts still out there. They would have done the same thing I would imagine, but (I couldn't tell you when that was) it would have been long before I was born. There were never any dairies there, just the remains of them.

The house that you mention they never finished, why was that?

Well I don't know. I think that's when they must have moved in closer to the road. Whether the house was out there, or whether they built it, I am not really sure. But it wasn't built with sawn timber either - they would have squared it with an axe or adze. That's all the studs are made of, they are just squares on both sides - I have still got some of them out there. Covered up, pulled out and replaced with other things. The logs underneath the house were just trees - they would have squared the tops off them, cut them off at stumps. That's all the underneath timber then - they just did it all with a hammer and chisel. Now days it's all done with, probably on a saw bench or just with a hand saw.

Is there anyone buried out on the Hogan properties?

No, they are all buried in Muswellbrook cemetery, except my wife Joan who is buried in the Wybong Cemetery.

What about on other properties, was there any?

Up the Wybong there is. Graham Bray's I think, there is one or two graves up there.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

What about Community groups up there, you mentioned the hall. Had that been going for a long while?

It was going as long as I can remember, because I know dad was the president at one stage of it. It's been going for a long time, I don't know how long, but it was always there. I was president at one stage and my late wife Joan was secretary at one stage.

What about post offices?

Yes, well that went for many years, but people that ran it passed on, then it closed down.

So would you get your mail there, or was it delivered by the mail man?

No, we always had a mail service, but the telephone exchange was at the post office - the lady used that as the main stay that was for the telephones. If you ever ring through there, that would be the call.

Did you have a phone on?

Yes, I always remember a phone, it was always there. I don't know how many there was. I always remember our number was 5 - that was our phone number. They change it now to numbers you can hardly remember at times.

I wonder who was number one?

I don't know really.

Did you participate much in the local show?

Well, you mean the one in here [*Muswellbrook*]? In later years, I used to be on the committee when they first moved down here and set up down here, South Muswellbrook. I was on the committee for quite a few years. Joan's father used to live in Forbes Street, that's where he sort of settled and we would come in here and stay the night and be the night watchmen walking around the pavilion there through the show. Not long ago there they wanted to shift it, and I said what do you want to shift it for? It's still there so...

What about Churches out there?

We went to the little church, sort of down the road across the bridge, where we used to go. Only went once a month for a long while - then a couple of times a month, the first and third Sunday, I think it was. In later years, we used to travel into either Gungahlin or Denman. Wybong has closed down, and Gungahlin has closed down now, so we used to go to Denman more so than here. I used to come in here every now and then.

What was that Church called?

Wybong Church - St Thomas.

Was there ever a police station at Wybong?

Not to my knowledge. Actually, there was a convent there at Wybong Church for a time - it was a long time ago. There used to be another building there that shifted into Denman - I think it's gone now - but it was in Denman for quite a long time until they started to rebuild the school in there. Then the nuns all shifted into there.

There must have been a fair Catholic population to have a convent out there?

Well I don't know what the story was at the time. But it started out there.

And it was never the Church?

It was down below where the church is now. I never knew, all I can remember is that it was before my time, because it was in Denman.

When did rural power get to Wybong?

It must have been...- we didn't have it when we were first married, I'd have to look back. I know when we shifted to Springvale, it was sort of coming, but we didn't have it when we started there. Off hand I just can't remember when we actually got it, I could probably find out anyway.

What about asphalt on the road out there, it would have been a major benefit?

You know I couldn't tell you the year. Denman Shire and Muswellbrook amalgamated, that's when we got the tarred road, just before that happened. It was all gravel roads up until then, and just before they amalgamated, they got in and tarred the road, and from there they amalgamated it all into Muswellbrook Shire. That's one good thing.

What sort of cars did you have?

We had an old, well dad used to have an old (we have photos of it) old Chevy with the canvas. But then he had a 1937 Chevrolet sedan. One of my uncles from Springvale had an Austin Ute. He gave that to me, he got sick and finished up in one of the homes, and he didn't get out of that. I drove that for a long while, and then I had a Holden Ute for some time, which I picked up a photo of just this morning.

Did you ever see signs about Aboriginal occupation out there on the property?

Well, the stories I was always told, was that they used to come through, and down below the house used to camp on the other side of the creek. That's what I told them when they all came around there looking for it. That's what I was always told, and it was written about it, there is a book on it - the Kamilaroi tribe, when they came through. And yet, when they were looking over the place, they had all different tribes there, none of them are Kamilaroi which amused me. They found bits and pieces that I suppose are artefacts, but its little bits of stone that made their instruments and threw away like we throw our rubbish out. But they did find some to that effect. But they were all arguing the point with one another. So I just walked away and shook my head. But even later on, they went further, went all over the place. I don't know if they found any more or not.

You never found anything yourself out there?

Oh, I have found the odd bit of stone, but to me, I suppose to them it would be something, but to me it just looked like little bits of rubbish. They did find some there.

Do you know why Springvale was called Springvale?

I always associated it with the one good spring that was on it. I don't know, but that's the way I always looked at it. There was probably more than one at the time. But that's what stood out in my mind.

What was the other property, Anglevale?

I just got a comment on that, and as far as I know, I just took it because there were so many angles. You know - different angles. I don't really know for sure, but that's how I looked at it. I never got any other explanation. That's the only explanation I have been told.

Is there anyone else you think we should talk to that could offer some history on the Wybong area? Maybe someone from the Ray family.

Harold is still out there, whether he would be able to tell you anything. Probably tell you more about his own family. He is sort of out there next to Springvale. His brother died, but his wife is out there in Scone, Carol, whether she would know anything or not I don't know, she might. She lives at no. 4 Gould Street. Harold might be able to tell you something. He has to move out too, but he is still there at the moment. Stan Ray here at Muswellbrook is another brother. He might even be able to tell you something. Well he will tell you something about his father and mother, and Doug his uncle. Malcolm Ray - Doug was his father .

Where's Malcolm, do you know?

I think its Shaw Crescent. I'm not sure of the number.

How long would it have been since Malcolm left out there?

Well, not very long ago now. I would say he has been in there some time before the end of last year; he is gradually shifting in there. He's finalised it.

In the scheme of things very recent when looking at history.

Yeah. He's got another brother I think. He's still at Mangoola I think - Noel.

What about John Cruickshank, was he there very long at the winery?

Well he sort of took over when Callatoota was sort of sold I think. He might be able to help you too. I worked with him for a long time. When he first started doing the grapes, I helped plant some of them actually.

So when would that have been?

Well that was early years of my marriage. When I was living in the first house down the road at the time. I still did a bit after when we shifted up the other one in the early '60's.

APPENDIX C-3

Peter and Aileen Hogan Transcript

Interviewee: *Peter & Aileen Hogan*
Associated with Study Area: *Residence 6A in Anvil Hill EA*
Date of Interview: *5 February 2008*
Interview venue: *'Old Anglevale' Wybong Road*
Interviewers: *Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker*

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

So, we will start with you Peter. What is your full name?

PH - Peter Damian Hogan.

What year were you born?

PH - 1960.

Who were your parents?

PH - My father is Patrick John Hogan, and my mother was Joan Theresa Hogan. She passed away oh, 2 years ago this week.

What was her maiden name?

PH - Wild. She was from Jerry's Plains originally; she came from the North Coast.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

PH - I've got three brothers. Luke is 45 and he lives in Toowoomba, the next brother is Jerrod - I can't remember how old he is, he was born in 66 - he lives in Newcastle, and my youngest brother is 37, he lives up on the North Coast.

So you're the eldest?

PH - I'm the eldest.

So, growing up, you grew up here?

PH - We all grew up here. I've been here all but two years of my life when I spent two years at Ag College in '80 and '81. But other than that I lived here.

Which Ag College?

PH - Orange Agricultural College.

So school wise here, was there a local school?

PH - I went to primary school at St James in Muswellbrook, and from there I went to Aberdeen - St Josephs at Aberdeen. I was the second class, when I went there - there were only 70 others, so we were sort of involved in the early stages of the new school really.

Where did you meet Aileen?

PH - What happened was when I left school in '78 at St Joseph's, I went to Ag College as I said, and I spent two years there, and I have an Associate Diploma in Farm Management. When I came back, I still had some contacts with the school, and they were just setting up their Agricultural Department again - I mean they had various goes at it from years and years, but the principal at the time, Colin McGovern (he was my math's teacher when I was there) - I was talking to him one day and he said "oh, we've just got a new Ag teacher who's pretty keen to get things up and running". He said "would you like to come up and give us some ideas". I was doing some fencing and things at the time, just trying to make some money, so I saw it as an opportunity that I might have got a little bit of work, or I didn't mind helping out. Well, when I went to meet the Ag teacher, it was Aileen. So I met her then, but nothing started then. She reckons she hit me over the head, but it took about 6 or 7 years later. We didn't start going out together for 6 or 7 years after that, but we'd had a lot of association with the school. In her role as Ag teacher, I got involved in sort of planning the sheep yards, and the Ag shed and all that sort of thing, so it was good.

AH - And shearing my sheep.

PH - I had learnt to shear - I spent 10 years shearing - so I used to shear the school sheep, and that sort of gave me a bit more contact with Aileen, and it sort of went from there.

And did you get any work out of the school?

PH - I did some fencing for them, and they eventually did pay me to shear their sheep, they weren't for a while, but they decided they better give me a few dollars.

They're usually keen on Volunteers.

PH - Yeah, it was very volunteer for a while.

AH - What happened was, when I started at Aberdeen, I said "where's the farm?", because I came from Sydney, and the school farms are all organised. I said "where's the school farm?", and they took me across, and pointed to this paddock and hillside, no fencing, sticky beaks 6 ft high, and said that's the farm. And I went "you're joking! - where are the animals?". I was told "there are no animal, that's your job". I had no way of keeping animals in, but I had to teach agriculture. So I put the word out around all the families, I got sheep, I got cattle, but I had no way of keeping them in. All I had was a bag of oats, and I had a bell, a big school bell, and I used to stand on the top of the hill at Aberdeen every afternoon, and ring the bell, and the sheep and the cattle would come home - which wasn't very popular with the people at Aberdeen. I kept saying I need fencing, and all I got was "oh, that costs too much, that costs too much." Anyway, I had no funds or anything, so the kids and I got the lawn mowers out from school and spent our lessons just trying to find fence lines, and back down all the sticky beaks until we'd located the farm. There was one section that was ploughed up, but I didn't know what I was supposed to do with that, with nothing else to use. Anyway, I won with the cattle and sheep, because they started eating the prize winning gardens in Aberdeen.

They would wander all around town, and after the principal had several phone calls from people absolutely irate - because they were just about to put it in the garden competition, and the cattle had come in and eaten all the roses, and the sheep were nibbling on all the flowers - he said you need a fence, and I said yeah! So, I got Peter to come and build me a fence. Yeah, that's when you [Peter] started fencing.

PH - I built a boundary fence - that was a good start.

AH - Then the night before a show, I'd ring up Peter and say I need some sheep shorn for the wool for Merriwa show, or wherever I was taking it. He would say "when do you need that done", and I'd say "well I've got to have the wool in Merriwa at 9am tomorrow morning". The first time I turned up with sheep to be shorn, I had a little Toyota Corolla, and I arrived and pulled into their driveway, and they said "where's the sheep", I said "in the boot," and they asked "are they alive" and I said "I hope so". So I opened the boot and up popped the sheep.

So Aileen what is your full name?

AH - Aileen Theresa (LeBreton) Hogan.

Your maiden name?

AH - LeBreton.

Do you want to give us your year of birth?

AH - 28 May 1958

And who were your parents?

AH - Louie Francis LeBreton and Maria Theresa Burgess. Louie came from Sydney - I think they'd been in Sydney since 1860, around the 1858-60 mark, and Maria Burgess came from Merriwa - her family were pioneer settlers out there since 1853.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

AH - Yes, I have got three brothers. Brian, who is 47, will be 48 this year. Phillip who is 46 going on 47, and John who is 44.

And where do you fit in?

AH - I'm the eldest.

And are your parents still alive?

AH - No, my mother died in 1964. My father is still alive, but very ill, and I've got a step mum - Betty Chivas from Lithgow.

So how many children do you have?

PH - We've got three children - Edmond, who is 18, Theresa who is 17, and Daniel who is 14.

Oh, you can give their full names?

PH - Edmond Thomas, Theresa Elizabeth, and Daniel Francis Patrick (he's got a couple of names).

Very Catholic names.

PH - Very catholic. Edmond of course just finished Year 12 at Aberdeen. He was the school captain last year, and we are very proud of him. He has a leaning towards drama and art, and we are currently heading down on Friday to Sydney, because his HSC play that he wrote for the HSC was picked as one of two to be performed on stage at the Seymour Theatre. He's just came back from Sydney, he's been down there with the director and the actors, and they've just put it all together. It starts tomorrow in Sydney, and we're going down Friday to see it. So he's really excelled himself last year in that regard.

AH - He wrote a play called 'The man with no funny bones'.

PH - Theresa's just started Year 12, or started it last year again, and she's doing Year 12. She is currently the SRC Chairman, so she is sort of in a leadership role too. Daniel's just started Year 9. We're keeping the tradition up at Aberdeen. My Grandfather actually went there in 1907 I think, or it might have been a bit later than that - yeah, it was a bit later than that, sorry it was in about 1910 or 11 - he boarded there for a year or so.

AH - We saw it in the records up at Aberdeen one time.

PH - Yeah, it's in the records, it was written down - his involvement, because they have got a big book up there.

I just had thought - when you came back from Ag College, what was your father's reaction to having a person coming from an Ag college?

PH - Yeah that was an interesting thing, just to see what his reaction was. When I first came back, he embraced it to a certain extent - I mean, the property needed a lot of development. That was sort of in the years where you had to really have your budgets all in line (I mean you do now, but that was where you sort of really kicked off) and you got to interview the bank manager - who was the bank manager, I mean, you don't do that anymore, you just sort of see a representative, or you just sort of see some person representing the bank. So, because my area was farm management, I then got involved in putting together what I thought was a budget and a direction. What had happened was, one of our major projects at college was we had to sit down and write a 5 year property plan. So using that, I managed to sort of convince dad it was possibly a way to try anyway, and he was reasonably open to it.

He managed to change direction quite a few times. I didn't have the say to do that sort of thing, and I guess in hindsight, in those early times, he sort of embraced the technology. Mum and dad used to always tell us that, I mean farming was tough, but our education was always of importance to the both of them, and hence the reason why we all went to Year 12.

We all had to have our minds pretty well made up on where we were heading, and what we were going to do. As you know, children can change, two, three, four times in our lifetime, your jobs change - but in those days in the late 70's and early 80's, you had to have more of a direction perhaps than you've got now. We've changed our approach to how Edmond sees it - I mean, he can do a lot of different things that he wants to, as long as he's heading somewhere, as long as he's going forward, not backwards.

AH - Our line these days is "find your passion and follow it", and if that's not working, take a different course - just get out there and explore life, enjoy it rather, than this is what you're going to do; now you have to stick with this for the rest of your life.

So you're the only one that ended up on the farm?

PH - I am. My next brother down is an Ag Engineer - he went on to Ag Engineering, he has had various jobs, but he was more the development sort of person, you know he builds slashers and things like that, for general purpose Ag jobs. He ended up with a company who were making broad acre machinery, and he was inventing things to make the job better for them. My next brother down started with BHP and finished with BHP when BHP left. He now works for a conveyor belt company - he does a lot of work up here, he travels up from Newcastle each day sometimes. My youngest brother's a muso - we all had a fairly musical background, but he sort of followed the music side of it - and he was working full time as a muso, but I think he also has a job at the CES as well I think.

AH - I think he's gone to teaching now.

PH- Oh, is he teaching now? I honestly don't know exactly what he's doing now, but for all intents and purposes, I mean I'm the only one here.

So naturally you would have continued to have a lot of activity with the school?

PH - Yeah, well honestly my association with school hasn't stopped. I mean I went to school there in 1973, at Aberdeen, and my association with the school has been unbroken since then - because, just when I left school (I mean I was the school captain in 1978) and so I still had connection in the next year, because the teachers were still there, and the sort of people that I'd had association with always wanted to know what I was up to. Because we weren't very big, and there was only 80 in my Year 12 class, we were all pretty close with the teachers, and of course the year ahead of us, we'd all had classes together, and I still have associations with some of the older ones. So when I left school, I was only away for two years but I still had associated with the school, and when I came back, it started straight up again. Then with Aileen's involvement, and subsequently, I have been shearing the school sheep since 1982, and I have been doing them every year.

AH - This year you're not.

PH - Yeah, this year I haven't.

AH - No, last year you didn't either - they've got a new farm hand that can shear sheep.

PH - That's right, they've got a farm hand now that can do them - which doesn't worry me in the slightest.

AH - Mind you, in my day there was no farm hand. I had a full teaching load and I was the farm hand.

PH - Yeah, so it hasn't stopped, and of course you know in 2002 we sort of kicked off with our own children going there.

So how long did you stay there as the Ag teacher?

AH - I started in '82, and finished full time at the end of '88. Then I did part time, like a term here or there to fill in, and after that then just casual through to '99, and then due to ill health I had to stop, and took some time out. I haven't really climbed back on the horse. So I was there through to '99 all in all.

You mentioned your Grandfather, and I neglected to follow up actually what his name was?

PH - Oscar John Hogan, and my grandmother was Jessie Mildred. She had another name, but I don't remember that. Her maiden name was Bray, so her brother was Reg, and Percy and she had an elder sister as well.

What was your Aunties' name?

PH - Aunty Thelma, she lived in Sydney, or down that way, somewhere on the Central Coast.

AH - Who was her father?

PH - Her Father was George, they lived just down the Castlerock Road.

AH - And Neville was her great Nephew isn't he?

PH - Yeah Neville was, have you run across Neville Bray yet? They have got a lot of history - he'll have a lot of history, well Neville's her nephew.

AH - Nephew or great Nephew? He was his father's nanna's brother.

PH - Yeah, Reg. Well Reg was a Shire President of something, of Wybong, the original Wybong Shire at one stage, and Uncle Percy drove buses for Reg Osborn, and he used to do the mail run too. I remember when he did the mail run. So he used to drive us to school when I went to school.

AH - Tell the story of when he picked up dresses.

PH - Dad's got 6 sisters, and he's the only boy, and he had one sister who died early as a child. Well that was a bit of a sad story, because she died at this house, it's one of the reasons why this house was I think left abandoned. It was all a bit scary for everybody.

But I used to have this story about one of my aunts, she'd moved in to town, but she used to tell this story about how she asked the mailman to go to the house (this was the house next door, that was my grandparents house), and he was to go to her bedroom, and get some dresses and things that she'd forgotten to get. I was horrified; gee the mailman does a lot of things. He knew exactly where to go and everything, and they never told me that it was Nanna's brother (Uncle Percy) - he of course new where things were. But this mailman picking up the dresses, that was a great story I thought. It used to have us going when we were kids.

You mentioned that your father had 7 sisters.

PH - Yeah, he's got six still going.

I'm going to test you now with their names?

PH - There's Aunty Nancy, Joan, Marie (I'm doing them in order otherwise I will forget them), Judith, Marion and Christine, and Dad's in the middle - he can tell you all that. He had a sister Helen who unfortunately drowned just here at this house, she was 2, and Dad was about 13.

AH - They were having a tennis party.

PH - Yeah, or something. I don't know exactly the story, there was something on and you know, children, as they do, wander off. I haven't changed the shape of the house at all. There used to be an open top tank just out the back catching the water, like it would be doing today, out on the corner of the house, and she managed to get into that tank, and drowned. When I first started on the house, I never thought Pop took much notice, because he'd sort of kept to himself. I put an open top drum on the corner of that house, and gee he gave me curry, he got stuck into me about this tank, your going to have trouble. I moved the tank, because that was when I found out.

AH - Every time I'd go over there he'd be telling me to watch those children. But it was after that he got involved in the ambulance, getting the ambulance going. There was no ambulance when that happened.

PH - My grandfather, he got a life membership from the NSW Ambulance, for the drive to get mobile ambulances in Muswellbrook. There's a certificate somewhere, someone in the family has the original certificate. It used to hang on the wall over there. One of Dad's sisters would have it. One of his sister's lives in Muswellbrook - Marion still lives in Muswellbrook; they had a property just up the Wybong further.

AH - Marion Flannigan.

PH - Her husband died, it would be 6 or 7 years ago, and she lives in Muswellbrook - she sold the property. Dad's younger sister Christine, she's only a few years older than me, and we spent a lot of time together, so she was sort of like having a big sister, because she was so far behind everyone else in the family. Just recently, we've just started off our friendships again after various family problems, and it's really good. She lives in Muswellbrook. She owns a place at Kayuga. She did own, both her and her husband built the A framed house, that's just down past the next house here, with my grandparents, and they sold that a few years ago now to Greg Thompson - Greg and Melissa - and they lived there for quite some time, and then Melissa sold it onto the coal company.

AH - Their land was a piece that Pop cut off for them wasn't it?

PH - Yeah, he cut land off for Christine and John, her husband.

So who was her husband?

PH - Her husband is John Hayes. He plays golf, they've got two sons. I mean, John plays a lot of golf, but it's his niece that's the golfer, Jordana Keaton. She's the golfer in the family. I think she's going to go a long way that girl. They just have a few acres at Kayuga that would probably out perform 10 times what was here. Their little block there, gee they could get some hay off that.

So is there another generation of Hogan's here before your grandfather?

Ph - Yes, there was 2 more. My grandfather's parents, they built this house, and lived in this house - that was John and Lillian. I don't know how much information you want, but I've got heaps, I mean I pretty well know what they did.

What is Lillian's maiden name?

PH - Lillian was a Dennawald - so that's how we get our German ancestry. Her father was Adolf and they lived at Giant's creek - they had property up there. There are still, there's no Dennawald, but there's descendant's of family up Giant's Creek, up that road, so they've sort of still got some connection.

AH - Was that where the timber mill comes in, in that generation?

PH - Well John married Lillian, and they had two children, one being my grandfather Oscar, and he had a brother Errold, who was killed in a motorbike accident when he was about 21 or 22. He had one son Keith, from Muswellbrook, that's his son - I don't think Keith ever knew his father, it happened before he was born. What happened was, Keith lived here, and Keith was reared by basically his grandparents, so he grew up as part of this family. His mother didn't live here, his mother lived in town. Incidentally her parents owned some of the property that my grandfather bought in the 40's, some of the back country out towards Mangoola that

he bought later on, so there was always this connection with all these people. John's parents were Thomas and Mary, and they are the couple - Thomas Hogan being the first person to be here.

What about Mary's maiden name?

PH - Mary's maiden name was Cook, and she came from East Maitland, she was born at East Maitland. She went to Scone, and then my great, great grandfather, Thomas married her. They got married at Dartbrook I think, that was where the priest was, I think that was the reason for that, there's probably other history to suggest why that would have happened. But I have got their Marriage Certificate (see **Appendix i**).

Forgive me for the way they are displayed, one of these days I will have to display them properly. This is actually my great grandfather's Birth Certificate there - that's John Thomas, that talks about his father who came from County Claire and his Mother who was born at East Maitland. It's my understanding that Thomas Hogan first came here in 1861, and I stick to that. There's been people trying to tell me otherwise, but it just doesn't add up, it just doesn't add up because of everything else I've been told from my grandfather and everything like that. So they were married in 1871, and they were obviously in the area. I think some of those early records of the take up of land, don't suggest that the year was that early, to have been here, but I've just accepted that. This is my great grandparent's marriage certificate.

So that's Thomas and Mary?

PH - This is John and Lillian's Marriage Certificate, they were married in 1900 at Wybong. Just down here at the little Church at Wybong. We managed to have all our children Christened in the little church. Daniel was the last one before they saw it in their wisdom to close down the country churches, and you had to go to Muswellbrook. So we managed to get one more baptism in. John and Lillian built this house, and had the two boys.

That was my next question. How many children did Thomas and Mary have?

PH - Thomas and Mary had 7 boys and 3 girls. My great grandfather was one, he was number 2. He was number 2 in that list. His elder brother, he had one older brother, William, now William lived over at Giant's Creek. From the stories that I've been told, William was a little bit slow, so he never married (I don't have a lot of information about him). There's John, of course (which I have a lot of information on) and his next brother down, Thomas - those two started the saw mill. They had a saw mill at Giant's Creek. Well they had a saw mill here first, that was how they made their extra money, and they cut a lot of timber. That's one thing we've done, every generation has cut timber, we've all been timber cutters to some extent, even I've had to do, and I did many years of it when I first bought the land. I just spent a lot of times doing timber, and I ended up, as a result, I had a great connection with chainsaws, and I ended up teaching chainsaw safety and use at TAFE - I spent 3 or 4 years teaching it at TAFE, so I had to go and get all those qualifications, and I ended up teaching it.

What timber would they have been cutting?

PH - Ironbark and slaty box, which is eucalyptus dawsonii - they are our two main timbers here. My grandfather even took it to a different level, he used to go to Harrington, up near Taree and cut Cedar. Obviously he needed to get out and make some more money, so he got on the road. Some of those stories must have been incredible, the sorts of things they got up to doing those sorts of things, but he cut timber all over the place. I think everybody that had timber would have had him cut timber for them at some stage or another. I think there's a fair bit of information about the saw mill, and how it got going, and things like that. I think I've seen other writings about that in the past too around the place. My understanding of it is the saw mill started here, there was a saw mill here at this house, and they had what was a pit saw, which was the original one up here further. Of course you know how the pit saws all work, but there are still remnants of that just up between this house and the next house. That's where that started. I believe just as the timber became harder to get here, they moved it all to Giant's Creek, because there were obviously some family connections up there, and there was obviously a lot off timber there. They kept the mill going there until they sold it (I don't know what year) to the Gageler's, who had the Sandy Hollow saw mill, and they went on for years and years. Then of course the next people, then it closed down, mainly due to the lack of timber. It was all to do with timber supply more than anything.

But this house, all the timbers in here were cut off the property. All the lining boards, they had the machines to machine these boards, both in pine, which is mainly black pine, with all the pine in the house, and hardwood would be the ironbark. So all our weather boards were machined here. What I did, I sourced people who had the machines to do it. Sandy Hollow mill was still open when we first started this, and I took timber from here, over there, and we got the weather boards cut exactly the same as they were in the 20's and 30's. An interesting thing happened to me the other day, the property that we've just bought, I had to take a weatherboard off that home (the weather boards to me looked exactly the same) which was built in the early 20's, and I brought the weatherboard home, and I matched it to a weatherboard here, and I can't see the difference. So I'm suspecting that the people when they built that first house, Edward Wicks who built the house, I suspect he got the timber from Giant's Creek, which is understandable. I can't prove that, but it's the same, the saw cuts are the same. So whoever sharpened the saw did it the same way, but anyway, that's just something extra.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

This property here, did you inherit it, or buy out your father?

PH – No. What actually happened there was, the lady who owned Bundabulla - Helena Doyle (you've probably done a lot of information about her in the past, and you probably know all about her history), she actually taught Dad at school, at Castlerock school. So we always had an association with her from being a neighbour, and as time goes on and you get older, you end up doing jobs for the neighbours and this sort of thing. Dad always looked after her property for her, and, so I nearly inherited that, because I was always with him - so

all the sorts of neighbours that Dad did work for, I ended up doing work for, because it just rolled on, because I was here. She got to a point out there, where she decided that she was going to sell some of her property to buy enough to have a house in town, because she felt as if she was getting of the age to have a house in town, like people often did from out here. So she said I will sell you, which was half her property, just less than 500 acres. So I brought it off her, 496 acres, which was basically half of her property, and I continued to do jobs for her until she left completely. The only help I got there was that Dad was guarantor for the loan that I took out. I got \$50,000; I think it was worth about \$100 an acre in 1983, '84. So that was my own.

AH - Then we hit 24% interest rates.

PH - Yeah, well I was paying off this loan at 24% interest rates.

AH - Which everyone's forgotten about now.

PH - That was when I started shearing, because I had to move away to sort of pay that. It was getting up towards \$1,200 or \$1,400 a month on wages that are nothing like today even. I mean everything's has gone up in comparison of course, but that's how that started.

AH - We would scrape to eat sometimes, just to pay it.

PH - I'm not quite sure of the year, but just after Aileen and I got married, we didn't live here, we rented a house at Peter & Marion Wilkes', just up the road, when we first got married.

AH - The matchbox I called it.

PH - Yeah, a little house it was. I had shown some interest in getting this house back to where it was. I just said to him one day that I'd like to do it, and he said well, yeah, I'll let you do it. But most of what we've done has all been our own, we don't own this. Dad owned this, and then he made his own decisions in terms of the coal mine and everything, and sort of left us a bit high and dry - I don't mind telling anybody that, but that's just the way it was, these things happen. So in the meantime, I owned the 500 acres that was part of Bundabulla, and I also leased another 200, which takes in what is known at the Wallaby Rocks, the big rocks down here on the left - Aileen and I took that lease on from Malcolm Ray, when he decided that he didn't want it anymore, So that gave me sort of 700 acres to do something with, mostly pay it off, that's about all I've done.

AH - This house belonged to Pat, and was an abandoned ruin and Peter's great grandfather built it. So Peter really wanted to, because Peter's always had a real commitment to family history, and the family connection with the land so forth, and he really wanted to take this project on, and turn it into a house - it had no wiring and no plumbing. I can show you some photos of what it was like (see **Appendix ii**). So, I went, "oh yeah, ok" and went along for the

ride. Originally the agreement was, from Pat and Joan, that if we did the house up, the house and 2 acres would be ours, and they would sign it over to us. So we always trusted that, and we never did the legals on it, because no one with 24% interest rates and everything, and trying to get a house up and going, we never really had the money to do the legalities. So we never signed it over, but when the coal company came along, Pat reclaimed the house as his, and signed an agreement to sell it to the coal company without discussing it with us, so we literally ended up squatting in our own home after 20 years of money and hard work going into it.

PH- And we are currently leasing it back.

AH - We are currently renting it back from the coal company just to stay here, until we can go. So that's where we are up to with that.

You mentioned Thomas took up land in 1861, where about's was that?

PH - Right here, the next house up is where my father lives - well he lives in Muswellbrook now. He and I might differ a little bit in some of our information. But that house up there was the first house that was built, it was a slab house originally, it was a slab when I was a kid, my room had slabs, and it used to have galvanised metal strips covered where the boards met. The slab was a typical, had the bottom plate, it had a piece of 2x1 either side of that bottom plate, the slabs fitted into that, and the top plate was exactly the same, but the gap between was filled with either plaster, or a lime mix, or it had galvanised strips. My room, I lived out the back, and it had galvanised strips, plus it had newspaper stuck in the corners where the breeze came through. But that part of the house was still slabs when we were kids, and then various additions to that one have changed the shape a bit. In actual fact, when you go in, you'll see that some of the original house is still inside, they've just built a new top over the top of it. I don't know how much more change he's done to it, but there's still remnants of the old house still in underneath that house, but that was basically the house that Thomas built.

When mum and dad got married, my grandfather owned a house, and this property here, well used to go all the way to the bridge, so it went from where Dad's house is, up here, next to Harold and Mary Ray, it used to go from that right down to the bridge. So subsequently, my aunt and her husband got a little piece, and there is another house, right down the other end across the creek, as you go around to where the Rays' all lived, and that's where, when mum and dad first got married, that's where they lived. That's where I was born, and I think I had two years there, my recollection is fairly vague. I actually do have, you know how sometimes in your mind you just have a recollection, and they tell me I was only 2 years old, so that's a recollection I have from down there. I think I was actually a little bit older than that, because I've seen photos of when I was down there. But at that stage, Thomas' sons, Edmond and Peter, who I'm named after, they lived in Dad's house, so they lived there, and Dad inherited that house, plus the land that they owned, which was 500 acres, and some

lease country, another 100 acres, down near the Wallaby Rocks - so he inherited that off them, when uncle Ted died (I remember him).

You said Thomas went from here to the bridge, how many acres all up would there have been?

PH - In those days, I'm not exactly sure.

AH - I think I've got that on those land maps.

PH - We might have, on the old land maps. You see it's easy to work out, but you see all these blocks across the front here are 40 acre blocks. What they did was they had those, they were sort of land grants, so they paid a certain amount of money, which was paid over a period of time. I've just had a similar thing happen at Merriwa. I've just bought a property that was taken off a huge station called Clingall Station that was given to Gregory Blaxland for crossing the Blue Mountains, so that was 60,000 acres. I've now got 1,100 acres of that, and there was still money owing on the original grant. The laws have changed, and I've had to pay that up, and it's taken 80 years for that to get to where I am now, because it was in the one family for 80 years. You're allowed to pass it on to your family, but when you sell it to someone else, you have to pay for it, and so I ended up having to pay for it.

But this land to my knowledge was much the same. They paid off a certain amount, so they all started off with 40 acres, and there's actually 3 block across the front here. It's written down on a piece of paper that a James Hogan had one of the blocks - well there was never a James Hogan. I think that he was a dummy, so this is where my family and I have had a bit of a disagreement. I said there was no James Hogan, there was people with James as their second name, but there was no James. But that was just a dummy to get another block of land... which they did, and they were the early blocks of land. I think it was my great grandfather, he then added a few more, and then I think my grandfather added the most of it in the 40's. Some of that my early great, great grandfather had would have only been sort of 80 acres, may have been 120 acres for 3 blocks across the front. It's really been my grandfather who added the majority to it, to the stage were it's at now. That took the property to about 28,000 acres that Dad inherited, and then I added the 700, which is about 35,000 all up then.

That just prompts a question, what did they call the property?

PH - The property has two names. Where dad is was Springvale, and so Springvale technically was the original place - that was the 500 or so acres, 500 acres freehold, and then there's another 100 acres that was lease country - a 99 year lease. An interesting thing happened to us a few years ago, the 99 years was up and it had to be renewed, and that doesn't happen very often in a families history, but Dad had to renew this 99 year lease, so that was basically the smaller part of the property, and then that was the bits they went out to and added. Now I've forgotten what the question was?

What were the names of the properties?

PH - That was Springvale. When my great grandfather started on this house, this was Anglevale. When, my grandparents were married in 1928, and my grandmother said I'd like a new house, as women often do (it is funny about that and fair enough too, but she had lived with her mother-in-law, which is a horrid thing sometimes). She had moved into this house, but her mother-in-law, Lillian's, they bought a house in town then, and she eventually moved to town, because of ill health. So my grandmother did live in this house, and brought up some of the family here, but she'd always wanted that new house and my grandfather actually had done his building apprenticeship with Dave Jordan in Muswellbrook, so he knew how to build a house. So he built the house next door, and it's a pretty good house, and in 1954, just before the '55 flood they moved into that house - because the creek comes straight at the house here, and they were always worried that the creek was going to rise, and come through the house. So my Grandmother used to tell me this story about how, Pop said nah, nah, it will never happen, it will never happen. She said I want this new house, so he built the new house over there, he put it up off the ground, they moved in just before the '55 flood, the '55 flood came, this house was right, that new house [*Anglevale*] got flooded. The gully over there banked up, and it went right out across the flat and filled up underneath the house. It was off the ground, but it filled up underneath the house, so Pop of course, used to give it to her all the time, we'd get that story all the time.

Aileen was the same with this house. I said, well I'll put a bank around it, it's [*the creek*] never come up. Well in 1992 we had rains like this in February, and we had 10 inches, and we ended up with water up under the house. It didn't come from the creek; it came from across the other side of the paddock. The same thing happened in June last year with those big floods, we were completely surrounded here with water, because it came from across the paddock, but the creek was ok, so the creek's never been an issue.

So we ended up with two properties - one Springvale, one Anglevale. When my grandparents moved over there, Pop took the sign off the gate and put it over there. So when I started this here, I said to him, well this was Anglevale, so I will call this Old Anglevale, because I had this history vent, and that's what's happened, and it's gone down as that. Pop was pretty happy about that.

Do you know where the name came from?

PH - The actual name - (I don't know much of the history) I think the name Springvale comes from the fact that the property has a really big spring on it, just over the hill, which was their only water, because the creek isn't very good, and the well up there wasn't very good, so they used to cart water from the spring to the house. It's beautiful water, and it has dried up once in my lifetime, and that was last year. It's right now of course, but it dried completely up, because even when we were children, we often had to go over there, and bring water back to the house. So that was Springvale.

The reason it's Anglevale, I don't really know why it's Anglevale. I remember my grandfather saying once, "I don't know about these early surveyors", he said, "they must have got paid for corners, because the place was just all corners, when you look at our blocks, they all fit in, and some of them are funny angles." I said, so that's why it's called Anglevale, and he said I suppose so, and that's about all I could say. Yeah, I was always curious, but I never really got that question answered.

So, what was the original use of the land here?

PH – Thomas Hogan originally ran dairy cows. There were a number of dairies around here, and you'd probably find out that's what most people did. Because we were miles from town, they couldn't carry the milk to town, so they took cream. And so, there are remnants of dairies all over the place - there's one just up here, there was one here. All the blocks of land that Pop brought right out the back, which were even further from town, there's dairy's out there, and they used to cart it from out there until obviously it just wasn't viable, or life got a bit tough out there. So the early thing was dairy, with the cream, and then of course sheep came. The original person through here was Forbes I think, the originally fellow who moved through here. I think in 'dawn in the valley' there is talk about the sheep coming through here, and this was just grazing land in the early days. I think, because they had the dairy cows, they moved into sheep, and just various derivations of that. There were a lot of horses here, as well, because they were timber cutters, they had to have some way of pulling them around. I've got photos of my great grandfather with a team of 26 horses, pulling pit props into Muswellbrook, and so there was a lot of horses here at various times, used for pulling purposes - they never used bullocks, they just used horses all the time.

What about, was there a shearing shed on the property?

PH - Yeah, the wool shed's here next door. That big shed just here is the wool shed, and Pop tells me that it was built when he was about 10, so that makes it about 1913, just before the war. It was weatherboard too, it's not looking real good these days, but it was built in weatherboards. I believe it was probably one of the few weatherboard sheds, because my great grandfather and his brothers built it, and there's a number of shed's around. The one at Bundabulla - my uncle Ted built that with his brother, and it's got weatherboards on it. There's another couple of sheds up at Googes further up the Wybong that I know Ted built, and they've got weatherboards on them too, and they still have, there's a stable up there that's still got weatherboards on it, that came from here. So what I believed happened, as the sheep numbers grew, my grandfather got more land, he bought land, and he also leased most of Ray's - there was a couple of thousand round at Ray's that they weren't using, because they were dairy farmers, and they only used the flat, they didn't use the back country much. So he leased that, he ran more sheep, and I believe there would have been something like up to 3000 or 4000 sheep shorn here at various times. It was also used as what's called a depot shed, where people just brought their sheep here, because they didn't build a shed, that's why there's not too many other wool sheds around, because everybody else that had sheep come here. There's a wool shed here, there's one at Bundabulla and there's one on the McCain's - but that property was originally owned by my great

grandfather's brother, so he had sheep as well. So there was a lot of sheep when they all got together. So sheep became a big issue, and then of course cattle, just as the normal season's go, you know cattle one time, sheep another, if it was good you had both. We have always had horses; we've always had an association with the horses. Dad had stock horses, and Aileen and I are really into them - we breed stock horses. At the moment there's no sheep and cattle, because we ran out of water completely last year, so the sheep and cattle just had to go. We were carting water in the little fire fighter, 500 litres at a time.

AH - We did that for 12 months, and then the dams went completely dry as well. Then it was 11km round trip to a dam that still had water in it, and it was cheaper then to start buying truck loads from town, so we just kept the horses going.

PH - Yeah, so we still had the horses, and they had sheep and cattle.

So you mentioned an excellent spring out the back and a well down here.

PH - Yeah, there was a well at this house here, but the well there was salty. That meant that the spring out the back was the main source when it went dry. There's a well just here, and when they first dug the well here, it was fresh water, they used to use the fresh water in the house - these days it's fairly salty, which most of our groundwater here is salty.

AH - It wasn't far into the drought that we had to stop using that water for the horses, because it would ruin their kidneys, it's so salty.

PH - But at the moment we use it, because with all the rain that we've had, the salt levels have just dropped right off, so after the rain that we've had you could almost drink it again, in some cases, like if you were desperate for a drink of water to keep you alive.

And the creek is dry most of the time?

PH - Yeah, the creek's dry most of the time. I mean, it's good now, it's been good since June, but you've got to have, you've nearly got to have 70 or 80 mm a month to survive the summer here.

AH - You've got to have water coming off these close hills around here to run this creek.

So was prickly pear ever a problem here?

PH - Oh, prickly pear was huge. I've got some photos somewhere, because we go down to the creek - there's what we call the flat, was our cultivation paddocks, most of the cultivation happened down there, because that was the soil, and in our time we put irrigation on down there, and really set it up reasonably well. There were photo's that my grandmother had, that would have prickly pear as high as this room, just completely covering that down there. There's 100 acres of flat down there, and it was completely covered. There's photos of a cousin of Dad's - who was a descendant of Thomas Hogan, who had a contracting business in Scone, and there's photo's of him with a machine that they'd invented to crunch it all up.

Because prickly pear hates being squashed, like if you throw a leaf out, it will grow, but if you squash that leaf it won't grow - so the only way back before a lot of chemicals, was to actually scrunch it all up. So there's pictures of this monstrous looking ugly machine with big steel jaws on it that used to just crunch it all up, but it was massive, and funnily enough, and I'm not going to put the blame onto people, but we've managed to keep it reasonably under control with Cactoblastis - but there's a little moth that lays in the thing and just eats it apart, cause it hates being destroyed, so this little bug eats it. I mean, it's nothing like it was in the 20's and 30's it was just incredible.

AH - Tiger Pear is bad now.

PH- We do have Tiger Pear, that's a shocker, it's starting to get away.

AH - With all the trucks and everything driving through for nearly 10 years now, it became a losing battle trying to feed it, and with the drought, it's killed all the biological controls - they've not survived, so back to the drawing board again I think, get them re-introduced. There's one little story I just think we should make a note to come back to, when we were just talking about the people around here and what used to go on - was the dairy farmer who lived across the road, the day he got married. There's our story, and then Frank Blake has it from the other end, he's got the other end of the story, it's really is a classic, so do remember to bring that one up.

PH - He would be nearly 80, and he hasn't married. They used to live out here at Wybong, they used to own up where Mick and Cathy LeBreton, which is a relation of Aileen's. They used to own that property, so they grew up out here, and then his father bought Rosebrook, his father bought Rosebrook. Frank knew my great grandmother, so I got a lot of information, about what sort of woman she was from him as a boy - which was interesting.

AH - They lived at Wybong- they grew up at Wybong; they knew all the old people of Wybong. They're a lot like my grandmother - when she died she was 94 out at Merriwa and she knew the history back to day dot. Because she came from an Irish family and for generations passed on the family story - she knew what her grandmother knew, and her great grandmother knew. She tried to drum it all into me too, and now I'm going, gasp, I think it was..., and then I get together with my cousins, and, no, no that's not how that story went. But she was a minefield of the history of the district, and (I started doing a few tapes, but then I had small children) nobody really go what was in her head down. Frank and Terry Blake are a few people that really have a lot of information.

You mentioned the 100 acre cultivation paddock, what was that for?

PH - It really saved the rest of the property at certain times - it was mainly used for growing oats, or feeding the cattle, and we often used a paddock or too to have the ewes lamb down there, because it was a good start for the lambs. From time to time, did grow a bit of grain, but we weren't grain farmers - well I've never been a grain farmer, but we have had

opportunities where you could, you know if we had a season like this at the right time, you could sort of get a good crop in down there, and actually get some grain off it and actually store a bit of barley usually, or oats for the horses. But it was really just having that there alongside the Wybong Creek was, you'd have to say it was opportunistic really. The irrigation improved it, but the salt levels have risen in the creek over the years, so the irrigation was dropping off anyway.

AH - If you use the water, you destroy the soil.

PH - You sort of had to be careful how much water you used in the finish.

So around the property here, are there old homesteads?

PH - Yeah, the Homestead over at what is called Millvale now, was called Millville, that's across the road here. It was owned in later years by Ron Roberts, a fellow from Sydney, but it belonged to the Doyle family - it was Helena's brother who owned that one over there, and before that it was owned by a fellow named John Boorer, who'd be in the histories. He had a mill over there, that's why that was called Millville. But when a fellow from Sydney bought it, he changed it to Millvale for his own reason I guess, and that's a slab house. The slabs aren't vertical; they're sideways over there, so it's a very interesting home. The fellow from Sydney, he did it up the same, he didn't change it much, it's had a few extensions to it, it has sandstone chimney and that sort of thing - it's a nice little house, it's not a very big house. It only has a couple of rooms. Then there's Bundabulla up here that was Helena Doyle's - it's a nice old homestead, and it's been featured in a few paintings of it around the district by some of the local artists. It's in a little bit of disrepair these days, but that's the way some things go.

Helena Doyle told us often enough what Bundabulla means, but I can't think of it off the top of my head. She used to drum it into us; she always thought she was still at school. See old Helena was one of the early members of the Girl League of NSW. I think it started in 1911, she used to say she was one of the first, but she couldn't be, because it was a bit before her time - but because it was teacher based organisation, it was run by teachers, and a lot of teachers went. I didn't got to school here locally, but the little school that she taught at Manobalai, she taught at Castlerock, and then it was up at Manobalai, and when she went on these camp every August school holidays - she would grab half a dozen of us from around here and take us to this camp. So I'd been going to one since I was 10 years old, and she'd grab us, and gee she used to give us some - she was worse than your parents, you know.

Where were the camps?

PH - The camps were all over NSW. I'd been over most of NSW before I left school - I couldn't believe it, you know, I was well travelled. We'd have 2 weeks up at the North Coast, we'd be at Sawtell, or we went to Broken Hill one year for 2 weeks, way out the other side - half way to Tippaburra, and it rained and rained, and we nearly didn't get back, and all those sorts of things.

I met the sort of people like Vincent Sorrenti and another fellow called Arnold McGill who was one of the founding members of Bird Watching. I've got their books, and I've got letters from other people that I became friendly with, but they were all old - they were sort of all in their late 60's and a couple of them were sort of even into their late 70's, they were older than my grandparents, but I became sort of friendly with them.

AH - There's one thing that came up - you went to the gun shop in Tamworth to buy a gun a few years ago, and a woman working there, her sister, or sister-in-law, brought Bundabulla off Cameron's, who bought it off Helena Doyle. When they got the house, all Helena's papers and photographs from early Gould League were still there. She's got all this historic stuff, and all these photos, that she doesn't know who they are, or what they are, or the incredible significance of them. She's in Sydney isn't she, but the Historical Society really needs to get onto it, or someone really needs to get onto it. I was going to chase it up but haven't had the time.

PH - I just haven't chased it up, it just happened that this lady saw Wybong, and I was in Tamworth, and the lady just saw Wybong, and she said "Wybong? My sister used to live at Wybong" and I said "your sister? Who's your sister?" She said "you wouldn't know her, but she used to own this property called Bundabulla", and I said "I know it, because I own the other half of it!" That got this discussion going, and her sister worked for the National Geographic, she was a sub-editor or something, and when she bought the house, there were all these photos and papers. She just put them together, and I said I'll have to come back in contact with you one day, because I can probably tell you a few of the people that are in the photos. We might have more time these days to chase that up.

What about, is there any burials do you know on this property?

PH - Ah, not on this property.

What about other ones around?

PH - There is a burial I know of that's outside the cemetery. It's down on a property called Collareen, which just on the other side of the creek and it belonged to Ray and Barbara Smith originally, it belongs to Christine Hopkins now days - Ray and Barbara are passed away. But there's a burial around there, and my understanding is, it's named, I think it was one of the Gannan's, one of my Mary Cook's mother was a Gannan, so there's some connection there that I don't know of, but this is just a small boy who drowned in the creek. They have buried him just up on the bank, and it's all marked, it's got a steel fence around it - it just sits there. I don't know what it's like these days, but I happened to do a fence for a neighbour, down the other side, and the grave was right near the fence, so I know the grave was all intact a few years ago. But that's the only one outside the cemetery that I know of and there is certainly none on this property as such.

Occasionally people buried their family on their property.

PH - Well they did, I have some friends at Merriwa who have their family buried on the property. There's one fellow who was buried, only a few years ago, the fellow of Mitchell, over at Castlerock- his wife buried him, Bill Mitchell, and he was a cartoonist with the Australian. I met him, he was a wonderful fellow, but they bought a property over at Castlerock, and I believe he's still buried there, because, I know Winston Bob was trying to talk her out of it, because he said "you never know, you might have to move, and she said well he stays there". I had another mate who had his fathers ashes buried at his place, just around the hill here, and I believe last week he might have moved him, because he was moving, he's bought a property at Armidale, and I think he's picked him up and is taking him with them. I said, look everywhere your going to go; you have to take a backhoe full of soil with you every time.

AH - I've always told Peter when I came to live here, I said if something happens to me, and you bury me in Wybong or in Muswellbrook, I am going to haunt you.

PH - But anyway, most of my family is buried in Muswellbrook, but my Mother is buried at Wybong, she wanted to be buried down there. So strangely enough after 146 years, there is only one Hogan buried at Wybong cemetery, so the rest are all in Muswellbrook.

So your mother was interested in history?

PH - Yeah, my mother was. I haven't been privy to some of what she found - Dad would still have all her notes. She spent many hours trying to delve into that, all about her own family, you know, I know a lot about her family, and she knows a lot about the Hogan's, and Dennawald's. I believe I do have some relations in Scone, which I've never got in contact with, there are some in Scone - I think there's a couple in the phone book, and I believe they are related.

Dennawald's have been around here a long while 1860's I think.

PH - Yeah, they came about the same time.

AH - Did you mention the grape vines?

PH - Yeah, that's the other thing yeah I haven't mentioned - that just reminds me that you were talking about that Count, when you found out he came from Germany and he was a wine dresser. Well, Thomas Hogan, the original fellow who came here, that's what he did in Ireland - so one of the first things he did when he came out here, was he grew some grape vines, and the rest is history. They grew these grape vines; there are still grape vines up there, across the creek. I was going to get the original. I ran across a fellow who could get me what the species was, they've got the genetic tests now, but I haven't done that - but I will grab some before I go, and find out. The story always was that they drank the profits - so they were on the ground floor of starting in the vineyards in the Hunter Valley, but they are

not mentioned in any books, because they grew the grapes all right, and they made the wine, but they drank it all too.

AH - There's actually a Banjo Patterson poem called "the Road to Hogan's Gap", now I don't know where it was, but when I hear the story's of the early days of the Hogan's, I think, he came up the Wybong! We don't know of course; don't put that down in the history book.

PH - But they did grow grapes, and there are still grapes up there.

AH - Between the German grape growing.

PH - Yeah, then the German influence as well.

AH - I think they all enjoyed their wine making together.

PH - I do know they all enjoyed a drink... as we still do, but some of us have got to be a bit careful.

AH - Well I don't think they probably saw the future in the grapes.

PH - Well the next people, they are the types of people who came. The Drayton family, and people like that, I mean, they obviously saw more future in it.

AH - They saw more general money turn over in dairying and cream, which was the going thing in the area. They probably just didn't have a big vision for where the grapes could take them - that was just what they knew.

PH - The first big vineyard down here was Wybong Park, which was a property before it was called Wybong Park, and Penfolds started a vineyard there. Brian McGuigan was one of the first winemakers, and Dad knew him very well - we knew the McGuigan family fairly well. Dad did a bit of work down there when they built the winery, because it's built on the solid rock down there, and the blasted and carried on down there, and built the wine cellars and things.

AH - Didn't he help them get going at Callatoota?

PH - Yeah, he worked for Cruickshank's down there, and helped them get their grapes started - I always believed that he had a lot of knowledge that came from somewhere. He grew a few grapes himself, but he never did much with them, but he did do a lot of work with people.

AH - He and your uncle Noel Flannigan got into it for a while at Noel's place.

PH - Yeah, Noel Flannigan had grapes, 10 acres up there. Hordens winery - they were involved in Horden's winery too in its early days - now Reynolds.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

So what about Community groups and that around here?

PH - Our main Community group focused with the hall - Wybong hall. Every generation of this family has at some stage been a member of the Committee, and that's all written down.

AH - This was the hall before the hall.

PH - This [*Old Anglevale*] was where they held dances before they built the hall, and the main instigator of the hall being built was basically the women in this house were going "well I think it's enough, we can have parties, but to have them as regularly as it's happening, the house is going to fall down." So consequently these doors [*Breezeway doors*] were all opened up, they pulled out all the furniture, and they used to dance in and around the doors. The next room there [*points past fireplace*] is as big as this one. But that's what they used to do.

In 1924, the Wybong hall was built, my grandfather was very much involved. There were 6 families involved in the original - putting in the money, getting the hall built, building the hall. They went out there - we've all been Presidents. I've done my stint as President. My Grandfather was President for some ridiculous number of years, 11 or 12, until my grandmother said I think it's time to pass it on. Dad did his; I grew up going to meetings. I was the President; Dad's been the President, my Mother was President, secretary, treasurer. She held all positions. I was the treasurer for a lot of years, and did a few years as President, and so that was our focus.

We also had our Church; we were all Catholics, so we had the Catholic Church down here. The little church, which from time to time has been re-built by my family, the original slab one was built by the family. The priest who used to come around used to stay here [*Old Anglevale*]. Then they built him a little annex down on the church so he could stay with the church, because obviously the family thought, the priest is here for a while, we don't want to know everybody else's business - so they built him a little annex on the church down there. So it has a little room there, where he used to stay, and people could be comforted down there with the priest being here for a period of time. There was also the Church of England up at Manobalai. So we had these two churches - each church group had its own little focus, and we'd come together from time to time, everybody joined at the hall. Then we also had an annual sports day, which became a rodeo, to make it a bit more americanised and so it was basically a camp draft, horse carnival day.

AH - Is that the sports day?

PH - Yeah

AH - Yeah, well Peter's still the President.

PH - I'm still the President. That was up at the grounds up near Googes (on the right hand side of Ridgeland's Road). There are remnants of the sports ground up there now, it's all fallen. I think the last year was, I can't remember, I'd have to work out what the last year was.

AH - It was before we were married.

PH - Oh yes, I was only in my late 20's when I was President of that. I was one of the youngest ones.

AH - No it was your early 20's, you were with me in your late 20's.

PH - So that fell away because of lack of numbers of stock - you couldn't get enough stock.

AH - Wasn't there an insurance problem too?

PH - There was an insurance problem that was mounting at the time, which is bigger now, and so there are remnants of that there. That was a big thing, everyone got together to really put on a big show. Hundreds of people would come. I mean it was huge.

AH - Wasn't there a thing about the state people were in when they climbed on their horse to ride it home? They would stay on and drink, and then try and ride their horse home.

PH - Oh, a few people came to grief trying to ride home afterwards, but that just all went with the job.

The two Churches, what were their names?

PH - There was Thomas Aquinas here at Wybong - that's the Catholic one. There is St Mark's at Manobalai, and we also have the one at Spring Creek - I think its St Paul's at Spring Creek. So the funny part was that it basically meant that there was an upper Wybong, and a lower Wybong. So everyone up there was Church of England, and everyone down here was a Catholic. Then you started to have people intertwine. There was never much Religious rivalry, but there was always this sort of, that was your area, and in those days, you tended not to go to one another's churches. I mean now days we do.

AH - We've always been invited to their harvest festival and things.

PH - We go to their harvest festivals and things at the Church of England, and we would invite them to whatever ceremony we were having at Easter and things.

AH - We used to always get a flyer in the mail, but nothing like that goes on anymore.

PH - Then of course you had some families, like for instance, I'll just name the Ra's for instance. They lived here, they went to church at Manobalai, but some of them went over (because they lived a bit closer) to Spring Creek, some of them went that way - so we sort of had a third church community. Other than that, most things surrounded the Wybong hall. It was built in 1924, and most things are there. In modern times, you had all the TAFE courses done there, the toy box school goes out there, and there's still a committee that administers the thing. Originally there was a trust set up. There are some trustees - Dad's still one of them, but slowly they're dying off unfortunately. So I don't know what happens in the future. The hall actually belongs to the community. It belongs to the people, not the Council - as much as the Council have said things from time to time. They tried once when I was President, they almost got it, and it had been closed for a while, and they found a loop hole that said once it has been closed for a while, Council got to take over it.

AH - Was that when you were President?

PH - Yeah, it was just the first year I was President that happened.

AH - But it had been in constant use.

PH - No there was a period there where it wasn't, and they tried to use that. I was always of the understanding that that's how it was, but that's when we found out that that was the case. It was given to the people of Wybong for perpetuity and yes we had a list of things that we had to do on the Council's behalf - but they didn't own the land, so that's the way it is. It still is that way today now.

AH - The only other thing we had as a community here was Landcare - which was a fiasco. It became a power thing that was in the community, and we got no projects going here, because by then it had gone to mostly small hobby farm blocks and then bigger property owners. They used to band together, and say well you're on the other side of the fence, you've got a big property, and we can't afford to do these things, so we need to have the projects happening on our place. There were people getting involved in it and the power went to their head, and the whole ideal of what it was all about got lost in the way.

PH - Well, we had a shift in Community. It probably started about 30 years ago with the sale of what was Callatoota at the time. It was 1000 acres that sits right in the middle, just across the road here, and they cut it up into 25 and 5 acre blocks. I've met some wonderful people, but it changed the way the community worked. So we then developed a way of having that being the community, and it was working along quite fine. Then you had Government things come in, like this Landcare Group, which sort of tended to split people up again.

AH - My overall viewpoint in the end, because I was secretary and then vice president of the Landcare group, and then I totally disassociated it under legal advice - my opinion was, it became a means by which more property owners could use tax payers money to improve the capital value of their land. By teaming up together and controlling where the money goes, they kept it all on their places, and in my opinion, very little was achieved from a lot of tax payer's money in the end. There's still machinery missing, somewhere in the community. There are still minutes that were wiped and things like that, so it became a pretty political situation. Actually it put a rift in the community just before the mining industry came up, which is unfortunate, but it did cause quite a rift in the end, and we certainly disassociated ourselves from a lot of people, because it was just, it wasn't correct, it wasn't right what was going on. Then we pursued getting funding to do re-generation projects on our own right, and succeeded working through the Hunter Catchment Management Trust to do that. We did some good work out the back here. There's a few trees planted around the area, and a few signs up, making out Blackjack Mountain Land care group was really doing wonderful things, but it really it went into nothing. I don't know where the assets and anything went to - every time I talk to the department I can't find out.

What about the rural fire brigade?

PH - Yeah, we have a rural fire brigade, and it's stationed. We've got a station up at Brogheda Homestead, that's another Homestead I didn't mention - it was the Horden's, it a big old nice homestead.

AH - It's getting into upper Wybong isn't it?

PH - Yeah, well it's up the other end - it's starting to get up into sort of the other end of Wybong, up into the next bit of Wybong. But the Horden's owned that. David Horden owned that, and they grew grapes, started a winery up there. They used to run cattle; they used to have a really good line of Hereford cows up there - which we ended up buying a lot of a few years ago. When we had all those fires in 2001 over the Christmas period, and it had us going all over the State, you know, saving Sydney and everything - one of the thank you's from the government was that they finally realised that we really didn't have much gear. So in their wisdom, they said that you all have to have a fire shed, so we got a fire shed, and very little else. But we have got a flash fire shed up there.

AH - We had a fire here, over on the flat here, and they couldn't get the Wybong fire truck to start to get it out of the shed. So they rang the Spring Creek Brigade. The Spring Creek Brigade got their old truck going and they got to the fire, where it promptly broke down, and Sandy Hollow Brigade had to come in and put the fire out, and then help rescue the truck.

PH - Well we're in two Fire Brigade's here. We're the crossover of Spring Creek and our property boundaries cross over between Spring Creek and Wybong.

AH - We're in Spring Creek, your father's in Wybong.

PH - Yeah, I've got parts in both and what happens – another committee. I was a deputy captain, and dad's been deputy captain. Oh, we had a fire, one of the first fire's I ever went to, when I was about 17; I ended up getting caught.

AH - You and who else?

PH - Oh, Gordon Gallagher and his son, and another cousin of theirs - we got caught right up on top of this mountain over here, because we were sent up to do something that was pretty silly at the time, but we ended up getting caught, but we got out, we're still here. That was my initial thing, but that happened one Christmas. One Christmas we were sitting having Christmas lunch with my grandparent's, and came back Boxing Day afternoon (I think it was) - we just had to go off fighting, but that's what used to happen, we'd all just get up and go. We've all been, I think, yeah Dad's been Deputy Captain, I've been Deputy Captain of the Brigade, as you do, to do your community bit. You don't get much choice when you grow up in a family that does their community bit. You just get dragged along. In the end you've become the age to do your bit.

AH - Yeah, while he was putting Wybong Hall back together again, and doing all wonderful things out there, my house was falling down around me.

What schools did you have here?

PH - The original school was at Castlerock. There are remnants up here on the side of the road. Helena Doyle taught there. Do you know where the original school was? Well you turn off at Limvardy road, at the top of the hill, well just past that on your right, you will see that there's a paddock there full of trees.

AH - Like an orchard.

PH - That's where the school was, and the paddock that's now got a lot of trees in it and a lot of tins and a little shack - that was the horse paddock for the school, because they rode their horses to school.

AH - You're father used to ride his horse.

PH - Yeah, dad used to ride from here [*Old Anglevale*] to there every day, and back home again. So did his sisters, they all went to there.

AH - That's where Helena [*Doyle*] taught.

PH – Yeah, Helena taught there. That school was closed down, not sure what year; Dad would be able to tell you. Dad went there, Peter Blake, all the Blake's went to school there too. That school was closed down, and they opened a much more modern one up at Manobalai, because that obviously was where the focus was, because these here could then

go to Muswellbrook. Which Dad did, he went to St James for one year or something, and then went off to college. He went to St Gregory's for two years, I think, which was pretty much the common thing to do if the families had enough money to do it. So then that became the school of Manobalai and Helena taught up there right up into the early 70's. She taught there and then it just had one or two teachers, and then it was closed down. I've got a couple of mates who went to school there, the same age as me, so they finished, they basically finished through. I think it went on a couple of years into the mid 70's, around '74 or '75. I can't think of the exact date, but it was somewhere around that, and then of course they went from the primary school, they went to high school and went on from there.

There was never a school down near the post office in Wybong area?

PH - No, no there was nothing, not to my knowledge. I believe there was one, I only have a vague recollection, the little gap up where Horden's is - there's a little gap there called Owen's gap, and I think they had a little school there too but I don't think it was there very long. But I wouldn't be held on that one, that's only something that's in my head. I don't think it's quite right.

What about the Post Office?

PH - The post office operated (I can remember when the post office operated) - Mrs Payne, one of the Payne's had the post office there, and that operated - I was very young when it closed down. I remember you could get your mail there, then the mail started to come, they used to also deliver mail. We used to only get it two or three days a week and we used to get our bread sometimes, so the bread sometimes was a bit dry - it's came from Torpies, Joe Torpie's. I don't know, dry bread wasn't too bad back then, but you can't eat it now. So that post office operated there.

AH - You should also mention at some other point, that Nanna - Nanna's family were among the first to have a car in the area. That was a big event.

PH - Yeah, my grandmother, Jessie, she was one of the first ladies to have a licence. So she lived over at Spring Creek. My grandmother was born in that house where Neville Bray is [Oakwood]. That's her family house there. She was one of the first to have a licence, and have a car. I've got a photo of her and her car, and I used to ask her "well what was the car?" and she'd say "it was a Chrysler Dodge". I said "it was a Dodge?" and she said "why wouldn't it be, we drove it from Sydney, and the pot holes, we had to, you know, that was why it was called a Dodge." So this was always the joke, we had to dodge the pot holes. So this would have been a 1921 or '22 Chrysler Dodge that they drove from Sydney, and they brought up here, and it was one of the first cars.

AH - She was only tiny, I mean, she wouldn't have been 5 ft tall was she?

PH - Oh, yeah, only just. Her father died when she was 10 years old, and she grew up pretty quickly, and she could do all the jobs her brothers could do, so naturally, get a car, drive it.

So what about say power and telephone?

PH - I remember the only phone here when I was younger, was my grandparent's had a phone. They were Wybong 5, and it came overhead, and they had a big black wind up phone that sat down there. I think there must have only been a couple of subscribers - it was a fairly open line, so everyone knew what was going on, pretty well straight away. We wouldn't have had a phone when I was a small child at all. We had power, but the power wasn't on, I don't believe the power was on. I think they might have only just had the power on up at the house where we grew up in just before mum and dad actually moved up there, because there's a lot of hurricane lamps up there. I've got a couple of holders that just hang, and this house had no power when we started, so we put power on at this house.

AH - We only put power on in this house in '88 or '89. It had no wiring, nothing. No plumbing, no wiring.

PH - Yeah, it had no nothing when we started. Consequently we didn't have television. I was about 8 or 9 before we got television, so that's about where that would be. I remember the exchange being built at Castlerock - so that's the box out there at Castlerock, and our phones became this wonderful automatic phone.

AH - Well when we got married, your parent's didn't have running water in the bathroom.

PH - No, they didn't, they were still doing that. That just added to the excitement. We grew up like that; we didn't worry about things like that.

AH - I thought they were just in the middle of renovations!

You never had your own Gen Set, or anything, like some of the places, your own generator and battery packs?

PH - No. People up here, I mean up until only a few years ago, there was some people, one of my cousins up there that still have a generator.

AH - Well Harry still does doesn't he?

PH - He still has his generator, but he's got power on.

AH - Oh, has he got power now, he's only just got it.

PH - Yeah, he still ran a generator, but he lives right up dry creek.

AH - His father wouldn't get the power connected, why wouldn't he get the power connected?

PH - What happened was - when you lived on the other end of the line, you had to pay for the whole connection, and then, as people attached themselves to the line, you were then

entitled to charge those people a certain amount of money and then they pay you. Well (this is my cousin Harry Bray) his father said well I'm not going to pay for everybody else's power, and I'm not going to wait all these years, so we'll have a generator, which they did, and now the payer is away up there now.

AH - And it cost's a fortune.

PH - It costs a fortune now.

AH- Harry had to wait until the neighbour sold out his entire place to buy the blocks and that bought the power closer and closer so he could afford to get it done.

Any evidence of Aborigines?

PH - Lot's of evidence of that.

AH - No actual knowledge of them ever coming here since 1861.

PH - On my mother's side, my great, great grandmother was Aboriginal - so I have a connection with it, now, as connections go, it's a very difficult thing to, it's not something that could be totally proven. Some people can, and some people cant. So the angle that I took, Mum had two half brothers, that were, I mean they could have fitted into most tribes, but they never acknowledged it. So what I did personally, I went to the Wanaruah Land Council in town here, and I had quite a few meetings with Bev Van Vliet before she passed away. So we came to some understanding for myself - I've just accepted this sort of thing. Now, when we were growing up, there was always evidence of Aborigines having been here - there's no evidence written down that it happened in the last 140 years, and no one's talked about meeting anyone.

AH - They all used to meet just on the other side of the creek here.

PH - I believe that they've all had some presence here. But there's plenty of artefacts, as in, you know, chips of mud stone, and there's the odd axe head, that they've found. But I knew a lot of these things were already there, we've picked them up over the years. My grandfather used to talk about them having passed through here, but as I said, there's no family evidence that they met with any.

AH - I think if they were here, then it was in a different time - when it was more productive and less rough country. I think it must have been a very long time ago, because when you go back to those early explorers' notes, this area, when they came around, was marked as not suitable for agriculture. Which means 200 years ago, it was an area that wouldn't have provided a living here. The Aboriginal people would have got Kangaroo, and I suppose there was have been a fair few marsupials around, but it wouldn't be an area that would be highly productive for root crops and things like that.

PH - There was a lot of Wallabies, hence the name of the Wallaby rocks down there.

AH - But I think it might be an area they went through, and maybe came back to the rock [Wallaby Rocks] for ceremonies and so forth. The Wallaby Rocks down there, and the muscles in the creek, obviously they came and ate those.

PH - Well they found them in the caves at the Wallaby Rocks, so they obviously have proven that they existed.

AH - I think it may have been a really long time ago. I think it was when the country was more productive and better, and not in a rain shadow so much. Because in summer it's harsh -you know I've read temperatures here up over 50°C, and the thermometer's hit 50°C at 1pm in the afternoon, and not gone below it until about 3.30 pm. I've had that for a week on end and I know my thermometer's pretty spot on, because the electronic one across the road here that the mine have put in, I'm only about 1°C out on - so it gets really pretty harsh country. So, my thinking, that's just instinct more than anything, it was a very populated area by Aboriginal people, but I think it might have been a very long time ago.

Probably thickly vegetated too, if they run saw mills here?

PH - It was and it wasn't - there were areas that were. One of the things that my grandfather always instilled in me was that you didn't go to an area and take all the timber. He used to tell me that all the time. In actual fact, there's more timber now here than there was when it was operating a lot more productively than it is now. But the quality was better; the quality that we've got now isn't as good as it was. But he used to tell say well, the big scrub, you know you'd go over there and get some this time, but you won't go back over there for another couple of year's type thing. So I grew up doing that, and I've done it exactly the same way. Now I haven't taken all the timber, I would have had to work, you know, every day for a year, to get everything that could have been usable - so, I mean, I've got some to keep me going. So we have this, I suppose I've always had this connection that you've got to work with it. You see I get a little bit annoyed when people sort of stand up and they go well 'I'm for the environment', but because you're a farmer, you can't be - but that's not quite true, otherwise we wouldn't be still here after 146 years. So obviously I mean, I take great pride in the fact that what we did for 140 odd years must have done some good, because there's still people here that want to fight for the environment. So there must be a good environment still. So I take a lot of pride in that.

AH - Can I cut in here and say; I came here, moved up here in 82 and married here in 87, so I saw the end of the old community and what it's become. I think one of the big things that's really sad here, that back before this whole mine issue came up, the community that I married into here, if a person was leaving the district, whether they'd been here a short time, or for generations, they were moving to another property somewhere else, they would get a big send off at the hall. There would be a party, there would be a dance, they'd give them a few speeches, perhaps a gift, and they'd give them a send off.

But what I think is really sad, is, that because of what has been done in this community, by a couple of blow-ins that only came in the mid to late 90's, some a bit earlier than that, but a few people set about trying to stop the mine (which I've got no problem with) but their way of doing it was by setting division within the community - turning neighbour against neighbour, turning family against family. So where there used to be trust and openness, it became closure and mistrust, and quite frankly it came to a point here where you couldn't turn you back on anyone, you'd think you would be stabbed in the back - you couldn't trust anyone to talk to them. For the last 8 to 10 years, you could not speak to people and say something without knowing it was going to be taken and twisted, and turned into something else around the place. You have really got to be careful who you talk to, and so what we've seen as the mine has progressed is people have sold to the mining company, and they have been treated like traitors to the so called community. I don't call it the community, because there is no real community anymore.

They have left without any acknowledgement that they're leaving, and acknowledgement of their history here, and acknowledgement of their part in the community that was. Families like the Ray's, Richard Ray, have packed up and left, Bert Ray has packed up and left. Tears have left, and they were part of a vital community, and no one has even acknowledged their leaving. But what has replaced that good wholesome community spirit, generosity, and friendship, has been a real nastiness that is quite evil. I think, in this community, because it's not a community anymore, and there are families leaving, and here we are, after 147 years, we're going to just pack all our stuff in a truck one day, and disappear, and that will be it - I think that is extremely sad. I think it is very, very sad, and I just think it's wrong that this sort of thing has been brought about, and it has a lot to do with one small group saying either band with us, or you're not in.

PH - Well that's one group I didn't join. I just refused to.

AH - Anvil Hill Project Watch - I always joked that they could hold their annual general meetings in a telephone booth and have a room for newcomers. It's all talk. It's a lot of hot air and unfortunately the media, newspaper and radio, have listened to one person, and taken what that one person has said as gospel truth, and they have believed it, and not questioned it. We have very, very poor journalism as a result. I rant and rave at Mike Pritchard, I rant and rave at the editor at the paper in here, because I say when are you going to start doing some real investigative journalism? Because if you even look slightly beneath the mat, you will find that there is no substance to what you're printing. I think it's very wrong, and I think, unfortunately, we were in a position where we are had whichever way we go. We couldn't say anything, we were catch 22. We decided to take the option, look at it as a business thing, look at it as saying, ok after 147 years, maybe it's time for the family to move to greener pastures - find a new place, start a new thing, and that's what we did. But we have been absolutely ostracised for doing that, and not discussing it with certain people who think they

run the whole show. I really think it's very, very sad what has happened to the older families here, and the way it's been done.

There have been lies - like a person who I won't name was saying to one person Pat Hogan said this about you, now they'd been mates since they were boys. Pat Hogan gets upset about it, says something to the person who supposedly said it, and he says, I didn't say that, that's not true. So he goes off to the woman that said, that he'd said this to Pat Hogan, and he said you lied, you said this, and I didn't say that, and you've caused a rift in a friendship that's been going on for generations. Her comment back was, it's my job to keep the community stirred up, I don't care what it takes. That is sad. So that's part of the history of the area and what's happened to the community really, because they now talk about the community of Wybong, and I think it's going to take years to develop a real community here again, because what's left, there isn't one, everyone's gone.

Do you want to come back and tell us about the story of the dairy farmer across – the day he got married?

PH – Oh, I can give you a little story about that - there's only remnants of it left, it's just up here, where the, what we call the oak tree, where the power line actually crosses just here, there's remnants of a dairy. There was a house there too, even when I was a boy there was a house there. That property there belonged to a fellow named Abe Clayton, and his name is written on the dairy, inside the old shed there. It belongs to Mick LeBreton these days. Ray Smith owned it for a while. He was going to get married, he was going to have his wedding at St Auburns, but he had to do the milking. So what he did was, at the time, my great grandfather's brother was the mail contractor, Thomas, he happened to be doing the mail.

AH - Thomas who?

PH - Thomas Hogan. But that was Thomas Hogan Jr. She was out here somewhere, and I'm not exactly sure where his bride-to-be was. So Abe Clayton said 'I've got to do the milking', he said 'I want you to come out and pick her up, and get there'. So he comes out and picks her up in the horse and sulky. This all doesn't happen in our time frame, so it's all happened over hours - so he gets her to the wedding. Well Abe did his milking, he got dressed up, he jumped on his horse, and he apparently rode the horse as fast as it could go for the 13 miles that it is from here to town, to Muswellbrook. He gets to the wedding in a lather of sweat, of course, because the horse has been beaten all the way to town, which would have taken about, oh he could have done it in an hour, if he really, really pushed this horse - an hour and 20 mins probably. So he has gone flat out. So he's in his best suit, he's just come out of the dairy, so he probably smells of the dairy, plus he'd definitely smell of the horse.

So he gets in, covered in sweat off the horse completely, because it would be just flying back in your face. He gets off the horse, and apparently a few of the locals here were at the wedding - he gets off the horse, gets the marriage done, and he said we've got to get back to the milking, can you bring her along? This is to Thomas Hogan Jr. Can you bring her out, so

he gets back on his horse, and goes flying back out here to Wybong, and leaves his bride in town to be brought back on the sulky, and this is her introduction to life at Wybong. Well Frank Blake can tell you a really good story about life for that particular couple a few years later in his memory.

AH - Now who were they?

PH - They were the Clayton's.

AH - So when you're talking to Frank Blake, ask him about the Clayton's.

PH - He can tell you about the story about the wedding day, because that comes from him, via other people. But then he said he was there one day, and he had to call in there for something with his Father. His Father was a sheep buyer, so they called in there for some reason. Anyway, Abe was sitting out there on the verandah having a bottle of beer or something, it would have been a bottle of something, anyway his wife comes out with this huge frying pan, and flaming took to him with it, there and then while the visitors were there, over some issues that they'd had earlier in the day. So here he is looking for a ride to town to get away from her. But oh dear, what stories these people have. But anyway, it's all just little things.

APPENDIX i
Hogan Family Birth Certificate

No. OF APPLICATION. 1900/4626.



1874 BIRTHS in the District of Sydney in the Colony of New South Wales

COLUMNS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

No.	CHILD.		FATHER.			MOTHER.			INFORMANT.
	When and Where Born.	Name, and whether present or not.	(1) Name and Surname. (2) Rank or Profession of the Father. (3) Age and (4) Birthplace.	(1) When and Where Married. (2) Issue living and deceased.	(1) Name and Maiden Surname of the Mother. (2) Age and (3) Birthplace.	(1) Signature, and Residence of Informant.			
2160	5th August 1874	John Thomas	Thomas Hogan 1848 County Clare Ireland	26 January 1841 1 male living	Mary Cook 24 Maidland	Mary Hogan Mother Arthur Street Creech Hill			

I, WILLIAM GIBBLE, DEPUTY, Registrar General of New South Wales, do hereby Certify that the above Registrars General's Office, Sydney, and extracted this 5th day of November 1900.

W. G. Gibble
1900



REGISTERED BY

Edward Grant Harris
Registrar General

of Sydney in the Colony of New South Wales,

5 6 7 8 9 10 11

FATHER.		MOTHER.		INFORMANT.	WITNESSES.	REGISTRAR.	Name, if added after Registry of Birth.
Name and Surname, Rank or Profession of the Father. Age and (4) Birthplace.	(1) When and Where Married. (2) Issue living and deceased.	(1) Name and Maiden Surname of the Mother. (2) Age and (3) Birthplace.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.				
<i>Thomas Hogan</i>	<i>26 January 1841</i>	<i>Mary Hogan</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Mary Hogan</i>	<i>Wm J. D. Stien</i>	<i>E. G. Harris</i>	
<i>Robert</i>	<i>1 male</i>	<i>Maidland</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>11 September 1844</i>	
<i>28</i>	<i>living</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Arthur</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Sydney.</i>	
<i>Uny Case</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Arthur</i>	<i>—</i>		
<i>Ireland</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Arthur</i>	<i>—</i>		

PITY, Registrar General of New South Wales, do hereby Certify that the above is a true copy of an Entry in a Register of Births kept at the
is *finished* day of *November* 1900. 18

W. J. D. Stien

DEPUTY Registrar General.

APPENDIX ii
Original Anglevale Home Photos



APPENDIX iii
Current Old Anglevale Home Photos









APPENDIX C-4

Neville and Robin Bray Transcript

Interviewee: **Neville & Robyn Bray**
Associated with Study Area: **Residence ID 96A in Anvil Hill EA**
Date of Interview: **6 February 2008**
Interview venue: **“Oakwood”, 1689 Wybong Road, Wybong**
Interviewers: **Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker**

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

We will start with Robyn today. What’s your full name Robyn, and if you like, year of birth?

RB - My full name is Robyn Bray and I am one of twins. I was born in January 1942 in Tullamore, NSW. I have been living in this particular area since 1963.

Is your twin still alive?

RB - Yes, my twin sister, we are un-identical, we would go to boarding school, and we had 3 sets of identical wins there, and we used to say that we were twins too, but no one would believe us because my twin had red hair, and mine was brown. We used to say that one was like Dad, and one was like Mum. Sometimes we would be thinking of each other, and other times, there is nothing uncanny.

Your sister’s name?

RB - Yvonne. We came from a family of 8, 4 boys and 4 girls. At the time of our birth, my mother did try and say to the Doctor she thought she was having twins, and the Doctor said no, I don’t think so. So every other member of the family had two names, but we didn’t. They only gave us one name.

And were you the last?

RB - No, I had a younger brother. He had two names. My maiden name was Thompson. I was born at Tullamore NSW, and then the family moved down to Temora, where my mother’s family had started family life in the early 1900’s.

What were your parent’s names?

RB - My father’s name was Eric Thompson, and my mother’s name was Flora Gwendolyn, she was a McLennan, they came from Donald in Victoria. Three brothers came out from Scotland, and bought land, or settled on land around Donald and Marnoo in Victoria, then my grandfather moved up to Temora and called the property Marnoo. My mother was born in 1907 and my father was born in 1900.

So do you have any brothers and sisters in this area, or did they all stay down?

RB - No, they have scattered. The eldest brother was on the family property, he bought all the members out of the property, and he stayed there. Then another brother lives next door

to him, and another brother lived in QLD, he has since passed on, and my youngest brother won junior farmers overseas tour, and that changed his life. All of us only did the intermediate Certificate. None of us went on to do the leaving Certificate, and my youngest brother then went back to university as a mature student and he became a Lawyer. And he has since passed on. So we still have the 4 girls, but we have 2 brothers left.

And is there still family on the family property?

RB - Yes. They have since bought several other properties, so they are quite a big concern down there, growing up to 10,000 acres of crop. But they are still in a really bad situation down there with drought, and didn't have a very good year last year, or the year before.

NB - You better explain the contrast between their operation and your eldest sister.

RB - Oh, my eldest sister is living in the Outer Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland, and she is running a Bed & Breakfast on the Island of Berneray, which you can catch a boat from the Isle of Skye or you can fly from Glasgow over to Benbecula, and then drive to her island, but she originally went over there as a nurse. She was on her way to Canada, but didn't get there. Neville and I have been over there to see them, it's a whole different way of living, and they move their stock by boat, and she has had Prince Charles stay as a guest in their house.

She speaks very highly of him, they also met Lady Di and they came up because Prince Charles is in charge of all the properties throughout Scotland - what you would call "the Lord".

NB - Those Islands used to be privately owned, the owner used to be a governor general out here once. I know what he looked like, a tall skinny bloke with grey hair, can't think of his name.

RB - Hon. De L'Isle, wasn't it?

NB - No? Anyway he owned the Island that they are on. That's just the way things operated for hundreds of years, I suppose, and I don't know how Prince Charles came into it. Then he got friendly with them and kept coming back, until the press drove him out.

RB - They have a website that you can go onto now called the Isleofberneray.com and you can make a booking, and stay in the B & B.

NB - You should go over and see Nellie, ah, Gloria is her proper name. You should get the website from Robyn, and you can contact them, because they actually run a B & B now, and anyone can stay there if you book far enough ahead. It's an experience, the second time you don't stay as long as you do the first time, because it's a small island, and there are no trees, and a lot of wind.

RB - No, I don't know if that is true. They get people coming back year after year. They have all people from working in hospitals and high rise offices in London who would come up and stay. But the differences is that their B & B over there compared to the ones in Australia like you have a B & B here, it's just like a one nighter or a two nighter in Australia, over there they will stay for a week. But they have now put a Causeway between their little Island and the next one, so that allows anyone who is staying there, they can then drive over to the Hotel and have a meal, so that Gloria and Don are not cooking meals all the time. So you can ride bikes, go walking, you could go fishing, so there's lots to do.

NB - Just don't go there in a stupid open fishing boat like we did.

What about school, where did you go to School?

RB - I started my education at Temora Primary School, and then all the family was sent away to boarding school. The boys went away to Yanco Agricultural College, and my eldest sister went to Osmond Ladies College, which was in Leura in the Blue Mountains – Blackheath, I should say and it was run like a naval college. My twin sister, I and my other sister, went to Annesley Girls School in Bowral - which is no longer a school.

Your turn Neville. Your full name and year of Birth?

RB - My full name is Neville Arthur Bray and I was born on 6th January 1936, in Muswellbrook. My education, Is that what you want next?

That'll do.

NB - I started at a one teacher school up the top of the hill here - called Castlerock, where the teacher was Helena Doyle. If you came home without getting the cane you had a good day. I was there for primary school, then I boarded in Muswellbrook to go to the high school for the first six months, and that was a big culture shock for me because all I did was trap rabbits, and go to school, and ride horses out here. I went in there and had to wear socks, and uniforms and shoes, and everything. After six months a bus started from Sandy Hollow to Muswellbrook, so I used to catch the bus over here. Went there for 5 years, then went to Hawkesbury Agricultural College for 3 years and then I was supposed to be educated.

So who did you board with?

NB - Harry James was the man's name, and I can't remember her name. I could tell you where the house was, it was in Skelletar Street, right on the corner near the sports ground. But I was only there for a few months.

RB - Was that Ron James' mother?

NB - Yeah, Ron James' mother. Thel James - that was her name.

Have you got brothers and sisters?

NB - I have an older brother who is deceased, and a younger sister who lives at Corlette, NSW, after she retired there. Col was my older brother, and Lynette is my sister. Lynette married Richard Champion, an Accountant, and they worked all over the place, finishing up in Sydney and retiring in Corlette.

So, we will go back to some of your family now. Who were your parents?

NB - Reginald and Elsie. She was Elsie Davies. Her father was a school teacher named Arthur, that's how I got my second name. Dad was born in 1900, and Mum was born in 1908.

Well we might go back another generation to your grandparents?

NB - My grandfather, he was one of 17 kids and he was a drover. He used to bring cattle from Brunette Downs to Edinglassie. He married a woman who lived up Spring Creek named Martha Waters. The same bloodline as Max Waters. This property was part of Bengalla owned by the Key's and they subdivided this end in 1910 when my grandfather bought a block here. This house was built in 1910, well the front part, and the back part in 1914.

So we'll go back a bit now, we will go back to your grandfather, so he was 1 of 17?

NB - I can't remember all their names, but he was 1 of 17. His Father was Seth and he first settled on Highfield in 1855 and that was where I spent a fair bit of time as a kid, up the top end of Dry Creek.

RB - Young Harry Bray and Kath Bray live at Woodland Grove on Dry Creek road. Out where Warren Ward has built his new home, but Harry is on the original place out there, which was part of Highfield after 1855 for a number of years.

NB - He's not on Highfield. He is on part of what the old great grandfather had. But Highfield was a separate property to Woodland Grove where Harry lived. It was in the top of the gorge, right up the top of this hill, on 2,300 acres I think it was. The family sold it to a bloke named Hewitt - in the depression and he couldn't pay for it. So he handed it back to them, and I used to spend a bit of time up there as a kid, riding the horse down to Brogheda to get the bread and mail and stuff three times a week, chase a few cattle, and trap a few rabbits.

Is that where Seth's buried?

NB - No, his wife is.

RB - His first wife, Seth married 3 times.

That accounts for 17 children?

RB - No, 17 children were by the first wife.

NB - She died at 46 or something. But the other two woke up to him, they knew what made babies and they broke him out of the habit.

RB - So her memorial is up there, Jane Bray, or Jane Walsh she was. But another member of the family we have now found by Google, where Seth and Jane lived in Plymouth in England. I've got a photo of where they lived, or their residence. We were able to find where they came from.

NB - I'll just tell you the story about Grandfather's horse boy, which might be interesting. Three of us went out on this trip to the Northern Territory, doing interviews and carrying on in 1958. We had a bit of an altercation with Aborigines at – Stanley Chasm when we tried to take their photos. I think money might have solved the problem, but they were yabbering and carrying on and telling us they were going to spear us.

I was the first one out of the car – so the other two blokes didn't cop it like I did. There was an old black fella in front of us with his spear quivering. I can still remember the fly that crawled up his nose, into his mouth, and back up his nose again, and up around his eye, and that will stay with me forever. So, I sort of took a step or two back and had a rifle in the back seat. I shoved that in his belly and he dropped the spear. So I was a bit touchy about Aborigines for a day or two after that. Anyway, we were sleeping in Spinifex out near Ayres Rock, and I woke up and here's this bloke with a spear standing over top of me - just on daylight, or soon after daylight I suppose. He had a young bloke with him, he was a real old bloke who spoke English, and he had this young kid with him. The other Aborigines that were talking to us, they couldn't speak English (or hardly, anyway) and he said "where you come from?"

I said "NSW"; he said "I've been to NSW". I said "where have you been to in NSW?" He said "I've been to Muswellbrook". I said "oh yeah" and I hadn't said anything about Muswellbrook at that stage, so I thought this bloke must be fair dinkum. But I said "how did you get to Muswellbrook?" and he said "I was a horse boy for a drover named George Bray, he came from Muswellbrook", and then he told me a long story about how he met my Grandfather and all this sort of thing. Anyway, I can't quite remember the whole story, because it takes Aborigines a long time to tell you anything. So then we became good friends, and I said "is it true you fellas can spear a finch at 20 feet with those things?" – Thinking of the bloke who had a spear about 2 feet from my face. So we put a match box up there and he did spear it from 20 feet.

What he was doing there - he was taking his grandson for a walk-about to be educated prior to his initiation (you now when they circumcise them and put their scars on them and all that sort of thing) to learn how to spear Kangaroos and other skills and the grandfather had to teach him. That's how he came to be out there at Ayres Rock.

We missed the first generation. How many children did you have?

NB - We had 3 boys, we now have 2. Andrew was the eldest, Gavin was the next - he's at Rio Tinto, he works in the coal industry - and Glen was a helicopter pilot, and he was killed in

his helicopter in 1995. Andrew's now running a ski resort at Lake Tahoe in Northern California.

So is Andrew married?

NB - Yeah, but he didn't get married until he was well into his 30's. He then had an accident and broke his back and sternum, and they thought he was going to be a quadriplegic there for a fair while. But then the way he came good is just amazing. He's just a little bit short and a bit of a hunch back because they set him the way he was and put him in a cast for about six months or something. That was just after he got married, and he didn't get married until he was 34. He's got two boys.

Gavin's got family here in Denman; he's got 4 girls and a boy.

The girl who Glen was going to marry finally married - she took about 12 years before she got serious with a bloke. Her mother, who lives down near Melbourne, rang us one day and said "you'll probably hear from 'Kimba' soon because she's got herself a boyfriend". So she rang us and said "I want you to meet this fella named Andrew Thomas" and her mother warned us- she said you'll think he's Glen again, cause he's a dead spit of Glen". And he was - when he got out of the ute here he looked like Glen, he talked like Glen, and he worked as a mechanic in the mines. He has done everything except fly helicopters, the same as Glen, and he was a farmer out near Coolah. He came from Singleton of all places, and his mother used to be Gordon Martins secretary when he first started. Anyway, she's going to have a baby soon.

What about your work life?

NB - I've worked in other places before I came back here. At the end of my education, I came home here because you didn't know what type of pass you got until it came out in the Sydney Morning Herald towards the end of January. So I answered the phone one night, and someone said they were looking for my father, and I said "No, he's not here", which he never was, because he was in every facet of public life - Shire President and that sort of thing. Anyway, I said "What did you want" and he said "Oh, I was just looking for a shearer". You can imagine after being a student for three years, I said "Yeah, I'll shear for you" and he said "Oh, that's good" and then I said "But I can't shear". He said "Well I'll give you a learner's pen". I thought, this sounds interesting, so I went shearing more or less for 12 months.

Then I thought that's a bit silly, you have a HDA and you're shearing sheep - but it was good fun. So, I went and applied for jobs and the first interview I went to was with a company called May & Baker - a drug company who wanted a sales representative. Then I thought "What am I going to tell them I've been doing for the last 12 months" and decided I might as well tell them the truth, because I had another interview lined up and was not worried if I didn't get the job. So I told him I was a shearer, and he said "Oh, a shearer", then he said "Anyone that can work that hard! - You've got the job" and the interview ended there.

I finished up as an Australian and New Zealand Veterinary Representative. Then I got sick of living in hotels and travelling all the time - I would finish up in a different place every weekend, and I could catch a plane back to Melbourne if you wanted to and there was a plane service available.

I was waiting for a vet at Albury and I saw an ad for a Junior Farmer Supervisor for the Department of Education, and I thought "This will do me". So I applied for it and there were three vacancies - one at Maitland, one at Young, and one at Temora. I didn't know where Temora was because they didn't have a vet there, so I put that last on the list, and that's where they gave me.

I spent 3 years there, and then I came back here when the family farm was in a fair bit of financial trouble. I then leased a place out here called Tara, 1,140 acres just down the road on the Northern side, between Ridgeland's Road and Wybong Road. I thought "you know, I might be able to make a dollar farming", so I spent a lot of time fighting with bank managers, share farming and growing wheat around the place.

Then, David Dosser and I started Hunter Grain Pty Ltd, a grain trading company, because I was working part-time with a grain elevator, managing the silos at Aberdeen. So then I decided I didn't want a phone grafted to my ear all the time, which is what happens when you're in the grain trading business - truckies ringing you in the middle of the night saying "Oh, you were busy earlier, so I thought this is the best time to get you" - at 2am in the morning! Then you'd have to work out where they came from and where they wanted to go.

So I decided that I would do something different and I finished up as an ESCO Man, managing the ESCO Branch in the Hunter Valley. I stayed there for 18 years.

Oh, I used to be a lecturer in animal physiology once and I was on the School of Agriculture Advisory Committee when they started Western Sydney University.

So that's what I was doing when I got a job with the mines - I knew nothing about ESCO, draglines or anything else. I just knew that they were things stuck up in the air. The only reason I got the job, was the silly bloke interviewed me on a Thursday, and someone had to start on the Monday. The managing director of the company said "do you mind giving it a go?" and I said "good fun for me mate, I'll try anything". So I started that with absolutely no knowledge of the product or the mining industry, but after many years I learnt a bit. That's where I retired on 12th March 1996.

Well, a couple of questions, the shearing contractor, was that a local?

NB - Oh it wasn't a contractor, it was what you call suburban shearing. There were about a dozen shearers lived in Muswellbrook in those days. Not many in there now, maybe one. But if a bloke would want 3 shearers and he'd know who the shearers were, and you'd get a phone call. We weren't with contractors; we were just working for individuals.

Further North in Quirindi, there would be a shearing contractor, and he'd employ the shearers and everything, and he'd have his run to go around.

NB - A lot of that does happen, particularly out in the big sheds. Around here it was Suburban Shearing. I didn't travel very far, I sometimes lived in, but it wasn't outside the Hunter Valley.

Did you ever work with Gordon Scriven?

NB - I did. He's the hardest working man I've ever known, and the roughest shearer I've ever seen, because he was always in a hurry. Hell of a nice bloke. If there were more men like Gordon, and then this country would be a better place. I've never struck another bloke like him. If he travelled anywhere, he'd be likely to just pull up and have a sleep on the way through and he always had the smallest car he could drive, because he didn't want to spend too much money. He was generous. Once he rode his old motorbike, which he had for years, from somewhere up the New England down to a sheep property here and shored 250 sheep here the next day. He rode the motorbike down after he had finished shearing up there at Armidale. Gordon, he was a funny bloke, he never changed his comb and cutter until smoko, because it took too long, and I saw how he dragged the wool off, I said "let us have a go, Gordon" and I couldn't push it through the wool - so he was a strong man. He was a good bloke. He was a good mate actually.

What about Tara, who was the owner of Tara?

NB - A bloke who had a grain company in Moree - Max Shorter. But he bought it from McTaggart's who used to own it before that and Doyle's had a bit of it. He'd only owned it for a couple of years and then he went into a grain business up in the North West. Some other bloke leased it before me.

So where about was it exactly?

NB - Well if you drive out on Ridgeland's Road, about 4-5 km till you get to the boundary, then it goes from there out to the Post Office Road, which joins to Wybong Road - it does not touch Wybong Road but it goes through to Post Office Road - and that mountain on the western side is the western boundary.

So what about when you started with ESCO, can you remember what year that was?

NB - Yes, I can remember all right, 1978.

You were working in Temora; I assume that's where you met Robyn?

NB - Yes, precisely. I got food poisoning one day and she took me home and looked after me, I thought she was pretty good, so I decided I would stick around.

The first time I took her out, I did everything right, was closing the door, and the dog came out from under the car and bit me on the arm. So I told one of the brothers I was going to do something to fix that dog, and he said "I've already fixed him, I've filed his teeth". I said well

that's a good idea - he said "I have made them a lot sharper, we don't like blokes like you around here taking our sister out".

They always had squeaky doors in the house, and I started oiling the hinges because I couldn't stand the door to squeak, and her father caught me doing that one day, and he said, "It won't do you any good you Bray, I'll still hear you when you come home".

Did they ever change their view?

NB - Yeah, I think they've accepted me.

RB - Yes they did, they thought a lot of him. Dad asked him at one particular time, they were going to kill a sheep, and Nev went down to kill the sheep...I'll let him tell the rest of the story.

NB – Oh that skinny old "wether" he had wanted me to kill, I said "Are you giving him to the dog?"

Anything else about your work life?

NB - Anyway, I wanted to get out of Hunter Grain because it was driving me mad – you would never see your family or have a meal with your family. Anyway, I wanted to get out of the grain business, so I organised to sell my interest. I didn't know what I was going to do, and I thought, I'll go back to the Department of Agriculture. I still remember them saying I was too old (when I was 39) and I said "Oh well, I didn't realise I was old at that stage".

So anyway, I applied for a job as a weeds inspector for the Council and I thought "well, I'll do anything for a job". I didn't really want to leave here, because I wanted to keep the farm going. But they wouldn't employ me, because I was over qualified, so I thought, that's something I've learnt!

So Max Kahn told me about this job as a machinery and tractor salesman at Moybern Motors. So I thought "I'm not going to be caught with being over qualified again". Allan Wharten was the manager there at the time, and he said to me "what's your background" and I said "I've run a farm and I went broke". He said "well a lot of farmers go broke you know, they're not very bright" and I said "no, I know they're not, but some are brighter than others". We had the interview, and it was as silly as a wheel.

So, I didn't know if I had the job or not, and I didn't care much after the interview with him. I came home and Robyn said "how did you go" and I said "I don't know, but I met an idiot" and so, I thought that was the end of it, until the next day I got this phone call from a bloke called Bernie Lister. I said "who's Bernie Lister"? He said "don't you know who Bernie Lister is?"

I was trying to think of all the possible places I could have known him from and then I said "I have never heard of him, you better tell me who you are". He ranted and raved and said "I'm

the managing director of Moybern Trading, that owns Moybern motors, and I believe your starting work with us on Monday”, and I said “Ah sounds pretty good”. He said “you better come and have lunch with us so I can meet you”, I said “sounds good”.

So I went to the restaurant with Bernie and Mr Wharten, and Bernie asked “how do you think your going to like ESCO” and I thought he said ‘Esso’ because I knew they had a couple of petrol bowsers out the front and I thought they were Ampol bowsers. I said “I didn’t know I’d be selling petrol, but I said I thought it was Ampol anyway”. Of course one thing led to another, and he and Alan had a big chat about Alan employing this idiot, and of course Alan tried to defend me. It was quite funny from my point of view.

Bernie says “I’m in a bit of a spot here” and I said “that’s your worry, not mine”. Bernie continued to say “I’ve got to have you down in Sydney on Monday, and I’ve told them your name and that you are going to be there. Do you think you can possibly handle this job?” I said “I’ll give it a go”.

So I went down there and had my induction for a week and Mr Wharten - we used to call him Choco - he went down with me. He was supposed to get educated too, but he went away with a girlfriend for the week, and he came back for the cocktail party. Alan Cloke, the general manager of ESCO at the time (he’s a good mate of mine now) had this cocktail party in his office, and Choco was telling these stupid jokes. This is how his name became Choco actually - Alan says to him “when they hit you with a tar brush Choco, did they tie it to a lump of 3x2 and did they knock your brains out?” So I thought “how do I feel, he’s my boss, and here’s the General Manager of this company talking like that to him”. So I thought this is going to be an interesting career. So we get back to Muswellbrook, and I couldn’t have an office or anything as only a car salesman could have an office. I also wasn’t allowed to order anything unless I got permission from Mr Wharten.

I had to knock on his door, because he’d go up to Black Hill Restaurant and get on the booze every day, have lunch up there and be away 2 or 3 hours and come back pretty tiddly, and I’d have to knock on his door and get his permission. Anyway, a bloke named Max Gardner told me one day that he wanted something in a hurry, so I said you’d be right mate, and I ordered it, just with a phone call. I knew there would be a confirmation order, so I sneaked into his office, well I didn’t sneak, I just went in there and I could see it, and I opened it up, and put it back in the envelope. I went back in that afternoon, when I came to get permission to order all this stuff, which I’d already ordered, and he used to ask me all these interesting questions, like how many of these would they use a year. I just said “I wouldn’t have a clue” and after I said “I didn’t have a clue three or four times”, he’d say “well, you had better order all that”.

So he was an interesting bloke, but then this Costain order - he didn’t give it to me; I knew the order was there, but he didn’t give it to me. I decided that afternoon that I had just about had enough. I went in and said “you haven’t given me all the orders”, he said “yes I have”

and I said "where do you put your envelopes when your finished with them?" He said "in the garbage", then of course I am scratching around in the garbage bin, and he's abusing me and calling me insulting names, and I pulled this order out and said "thanks very much and walked out the door". I came home that night and I rang Bernie Lister and I said "Bernie I don't mind working in the circus, but you shouldn't have the clown managing the place, that's not the right bloke you should have in the top job". He got all stroppy and said I want you down here at 9am in the morning at my office.

I made it down there and he got stuck right into me. He must have found out all my history, because he told me I've been running a big grain company and wasn't used to working for anyone else, and I was this and that, and if I wanted to stay with them I had to learn to work with the boss. And that was it; he didn't want to hear another word about this. So then I came back to get on with my job and it just went from bad to worse. I was about to say I've had enough of this when I thought I would ring Alan Cloke and tell him what's going on - because it's their product you see. So I rang Clokey and I said "look I am going to pull the pin, but I'll tell you what the real story is - I said to him there was stuff that's stored up in the grass, and this kid of Chocos was rolling bushes across the highway and all this sort of thing, and I wasn't allowed to have an office or anything at all."

Geez, then within a couple of hours I had Bernie Lister on the phone saying that I was the new Industrial Manager and that I wasn't to take any notice of Allan Wharten (Choco) and that he had nothing to do with me. I said "well that sounds fine...do I get an office, a chair a table or anything like that?" Bernie said "you get whatever you want, and you tell Alan (Choco) what you want and you get it". So, I swung my weight around a bit for a day or two, and I don't think Wharten ever spoke to me again.

Then he was robbing the company hand over fist, and about 12 months after that the accountant rang me and said they were coming up the next day to get the yellow cab for this bloke - so I said it's a good day for me to go to Ulan. I went out there and I came back and I met Bernie as I walked in. Bernie said "Why didn't you tell me what was going on here!" I said "you told me you didn't want to hear any more about that bloke" and he said "well it cost me a lot of money to say that didn't it!" So things changed altogether after that, and it all became civilised.

So where was their garage?

NB - Opposite the Wayfarer Motel, down the bottom end of Maitland Road there. I think it's all knocked down now - I'm not sure.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

So why would Seth move up into that really hard country?

NB - My guess is there was nothing else left, because naturally when people are settling they don't go up and get the gorge first up. There's some good country here and there around it, there was some good land there, but it was just, rough as hell, and very steep. It didn't have a lot going for it in a way. But I presumed he was one of the last to come and the spot was there.

So who owned this place first as far as the Bray's go?

NB - My Grandfather, Edward George. He owned where the house is, because he built the house. Part of the land in the lease area actually belonged to Val Parkinson, Cliff Parkinson's father.

So how many acres did your Grandfather have here to start with?

NB - That I'm not sure of. There were 700 ever since I have known it.

How old is the house?

NB - The house is now 98 years old I suppose. Will be this year.

RB - The rooms here were all boarded like it is in the hallway, and Mother Bray kept telling Father that there were white ants, but nothing was done until they were leaning against the wall, and they went through the wall, so hence this type of lining.

NB - It was lined with Baltic pine imported from the States, and that was very susceptible to white ants. Someone sprayed underneath it after a while, but that was much later. They found it very early in the piece, and did all sorts of primitive things to get rid of the white ants. But the fella that sprayed it, he was actually using water out of the tap out there to fill his bucket. I came home it was a hot day, just after he'd sprayed underneath it, and just grabbed the hose, and stuck it in my mouth, and I got about as far as the door here and fell over. So I thought, I know how to kill the white ants.

I was just looking as we drove up; it looked like it had a separate kitchen?

NB - It had a separate kitchen out there that was built 4 years after this. This was built first, then the kitchen and dining room was built afterwards. You know how they used to separate the kitchen, because if it burnt down it wouldn't burn the whole house down. So that's why we've got this lovely breezeway that my wife loves every minute when we get the rains through.

So what's the property being used for?

NB - It was a dairy until 1939, and my father's family were all reared here after 1910. Some of them would have been brought home here as babies, I suppose. There were half a dozen

kids - I can't remember I, think there was six of them. Jessie Hogan was one - Pat Hogan's mother.

RB - There was Elsie, Reg, Jessie, Thelma, Percy and Essie. Yes Elsie, the oldest girl was a Passfield. She married and had quite a large family down in Branxton.

NB - Anyway, the history of this place, it was a dairy when Jess was a kid, because she used to have to milk cows. Everything around here was a dairy in those days, even where the mine is going had little dairies on what is now Pat Hogan's property.

Because you could have a few pigs and feed a few calves and have your own milk, and kill a pig every now and then, you were self sufficient. That's what is was all about in those days - getting yourself a feed.

Anyway, in 1939 the dairy was sold, and surprisingly enough I can still remember that quite vividly. They sold the cows down there, I would have only been about 3 years old, and I can still remember them selling the cows down the yards here. The first milking machines in the Hunter Valley were in the old dairy down here.

Then they had sheep. They built a wool shed - Oscar Hogan and his father John Hogan - and they built the wool shed down here - before the dairy was closed I think, I can't remember when the shed was built, but anyway, they built that and it was the only shed around here for a long time. Because shearing used to go on here for 6 months every year when I was a kid, everyone used to bring their sheep around here to be shorn. Then we had sheep until the bottom fell out of cattle in 1972 or 1974, and I sold all of the sheep (well I sold a hell of a lot when the market first came good for sheep and the bottom fell out of cattle) because I thought as soon as the bottom falls right out of cattle, then I'm going to buy some cattle, which is what I did.

So we've had cattle here, and never bought a female since then, just bought bulls and that's what we've had ever since. We did keep a few sheep for killers, we kept about 30 ewes or something, but the dingo's got stuck into them. He liked the lambs better than older sheep, and we didn't like eating the older sheep either, so we sold them. He used to come down here howling around the place. Andrew actually tried to shoot him one day. I think he got a shot in somewhere up there, but I remember it frightened the hell out of Andrew when he heard him howling - because he was a kid then.

RB - And you had pigs.

NB - Oh yeah, we had pigs - I can't forget the pigs, for God's sake. I'll tell you a story about the Erisyphilis. Some bloke caught a wild pig somewhere, and asked my father if he could leave it out here for a day or two until he got back, or something. The wild pig had Erisyphilis which infected all of the pigs.

RB - And then you were doing cropping there for a while.

NB - Oh yeah, I grew a lot of wheat here, and stuff like that; I put a lot of grain in. I cleared the entire place and it was all badly eroded, and the gullies were all very deep gullies. After the late part of the 18th Century, before 1900, when they started the coal mine in Muswellbrook, they got pit props off this place. Prior to that, the Chinese had cleared the whole place.

After the gold rush, the Chinese had nothing to do and nowhere to go, so they came up here and they cleared a lot of land around. I don't know whether they cleared it for Bengalla, it was probably Bengalla by then I think - yeah I think it would have been Keys', because he would have been a big enough bloke to bring these Chinese in. Anyway, they cleared it all, and then it just started growing up again. So all of these trees, that were the diameter of about 6-8 inches were cut for pit props, and carted into Muswellbrook for the mines. Oscar Hogan used to cut a lot on his place for pit props too.

Our place was covered in stumps about 3 ft high, plus the rubbish and stuff, so I cleared all that, and shoved it in these gullies. I had an old wagon that (I learnt a bit of history about it, because it used to be used for carting pigs and calves to Singleton) I used to take it over the bank of the gully until it flipped over sideways far enough so that everything slipped off and into the gully. It filled all the gullies up with rubbish, rocks and timber, and you don't know the gullies are there now - well you know they're there - but they are not like they used to be. They are all fully grassed.

Then later on, I put in 10 miles of contour banks. I borrowed that money from all sorts of sources (I was good with borrowing money). I borrowed money from the soil conservation services and put in the contour banks and a lot of key lines. The key lines for the uninitiated are not quite on the contour - It runs so that the lowest part of the key line is on the top of the ridge so it runs the water onto the top of the ridge (like the old Chinese gold mines - they would run the water out of a creek from way up and around up the side of the hill somewhere). So I did all that and then started farming the place and sowed it down to pasture.

I was working most of the time and I didn't make and money out of the farm. I spent it all on fertilisers - I spent a lot on fertiliser. So this place has come from being the second most badly eroded property in the Hunter Valley in 1950 to what it is now.

That big dam up there that we use to water our garden - it's got a bit of history about it. It was first built by the convicts in the gaol at Bengalla. They came out here and filled it with wheel barrows - probably didn't enjoy it much and they didn't do the job properly. The spillway used to go all the way across the flat up there, and it broke out because the spillway wasn't big enough and went straight through. It was always my ambition to rebuild the dam, but we couldn't rebuild it because the road used to go up there where I have got the spillway now.

Then in 1963, soon after I came back here - we got married in 1963 and I was back here a couple of years before we got married - they moved the road. So as soon as I could (I couldn't do it straight away because I had no money) - but I will actually tell you how I got the money - to build the dam.

When I got these cattle for \$1500, after I sold all the sheep. Malcolm Fraser was the Prime Minister at the time, and he decided that these poor cattle blokes were going broke, so he would give them \$2000 each to anyone who could prove that their only income was from cattle, during a certain time, I hadn't actually sold any cattle, but I had no sheep, and I proved that my only income was from cattle. I got the \$2000 and I didn't want the bank managers to see it. So I went and saw Tony Sumner, an earth moving contractor, and said if "I give you this \$2000 will you build that dam for me", and he did, and it only cost me another \$100, I think. So that dam was originally built by the convicts, I don't know when, but it would be a fair while ago.

RB - You can see evidence of old wall markings, on this side of the dam, where you think the wall might have been.

NB - The wall was in the same place.

RB - As where it is now?

NB - All I did was rebuild it.

RB - Oh, there is sort of rock markings up the other side.

NB - That was old shepherds. In the 19th Century they had shepherds working out here and there were a couple of places where they used to camp. When we grew wheat here we found out because they had a yard there to lock their sheep up at night, and the wheat would grow like mad because of all the fertiliser there. We found old crockery and stuff like that, and where they've got these flat rocks, that's where they had their camp, because they used that as their camp fire. They had a little hut there. That's how we found out where my great grandfather first lived, because there were still bits of stumps and flat rocks and things there.

So is that still visible?

NB - Where my great grandfather lived?

Where the shepherds camps were.

NB - I can take you to where they were, but it's not exactly visible as such, because I've ploughed it all up now - but I can take you to where they were. There was one on the bank of the dam up there.

So why do you think the dam was built by convicts?

NB - I was told it was built by the convicts.

I'm not questioning you, I'm just curious as to where the information came from.

NB - My father told me.

The same with the Chinese?

NB - Well, I was told, probably by my Father too about them being here. I didn't read it in a book. I only know what I was told.

These are questions that you've generated by what you've said. So what type of timber were they cutting here for pit crops and that?

Only Gum - Red Gum. Not much Iron Bark. I don't think they would care much once they got passed where they were.

I don't know, I was just curious as what the predominant timber was here?

Oh, the predominant timber was Box and Red Gum - Yellow Box and Red Gum, Kurrajong and there are Iron Bark ridges - we've got a little bit out the back, but not much.

Where do you think the Dingo might have come from?

Oscar Hogan's. There were Dingos around here for a while. They were up in that mountain.

What, in actual Anvil Hill?

NB - Well, this bloke [*dingo*] came from out there, and there were a couple of them out there. There were a couple of them up there at Geoff Gowings at Black Jack Mountain. He got a trapper named Rose who came down there and whistled him out and shot him, or trapped him or did something. No, they had a couple out the back of Hogan's there for a good while.

RB - Cause Hogan's had sheep out there too.

NB - Yeah, they did have sheep. Geoff Gowings was a pure bread Dingo, but the ones at Hogan's were crossed with Alsatians or something - not pure blood dingoes. But they only howled, they didn't bark.

I was very surprised, because you think of Dingo's are more towards the Barrington, and that they would have been all killed out.

RB - Well Harry has Dingo's doesn't he?

NB - He's had troubles with Dingo's up there, and dogs. Well see, it's got that way down around here now that most of the Dingo's are crossed with something else - but you don't see them like you do in the outback where there are pure bread Dingo's. This one that Andrew was chasing, he was not a real yellow dog, he was darker colour.

When you had the community shearing shed here, was there a charge for that?

NB - I don't think there was a charge for it, I think they just had to put their own fuel in the motor.

RB - Who did the cooking? I ask that because down at Temora where my grandparents lived, they took it in turns to do the shearing at the different sheds there. And when it came time for the next door neighbours to do the shearing, the lady of the house refused to do the cooking. So, my grandfather built a wagon for my grandmother to live in, and for her to do the cooking for the shearers - and they still have the wagon, it's a magnificent wagon, its great big wagon. So they would take the wagon over to the next door neighbours, and she would live in that and cook for all the staff that were there.

NB - She probably got paid for that I would imagine. What happened here, it depended on whose sheep you were shearing, I think. See Waters are relations - they were one of them. Hordern's, you know Bob Hordern from Brogheda used to shear here at first. In fact Bob split his head open on a windless when he was about 14. We used to dip our sheep out at Oscar Hogan's, because he had a dip. We have dipped here since, but this was early in the piece. Everyone at Spring Creek shore their sheep here.

RB - Getting away from sheep a bit, they used to have a communal cricket ground here, and tennis. So they would take it in turns each weekend playing. The cement cricket pitch is still over in the paddock. The boys uncovered it, to try and play cricket on it - the thing was they had this big mound of dirt all around the cricket pitch. But it's a beautiful cement cricket pitch. Then they had little amenities over in the corner, they've all disappeared now, but they used to come and play cricket, and they had a tennis court out here.

NB - No it was over near the hay shed in those days.

RB - Oh, in those days. So yes, they sort of would play the sports each weekend.

NB - From here to Bunnan, all through that area we had cricket teams. Because you would need a lot more people to run a farm in those days. See there were always people working here when I was a kid, on the staff here and Highfield.

So would this have been the base for the Spring Creek Cricket Club?

NB - That's what it would have been, yeah.

It comes up in the early Chronicles about the Spring Creek Cricket Club?

NB - Well that's what it is, that concrete over in the flat there.

With the shearers shed, was there shearing quarters there too?

NB - No.

They would just travel in for the day would they?

NB - No, they would sleep out the back there. They didn't have any regulations about how they slept in those days; they slept the same as we do, on the veranda or something.

They couldn't have been unionised shearers?

NB - Ah, I don't think Mick Moloney could spell Union.

So who would have been some of the shearers here then?

NB - Mick Moloney was one I remember because he used to smoke this horrible tobacco - which stunk like hell. He would always have another kid, every year - he had, oh I don't know how many children - but he would always have to go home one night through the week to see the Mrs because she'd just had another baby. He spoiled her a bit. 'Wilf' Galvin was another bloke who used to shear here. There were only two shearing stands. George Bray shore here after the First World War, and he was obviously a relation.

So did you have an orchard here too?

NB - Yes, we did have an orchard, but it didn't last very long, because they'd pump the water from the well over there and it was before people knew much about water quality. Dad thought he was doing wonders. I still remember when I was a kid, Oscar Hogan and this old truck, took our load of wool to Newcastle, and brought these three quarter galvanised iron pipes back, some of which are under the ground here. We ran the water up to the house here and the shearing sheds - which was a big deal. That's why I wanted to put the dam in. Mum didn't have a garden here, because the water was too salty.

RB - She had a garden here for the first 12 months and then everything died off. They had the water tested after that. But she had a beautiful garden, with Snap Dragons - but it doesn't last long. I can remember the orchard being here when we got married, but there was not a lot.

RB - People are saying now, the whole area is changing because of progress etc. In days gone by you had people looking after their properties, and mowing here and there. Where as now, there is going to be lots of vacant places and the grass is not mowed, and with such a good season, people are thinking that fire risk is going to be a big problem. But, as Neville was saying, the whole area, especially out Wybong was just dairy, after dairy, after dairy.

NB - There used to be a milk and cream depot just up the road here, at the junction of Castlerock Road and Wybong Road. Everyone brought their cream there. There's a 90 ft well just at the top of that dam on our place - which has now fallen in. It was all slab well - which would have been quite interesting putting the bottom slabs in, I would have thought. Anyway, that was where the good water was - they tested it and it was like tank water. In the 1900 drought, or the federation drought, that was the only water in the whole of this Valley - everyone had to bring their cattle down here in the federation drought. So this is not the worst drought we've ever had, it's just a bad one.

Are there any other wells on the property?

NB - They have been put down since, but basically the wells that have been put down since, they were all connected to the water that runs down the creek. I have got a well just down the front of the house here, which is the same water that runs down the creek, but after a while it doesn't run on top of the surface of the creek. It's has no water in it a long time before the well goes dry, and the well didn't really go completely dry this drought, but it was almost. You could pump for 15 minutes every 4 hours at the end of the drought.

RB - There's a well over on this side of the bridge, just over at the power pole over there, and it was slab as well. I've got a photo of Andrew and Neville down the well, and they went down (I don't know if it was Neville or Andrew that went down); a snake poked its head out through the cracks. It's all caved in after we had a huge downfall of rain, and the creek came down. It's all caved in.

NB - It was no good anyway, that well wouldn't last - I thought if I could divine a new site, it might be better. I didn't know then that I could divine water. I divined this one down here, and it's a lot better - it's only the same depth as the one over there. But there are little streams and bigger streams. There are two streams there- there's one there, and one a bit further over that's were slab wells years ago, but not very reliable. This one down here's not too bad as it is a different stream.

What do you use for divining?

NB - Two bits of wire. But I don't like doing it too much, because it makes me feel sick. It gives me a headache and makes me feel as if I've got the flu. I do it occasionally, but I don't tell everyone I can do it, but it doesn't matter because if they ring me up, I'll just say no. I don't do it, so I say the same thing.

But I know someone else that can do it - Craig Manwaring can do it, because I took him with me. He wanted me to divine water for him one day and to anyone that wants' me to divine water, I say here you try it - other people don't know they can do it. When they learn a bit about the area, a minority of people can divine the same as me. We've got a sister-in-law who married Robyn's young brother that was a medical professor, and had a reason for everything. She wasn't sure about this diving bit and I said "come with me Eileen, I'll show you how to divine". She tried it, and it didn't work, so I grabbed her wrist, while she had the wires in her hand, and it almost pulled the skin off her hand. So she's mystified by it and, she doesn't talk about it anymore.

I'm curious with the sheep dip, was that just a plunge type?

NB - Yeah, it was a plunge dip.

And the one at Hogan's?

NB - It was a plunge dip. I had to get ours filled in, because I had Gavin's 21st Birthday party down in the shearing shed, and I slashed everything except for around the dip. There was

grass about 6 ft high, and I thought no one would go through there. Then one young lady wanted to go to the toilet, and not be seen, and she fell in the dip. Her boyfriend didn't like the trip home, he thought she smelt a bit. So I thought I better fill that in.

So what chemicals would they use in it years ago?

NB - Don't tell this girl, but they had arsenic and dieldrin. Arsenic first, and then Dieldrin.

Besides the shepherds hut over there near the dam and this house, were there remains of any other buildings around here?

NB - Not that I know of.

Are you aware of any burials on the property?

NB - No.

Besides the Bray's?

NB - They're not on this property, they are up Dry Creek.

What about other properties around here, are you aware of any?

RB - Doyle's haven't got any, have they?

NB - No, there's only those graves up there at Woodland Grove, where Harry lives, that's across from his house there. There's other's there - I'm sorry! I can't tell you too much about who they are. There were a couple of people buried on this side of the mountain - do you know where Brogheda is? You turn left there, and go over the creek. Go up Dry creek, well you turn off to the right, and it goes around the right hand side of the mountain and Dry creek goes up the left hand side, and there's a couple of people that were buried there.

RB - Where Fred Bray and Jeanie Gallagher came from up Powers Road, and Graham Bray.

NB - Yeah, Graham Bray still lives there. See what happened with my great grandfather, in his will, he left Highfield (which was Woodland Grove and Highfield). He left that to a couple of sons, the others he gave a certain amount of money. I think it was \$25 quid, and they bought blocks of land around there, that's how Fred started there, and Don started. My Grandfather, he might have blown his, because he just went droving. I'm not sure what happened to his, because he didn't own any land around here, until he bought this to the best of my knowledge.

So you mentioned there was a few, was that just those couple?

NB - There was just two Graves there. Joan Hogan, you know, Pat's wife that died a year or two ago - she, I think had a fair idea who they were.

Was there anything to mark them?

NB - I can take you to where they are, there is just a couple of bits of timber or something.

RB - Gordon Gallagher would probably know wouldn't he?

NB - No it's up to young Graham Bray, I suppose.

It's just that in a few years, these people, no one will know, and that's gone, and that's one of the reasons why I'm interested?

NB - It's on the left hand side of Powers Road, around the mountain.

What about mechanising the farms. Did your grandfather use draft horses?

NB - Oh, yeah, we had a lot of draft horses. When I was a kid, that was one of my jobs -we had to muster the draft horses before we went to school, and harness them all up.

RB - This is the photo up here on the wall of Father Bray, ploughing down in the front paddock just over here.

NB - Yes, I can remember stripping wheat with 6 horses - 3 in the back and 3 in the front, pulling the stripper. That only ripped the heads off the wheat, then it got stacked in a heap and then you had to shove it through this thing to separate the grain. This fellow named Bill Bates had that, and everyone used to help each other - we had a big crop, we had 8 acres, we had the biggest crop.

RB - I have a photo out the back of Neville as a 12 year old skinning rabbits, and there is a photo of his mother skinning rabbits as well. So I've kind of made it a duo photo.

NB - Oh yeah, the rabbit bizzo.

You just reminded me about the rabbits.

NB - Well the rabbit situation - we had as many rabbits as anyone else. I had a greyhound dog and a blue cattle dog, and they'd get the way that they would only chase a coloured rabbit because there were so many. But if they spun around, the cattle dog would get them - that was a pretty good combination. I used to trap rabbits a lot - I put myself through Hawkesbury with the money I got from trapping rabbits - it was not bad money, particularly just after the war and during the war.

We used to gut the rabbits and hang them across the wire, and pull a Hessian screen over them. Sometimes you'd skin them and sell the skins. There was a rabbit truck which came around every day and picked up these rabbits and took them into what we call the freezing works, and they finished up down in Sydney.

I know when we rode our horses into the pictures, these wires between trees became a bit of a hazard, because sometimes, you'd see a horse gallop past, with no one on it, and you knew he was back at the last rabbit screen because the horse had gone under the wire. It

happened fairly often too, because no one ever told you where they put the screens. We went in after dark, and come home after dark.

Anyway, we used to poison them with Strychnine on thistle roots. I can remember one Christmas day we skinned about 1000 rabbits. Just before myxomatosis came in, my father said the one thing we've got to do is get rid of the rabbits off this place - he had a real obsession with getting rid of the rabbits. Anyway, I thought that was a bad idea, because I used to trap them and make money selling them. Anyway he netted the place in, spent a fortune netting the place in, and we chased the last rabbits, filled all the burrows in by hand, and then they got myxomatosis and we didn't really need all that. We had just finished spending all that money, when myxomatosis came in.

RB - It was not long after we were married, when suddenly there was a stump up the paddock there one hot summers day, I think we were working with sheep or something, and...

NB - Can I interrupt a sec - I'll tell you a story, this is nothing to do with rabbits - I'll tell you that in a minute. But anyway, my father was really strong on OH&S (health and safety) - he used to measure the strychnine with his pocket knife, and then he'd wipe it on his trousers, and peel his orange. While he was doing that, he'd tell us kids, two grains of this will kill you. We used to stand there and watch him, waiting for him to die.

Anyway, what Robyn's talking about, we used to poison crows with SAP (sodium, arsenic and phosphours), and phosphorus was flammable. Someone tossed an empty tin of it in the stump there one day, and the stump just burst into flames. It was 117° Fahrenheit on the verandah here that day, and the stump just, well up she went.

RB - But also after we were married we had a fumigator.

NB - Oh yeah, we had it a long time before then - a charcoal fumigator; we used to fumigate the burrow. We had that when we were kids - that was my job, to turn the handle.

RB - But we were using it after we were married there, and I had my sister over here staying, and she went out with Neville, up around the sugarloaf field - a trip around the slopes of sugarloaf where there were trying to find these burrows and fumigate them.

NB - Now, if you want to know about the mechanisations. In 1949, we bought a Fergie (Ferguson) tractor, because my brother was very mechanical, and very forward thinking. He was 2 - 2.5 years older than me. So in '49 he talked dad into buying this Fergie Tractor - it was one of the first that came to Muswellbrook, from a guy named Don Jennison down in Skelletar Street. That was our first mechanisation, with a 2 burrow disc plough behind it, and we just went on from there. That was the first mechanisation with a motor in it, but we did have a motor here for sawing fire wood - it was a 1904 model, a 'new way' it was called. It

was good when you had your mates here, because we used to hook a bit of fencing wire to a bit of wire tied from the spark plug over to the fence and then just ask them to come to the fence and see if they could get through.

On the rabbits did you ever use Larvacide?

NB - Yep, it's heavier than air, and is supposed to not make you sick, but it does.

So what would be a good catch of rabbits, for trapping?

NB - I used to set about 100 traps a night, when I was a kid. I used to run them night and morning, because I remember one night I was running them, and I fell over in the creek up there, and the lantern went out, because all you had was a kerosene lantern to wander around. It was as dark as the inside of a duck, so I had to sleep there for the night, so as soon as it got daylight enough, I raced home and jumped into bed so mum wouldn't know I've been out in the paddock all night, because she used to go crook about things like that. But I used to set about 100 traps in one night, and you'd nearly fill them all up. If you were running them twice, you'd usually get at least 100 rabbits. There were a lot of rabbits... no shortage of rabbits. I used to ride a horse around, and sit sort of side saddle on the horse, and they'd be sitting in their squats, and I would just jump off and catch them sometimes. Another bloke used to wander around with a stick in his hand, because if you walk past them, they'd think you weren't going to worry them, so then you'd just turn around and bop them. You just got to learn their habits.

We had ferrets to - Glen had ferrets, he loved ferrets. Glen and I used to go ferreting. They were a waste of time really because you'd spend half your time digging the ferret out of the burrow.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

So the Community here, I see you have the spring Creek Fire Truck out there, so I assume you're the captain are you?

NB - No, no, I'm not the captain. My father was the captain since I was a little boy, then when he tossed it in, Joe Moore took it on.

RB - When he was captain did he used to keep the truck here?

NB - No, they didn't have trucks then. But Glen Fellows became captain, because I remember when I used to work for ESCO we had a fire brigade meeting up here and 55 people turned up to it. We wanted someone that didn't have a job, and that lived on their farm and just made enough living out of their farm. Well, there was no one other than Joe Moore (who just resigned because he was too old) and Glen was nearest and the most serious one to put his hand up.

The story about the truck being here - see, we weren't organised - in the old days, we just had a fire brigade. It was called the Wybong Fire Brigade because we lived in Spring Creek and Wybong. Then gradually we might get a pump and a tank or something. Then they got more organised, and we had our first Fire Control Officer come to Muswellbrook, and he got onto these old second hand fire trucks from Gosford. I filled it up with petrol in Gosford, and it ran out before I got home, so it wasn't a real big tank. Then they started giving us these diesel trucks, because petrol trucks are not really good for fighting fires if they vaporise at the wrong time - they can be a bit hard to get a way from. So, this was a fully equipped diesel, and I donated some land to them over here, to build a shed. An ideal place - because I pump water from this well here, to the top of the hill up here. It was beside that, beside the road, you could fill the tank, fill everything - I thought it was great. But it turned out that it was where the road used to be many years ago, and it was only half transferred to my father, or someone, and it was too much trouble- they couldn't build it there, because no one knew who owned the land. So I donated them another bit of land, and they put up a few pegs in there, and then they landed out here with the truck, and they said "Oh, we haven't got around to building your shed yet, but we've got the truck, as long as you can guarantee to put it in the shed where it's weather proof",. I said "come down and we'll stick it in the shed - we went down there, and it wouldn't fit in, so we had to cut a bit out of the floor so we could get it in there. So I said, "she'll be right, get the chainsaw out, cut her out, and whack her in", and it's been there ever since. So that's the history about the truck being there. So I am the custodian of the truck.

So who is the captain?

NB - Glen Fellows at this stage, but he's just sold out to Centennial, and moved out into another area, so I don't know what's going to happen. Young Jonathan Moore might give us a hand; we'll sort that out when the time comes.

So how long has the rural fire group been going?

NB - Oh, after the war. Possibly before the war. It would be more than my life - the '57 fires, they were very well organised. I wasn't here at the time, but, on my 21st Birthday I finished up fighting a fire, and everyone else at the party did. It was after the war I think they got organised, but possibly a bit organised before that, I suppose.

You mentioned the cricket club, were there any other sporting groups around here?

NB - No, it was only cricket and tennis as far as I know.

RB - Then they had the horse sports didn't they?

NB - Oh, horses yeah. Well there were horse sports with everything, you know, they had a horse sports area. Rodeo ground or whatever you wanted to call them. There was one out there at Brogheda, up the road a bit. There was one at Baearmi because Col and I used to go to all these things - you know, Scone Rodeo and all that sort of thing. Everyone had horses in those days.

RB - So it was at Brogheda, and then it sort of moved down out to Manobalai, and sort of Wybong area. So then they had these big days where everyone came with their horses and organised a dance that night.

So how long has the Wybong hall been going, do you know?

NB - Ah, it was there when I was a kid, and I can't really remember it being built. But, it's not nearly as violent as it used to be. There used to be a boxing match there every dance, and these blokes would get stuck into it out back. I still remember one night when Lance Ireland came into the room and grabbed Oscar Hogan. He said, "Come out here Occy, you whack 'em and I'll stack 'em". Occy could whack pretty hard. So they sorted it out, and put them under control, and they'd be right. Once they were half asleep, they'd behave themselves. We used to do some terrible things out there.

There was this bloke out there named Harry Claire who used to get as 'full as a goog' - you know really full. He would come down in a horse and sulky, and we had a five wire fence around the hall. So we shoved the sulky shafts through the fence and put the horse on the other side of the fence and told him to get in and the horse would take him home - he couldn't work out too well why the sulky wouldn't go.

You mentioned your father was involved in a lot of organisations, including the Shire. How long was he on the Shire?

NB - It's all recorded in there somewhere. Where's that Hall of Fame? - he's in that. It would tell you all about it I suppose. I was invited to it, but we were overseas somewhere at the time, and I'm not sure where it is.

RB - It was way back in the 1950's.

NB - Oh yeah, he was certainly there in the '55 floods, because that's when he got his MBE - about then. So I don't know to be honest. I was never really interested in his public life because I reckoned it just sent the family broke - he was in the paper and things like that. So it didn't sit real well with me, I didn't take much interest in it.

RB - Because he was very involved in the Lodge - the blue and the red.

NB - And there was also the Show Society, and the County Council, and the Ambulance, and the Polo Club - do you want a few more, I can't remember.

I don't think he ever made it to the PP Board. But I know that it was very rare for him to be home at night. Because I just got that way if he was home at night there was something wrong. Except possibly Sunday night they had no meetings. Probably on the Oil Committee, anything, he was there. So I'm not real good at meetings.

What about rural power, when did start?

NB - It came here in 1963 I think, is that right Robyn, or was it earlier than that?

RB - It was a little bit earlier here, but you were doing a lot of the carting of the poles around people's places, at the time of our marriage.

NB - We were married in '63, so it might have been '62 - somewhere about then. There was no electricity out here. We had kerosene lamps when I was a kid - God knows how I did my homework, but that's what we were used too. We have got a couple up there now, when we have a blackout we turn them on, and we can't see. But then we got a hurricane lamp that you pump up - you know the type campers use. Then we had a 32V lighting plant, which is the reason why I've got gold in my teeth, because I came home here one night, and the lights were out, nothing was working, and I went out there, and the thing backfired and pelted a crank handle through my mouth. So then we got the power on, and got rid of that, and that was quite exciting.

RB - And they had a slow combustion stove out the back here, so we sort of had a wood box, and you would fill the wood box from the outside. They also had a tank stand, just out here, with a small tank on it.

NB - And a little hand pump with a lever on it. My sister didn't know how to use it, or she said she didn't. But I used to always try and make sure the tank was empty when she wanted a bath so she'd have to use it. About toilets...I remember we first had a toilet down the paddock there, which had a 4 gallon tin under it, and we buried it. The only hazard with that was we had rooster that wouldn't let my sister out of the toilet, so someone always had to go and get her out of it.

RB - Not only that, Lynette used to not like to do the washing up, and she'd been down to the toilet, and there was a knock at the door, and Mother Bray thought it was Lynette, and said "come in pet". When she turned around it was a swagman. So she was frightened then, because she didn't know what had happened to the daughter.

NB - That was soon sorted out, he was a good swagman - we had a lot of swagmen here. But the toilet upgrade business - we then got onto a chemical toilet, you would just put bicarb soda in it then. It had it go into a pit and one of my Hawkesbury mates used to always wear those Baxter riding boots down there, and we had a bit of a packing case over the top of this shallow pit, and he put one foot through it. Forever after he had one boot he couldn't polish, but he didn't have enough money to buy another one, so his two boots always looked different. Then we upgraded to a septic system out on the verandah there, and since then, we've got an ensuite in here. So we're modern now and all up to Council specifications too.

They've checked you out?

NB - Oh, yeah, they came out and checked.

What about asphaltting of the road?

NB - It was done as far as our gate, and the old man was Shire President then, and everyone thought he did it on purpose, but it was because they were going to build a bridge. We used to have a causeway there, and we would be the "puller outers" - we used to have to go over and pull people out of the creek. Except for the guy that abused me one day, because he said I should have been there to pull him out, and I said "it's not my job to pull you out; I ought to leave you there". Anyway, we argued for about 10 minutes, then I came home to get the tractor, and just as I backed in to get him, it washed his truck down the creek. I said "that'll teach you to fight with me". But anyway, in 1963 or thereabouts Spring Creek bridge was built, and the bitumen came to our place - oh, I don't know when it came out here, I can remember the Clifford brothers building the road. I would have been a kid; it would have been after the war.

Have you found any signs of Aboriginal Occupation?

NB - No, not really.

Is there anything else we should know?

NB - If you want to know about just the specifics of the Hogan family down at Anvil Hill, Pat Hogan's the only bloke that would know. I can tell you a lot about that area out there, but not as much as he possibly can. I can tell you probably as much as he can, but he might have the dates a bit better than me. I know the Ray's were out there for 3 generations, and the Hogan's were out there for 3 generations.

This used to be a post office and telephone exchange out in the old laundry out there at one stage when I was a kid. The mail used to come to here, and they dumped the mail off here that had to go around the Roxburgh area. We used to deliver it on a horse and sulky. That was 16 miles and 32 gates. By the time you turned 8, the old man says "you've grown up now; you do the mail run on Saturdays". So we used to do it, or put up with it. With the sulky's - because all these gates, you'd chase the horse through the gate, and then run up behind the sulky and jump over the back to save stopping twice. But the horse didn't always slow up enough, so we wrecked a few sulkies.

So was this an official Post Office?

NB - I don't know - it was a telephone exchange. Jessie Hogan used to operate the exchange. I'm never real sure if it was an official Post Office, or a sorting thing, or what it was. I've heard two different stories about the Spring Creek Post Office, and you might be able to help me out here.

One was that the first Spring Creek Post Office was up at Bill Bates there, on Spring Creek Road, off Castlerock Road, and the other was that it was out here. Now I can never remember it up at Bates' (it certainly wasn't there in my lifetime). This was a sorting place, but we'd get stuff addressed to Spring Creek, and it came here. We didn't have stamps or anything like that, but I don't really know what it was to be honest. I can't really tell you. But I

know later on, the Wybong Post Office was the same sort of thing. It was there when we were kids. When we were kids there was a sorting place here (we used to call it a post office, but whether it was or not, I don't know) Wybong and Manobalai.

The Manobalai one was also used as a phone exchange, and this was used as a telephone exchange until Jessie Hogan got married, which was a fair while ago, because Pat's six months older than me, and he's not the oldest kid in the family. Col used to do a mail run here once and the Wybong Post Office was still operating then - you'd have to stop there, and sort the mail that went past there. Sort it all in Muswellbrook that went as far as the Wybong Post Office.

You see what happened when Jessie got married, was we had to put our own wires from here into Muswellbrook, and we used the same posts. There was one wire that came out here and it was one party line thing. So then, when she got married, because no one wanted to operate this exchange, we ran 5 wires out. There was one to Saxonvale, Gardenridge, Bundabulla and Springvale. You wouldn't get each others rings, but you couldn't both use the phone at once. You would hear everyone talking at once.

There was a bloke named Keith Dowling, who had a wife, Flow, and he was a Sydney businessman, and she was a bit of an alcoholic. So he bought a farm up here, and he installed her up here you see. She used to listen to all these conversations. Old Flow heard Helena Doyle talking on the phone talking to some bloke somewhere. She couldn't resist it, when she heard, so she rang her back about 5 minutes later when she hang up, to give her all the advice about how to hang onto this bloke, because she thought he might make a good husband for her. This old Flow, she was a funny old thing.

Dad sent me up to see her one day, when I was about 12 or 14. I had to go up there on a horse, and she had one of these great big dishes, about 3 ft deep and 3 ft wide. She was leaning over it, mixing up feed for her geese, sloppy looking stuff. So as I rode up there, I saw this ram lining her up and I thought I had better stand back and watch this. He hit her fair in the backside, and put her head in this stuff that she was mixing up for the geese. She pulled her head out and it was dripping off her everywhere. So I came home and told Dad I couldn't find her because there was no way I was going to stay there and talk to her after that.

Who used to sort the mail, can you remember?

NB - Whoever was told to sort it, usually us kids, I think. There weren't that many people on the run. Kerry Packer's old man was one - Frank Packer. Kerry and Clive used to come up here; they were at the stud down here. They were a bit younger than me, but I knew them as kids. That's all changed now, there's only us left, as originals. But I'll tell you a funny story about the mail man if you like an interesting story.

Gordon Leeds owned Russia when he won the Melbourne Cup in 1946, and whenever you delivered the mail (we were only kids) you'd tie the horse up outside, and you take the mail inside to the kitchen, and have a drink of water, or a bit of cake or something. So I went into the kitchen with Mrs Leeds and gave her the cheque from the Melbourne Cup, and she was all excited as she opened the cheque and yelled out "oh Gordon, we've got the cheque". Then for some strange reason she threw the cheque in the fire instead of the envelope. So they had to go to a fair bit of trouble to get that cheque replaced, and I think from memory it was 5,000 pounds, but I'm not positive about that. The Melbourne Cup itself, they brought it here, we had the school on top of the hill, and they took the cup up there for us all to have a look at it. I knocked the cup off a table by accident and it had a ding in it. They brought it back to Muswellbrook here about two or three years ago and I said to Gordon's grandson "has that cup still got a ding in it?" and he said yes, the family's been mystified about how it got there. I said I will buy you a beer and tell you how it happened.

So where was that property?

NB – Glen Fellow's place over the hill at Saxonvale, where the old stables are. He came back here after they won the cup for a little while, and then I think he went to America. They sold him for 100, 000 quid or something. Big chestnut horse he was.

When Col and I were kids we had a fellow named Cliff Bailey working here, and anyway, Col and I had this horse, and a little wagon thing that you pull behind you. We hooked the ropes up behind this horse, over near the front gate there, and I was sitting in the wagon, and Col was on the horse, and he went full bolt. He told me he wasn't going to, but he did. He went full bolt over here, and Cliff and Dad were down at the wool shed, and Cliff turned around to Dad and said "Reg, do you want to have the last look at your two kids".

You made it?

NB - Well I'm still alive.

It's a wonder you didn't loose some teeth. Did you keep the dinky upright?

NB - I stayed in it, rode it all the way through. I thought I was doing alright. I wished he hadn't gone so fast though.

RB - Headley Brown used to work out here as well.

NB - Oh, he only used to come out here with Col. He was a mate of Col's.

Robyn- Cause Col had his own business with the Milk truck, used to go out around Baerami and Myambat, picking up milk and cream. He left here at 16 or 17 I think, and went out and got a job, so he used to do the milk run out there.

NB - He was always a truckie. I remember once he had this old '38 Chevy truck, and it was long before they had bitumen going up the Rosgole Mountain, we had this load of cattle on.

I was driving this truck up there, and Col said to me, "you might have a bit of trouble when you get up here, it's pretty steep". I didn't realise quite what he meant, but it was really steep, and it was fairly loose gravel. I was in the last gear I had left in this truck, and so I started looking for something that I could skid back onto, because I reckoned I would never make the top of the hill and finally, the truck coughed its last breath and it died, and I went screaming back down the hill with all these cattle. I hit this rock that I had picked out, and I hit it so hard that half the cattle went over the back of the truck. So Col and I spent the rest of the day chasing cattle around the mountain.

What about the wine industry here, when did it sort of start?

RB - 1960's wasn't it? McGuigan's?

NB - Hang on a minute - when was it the Prime Minister drowned himself, Harold Holt, when was that? Well all I can tell you is, the first I knew about wine in the Upper Hunter up here was Penfolds . Harold Holt came out here, and it was all gravel roads then, but they sprayed it all with water, and graded it, and fiddled around like they had never done for us, so that he could drive out there and open the winery. So if you can find out when he was Prime Minister, it would have been a year or two before that.

RB - Well obviously the road wasn't sealed then at that time.

NB - No it wasn't all sealed, but it might have been sealed to our gate.

RB - Our gate then was it?

NB - Well it wouldn't have been past here if it was. When was he Prime Minister? I don't know, anyway, you can check that out. It certainly wasn't sealed passed here at that stage, because I remember Jessie Hogan saying that I hope I'm still alive when they tar the road to Anglevale which as it turned out, was tarred for a fair while before she died.

RB - Did Neville mention to you that the grandfather who was a drover died of Hydatid disease?

NB - Yeah, he died of Hydatid disease, feeding to sheep, a few dogs, patting the dog, and he got it too.

And he died around here?

NB - Yeah, he's buried in Sydney. Wait a minute, he's buried in Muswellbrook, and it's my great grandfather that's buried in Sydney. Yeah, he's buried in Muswellbrook.

RB - The original Seth Bray that came out from England is buried in Waverly.

Do you know why?

RB - Well he was living down there with his wife in Sydney. Harriett Bray was his wife, so they're down there, and we found out where they are. So I know the numbers and where to go too.

NB - I went looking for my grandfather's grave, because my grandmother was buried next to it. I remember when she died, I think it was 1950, and I had a pretty fair idea where it was.

RB - We were looking in the wrong department there.

NB - I didn't have a proper look, I will go back there one day. See I've had arthritis, and a knee replacement, and until I started taking witch doctor pills for the arthritis, I couldn't walk real good the last few years, and I didn't have much time before that to go looking for graves. Now that I'm taking Emu oil and Glucosamine I can nearly run from here to the gate and back. If I'd got onto it sooner, I'd still have my own knee I think.

That's what I meant to ask, the freezing works, was that Denman or Muswellbrook?

NB - There was one in Muswellbrook, down there near the Hunter Hotel. And there was one in Denman, near the first street, this side of the first street at this end.

Robyn- Kenilworth Street.

Neville- Kenilworth Street. Just this side of Kenilworth Street near the railway line there. There was one in Muswellbrook, and later on there was another one in Muswellbrook, down in Market street, but I don't know that there was too many rabbits. When we had rabbits I think there was a freezing works, you'd probably know better than me, but I think it was near the Hunter Hotel there somewhere.

Who used to run that?

NB - Oh, I don't know, I know Goldie North owned the one in Denman.

What about the bloke going around picking them up?

NB - Well there was a bloke, who must have been going to Denman, because I think there was a Goldie bloke, well we used to call him 'Goldie', who picked the rabbits up at one stage, but there could have been others. I think ours must have gone to Denman, because I remember this Goldie fellow. Don't know how he got that name, but I think it was passed down from father to son.

RB - Can I ask when you had the dairy there, how many cows you had?

NB - Well the ones that were doing milking, aren't alive anymore, they might have remembered. I don't really know. I have no idea.

APPENDIX i
Current Oakwood Home Photos

















APPENDIX C-5

John Cruickshank Transcript

Interviewee: **John Cruickshank**
Association with Study Area: **Residence ID 138 in Anvil Hill EA**
Date of Interview: **7 February 2008**
Interview venue: **"Callatoota Estate", 2666 Wybong Road, Denman**
Interviewers: **Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker**

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

John, what is your full name and the year you were born?

John Hugh Farquharson Cruickshank - It's a mouthful. Born on 9th June 1927, in Hobart.

In Hobart? Well that starts up a question. How did you get such a range of names?

My Father's name was Hugh, and early on in the family history the Farquharson name was very common. In fact, going back a number of generations, my great, great, great, great grandmother and, her brother and a fellow called Farquharson were very rich, owners of British East India Company ships and they each had large properties in Dorset. They have all gone now. So the Farquharson name is fairly common in my family.

It hasn't done me a lot of good, except I had some trouble at school; you know everyone teased me about it.

So who were your parents?

Hugh Cruickshank and Delia Wedd. They both lived in Tasmania. He was a shift engineer at the power station at Waddamana. My mother, straight out of teachers college, went there to teach at the one teacher school, and he was a bachelor. So it was almost inevitable. She put him off as long as she could.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

I have two sisters.

What were their names?

Elaine Mary and Sheila Donaldson. I had a brother who died at the age of 6 weeks of whooping cough.

Are they still in Tasmania?

One lives in Hobart, and one lives in Brisbane.

So does your family go back further in Tasmania?

My great grandfather retired from the Indian army and went to Tasmania in 1885. His was the second generation of the family to serve in the Indian Army.

And when he retired in Tasmania, did he go on the land did he?

He did eventually. He became the first Registrar of the University of Tasmania. He brought a property after a few years, on the edge of Hobart - at Glenorchy. He planted about 25 acres of apple orchard, which was the family orchard for a couple of generations.

So where did you go to school then?

I spent the first 9 years in a small village called Waddamana in the middle of Tasmania, where the power station was. We moved to Hobart when I was about 9, and I went to The Friends' School there, which is the school my father went to, and some of his father's brothers. My sisters went there too.

So at school were you involved in any School Cadets or anything like that?

It was a Quaker school so we didn't have any school cadets, but during the war I joined the Air Training Corps when I was 16..

So, the air training scheme, how long were you in that for?

About 18 months. It was established to provide initial training for the Air Force. I joined at the age of 16 in 1943. It was the next year it became very obvious the RAAF wasn't the way to go if you wanted to get into the action, because the training was too long. So I joined the navy when I was 17.

So how long did you serve for?

A couple of years. I retired from the navy at the ripe old age of 19.

So what did you do then?

I went to University to study engineering.

It never ceases to amaze me the different things people have done in their lives.

Oh, well my father was an engineer, and his father, and his father, so I really didn't have much choice.

So after you finished Uni, where did you work?

At Uni I got fairly heavy involved in student affairs - it was easy to do in a small university. In my last year I was elected President of the students union.

I was convinced I wanted to work for myself, whereas everyone else wanted to join the Hydro Electric Commission or the Public Works Dept. etc. I discovered that there was a product that I'd never heard of called Wood Flour which was an important component in Bakelite. It's like a moulding powder which was the principal plastic in those days. So I did some research, and found that it was all made in Scandinavia and imported, and it could be quite expensive. So I borrowed 50 pounds from the bank in 1949 - and went to Sydney and spoke to the forestry people. It is a very fine powder made out of the waste from the soft wood saw milling. I discovered that there were forests in various places in NSW, VIC, SA, and in the

ACT. Well, the Department of the Interior almost bent over backwards to get an industry established in Canberra and they offered a very good deal. So I then went back and managed to persuade a company in Melbourne to back me, when I graduated. They sent me overseas for three months in 1951 to investigate the industry in the UK and Sweden. While I was there I designed a factory which we started to build that year - it was very difficult in those days, we had to import all the building structure for a start. The delivery time for a locally made building was much too long.

So I was given a site in what is now the big industrial area in Canberra - I was the first one there. They gave me 7 acres. They said don't build too close to the boundary as we might want to change the boundaries a bit.

Before I went away, there was a company in Sydney that used wood flour. I talked to them about it; they were very keen on the idea because they were being held to ransom by the Swedes. They offered me a job, and were prepared to put money into the company - so that's how it all started. When I came back I was interviewed at Sydney Airport about what I had been doing which was reported in the paper the next day. The next thing Monsanto Chemicals was on the phone wanting to have a bit of the action too. They were the other big user. So we built this plant to manufacture wood flour. At that time (1951) the Sydney company (Beetle Elliott) was using about 6,000 tonnes a year and Monsanto much the same. So we thought we'd start off with a 4,000 tonne per annum plant. We started production at the end of 1952.

In 1953, Beetle Elliott's usage went down to 600 tonnes. Because just as we started production, large scale injection moulding technology appeared. So they could now make telephones and fridge doors and all sorts of things with another cheaper material. So we were doomed before we even got into production. Anyway we batted on for another 5 years, and it became obvious that our costs were too high to make a satisfactory profit although we did build up a reasonable market in other areas, such as hard rubber.

In 1958 I managed to sell the plant to PGH Industries who had a big saw mill in Tumut. They moved the plant to Tumut to use the waste material from their sawmill, thus eliminating the cost of getting rid of the waste. I left Canberra and joined a consulting firm in Sydney. I spent 8 years in management consulting, and then was general manager of a Public Company for two years before setting up my own consulting company.

So where did you meet your wife in all of this travelling?

While I was at University. That's a funny story too - during the war, I visited my cousin in Sydney, and I said I was going down to Sydney and around the coast. He said "do you know my brother in Melbourne? He's got three red-headed daughters". I said "No, I have never met them." So when I got to Melbourne I rang up, and was invited out to lunch, and finished up marrying the eldest one.

So what was her name?

Anne Kingsmill. We were married in February 1950. I was famous for putting off my wedding for a month to go to NUAS conference. I thought that was important, she didn't. We moved to Canberra after a year or so. I was probably the first married President of the Students Union.

So how many children do you have?

Three.

And what were their names?

Sally Anne, Andrew and Penelope. Sally was a '51 vintage, so she is 56. Andrew is a couple of years younger, and ten years later we were careless and along came Penelope.

So do your children still live around here?

Andrew does, and Sally is retired and lives up in Grafton. Penelope is in Sydney.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

Oh well, we might look at the property now, how do you want to carry us through from Canberra to how you ended up to Sydney to here?

When I came back from a quick trip to Europe, well while I was on that trip I met a few people that were very keen on drinking wine which I had little experience in, well it goes back a bit further than that.

Just before I went away an Oxford Professor, Don Salvador de Madariaga, visited Australia on a lecture tour of the ABC. When he got off the plane in Perth, he was interviewed, he said to the poor guy "I don't understand you Australians, you live in a Mediterranean climate, and yet you drink beer. Germans drink beer, you should be drinking wine". Anyway, he went from Perth straight to Hobart, and he gave a lecture to the students. We had to give him a presentation, so I went into town with the vice president, and we bought a bottle of wine, and presented it to him, and said "We got the message". He thought that was terrific. He's an interesting bloke.

The next day the Professor of History invited me to go with him on a trip to the Derwent Valley. They picked us up in the morning, and I went down to the car and introduced my wife, and he said "I didn't know you had committed matrimony son".

A few weeks after that I went to Canberra, at the same time he was there, and I spent part of every day with him just about. Breakfast and sometimes lunch and always dinner. I got to know him pretty well, and he converted me to a wine drinker. When we moved to Canberra, I used to stop off at vineyards between Melbourne and Canberra and pick up a demi john of red every now and then. Some of my mates wanted to be involved, so I would pick up two or three. Later, when we were sending truckloads of wood flour to Melbourne I arranged to

bring back casks of wine from wineries in Rutherglen etc. It started to get out of hand, so I said to my friends that if they didn't like what I was buying I would go broke and that we regularise this by forming a club.

So we started the Canberra Wine and Food Club. Which is another very long story, and eventually we built our own clubhouse in Manuka in Canberra. It was probably the only wine and food club that has its own licensed club house and it's been a pretty successful sort of outfit. So I was very interested in wine, and I drank a moderate amount of it.

Then I got involved with a wine merchant in Melbourne and I became the director of it at one stage. Then in 1968 or '69 we started something quite new in the management field and that was, it's common now, but this was the first time - we were looking for something that was different, in short supply. We found that what they call industrial engineers or work study engineers were very scarce, and everybody wanted them and so on. So we decided that we'd employ these people, and then hire them out to others on a contract basis. I went along to one of my friends at PGH Industries and said "what do you think about that". He said "that's a good idea, I'll have one as soon as you can get one for me". I spoke to another guy from Shelly's Cordials and he said exactly the same thing. So we started a new business. It took six months to sell the third job. If I hadn't asked those two fellows, it would never have started.

Anyway, we eventually succeeded. We called it Ad Hoc Pty Limited. Everyone asked why "Adhoc". In fact it's a very good description, because it means "for a particular purpose". So we could give you somebody, they would go in and do the job and get out, and take no notice of anybody else. It was easy to remember, and quick.

From then we went on, and one day I happened to be talking to a fellow who was the Managing Director of Eail Ltd and about to retire. I said "what are you going to do?" and he said "I don't know, I really don't know". I said there must be a lot of fellows like you that have still got plenty of get up and go, and have nothing to do. So I decided we better expand Ad Hoc to include executives and professional people. We tried to get that going, and that took a long time too, because everyone thought they would come in, work for them, steal their secrets and go away.

I used to go around to Rotary Clubs to give a talk about "what are you going to do when you retire, think about it now not the day before". That made them sit up and take notice a bit. I thought to myself that I really ought to be practicing what I preach. What am I going to do? We thought about all sorts of things - Country Pub or Motel but you can't do that little by little.

So I decided I would plant a vineyard, a few acres at a time, and gradually work it up. So we spent the next two years looking for a suitable place to plant the vineyard. We eventually found this place. It was this or one near Broke. The one near Broke was twice as expensive, and when I worked out the dollars per hour it would cost me to drive an extra hour, it would

take me a lot of trips to cover it. So we bought this one which was part of a big property that was broken up 3-4 years before.

So what was the property here originally?

Actually, I think it was originally owned by a Nowland, who was one of the founders of Muswellbrook. Then the Simpson's had it for several generations before selling to a developer who sub-divided it. It was a very smart sub-division, because they didn't have to build any roads. It was bounded by road all the way around, so they sub-divided it into blocks all with road frontage. This was the homestead block which ran up to Post Office Road.

We bought the place in 1973 and planted the first vineyard in 1974. At that time it was 125 acres, but I didn't want the back half. We ran cattle on it for a while, it was a damn nuisance, and they kept jumping over the fence. Anne went off and did a TAFE course on Animal Husbandry, and we even had pigs, and that was very unrewarding. The first and second year it cost me \$4,000 to feed them and I got \$2,500 back. So eventually I managed to persuade the council to let me sub-divide 40 acres, which is a bit unusual then, rather than have land that I couldn't look after properly.

So the original large station here was called Callatoota?

Yes.

I know a little bit, but I want to know what you know?

Oh yeah. This was the brochure on it. Here is the map. You see it goes down there, and comes back here. This was our block. In fact I've got an easement right the way through. It was bought by another fellow; I bought it from the first owner. It was a fairly major development in those days.

So how many acres did you plant up first?

I planted 10 acres in 1974. I had my first very small crop in '77, then there was a hail storm in '78 that wiped the whole lot out, then I got nothing in 1979. In 1980 we got our first crop which was made by Kevin Sobels in Muswellbrook. I decided at the end of 1981 to build a winery. The first vintage here was in '82.

So how many acres did you end up with?

About 23 acres of vines.

And what varieties?

The first 10 acres were Cabernet, because Doug Seabrook said to plant Cabernet Sauvignon, it's the best red wine variety. He was the Chairman of Judges for the Melbourne show, and a very well known Wine Merchant in Melbourne. Then we planted another 6 acres of Cabernet and a couple of acres of Cabernet Franc in 1986 and 1987 and finally 5 acres of Shiraz in 1996.

So your retirement turned into a business?

Well, you know, it's crazy. I was working 4 days a week in Sydney, and spending the weekends up here then I retired to work 7 days a week – it keeps me out of mischief.

So which variety has done the best here?

The Cabernet has always done well; the Shiraz went very well too. I only started to make white wine a couple of years ago. For 30 years I said why 'would I make it if I don't drink the stuff', and in any case, the winery was designed to make red wine, not white wine. Laurie Nicholls, my Partner, spent a year in another winery where they make white wine, where he found white wine was easy. He persuaded me to convert the winery to make white wine which we did by buying a length of 3 inch hose to pump crushed grapes from the crusher into the press.

So do you drink white wine now?

Oh, occasionally.

So the Rosé has been a specialty here has it?

Yes, back in about 1990 we made it by accident. A very light red and some of it was almost colourless. So I sold it and people liked it, so I was committed to make it from then on.

Did you ever make any fortified wines?

Oh, we make a little bit of port.

So, were they dryland grapes, or did you irrigate them?

Oh, we irrigated them. The criteria I used when looking for a suitable site for a vineyard were that it had to be within 3 hours of Sydney, in an established grape growing area, vineyards have good soil of course, and water. There were not too many places that met those criteria.

What other vineyards were around here when you came?

Penfolds as it was then, was the first, started about 1956 just over the creek. Adelaide Steamships had one at Sandy Hollow. Most of the others that are here today had started just a year or two before. Rosemount was the second, about 1967.

What about Reynolds. When did they start?

I am not sure. About the same time as Rosemount. It was started by David Hordern who later took Dr Bob Smith as a partner.

So when you came here was the old Homestead was here?

Sure, but that dates back a long way. Parts of it were built not long after 1850. It was when made some alterations we found out - it had a dreadful bathroom in it, so we fixed that and when we pulled it all up - the foundations were Cypress Logs just laid on the ground. They were adzed flat along the top and notched for round cypress poles to be the studs. It was

built out of timber off the property, and it wouldn't pass the council specifications today, but its still there.

So when you came here were there any other buildings besides the house?

There were stables which is now the workshop, and there was an old harness room and store for feed but that was about where this winery is now.

You mentioned you had a partner here, have you always had a partner?

No, only recently - two or three years. He's [Laurie] now the wine maker. He was a better wine maker than me. He did the course at Wagga, and he is half my age.

Was there any timber on the property?

It had all been well cleared. There was the odd tree, which are still there now. There was a big old hay shed about halfway to the gate – we used the timber to build a machinery shed.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

What about Community Groups, one is the Rural Fire Brigade, have you been involved in that?

No, not really, but I am fairly heavily involved in the Wybong Hall - which is a pretty important part of the social life of this area.

Was the post office still running when you came here?

No I don't think so. I don't know - there used to be a Catholic Seminary over there, near where the little church is, and several schools apparently. Pat Hogan might even be able to tell you something about that.

What about the local show, were you involved with the show in Muswellbrook?

No, Andrew used to be occasionally, but the only show I was ever involved in was the Hunter Valley Wine Show, which is held in Singleton. My friend Doug Seabrook was the chairman of judges there in the early days.

So did you win a few prizes?

Oh yes, I have won a quite few, perhaps 100 or so over the years.

So what sort of community was it like when you came here?

There weren't very many people here - Pat Hogan looked after the place in the early days when I was just coming up weekends. None of the other houses along Post Office road were there. The one on the corner was there, and other farmers along Wybong Road.

So who were some of your neighbours around?

The nearest neighbour was probably Pat Hogan, and his brother-in-law who lived a bit closer. But I didn't have very much to do with them. Because I'd come up in the beginning

Friday evening, and go back on Sunday nights and work like the clappers in the vineyard, and so on and so forth. So I didn't really have much time to socialise in those early days. When I built the winery, Andrew came up to live on the place and helped build it, and he socialised more than I did. I never have until recently had a lot to do with the local people.

Has Wybong Creek changed much? Has the water supply diminished?

Yes, I think quite a lot. Before I brought the place I spoke to the Irrigation Department, I happened to know the Chief. I spoke to him, and I said it looks like a pretty good creek, and he said it does run dry occasionally, but only occasionally, and not for long. In the early days we had no trouble with water in the creek, but lately it's been pretty difficult at times, especially in this last 5 years of drought. There are more people irrigating further up the creek than there were in the early days.

So do you pump directly out of the creek, or do you have wells?

The irrigation comes out of the creek. I did put a well just behind what is now the workshop, but I didn't make it deep enough, so there is plenty of water for the winery to wash down, but not enough for the vineyard. I really should have, if I had any sense, realised that you go down to the same level as the creek - then you are really tapping into the creek, and you have a big sand filter between you and the creek.

I noticed when we were coming in, the vines a pruned up to a T, then out.

That's very unusual. Well, when I planted it, it was the latest idea, not to have a dense canopy, so you have a wide trellis. Most people used a narrow trellis. But I thought I would go all the way, so I made them a metre wide, and that means you have a much more open canopy, you've really got two rows and that works well. It makes it a little harder to prune, but easy to pick by hand.

So where did you get that idea from?

Oh, it was being talked about, wide tee trellises - they mostly had a horizontal arm, that's pretty expensive, so I got the idea to use fence droppers instead. I knew the Manager of Lysaghts and I persuaded him to make a batch for me, taking all the holes out, and putting a big hole in each end. I said, you'd make a fortune selling these to Vineyards, it's much cheaper than the other way. Anyway, he humoured me, and when I went back for some more, he had moved onto bigger and better things, and they wouldn't be in it again.

So have you mechanical picked here?

Yes, I bought a harvester in 2000. We used to pick by hand, and it was pretty satisfactory, but it became harder and harder to get people to do it. One year, the last year we did it, we had 106 people through the place. Most of them started in the morning, and knocked off at 11am. We had to get their tax file number, and a couple of weeks later we would get a 3 page questionnaire from Centrelink asking when did they start, how much do you pay them, are they still working etc. etc. Then we would get another one from the child support agency, why haven't you taken child support out of his wages, and then we'd have to send them a

group certificate, for the \$50 or so they earned - and most of those would come back as not known at this address. I said there has got to be a better way, so I went out and bought a harvester - paid for it in 2 years or so in the wages saved, and it doesn't talk back. You put diesel fuel in it and it goes.

So is there anything else we should know?

It's a very good community now, most of them who arrived here in the last 20 or 30 years or so. Have you spoken to Roger McTaggart, who lived over in the mine site? His family has been over here for generations, you really should talk to him.

Yes, we have spoken to the Hogan's here, and Neville Bray, he's on the other side, but we're still looking for people.

Yeah, well Roger McTaggart, they are still living on their place over on Mangoola Road, but Roger's grandparents have been around as long as the Hogan's or longer.

Some of the other early Flannigan's, and Malloy's, all the Catholic families.

Yeah, it's a big Catholic Community. But Roger, his ancestors were Catholic, but he's not. I don't know what happened there; maybe he married somebody he wasn't supposed to.

There weren't any graves on the property were there?

I don't think so. No. Not that I know of. I think they must have used the cemetery.

With the latest changes, are you thinking of retiring, or did you look around for something else?

No, I'm not the retiring kind. Don't know what I would do. That's one thing; the other thing is you can't just walk away from something like this - we've got 5 years supply of stock. I could have stayed here, the mine would have bent over backwards to have me stay here. But the trouble was it was too close, it would be very noticeable, and they are going to close the Wybong Road, the Muswellbrook end, in a year or two. We have a lot of people visiting from Brisbane, they would have to come right through Muswellbrook, up through the Bengalla Mine, out to the beginning of Roxburgh Road, and around to Wybong Road. It's about 20 kms further, and nobody would do that, so we would have lost a lot of business that way, and people coming all that way to see a mine across the road, they wouldn't be very pleased, wouldn't be impressed.

So having thought long and hard, we had to do something about getting out. So I started to negotiate with the mine to buy this place for a sufficient price to enable me to replicate it somewhere else, which I didn't quite achieve. So, that's how it started. We completed the deal with them about the beginning of last year, and bought the place over the other side of Denman - which is unnecessarily big; it's three times the size of this. I don't really need one three times the size, but it's a fantastic position - very prominent and easy to find. I hope to be over there by the end of this year.

So are you going to shift your winery to there?

We are shifting - we are building a new winery, and we will shift all the equipment.

So what varieties do you have over there? Comparable to here?

Same. A couple white varieties as well so they are all the same. We didn't have Cabernet Franc over there, but we've grafted a couple of acres of Chardonnay very successfully this year. So we will have that variety.

I don't know whether I asked, what do you use that variety for?

We make a straight Cabernet Franc wine, it's a very good - it makes a damn good wine. We also blend it with a Cabernet Sauvignon, which is what the French do. It's pretty popular, it makes a nice wine.

So, most of your sales are to previous customers, or do you sell to chains?

We sell a lot by mail order. We have got a pretty big mailing list of about 2,800 people, or something like that, Andrew sells to bottle shops, and a few restaurants in Sydney, and Newcastle and around the Valley. It's about a couple of hundred I suppose, but only to the independents. We like giving the industry something a bit different. They know if they buy our wine, the competitor around the corner won't have it. So there is no chance, or little chance of price comparison, and price cutting, so they make a good margin on it. They don't sell it in pallet lots.

Have the door sales changed much over the years. Has tourism increased?

Oh, yes it has increased. A fairly steady increase actually. I expect that would go up when we get over there [Denman]. You see we are pretty unique; we are the only small winery in the area - one of the few wineries anyway. Down in the lower Hunter there are lots of so called wineries. So we are fairly unique in being small, you can come in and talk to the owner, and you can have a look around and see what he does, and people like that. So almost everybody that comes to this area, visits us.

The others get theirs made in town do they?

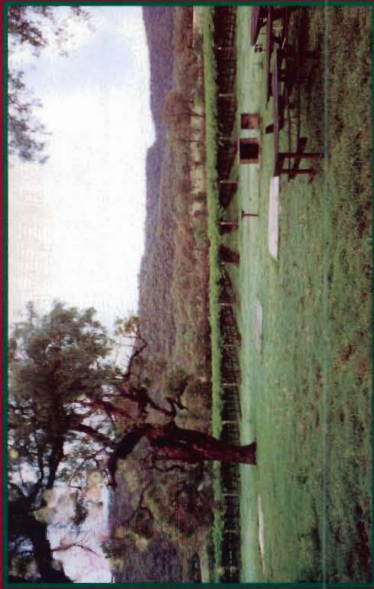
Well, if you go to James Estate for instance, they make good wine, but you will never meet the wine maker - it would be some employee, who probably doesn't drink wine, and know little about it, he will just be offering you stuff to taste, so you can't ask sensible questions. You'd get weird answers anyway. Whereas if you come in here and ask Laurie, you would get a dissertation on it if you're not careful. Two Rivers, I don't know where their wine is made; I think it might have been made in Rosemount - It's certainly not made there. They are grape growers, selling wine made from their grapes. Arrowfield's another one that is real, but that's about it. We are the only small one where you can talk to the people that do it.

Is there anyone making wine up at Reynolds now?

No, the fellow that's got that place at Black Hill brought it, can't think of his name now, but he was going to build that great big complex on the outskirts of Muswellbrook. But somebody is looking after the vineyard. To my knowledge there's no one living in the house. There's somebody living in the cottage. The house looks almost uninhabitable.

APPENDIX i
Materials Provided by John Cruickshank

Callatoota Estate Brochure



~ THE CALLATOOTA STORY ~

The Cruickshank family interest in wine goes back to 1950 when John met Spanish historian Don Salvador de Madariaga then on a lecture tour of Australia.

Don Salvador suggested Australians should drink wine instead of beer for the good of their health.

John was taken by this proposal - and his interest increased while visiting Europe, becoming accustomed to enjoying wine with meals.



How to get there - From the Lower Hunter area take the New England Highway to the start of the Golden Highway 11km North of Branxton and follow this to Denman and on towards Merriwa. Turn off at Hollydeen 10km from Denman and follow the signs to Callatoota 0.8km along this road. Travelling from the North, turn right to Sandy Hollow and Merriwa as you come into Muswellbrook and follow the signs along the Wybong Road for 25km to the entrance to Callatoota.



CRUICKSHANK
Callatoota Estate
 Vineyard & Winery



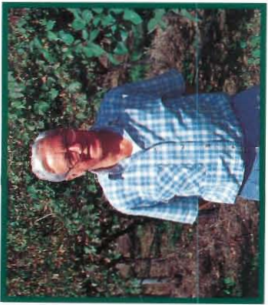
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In 1973, John purchased the homestead block of an old property called Callatoota to realise his dream of developing his own vineyard. The

following year he planted the first 4-hectare vineyard with the best available clone of Cabernet Sauvignon.

The vines are grown on high wide trellises which ensure an open canopy providing good exposure to the sun's rays and therefore high quality fruit.

In 1981 the winery was built on sloping ground so that the wood storage area is mainly underground. The cellars, where the wine matures in bottles, are completely underground.

In 1986 a further 3 hectares of Cabernet Sauvignon and one of Cabernet Franc were planted, and recently, 2 hectares of Shiraz.



This vineyard produces a harvest of about 120 tonnes of fruit in a normal year including about 10% of the Cabernet Sauvignon grown in the Hunter Valley.



- THE WINE -

Styles range from an elegant dry Rosé to full-bodied dry reds matured in large American oak casks. French oak hogsheds are used to make small batches of special wine. The current range includes the following:

CABERNET ROSÉ: The red wine drinker's white. A very light dry red with a crisp finish and good Cabernet character. It goes well with salads and light meals and is best served chilled.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON: Several styles ranging from lighter 'free run' to full-bodied wines. In good years a big 'press wine' is produced, which is unusual, as in most wineries this is blended with the 'free run' wine to add extra body. The Pressings have been described as a 'wine fit for heroes'.

CABERNET FRANC: Grapes are picked at full maturity, producing opulent fruit flavours in the 100% Cabernet Franc wine. The fine astringency and sweet fruit enhance the mouth-filling textural palate.

TWO CABERNETS: A blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. The mouth-filling Franc complements the fruit-led flavours of the Sauvignon in this full, rich and complex wine.

SHIRAZ: Has good vibrant colour, with fresh, spicy, earthy fruit flavours and a firm savoury tannin structure. Maturation in American oak has produced overtones of sweetness with lift and complexity on the palate.

- A UNIQUE ESTATE -

Callatoota is unusual for several reasons:

- The wines are made only from fruit grown in the Callatoota vineyard.
- The Estate is completely self-sufficient, having its own equipment for every operation from harvesting to bottling and labelling.
- Most of the wines are matured in large American oak casks for up to two years before being bottled in the winery.
- After being bottled, the wines are matured for several years in the underground cellars before release.
- Visitors to the cellar door are looked after by John Cruickshank or his assistant winemaker.



Underwood Extract

the title of Underwood's factory, and no doubt had that gentleman lived we should have seen more rapid advancement in the dairying industry than now presents itself. Quirindi Station, comprising some 3,000 acres, is now in possession of Mr Macdonald, of Wallabadah Station.[21]

2) PAULINE DELESSERT WILKINSON UNDERWOOD

Pauline was Richard's third child, and was born in 1846, when the family was still at Erin Cottage. In the parish register her 2nd name was spelled as Deliffert (handwritten with long s's), but a recently obtained birth certificate had her names typed as Paulina Deligurt! Pauline herself spelled it as DeLessart, and her death certificate, tomb stone, marriage certificates and other documents spell it that way. The name led one branch of the family into believing that they had French ancestry, as the true origin of the name had long been forgotten.

Reverend Frederick Wilkinson, a family friend, baptised her, and her third name was for him. He was the Chaplain of Newcastle in 1827, but was dismissed for giving too much attention to his dealings in livestock. In 1833 he was cleared by the Bishop of Calcutta and was made chaplain of Illawarra, followed by Picton, and finally Ashfield from 1/4/1843, until his retirement in 1854. The Parish then included Concord, Balmain, Petersham and Ashfield.[22] He was given a Government pension of £118/11/8 in 1855.[23] His nephew, Thomas Wilkinson, succeeded him as the Ashfield chaplain, and married one of Pauline's cousins (see p. 222).

Marriage to William Nowland.

When Pauline was a teenager, she lived in Muswellbrook where she met William Nowland. They were married on 17/8/1864 at St James's in Sydney, when she was aged 17, and he 24. Their witnesses were Pauline's cousin, Ada Grimes, and John Smythe, her uncle by marriage. She was the first of Richard's children to marry.

William came from a wealthy family as his father, Henry, had owned most of the privately held land in Muswellbrook; two hotels in the area; a blacksmithing establishment; a coach building workshop; and several properties beyond the town.[24] William's grandparents were convicts Michael Nowland, and Elizabeth Richards, arriving per 'Scarborough', and 'Lady Juliana', respectively, with the 2nd fleet. Henry was born on 24/9/1796, and it is presumed that his parents were married at Norfolk Island, but the Norfolk Island Victualling Book, in the Mitchell Library, lists their children born there as Richards, including him.

William's mother was Harriett Farlow. Her father, Robert, had been a convict, arriving per 'Canada' in 1801, and his free wife, Ann (nee Dyer), had accompanied him.

The Nowlands were of Irish descent, and apparently what they lacked in social graces they made up for in personality. They were known to have been good company and great yarn spinners, but none of Henry's 5 sons inherited their father's energy and drive, but went into debt, drank and floundered (like the Underwoods!).

William and Pauline lived at 'Callatoota', a property out of Muswellbrook at Wybong, which his father had bought from John Pike in 1859, and had left to Harriett when he died in 1863. William, and his brother James Nowland, bought it from her in 1876 (according to records in the L.T.O.).

The slab homestead where William and Pauline lived, is still there, and seems very small by modern standards for their large family. It is now the home of the manager of the 'Callatoota' winery, and he is restoring it to its original character. See photo opposite.

The Nowlands had 13 children, with 3 dying in infancy. Two infant sons (Osbourne Edward and Osbourne George) are buried beside their grandmother, Jane Underwood. A daughter, Florence May, later Parkinson (my grandmother), was born in one of Henry's former pubs, the 'Royal', in the main street of Muswellbrook.[25] The Commercial Bank later pulled it down and rebuilt there.

Pauline and the Underwood Estate

The 1870's were a time of financial hardship for the Nowlands. Although the lands of the Underwood Estate were being sold, it took time for the funds to be released. The monies were put into various trust funds, and managed by the trustees until the court could authorize payment.

On 1/3/1879 it was decided that Richard's children were entitled to 1/5 share in the Paddington lands, and with a share for each surviving 7 children, it came to 1/35th each. In Homebush and Summer Hill, Richard's children had 1/4 share, entitling them each to 1/28th of the proceeds. Their shares were later increased by their Uncle William's death.

In 1876 £540 was paid by the Underwood trustees, to release a mortgage of William's on 'Callatoota', and to put the property in trust for the Nowland children.[26] In October 1878 Pauline presented an affidavit to the court, requesting further funds as soon as possible, as the family were undergoing severe hardship from drought and stock losses.[27]



Grave of William and Pauline Nowland (nee Underwood) in the Muswellbrook Cemetery
Photograph of Pauline Nowland (nee Underwood) probably taken in the 1890's
'Callatoota', near Muswellbrook, where William and Pauline Nowland lived. Today there is a winery there.

In June 1879 Pauline wrote from Dawes Battery requesting funds to redeem a further mortgage on 'Callatoota', and stated that the property was worth £2,000.[28] Three days earlier she had registered an estate settlement document, and had appointed as trustees, Richard Harnett, and Warner Wright Spalding (as a protection for her money).[29] Later Harnett and Spalding were replaced by her brother Edward, and brother-in-law Walter Goddard.

The Underwood money enabled Pauline to buy a house in Muswellbrook, so her children could be schooled in town. It was on the south western corner of Maitland and Lorne Streets.

Pauline and her family presented many petitions and affidavits in court in the 1870's and 80's, regarding the Underwood Estate. In affidavits presented by her children, it was stated that she always capably managed the financial concerns of the family.

As the Underwood Estate was so complex, and there was so much litigation, it took a couple of decades to be resolved after the land sales commenced. By 1891 Richard's children still had not seen much of their money, and they presented their case to the Master in Equity. A letter was also presented to the court by William Campbell, requesting a speedy resolution to the claims as he stated that Richard's children were getting most anxious to receive their funds 'particularly the married ladies'.[31]

In June 1894 Pauline's trustees released a further £200, to pay off a mortgage on 'Callatoota', and this time William made over all his lands, properties, and a life assurance policy, to Pauline, in return for the funds to prevent foreclosure.[32]

It appears as if William Nowland was often away for long absences droving cattle, as in one instance Pauline said that she was not expecting him back from Queensland for another 9 or 10 months.[30]

On one of these droving trips there was a tragic mishap. These Nowlands had enjoyed practical jokes, and one evening one of William's sons (thought to be Herbert), dressed up as a ghost with chains to scare every one. The party hadn't realised that he was missing, and in their fright, unknowingly clubbed him to death.

Deaths of Pauline and William Nowland.

William died of throat cancer, on 13/10/1904, and was buried in the Muswellbrook cemetery. His obituary in the Maitland Mercury stated that he had been ill for some time.

Pauline died on 19/3/1915, after suffering a stroke 3 days earlier. The informant was her son-in-law, Val Parkinson, who lived nearby with his own family. She was buried with William, and the family had a tall marble headstone erected and engraved to their memories (see p. 159).

'Callatoota' was sold in October 1916, to Henry Simpson.[33] Pauline bequeathed her personal items to her children and requested that the monies be divided up equally amongst them. She also specifically excluded her eldest son, William Underwood Nowland, from any of the proceeds of her estate. According to a daughter, this was because he had been the favourite, and had already received considerable monies from her during his lifetime.[34]

RICHARD JAMES JOHN UNDERWOOD.

Richard was his father's 6th child, and was named after his father, and both grandfathers. This boy was cast in much the same mould as his elder brother, Edward Grimes Underwood.

In the 1860's, as a young man in his teens, he became a jackaroo in southern Queensland, when it was being pioneered. He initially worked for Andrew and George Thomas Loder at 'Gularber', a property of some 64,000 acres, near the Balonne River. His employers were brothers of James Mein Loder, the gentleman who employed Richard's brother, Edward.

Richard also worked at 'Dareel' owned by Samuel Thorley; 'Yamburgin'; and managed 'Doudi' Station for William Baldwin. He then owned 'Brynog' in the Surat district, and finally 'Warroo' station near St George.[35]

On 23/9/1878 (2 months after his father's death), 25 year old Richard married 17 year old Rosa Brown. She had come from Maneroo (once an important district near Queanbeyan). Her mother was Rosa Morris, and her father, Edward Brown. It appears as if the bride had not known her father too well, as her marriage certificate gives her father's profession as unknown. Richard gave his father as a gentleman, and his own residence as Yamburgin, and Rosa's as St George. One of their witnesses was William Baldwin, the owner of 'Doudi' Station.

Richard and Rosa had ten children in all, and chose many of the names of his brothers and sisters. His first was Pauline Emily, born in 1880, with his first son being born in 1886, and named Edward Benham. In 1889 there was a daughter born called Amy Dell, and the Dell was probably a corruption of Delessert.

Richard J.J. did not have the financial problems which had beset so many of his relations, although the proceeds from his grandfather's estate in the 1880's and 1890's would have been a welcome bonus.

In about 1890, when Richard and Rosa had already had 5 children, he purchased 'Warroo' station, about 35 miles from St George. In 'The Wallabadah Manuscript' it is claimed that the property was first taken up by William Ogilvie, and it then passed on to Robert Fitzgerald in 1852. In a History Of Queensland, it says that 'Warroo' had been virgin bush in the 1860's, when taken up by the McDougalls. This History also says that Richard had bought it from 'a financial institution' (so presumably had been lost by debt).[36]

It had once been a large property but its size was considerably reduced by the Government, after the first World War, when land was resumed for the soldier settler plan.[36] The old pioneer homestead was described as:

'... a low roofed, rambling, but withal [sic] picturesque building, constructed of rough slabs which stand as an object lesson of the risk run in their ventures by the early settlers of Queensland. Bored through these slabs are post-holes where a rifle or blunderbuss could be inserted from within, forming a means of defence from the attacks of the savage and hostile aboriginals by which the district was infested, attesting in emphatic manner the way in which brave men of the past took their lives in their hands when they penetrated the wild bush region to blaze tracks for those who should come after them'.[37]

The author of the above, in the same article, gave the following description of Richard:

'... he exhibited all the traits of an upright and sterling character, and took his part in the administration of law and order, at the time of his decease being one of the oldest Justices of the Peace in South West Queensland. He was a member of the local Rabbit Board ... [and] a good sportsman when this designation implied the possession of all the most gentlemanly qualities.'

The author continued on to sing Richard's praises as a horse breeder, and a capable amateur rider who had won a lot of racing trophies. Richard died on 1/12/1909, of a prostate abscess [sic], at 68 years of age - not 60 as recorded on his death certificate. The same author wrote the following of Richard's passing:

'... he left behind him a worthy reputation as a reliable and enterprising settler who earned the respect and affection of all with whom he came into contact, and whose death made a long-felt blank in the district where he had resided for the greater part of his life'

Richard's widow, Rosa, stayed on at 'Warroo', along with two of her sons, Edward and Arthur, who managed the property. Another son, Richard, joined the war effort, and attained the rank of Lance Corporal before being killed.[38] She herself died on 30/11/1953, aged 93, of senility and influenza, in St George's Hospital. The property is still in the hands of the Underwood family, and Richard's descendants also own a number of other properties in the St George area today.

RICHARD'S OTHER CHILDREN

Claude Arthur Kingston, the youngest child born to Richard and Jane, died in 1874, aged 14, and is buried with his father, and sister Florence, in the cemetery at St Judes Randwick.

Josepha Mary Probert, Richard's fourth child, married George Coupar Chalmers, of Pitt Street, on 3/10/1878 in a Presbyterian ceremony, conducted by Reverend Steel.[39] He was the Manager of the Colonial Finance Mortgage Investment and Guarantee Corporation. Their children were: Mildred, born in 1880; George, born in 1882 (and died an infant); and Muriel, born in 1884. Josepha herself died in 1899.

Emily Eliza Mary was with her father in 1878 at Dawes Point, but then stayed at 'Callatoota' with the Nowlands after he died. On 21/6/1879 she married Walter Henry Goddard, who was with the Commercial Bank. He became the Manager of the Newtown Branch, and they lived in that suburb, where they had three children. Their daughter Hilda (b.1880) didn't marry, and would stay with relations at Muswellbrook and Quirindi, when leaving her home in Burwood.

Florence Mary Powell did not marry either. She lived until aged 84 - the latter part with her niece, Mabel Manchee, of Moree. She died on 10/8/1940, and was buried with her father, and brother Claude, in the family plot at St Judes.

Herbert William Goddard went up to Queensland to live. It is believed that he went to the St George area, following his brother Richard. It is known that some of Pauline Nowland's sons also went up there. In 1884 Herbert sold his Underwood Estate entitlements, to Charles Sandon, for £600. In 1891, when in the Bundaberg area, he was disputing Sandon's right to his share of his deceased Uncle William's share.[40]

----- FOOTNOTES

- [1] Reverend James Hassall: 'In Old Australia'
 [2] National Trust Magazine April 1983
 [3] Translated by Jean-Michel Sieur
 [4] 'Gravestone Inscriptions of N.S.W' edited by Sainty and Johnson
 [5] L.T.O. 11/765 (Simmons) & 13/410 (Dangars)
 [6] M.M. 16/9/1848
 [7] M.M. 5/12/1849
 [8] S.M.H. 28/10/1851
 [9] L.T.O. 44/840
 [10] Book 43, ents 1-8 (to Brady) & 44/840 (to Smith)
 [11] L.T.O. 49/44 & 49/45 (re Driver), & 60/806 & 60/807 (to J.S.Rodd)
 [12] L.T.O. 62/865
 [13] A.O. Case 4792
 [14] ibid.
 [15] ibid.
 [16] Fox, Matthew S. History of Queensland: It's People and Industries Vol. 1, p. 250
 [17] L.T.O. 183/605, 183/894
 [18] Obituary in M.M. 28/6/1870
 [19] 1866 N.S.W. Gazeteer. Pastoral Leases, Liverpool Plains
 [20] Various entries L.T.O.
 [21] N.R.L.: Mackenzie H.M., 'Among the Pastoralists and Producers. "Between Quirindi and Wallabadah"' p. 152
 [22] W.Allen Wood: 'Dawn in the Valley' pages 164-165, & 194-198
 [23] N.R.L. Blue Books
 [24] Parkinson, E. 'Henry Nowland: The Forgotten Pioneer of Muswellbrook'. Printed in Muswellbrook Chronicle 26/8/1984
 [25] Birth certificate of Florence May Nowland
 [26] L.T.O. 208/290
 [27] A.O. 3/3843
 [28] A.O. 3/3849
 [29] L.T.O. 546/426
 [30] A.O. 7/3578
 [31] ibid.
 [32] L.T.O. 546/426
 [33] L.T.O. 1095/50
 [34] Explanation from Maxine McNaught
 [35] Fox, Matthew S: op. cit. pages 250-251 Also various Government Gazettes - giving names of property owners at the relevant times
 [36] Fox, Matthew S. op. cit.
 [37] ibid.
 [38] ibid.
 [39] A.O. 7/3578 (Case 2498)
 [40] A.O. 7/3579



Above: Richard James John Underwood
 Right: Florence May Parkinson (nee Nowland)

Book Extract on Nowlands

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

The epitaph on Elizabeth's headstone at St. John's Church, Wilberforce reads as follows :-

SACRED to the MEMORY OF
ELIZABETH NOWLAND
Who departed this life on the
8 of August AD 1852
Aged 75 Years²³⁷

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

THE FAMILY- Pen Pictures of the Children.

Michael and Elizabeth had 9 children, 8 of whom survived to adulthood. The first four were born on Norfolk Island, William 1792 (who lived only five weeks), Michael 1794, Henry 1796, and Elizabeth 1798. On their return to Sydney they had Ann 1801, William 1804, Edward 1806, Mary 1808 and Sarah 1814. (Refer Attachment 'L' for the family tree of the first two generations.)

It is not intended to detail the histories of each child, as that is a matter for the various descendants of the respective branches of each family. The paragraphs which follow are simply intended to highlight the main activities of each of the children and to provide a brief perspective on a somewhat extraordinary family. The main thrust of these paragraphs will be to fit them into their parents' situations at the time of their births as well as to record some statistical data as to their births, deaths and marriages etc.

One aspect of special interest is that the brothers Henry, William and Edward each married Farlow sisters, respectively Harriet, Mary Ann and Christian. Both families grew up in Wilberforce and in the small communities of those days such an occurrence was not unusual. Henry, William and Edward also ventured across the Liverpool Plains opening up the New England district, Henry becoming a very successful businessman and amassing considerable wealth.

³⁷ She was at least 77 years of age and could have been up to 6 years older, hereby living to the age of 83.

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

William and Edward ventured further afield to Breeza, Wirindi and elsewhere in pursuit of their pastoral interests. Mary ventured north as well and after her Sydney marriage, settled in Scone with her husband Alexander Johnston, who also became a successful businessman.

As it is more appropriate to keep the boys' details together, this section commences with the two daughters -

Elizabeth Born Norfolk Island 1798. Died 18 May, 1878 at Windsor aged 80 years. Married Henry Richardson at Windsor 26 December, 1814.

Henry arrived as a convict on the *Admiral Gambier* on 29 September, 1811 - having been sentenced to transportation for life at Chester, England in 1810 for burglary. He was pardoned on 31 December, 1813. The marriage produced three children in 1815, 1817 and 1820, all born at Wilberforce. The marriage then broke up.

The business partnership between Henry Richardson and Michael Jnr. was also terminated in 1821, probably about the same time as the marriage ended. They had, in February 1815, lent money to Michael Snr. to build his replacement punt, not long after they became brothers-in-law. Elizabeth's marriage at the age of 16 had also been the first in the family.

As it was not possible to obtain divorce or legal separations in those days, Elizabeth then commenced a liaison with James Rochester which produced nine children (5 boys, 4

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

girls) all born at Windsor between 1824 and 1843. Henry Richardson died in 1850 and Elizabeth and James then married at Windsor on 4 July, 1850 at St. Matthews Church. Elizabeth's place of burial has not been located.

Ann Born at The Rocks, Sydney in 1801. She died on 25 November, 1819 and nothing more is known of her. She lies with her parents and brother Michael in a group of four in the St. John's Anglican Church cemetery at Wilberforce N.S.W. Her headstone bears the epitaph -

SACRED

to

The Memory of

ANN NOWLAND

Daughter of Michael & Elizabeth

Nowland who Departed

this life Nov. the 25th 1819

in the 18th Year of her AGE.

Her death would have come at a particularly difficult time for her parents. Michael must have been under enormous emotional pressure, his land at the ferry site had been lost two years earlier and creditors were pressing. The punt was operating but he appeared to be no longer farming and had accepted the post of District Constable, no doubt to provide some regular income for his family.

Turning to the four sons, the highlights are -

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

Michael Born Norfolk Island 18 May, 1794. Died 27 October, 1854 in Wilberforce aged 60 years. As Michael died without issue, and as there is a good deal of information about him, a separate paper on his life and activities has been prepared. It is attached to this history. Having no descendants, there would otherwise be no detailed record of the main features of his life.

Henry The third child Henry was born on Norfolk Island on 24 September, 1796. He died on 10 February, 1863 aged 66 years in Muswellbrook N.S.W. Henry married Harriet Farlow at St. Matthews Church, Windsor on 31 January, 1825. Harriet died on 20 August, 1880 aged 75 years and both are buried in the Muswellbrook cemetery. The marriage had produced 12 children from November 1825 to 1850, although only 9 children (6 sons and 3 daughters) reached adulthood.

Henry started work at Wilberforce as a wheelwright, but it was recorded in the 1822 muster that he was living at Windsor. By 1828 he was a publican at Wilberforce and had a farm of 320 acres at Patrick Plains (now Singleton). After acquiring William and Edward's grants, he sold to Richard Dines the consolidated land package which was ultimately developed into the historic Hambleton Hill property.

He was in 1835 "the first publican and the first resident in Muswellbrook where he resided for the remainder of his life. He was the foremost citizen, a great land owner on the Hunter, a

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

squatter at New England, and at one time held all the overland mail contracts from Maitland to Moreton Bay."²³⁸

The major assets acquired by Henry, as supplied by Liz Parkinson were -

- 'Overton' a 2,560 acre property on the Hunter River west of Muswellbrook N.S.W. (Originally granted to Captain Francis Allman.)

- 'Bollibong' a 1,280 acre property west of Muswellbrook on Sandy Creek, adjoining 'Overton'.

- 'Guy Fawkes' in the New England district. Acquired by squatting and eventually lost in the Claims Court.

- Two thirds of all privately held allotments in the township of Muswellbrook.

- 'Chain of Ponds' Inn at Liddell N.S.W. and adjacent 150 acres.

- 'Hambleton Hill' at Wylie's Flat near Singleton N.S.W. (Henry consolidated the land holding of 820 acres, then on 19 November, 1859 sold to Richard Dines, who developed the property.)

²³⁸ 'Dawn in the Valley' by W. Allan Wood. Page 219.

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

• 'Callatoota' a 2,095 acre property at Wybong N.S.W. This consisted of two grants to McIntosh in 1827 totalling 920 acres and a grant of 175 acres to his brother William.)

• 20 acres at Newcastle, which was portion of today's Singleton N.S.W. (It was sold in 1857 to William Nicholson.)

'Overton' and Liddell have since proved to be extremely coal-rich.

Henry's sixth child William married Pauline Underwood, grand-daughter of James Underwood whose name has been mentioned in the chapter 'The Political Turmoil of 1806/1809.'

On 11 November, 1844 the Governor (Sir George Gipps) stayed overnight at his Royal Hotel, Muswellbrook.²³⁹ Henry could look back on a very successful life.

An entertaining item about Henry (Boshey) Nowlen is produced as per Attachment 'M' as it provides some insight into Henry's personality and strength of character in those rough old days. The extract is from 'Reminiscences of Australia' by J.T. Ryan.

Bosh, incidentally, is defined in the dictionary as nonsense; foolish talk" and Henry, with a nickname such as Boshey was probably a raconteur and a teller of yarns. He seems to have been quite a character.

²³⁹ Sydney Morning Herald 12 November, 1844.

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

William The sixth child William was born in September, 1804 at Castle Hill, the year of the Irish insurrection which originated there.

William was married on 24 October, 1831 to Mary Ann Farlow at St. John's Church of England, Wilberforce. They had 10 children, all boys between 1832 and 1851. William died at Camberwell N.S.W. near Singleton on 28 April, 1884 aged 79, and Mary Ann died on 27 November 1895, aged 82. Both headstones are in the cemetery adjoining the Anglican Church of St. Clement's, Camberwell. Their 6th son John, who died at the age of 18, 9th son Alfred aged 71 and his wife Lauretta are also buried there.

At the time of the sesqui-centenary of St. Clement's in November, 1990, William's grave was restored with the help of the local Noble family, and a plaque unveiled to William's pioneering efforts. Liz Parkinson, and her husband Ken, unveiled the plaque and represented the Nowland family at the service. William's tombstone is topped by a Celtic cross with a profusion of Celtic symbols, reflecting his Irish ancestry.

William owned the nearby property known as 'Rosedale' which was a consolidation of grants and purchases amounting to approximately 1,500 acres in the District of Falbrook, Parish of Camberwell.²⁴⁰ In those days the township was known as Falbrook, "but is the present day Camberwell situated 9 miles from Singleton."²⁴¹ Last century Falbrook was an important

²⁴⁰ researched by Liz Parkinson.

²⁴¹ 'The St. Clements Church of England' by L.M. Noble.

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

settlement consisting of three inns, a wine shop, general stores, blacksmiths, schools and Post Office. There was also a large town common.²⁴² The author mentions that "large grants of land were made between 1821 and 1824 to Dr. George Nowland and Micheal (sic) Nowland on the lower Falbrook."

William was eventually to acquire Michael's land and others as he built 'Rosedale' (later found to be coal rich) into his main base, which it remained during the many years he struggled to maintain an insecure possession of various stations on the plains at New England east of Armidale, and on the McIntyre River.

On 14 July, 1815 William, when not quite 11 years old, was indentured to Henry Richardson for seven years to learn the blacksmith's trade. By 1822 he was apprenticed to shoemaker Bogg, Pitt St, Sydney and in the same year was listed as a land-holder, Windsor.²⁴³ He was by 1825, apprenticed to his wheelwright brother, Henry.

William is probably the best known of the Nowland children, having blazed the present route followed by the New England Highway north of Murrumbidgee, thereby opening up the country on the north western side of the Great Dividing Range. Though two others (Cunningham in 1823 and Dangar in 1824 and 1825) had penetrated the mountain barrier before him, it was William, who having driven his cattle over the Dart Brook passes in 1826, decided a better route would have to be found.

bid.
R. Bogg (c. 1768) arr General Hewitt 1813. 14 years.
260

Michael & Elizabeth Nowland

"Nowland blazed the trail, rode to the Hunter, loaded a dray with supplies and drove to Warrah on a gradient 'a team could take two tons over'. It was wet, the wheels cut in and left a clear track behind. Ten thousand hungry cattle followed it out to the plains."²⁴⁴ Most of those who went on to the plains followed his track.

²⁴⁴ 'A Million Wild Acres' by Eric Rolls. Page 74.
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Letters

34 Dawson Street
Cook's Hill.

Newcastle. 2300.

27.3.85.

Dear Mrs Cruickshank,

Thank you very much for your letter, and your interest - I'd almost given up expecting a reply to my July letter!

By a very interesting co-incidence I believe that the other people who contacted you about having a property named "Callatoota" are cousins of mine, by the name of Parkinson. Val Parkinson, and his wife, called their property at Wagga by that name, and their daughter Barbara Brown wrote to you. I've done a rough sketch of the relationship - my father was Clifford + Val was his 1st Cousin. I met this family for the first time just a couple of months ago, although I'd certainly known of them from my father, and by letters, for many years. They told me that they had thought "Callatoota" had meant "a resting place." However that's pretty much the same as "a camp site," which

I thought that they had found in a book.

Henry Nowland was my great great grandfather and it appears as if he bought Callatoota in the late 1840's. He set up all of his sons on properties before he died, and my great grandfather William was given Callatoota.

He ^{William} was known to have been fond of a "drop" so I daresay would be well pleased by it now being a winery.

Henry Nowland became a teetotaler as he'd seen his own father go by the boards from drinking (Documentation exists).

I wrote an article (4 pages) in the Muswellbrook Chronicle last year about Henry Nowland. I called it "The Forgotten Pioneer of Muswellbrook", and "it" made several mentions of "Callatoota." It appeared on 24.8.1984. I also gave a talk on him to the Muswellbrook Historical Society at about the same time.

In the article I mentioned that my grandmother was born in the front room of "Callatoota." Mrs Simpson, a previous owner

of the place had told me that. However an uncle told me that she'd been born at the old Royal Hotel of Henry Nowland's (today's N.A. Bank). Her birth certificate confirmed that she'd been born at the hotel, so it was probably one of her sisters. William had a large family at Callatoota, and the family also had a house in town for the children's schooling. When he was in his ~~sixties~~^{fifties}, in the 1890's, it was sold.

My links with Muswellbrook are soon to be broken however. My mother is going to sell her place and move away. Ironically it's also on Henry Nowland's land. However he once had owned $\frac{2}{3}$ of all the privately held land in the township, so it's not really so surprising!

I noted from your letter that you will be away in April and May, so I hope that we can meet in June! Anyway I'll probably go up to Muswellbrook for the October long weekend, so could meet you then.

Let me know if you haven't seen the article, and I could send you a copy.
Regards from Liz Parkinson.

Michael Nowland
Convict - 2nd Fleet



Henry Nowland (1796 - 1863)
Went to Hunter Valley in 1820's and started
buying land in Muswellbrook in 1830's + 1840's.
Purchased Overton + Callatoota.



William Nowland of Callatoota. (1840 - 1904)
Ran coaches from Muswellbrook to Wybong
and Muswellbrook to Denman.
Married Pauline Underwood + had 13 children



Florence May Nowland of Callatoota
married Val. Parkinson.



Clifford Parkinson (my father)

Robert + Hannah Parkinson



Val Parkinson of
"Edward Higgens
Parkinson + Co"
of Muswellbrook
married

Florence May
Nowland of
Callatoota, Wybong



Clifford Parkinson
of Muswellbrook



Elizabeth



Frank Parkinson



son Val Parkinson
named for his
uncle. Lived at
Callatoota, Wagga



Barbara, now Brownie

↙ and Cousins ↘

5,
2
ck

34 Dawson St,
Cooks Hill.

Newcastle 2300.

10.10.85.

Dear Andrew,

Thank you very much indeed for showing me around "Callatoota" — I found it very interesting, & am so glad that you're interested in trying to retain the old world farm-house character of the house itself.

I thought you'd probably be interested in the story, that I wrote on Henry Newland, for the Chronicle last year. I've added the connections + additional information at the end. I'm really very proud of the old boy, but I'm sure he'd turn in his grave if he knew of how ^{his} sons squandered everything.

My mother is moving from Muswellbrook soon + with my father already dead, the family's historic connections with the town will go.

2.

I was glad to be able to get a photocopy of the Simpson Subdivision as I now know where the boundaries of the estate were during their time.

I did quite a bit of research in the Land Titles Office in Sydney, on 'Callatoota' but the indexes to land dealings are incomplete, & I'm not a solicitor. However, I think that I have a reasonable idea of what the situation was up until the 1890's.

William Nowland's brother James lived at Callatoota, too, (at least he was there in the ^{late} 1870's, with wife & various children). He also owned adjoining land in the Parish of Yarraman & had 1280 acres at Sandy Creek towards Muswellbrook.

It's all quite complex!

Good luck with everything, & thank you again

with regards from
his Parkinson.

HENRY NOWLAND. Grazier, arrived in the colony in infancy with his parents, who afterwards resided on the Hawkesbury, his father being amongst the earliest settlers in the colony to own sheep. He afterwards removed to Singleton, and resided on the estate known as Hambleton Hill, of which he was the proprietor. One of the earliest settlers on the Upper Hunter, he was at one time the largest landholder and employer of labor in the district, but on removing to Muswellbrook he became the owner of those two valuable properties, Overton and Collatoota. He was at one time the proprietor of the greater portion of the town, and as one of its most prominent residents, supported the various charitable institutions, and other things relating to the welfare of the district. He also owned several stations in the north, amongst which was Wallamumbi in the New England district, a property watered by the rivers Henry, Sarah, and Ann, and the Nowland's Creek—streams so named in honor of the family of our subject. Mr. Nowland was a very abstemious man, he not having tasted spirits for the period of thirty-five years. On his death, which occurred on the 10th February, 1863, the district lost a sterling settler, and many residents therein a faithful friend. He had issue twelve children, of whom two sons and three daughters survive. The late Mr. Nowland's father—Michael Nowland—was at one time a civil servant.

W.F. MORRISON - Aldine Centennial History of N.S.W. 1888

34 Dawson St.
COOKS Hill.

Newcastle 2300.
Fri 22 June 84.

Dear Sir

I'm writing to you because 3 generations of my family have been associated with "Callatoota" & I'm very interested in family history.

One of the earliest owners of the property was my great great grandfather Henry Nowland, a prosperous & energetic pioneer of convict origins. After his death in 1863, it passed to William Nowland, who with his wife Pauline had 13 children there. My grand-mother used to talk a lot of "Callatoota" & I gather she spent a very happy childhood there. Towards the end of the century, the family moved into Muswellbrook & the property was sold.

I visited your vineyard in October last year, perhaps you remember me introducing myself to you? However you were busy with wine sales, & I was with some other people, so there wasn't

an opportunity to talk about this.
However, if you're interested in
the activities of these Newlands, perhaps
I can be of some help to you.

Perhaps you may also be able
to help me with some of my enquiries.

At the moment I'm preparing an
article on Henry Newland, for the Mbrook
Chronicle, to mark 150th Centenary of
land sales in the town. It will be
featured in August & is a rather time
consuming project (although fascinating)

My mother, & other family still
live in Muswellbrook, so I go there
regularly. I'd appreciate the opportunity
to visit you some time when I'm up
there.

Congratulations on your very fine wine

Best wishes from

Liz Parkinson (Miss)

APPENDIX ii
Current Callatoota Homestead Photos



















APPENDIX C-6

Paul and Maureen Hurney Transcript

Interviewee: **Paul & Maureen Hurney**
Association with Study Area: **Residence ID 10 in Anvil Hill EA**
Date of Interview: **27 February 2008**
Interview venue: **1938 Wybong Road, Wybong**
Interviewers: **Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker**

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

I might start with yourself Maureen, what is your full name and year of birth?

MH - Annette Maureen Hurney and my birth date is 17th December 1943.

Where were you born?

MH - Arncliffe, in Sydney.

And who were your parents?

MH - My father was William Kevin Hingerty and my mother was Violet Winifred, and her maiden name was Halpin.

That sounds a little German, Halpin?

MH - No they were English. But let's face it; Europe was all a mixture anyway.

And you had siblings?

MH - Yes, 4 sisters and I'm in the middle.

And their names?

MH - Valda Marie, that's my eldest sister, and then Joan, and my two younger sisters are Patricia and Colleen.

Are they all still alive?

MH - Yes.

So where did you go to school?

MH - Well, just after the war we moved up to St Mary's, west of Sydney, and dad was the health inspector there. Then in 1954, I think it was, we moved to Penrith, and Dad became the Chief Health and Building Inspector at Penrith council. We lived in Evan Street in Penrith, and I went to school at a Penrith convent, I finished school there - I did my Intermediate Certificate.

And after you left school?

MH - After I left school, I then worked for the Prospect County Council, until August 1966, I was pregnant then and left. Paul and I were married at Penrith in April 1965.

What about grandparents, were they around that area too?

MH - No my grandparents, well, both my father's parents were dead before I was born, and Mum's parents lived at Rockdale.

Your turn Paul, what is your full name and date of birth?

PH – Paul Joseph Hurney, 1940.

Where were you born?

PH - I was born in Crown Street, in Sydney, in the hospital. We were living at Balgowlah, near Manly at the time, and I lived there until 1956, when we moved to Penrith. My father was Thomas Luke Hurney; my mother was Isabella Mullan Hurney (nee Mullan). My mother came from Emu Plains, my father was in Orange initially, then he moved to Sydney - that's where they were married. I've got a sister Patricia, a sister Carmel, brother John, and a sister Cecily. I was below the middle. I joined the railways in 1955, did my apprenticeship as an electrician, and in 1959, I went to Parkes to work on the new version of locomotives, and in '65 I came back to Penrith, and had a great attraction.

So how did you meet?

PH - Maureen used to go home with my father's secretary.

MH - We'd been to school together, so I used to pick her up after work from Paul's father's office and we'd both walk home together, and Paul just happened to be there one day and here we are 43 years later.

Did you do any military service?

PH - No.

So after you were married, where did you live then?

PH - We lived at Emu Plains. Father gave us a block of land, next door to it while we were building. We went to Yass then. I started with the railways in '50 and left the railways in 1968.

MH - No, you did not, we were married in '65, and so you left the railways way after that.

PH - Oh, well the mid 60's.

MH - Must have been '68 or '69.

PH - I left and joined the Electricity Commission, and then we moved around a fair bit then, went to Yass for 5 years.

MH - In '71.

PH – '71 we came.

MH - No, '71 we went to Yass.

PH - Yeah.

MH – '76 we came back to Emu Plains.

PH - We stayed there for 12 months, then I went to Wallerawang - that didn't work out, so we came to Liddell, and got the job there as a telephone technician.

So did you live in Muswellbrook first when you arrived?

MH - Yes, we lived in Barrington Street - 2 houses there, 1 then, the other.

PH - They were selling them, and I thought I could do better coming out here and buying this place. This was owned by the Bates, and then by Bray's, and then Ken Barnett owned it, and I bought it from Ken Barnett, and here we are.

So children, how many children?

MH - 6.

And their names?

MH - Michael, Annette, Gregory, Laurence, Robert and Clare. Clare was the youngest - that was enough.

How many are married now?

MH - 5 are married.

So you have lots of grandchildren?

MH - 12.

So, when did you actually buy this property, what year, can you remember?

MH - 1980.

And how big is it?

PH - It was 120 acres, I split off 20 acres, and now it's 100.

What have you used it for?

PH - Oh, cattle.

MH - We had cattle to start, oh, we had sheep to start with, but they were very naughty, they kept getting out, so we had cattle then, and then we had Cashmere goats. At one stage we had about 150 cashmere goats here, and that was quite good, because Michael Scarf had

his abattoirs down there, and he was killing goats, so that was very good. But then, I hurt my back and became ill, so we got rid of the goats, and as the children grew up and left, we then got rid of the goats. We've just had cattle since then, you know. But we got rid of our last lot last year, in the drought, because we were buying food and water by then, and it was just ridiculous.

You mentioned the goats went everywhere?

PH - They were everywhere.

MH - No they just grew a lot of goats.

PH - If it wasn't for 'Scarfie' there would have been a real bottleneck - because he'd take all the male ones. We were only interested in the females for breeding, but we learnt a few tricks from our mistakes along the way there.

MH - It was interesting times shall we say. Interesting times with the goats.

I think we should know about the interesting times.

MH- Well we contained them, that was quite alright, because we had electric fencing all the way around and so they were quite well contained. But it was just some of them, they could be very pig headed, some of those goats.

PH - They were very high maintenance too, you had to clip their hooves, and that.

MH - Yeah, they were very high maintenance, and that's why in the end when I hurt my back, I just couldn't chase them all over the paddocks. Of course then we had to get someone to shear them for us - Peter Hogan used to shear them for us, for the cashmere, and that was quite good. In fact they are really good now, pity we don't have them now the prices are phenomenal.

For the goat or for the wool?

MH - Yeah, for the cashmere.

So where did you get your stock from?

PH - Western Plains. I forget who we bought them from.

MH - I don't know.

PH - But anyway, they were running amok out there. When they built the railways, they take goats along for meat and milk, and for the fleece, and then of course, when the train came to pick up all their gear and take it away, there was nowhere for the goats, so they kind of just let them go. Thus feral goats, and these were - somebody round them up on his property,

and sort of let them graze, and kept them contained. Then you sort of buy a truck load of them, and they arrived here, and they were pretty scatty.

MH - Don't think they had been handled very much.

PH - Not like they are milking goats that for generations have been handled - so you had to be prepared to bleed a little bit.

MH - And we bought a pedigree Cashmere buck, we had two bucks.

So did they fight?

MH - No they didn't surprisingly. We kept them in separate paddocks, and they each had their own little herd, so they seemed to be quite happy.

How did Peter go shearing goats?

MH - That was interesting times, for him as well as us I think. They are not quite as compliant as sheep are. We've had butted heads and horns through the leg, and I've even needled myself when we were needling them, giving them their injections, one moved, and I got myself.

PH - We didn't have any lice problems after that....

MH - So it was quite an interesting experience. I'm glad we had that experience, it was great. At the time, the boys just thought it was wonderful, they tore all over the place, chasing goats and wrestling with them, and that was great times. It was a great place to bring up the family out here, the boys had a wonderful time.

So how long did you have the goats for, sorry to harp on about the goats, but there are not many people running goats?

MH - Oh, it would have been probably 10 years wouldn't it?

PH - Yeah, 5 or 10 years.

And the shearing, did you take them down to the Hogan's shed, or did you do them here?

MH - Well we tried both - we took them in shifts down to the shed, because we only had a small trailer. So we'd take a load down, and Peter would be shearing them, meanwhile we'd come back and get another load, and then take the shorn ones - it would be back and forth all day sort of thing shearing them. But then, I think Peter got involved in Merino's then and he didn't want the Cashmere fleece in his shed, so then he came up here and we sort of rigged up a thing in our shed up there, and he shored them there for quite a few years we had them.

PH - On the first year it came time to shear, or so I thought, so we got Peter up, and we sheered them all, put it in bags, and numbered each goat - we were really high tech, and

took it down to the fleece classing day down at Rothbury there. So we took them down, and they opened the first bag up, opened the next one up, and said when did you shear these? I said, "oh a couple of weeks ago", she said "that's lovely guard hair, but I can't think what your going to do with it."

MH - We'd left it too long.

PH - The fleece falls out at a certain time of the year, and growing through the fleece is guard hair, which doesn't fall out. Now in Afghanistan, and these places, they comb the hair out of the sheep, over a long period of time, so they get all the fleece, but not the guard hair. So I paid a dollar a head, or whatever it was to shear guard hair.

MH - It was a learning experience, it was.

So what did you do after that, was there a specific time when you had to shear?

PH - Yes, you had to shear before they started to shed, which was, oh, early winter, July.

MH - Or June I think it might have been.

PH - The guard hair is a lot thicker than the fleece, the fleece is very fine, probably about 12 microns, something like that.

So Maureen did you got the job of separating did you, the guard hair from the...

MH - No.

PH - Oh, that's got to be done by machine.

MH - Yeah, it was all done by machine, but the first time we didn't know, so we lost it all, lost that lot of fleece, but it was ok.

And the ones you were selling for meat, was that a worthwhile proposition?

PH - Yeah, Scarfie used to give us a reasonable price for them, \$10 or \$12 or something.

MH - Yeah, he did, yeah I think it was about \$12 for a goat, but they were only about 20 weeks old. He'd take them, and I suppose they were nice table size or something, and sell them in Sydney.

So they would be killed and sold whole would they?

MH - Yeah, I suppose so. I don't know - I didn't go into that side of it.

PH - He used to make Jerky and a few other meats, but of course once I give them to him, it's a huge sigh of relief.

You didn't try droving them?

MH - Oh no, straight from the yard, straight into the trailer and off they went.

PH - He came out there one day, and he said, how many have you got on there? I think it was the last load, and I said oh, I've only got 8. He said the meat inspector's here, and your only allowed so many in a certain area, and I had a 6x4 box trailer with a crate on it, and I just kept poking them in until I couldn't get anymore in, because it was only around the corner - it wasn't as if I was going 100 miles or something, so just the one day that I only had a light load, the meat inspector turned up.

MH – So, all was well.

I suppose you had a top on the trailer?

PH - Oh yes, otherwise I might have just let them go.

MH – Yeah, it was a fully caged trailer.

So did you have the sheep before the goats?

MH - Yes, we had sheep when we first arrived. We didn't have many, we really just kept them, that's while we were building - we just kept them really to keep the grass down.

PH - We were given a sheep, and a young, doe I think.

MH - A doe with two kids, two little ones, a ewe, sheep are ewes.

PH - Of course when we weren't here - she was a pet, hand reared, so she'd get lonely, so she would go across, get through the fence, go and sit on Bert Ray's place, just camp there all day. We'd come in the afternoon, grab the sheep, drag it across, I thought it might go over there for water, so I dragged it across and took her to the dam. So it got the nickname 'Stupid' and we decided it just wasn't working, so we had a friend butcher her for us.

So there was no sentimental attachment to Stupid?

PH- Oh no, no, well the kids were hanging off the rafters at this place we were doing it - all looking, you know, we were still city slickers at this stage. We had never seen an animal killed, and he killed it, and took the fleece off it, and butchered it. We could have got 10 sheep through, because they are normally, after they get the chop, most of them turn their nose up. They were like is this Stupid, yeah that's Stupid.

MH - Oh, they were happy to eat Stupid.

PH - A lot of pain and suffering due to Stupid.

MH - All the chasing of Stupid every afternoon, we'd drag her back to the dam so she would know where the water was, and not run away again, but nope, back over into Bert Ray's every afternoon.

PH - Bert used to laugh when we'd come to get her.

She just wanted company.

MH - Yeah, that's what it was. She wanted company.

PH - I could have come and got Bert to sit at the dam, she would have come over then.

So when you came, did you owner build a house?

PH - Yeah.

That's quite an undertaking.

PH - It was. Maureen was pregnant with Claire at the time too. Other than the big jobs, like the slab, the brickwork and the plastering, we did just about all the other stuff.

So how long did that take?

MH - About 9 months all together.

PH - I'm just finishing off now, aren't I?

MH - Oh, no your not. No, about 9 months. We moved in the December, a fortnight before Clare was born.

PH - Then we arrived home and the fridge blew up.

MH - That's right, yeah, and the car blew up.

PH - Yeah, had to buy a new car.

Were there any other buildings on the block when you bought it?

PH- No, just two dams.

Where they old dams?

PH- Yeah, which is good, because I knew the history of them.

No yards?

PH- No, oh I tell a lie.

MH - Yes there was. There were yards down there on the paddock that we sold.

PH - But when we moved here, there was a set of yards there, and they came with the place, that's right.

Were they timber yards?

PH - Yes, they were just timber yards, they were in a pretty dilapidated condition.

They would have been what, cattle yards or sheep?

MH - Yeah, cattle yards.

PH - With a head veil.

So the two dams are your only water supply?

PH - No we've got two 6,500 gallon tanks - one on the shed, one on the house.

No underground water here?

PH - No.

MH - We did have people come and divine it, and he said right outside the back gate there was water and we sort of thought that just sounded too convenient.

PH - Especially because he said to me, where do you want to find it? I said just out there, and he said oh, oh, I got a bit here.

MH - So we didn't take any notice of it, there could be, we don't know. But we thought that sounded bit suspicious.

I assume he wanted paying for this?

PH- Oh no, no, no. I don't know where he came from, Denman or somewhere. He just turned up one day. Someone must have told him we were looking for water. But Glen Fellows, he came over too, and he had a bit of a reputation at the time.

MH - But no, his heart was going on him then.

PH - Yeah, your heart goes doing it.

MH - Apparently it affects your heart.

That's interesting, that's what another person who we interviewed, who doesn't want it to be known that he can divine, it makes him terribly sick, and he only does it for himself, and then recovers.

PH - That's why I think it is a genuine art, nobody understands it, but that doesn't mean it doesn't work.

MH - So we really didn't ask Glen to do it did we. We were going to, but then when he told us that he got sick from it, we said don't worry about it.

PH - He was a bit more cunning than the other fellow, the other fellow zig zagged around, and in a sort of hap hazard fashion, and Glen just walked the fence. He said what goes in has got to come out, and we'll find it. There's definitely something - I don't get in a barny about it, but I definitely believe there is something in it, because people have, you know the sticks bounce up and down, and we dug down and found water, you can't get much better than that can you.

So this property here, was that a sub division of a lot larger property originally.

PH - I don't think so, because I've been told the Bates owned it, and Bill Maher owns the next one, and this is a triangle formed by the two roads so there's only one way to divide it, and that's to go down and take some of Bill's land. Bill's owned that for some time, well he doesn't now, but he owned that for some time. The Bates owned ours, so I don't think it could have been a subdivision, it was just a block of land that was there, but nobody had ever built on it. If it's important you probably should check up with the council or somewhere, they will tell you who owned what.

So, when you arrived out here in '81, from then to now, what changes have been in the Community?

PH - We used to go to Mass at Wybong.

MH - Yeah. Every second and forth Sunday there would be Mass at the little church out there and there was quite a crowd. We would go down to mass there.

PH - What time did it start, 8 o'clock?

MH - 8 o'clock.

PH - It would go to 1 or 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

MH - We'd all get there, and the kids would be there, and, oh the mass didn't go for that long, it was just the talking afterwards.

I was going to say, it sounds like a Presbyterian Session if it goes to 1 or 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

MH - No, no, the Father would have to be back to do Mass in Denman. The boys would take their cricket bats and stumps, or they would nick across the road and climb the mountain across the road while the adults are all talking, and eventually they would say, we're hungry, we better go home. So we would all head off home in different directions, and yeah, it was quite a community.

That was a service by the priest from Denman?

MH - Yeah, Father John Woods was there at the time.

So when did services stop?

MH - Oh, I can't remember, what year, Hogan's would be able to tell you better than us, I can't remember what year that stopped.

PH - It stopped because of lack of Priests.

MH - I think it was when Denman parish then joined with Merriwa and Cassilis and he had to travel even further - so the little churches like Wybong, and Gulgong, and what was the other little one out there? Berami (I think it might have been) - they were closed down; because I think he had to go further out.

And what was the name of the church up here, was it a Saint's name?

MH - I don't know. Pat Hogan would have to tell you that one.

So was it used for weddings and that too, do you recall anyone getting married?

MH - Not in our time, no.

PH - I would be surprised if there weren't a few people got married there.

MH - No, because Peter and Aileen got married in Sydney, we went down to their wedding. No, there were no weddings in our time there. There were baptisms though, and I think Pat's father, Oscar's funeral was there too.

PH - He built the place.

Oscar Hogan built the church there?

PH - He was an apprentice. Well his boss, whoever his boss was, built it, but he was the apprentice on the side.

That's interesting.

PH - I don't know how successful it is, but Pat was going to get the mines to take the church up to the cemetery.

MH - Well he was hoping he could.

Do you know if there are a group of trustees for the Church?

MH - Well it was a very relaxed sort of thing. I think the Hogan's had the keys, and did everything, because they had been there since the beginning of time almost.

PH - Who used to write the cheques out?

MH - The Hogan's and Noel Flannigan, I think it was Pat and Noel did all the financial side of it. Yeah.

So what other Community groups have been around?

MH - Well there's always been the Bush Fire Brigade, the bush fire crowd, and the hall. Dances are always very popular, and very important I think.

PH - The first couple of years we were here they had the rodeo at Manobalai.

MH - They did too, and they had the sports day.

PH - That was brought between the two churches, an equal share.

MH - The Anglican and the Catholic Church.

PH - And used by their various churches.

So the hall, that's run by a Committee out here?

MH - Yes

Have you run it?

MH - No. No, from the old hall when we first came here, it's really improved a lot - all that back area wasn't there, it was just the hall.

PH- Well it was there, but they put roller doors in so they could open it on a hot night.

MH - And then they had the, I think the toilets were all long drops and things like that which they have really improved, it's really good now, the kitchen's all new, it looks lovely.

PH- There's a huge playground for the children.

MH - It's a really good community place. But over the years, I mean, I've been down there and we've done sewing classes, and woodwork and different things. We had computer classes there one time; Max Waters still does his painting classes down there.

Does he get a good role up?

MH - He does. Sometimes he might only get 5 or 6, but other nights, he could have probably 30 - it just depends I suppose.

So what about the fire brigade, who's in control of that out here?

PH - Mr Hughshaw.

MH - Yeah, it's Mr Hughshaw now. But for years it was always Dudley Googe and Pat Hogan, they were the main Captains.

So does everyone out here sort of belong to that?

PH - Well some people do, I don't know what numbers there are, like it was 1981 when I came out here and I saw Pat Hogan, and I said how do I get into the fire brigade, and he said consider it done. So, I just assumed I was on some list somewhere. Nobody asked me for money or anything.

MH - Yeah, but if there was a fire you would go.

PH - Now, you're not allowed to go to a fire unless you're kitted out in all the right gear. I have got all the right gear, and everybody says, but you're not on my list. So then I got one fellow, and I said well how do I get on the list? He said you've got to do an induction course, so I spent a day out in a gully out at McCulley's Gap putting out fire, oh, it was good, the one that got me was the one where you wrap yourself in a blanket, and hop in the back of the truck, and hope it doesn't burn down.

MH - But having lived at Emu Plains, we'd been fighting fires for years.

So have they had any bad fires out this way?

PH- Oh had a couple, not raging ones, one on the ridge up there. Joe Moore was the captain then. Oh, there was one across the road, but I wasn't here for that.

What about the school bus service, was that running when you came out here?

MH - Yes, it was just about in need of an injection of children, and we supplied the injection.

PH - The bus driver, what was his name?

MH - I can't remember his name darling. Every time he saw us, he'd say are you in your house yet? When are you moving in? When are you moving in?

PH- We were doing terrible things to his demographics.

MH - And finally we moved in, and he said, "Oh, thank goodness for that, now I have got so many kids I can keep the bus going."

So how many school aged children would you have brought then?

MH - 4... no 5, Robert had started school, so 5 new ones on the bus.

And, are you retired now?

PH - Yeah.

So what have you been doing, finishing the house?

PH- Oh, just playing a bit of croquet. Takes up a fair bit of my time

MH - Plus we've been away a bit in the caravan. We will have to do more of that when everything's sorted out.

So will you stay in this district do you think, or will you move away?

MH - We're not really sure, we haven't sort of decided what we're doing really yet.

So is there anyone else around here we should interview?

MH - I don't know- see the Wild's they've gone, they were all houses built after us. We were really the first brick house that was built, and then Shorter's built there's, and then built Wild's theirs. Then I don't know what happened, the Mine Subsidence came out one day, and they said where did you get permission to build a brick house? I said from the Council, and he said well where's your paperwork. Anyway, we showed him all the paperwork and he said oh. From then on there were no more brick houses allowed to be built - which was strange. Because they are still building all brick houses in Muswellbrook, and all underneath Muswellbrook's mined as we know. So that was strange, we don't know what that was all about, but anyway, so people after that were not allowed to build brick houses.

Perhaps there's underground coal here, and there's potential in the future.

MH - Well there is coal under here, but it's about 300 m we were told.

What made you sell the 20 acres?

PH - Well it helped us pay off the rest of it.

Anything else you can think of, any stories you've heard about members of the community?

MH - I hear nothing, and say nothing.

APPENDIX C-7

Noel Ray Transcript

Interviewee: **Noel Ray**
Association with Study Area: **Residence ID 179 in Anvil Hill EA**
Date of Interview: **24 July 2008**
Interview venue: **1023 Bureen Road, Denman**
Interviewers: **Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker**

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

What is your full name?

Noel Edgar Ray.

What year were you born?

1953.

In Muswellbrook?

I was born in Muswellbrook.

Who were your parents?

Doug and Joyce Ray.

What was your mother's maiden name?

Joyce Evelyn Elizabeth Bailey. My father's name was Douglas Charles Ray.

On the Ray side, who were your grandparents?

Charles Richard Ray and Harriet Ray. Harriet Ray was a Barwick from up at Scone, and Charles Richard Ray actually came from Bunnan, when they bought land or took land up at the Government grant. I think that was the way it all started.

And on your mother's side, who were your grandparents?

Grandfather Bailey was actually a blacksmith, and he actually came from out around Parkes area (or somewhere originally I think), then he came to Merriwa and he had his family out there for a while, then he also moved over to Bunnan. Then Mum actually come down to Wybong working for Dad and Gordon, looking after my uncle's children, because they had 9 children. Dad then ended up marrying my mother.

So what was Gordon Ray to you?

My uncle.

What other brothers or sisters did your father have?

There was only one other sister, and that was Claire (Bray). Claire's children are Les, Lorraine (now Miller) and Jean (now Gallagher). Jean was one of my first cousins. Les Bray at Denman, he is one of my first cousins, and Lorraine Miller, she is in Maitland.

What about your brothers or sisters?

Out of my father's children there were Malcolm Ray, Richard Ray and myself, and there was one elder brother (Anthony Charles) that died when he was 18 months old. He is buried in Muswellbrook cemetery.

So when do you think the Ray's came to the actual Wybong area?

I don't honestly know that, but everybody's always spoke around the 150 year mark that they were over there for, but I couldn't guarantee that.

I also know a parcel of the ground was taken up over there, which was actually Anvil Hill, where my grandmother used to live in the old slab house. That was actually taken up by Granny Ray's brother, which was a Barwick. Uncle Fred Barwick, I think it was. He actually took that up in the first place, to the best of my knowledge, and then he chose to move back up to Moonan Flat. He went back up there to live, and I don't know if Granddad bought the place off him, or Grandmother bought it off him, or what happened, all I know is that at the end of the day I ended up with it - it was left to me in my father's will, and I actually ended up with that parcel of land in the finish.

So what's your wife's maiden name?

Barbara Sandra Bell.

Was she from around here?

She originally came from Scone. It was quite funny, because she and I ended up being about 5th or 6th cousins, I think. I've got the history book here on, as I call it, the breeding sections. So anyway, somewhere along the line they hooked up there, and then strangely enough I married Barbara, and my brother in law turned around and married Bert Ray's daughter, which is my second cousin, which locked us up again. So we are all keeping it close.

How did you meet?

I became friends with Peter Bell before I ever met Barbara, and I was playing in the Ray boy's band - which I did for 20 odd years. I was out at McCully's Gap when I actually met Peter, he was working up at Scone, at a stud, and he went out there dancing and carrying on. I ended up meeting him and he got out of a job up there and had nowhere to live, so he bunked in with me and worked at the vineyard at Wybong for a while. Then Barbara came up actually to visit Peter, and I ended up meeting up with her, and that was the end of that story - that's 25 years ago.

How many children have you got?

I've got 3 children. Timothy in Adelaide, Jessica's in Sydney nursing, and Kylie's still at home.

Did you go to school at all?

No, I never went to school. I did correspondence for a little while, but I spent more time catching rabbits and riding champion horses than what I did learning how to read and write, unfortunately.

Was that with the Black Forest Correspondence School?

I suppose it would have been. I don't honestly know. I can honestly sit here and say to you I wish mum never let me out, but the trouble is I used to just take off on my horse. I just bolted for the hills. I would much rather set a rabbit trap than worry about adding up what 2 and 2 was, at that time in my life.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

So you mentioned earlier you lived on the original block that the Ray's had - how big a property was that?

That portion was 200 acres, there were five 40 acre blocks in that, but it was 200 acres. Granddad first took up down where Gordon used to live. I can't even remember what they called that, I should know. I don't know how many acres were in that originally, because they bought part of Charlie Clarke's old place. Charlie Clarke owned a portion of the land as well, so Granddad bought him out – then who else he took up, I don't know, but there were a few Clarke's around there at the time.

There was actually a vineyard there too - many, many years ago. I didn't know that until about 25 years ago - I was talking to somebody and they said 'Oh, there used to be a vineyard there years and years ago', and I said 'Oh, ok, I didn't even know that.'

That was on the black flat, right down the bottom there apparently, but I didn't know that. There used to be a racecourse there too.

Well, from the Wybong Bridge, if just come back this way a bit and there is a house, and then you will see like a lagoon, like a flat sort of area in the middle there - apparently that's where the racecourse was. When Dad and Gordon used to sit over milking their cows in the dairy by hand, they used to look across and they could see the horses going around the racetrack there. That was many years ago too.

So how long ago do you think that would be?

I have no idea. I know I wasn't around, so probably in the 1940's - late 30's, early 40's, I'd say. I don't know for sure, I couldn't tell you to be honest.

So how big did the property you own end up?

I ended up with 140 acres in the finish. I sold the house portion of it a couple of years after I met Barbara, then we actually moved into Muswellbrook. I lived in Koombahla Street for 8 years, I think it was. Then I got sick of living in town pretty quickly - I didn't go much on living in town, after living the bush all my life.

One day, we went for a Sunday drive, and I actually drove down through Mangoola and I saw a little sign sitting on the gate 'For Sale, apply within'. So I drove in there, and I found out I knew the bloke - I used to work with him down at the mines. He ended up saying 'Oh well if you want to buy it, we will do a deal.' So we did a deal and I bought that, and I moved back out there. Then I sold the rest of Anvil Hill off and moved over there, and that was it. 14 years I lived there for, and then we come out here.

The other Ray properties, how big were they?

'Potters', the portion that my brother Richard owned, I think that was 800 acres. Then the other brother, where I was reared, Malcolm, I think that was 140 or 150 acres, I'm not really sure. He owned the old part of the black flat down the bottom, I think it was about 160 acres, - somewhere around that area anyway.

So what did you use your property for, dairy farming?

I just used it for grazing – you would never earn a living off it. I worked in the mines; I drove coal trucks for my cousin Ray for him for 16 years, and then I got sick of that, and then went driving machinery for Howick Mine. I drove for them for 12 years, full time. Then I got hurt and finished up down there, and sold out to the mines and come over here. Now I have my cattle truck I cart cattle with, make a bit of hay, grow a few crops, and sleep at night.

Then the other Ray properties, what were they used for?

They were all used for grazing in the last part of the years. My grandmother and grandfather had it, and then my granddad died. Then dad and Gordon and Aunty Claire and my grandmother run the property as an estate. The whole lot was run together, nobody actually owned anything. It was just an estate. That's something that I've always been a little annoyed with when the history gets written - they always say Gordon Ray owned the dairy - Gordon Ray did not own the dairy, it was owned by an estate, and it was owned by Harriett Ray, Gordon Ray, Douglas Charles Ray and Claire Ray, that was who it was owned by. Then when grandmother died, they all got their piece of the ground. The dairy was actually closed down, Dad got his part of the ground, Uncle Gordon got his part of the ground, and their sister Claire got bought out by my father and my uncle, and then it was all closed down and run as a grazing property.

Did they run it separately then?

They ran it separately then, and only then was it ran separately. Gordon Ray did own another property - he actually owned Anvil Mountain, he bought that himself, and he actually

owned the Ranch, what they call the Ranch, up the Wybong Road there. Where Harold Ray lives, I think he still lives there, I'm not sure if he has moved yet or not, but he was there.

So when would the property have been split up, do you think, roughly?

I think I was between 16 and 17 when it got split up, so if you can work that out, you got it. Because I know we never had electricity up until then, and I know when the property was split up and the money was sorted out for Auntie Claire - there was a bit of money left over, and I know Dad got the electricity put on. All we ever had before that was kerosene lights.

My poor old dad - he was a bit of a character. He used to always say modern society has got it wrong. I said why is that? And he said well they eat outside and cook inside. That was one of his favourite things he used to come out with, poor old dad.

Dad was an absolute poet, dad and Gordon both - they could stand there and recite any poem to you that you wanted, and they were absolutely perfect. Banjo Patterson was one of their heroes apparently. Mum thought she was doing the right thing one day, she went into Muswellbrook and she bought this big Banjo Patterson book and brought it home. I remember we were sitting around the old fire place, we were sitting there with our feet on the oven, in the middle of winter, to keep our feet warm - it was freezing cold. We were sitting there and Dad was sitting there alongside us, and he was actually having a little bit of wine. He used to always used to have about a half inch of wine and fill the glass up with water before he went to bed at night. My brother and myself were sitting there, we had our guitars, of course we were always keen playing our guitars, we just taught ourselves, and dad was there. Mum drags this book out, old kerosene light burns in the middle of the table, and we're all sitting there. I remember Mum read the first line of this damn thing, and dad finished the page. She flipped the page, read the first line, and the old fellow would finish the poem again. Mum said 'I don't know what I bought it for' and Dad said 'you've got me beat'. I have never forgotten that.

So did he go to school?

Yes, Dad went to school.

At Wybong School?

Yes, well actually, he went to school at Spring Creek. Well, he went to school at the Wybong convent. You wouldn't believe there was a Wybong Convent would you?

Yes, Roger McTaggart was telling us.

Roger Mc Taggart? - well there is a funny story. My father used to go over there, and he used to tell us kids about the story when they had turkeys, geese, ducks and all sorts of things that they did in those days. Dad said all the kids used to get a piece of bread and tie it onto the end of a piece of string and throw it into the old ducks or turkeys, and they would swallow it and then they would drag it back out. He said they used to play up a bit on that. Apparently the old nuns gave Dad a flogging and a few of them a flogging for doing it.

I think the nunnery actually closed down, and that was why he went over to Spring Creek. He used to ride a horse over from Manobalai (from where they used to live) across to Spring Creek every day. That was a fair stretch, you know, I think they used to ride over there, and I think Roger McTaggart went to school over there too.

Yes, Roger said it was near the turn off to Castlerock Road, in that area there.

Yes, just after the Castlerock Road turnoff from Wybong Road, there's another road [Limvardy Road], and just at that corner there's a great heap of bush, in a paddock - that's where the school was there, in that little area. I know that's where dad went. My mother went to school there too, and she used to live on the Ridgeland's Road - right up in the valley up there, that's where she used to be, she used to ride down on a horse.

Did Gordon live in the slab house?

Yes, that was a slab house. He was actually born there. Dad wasn't. Dad was born in 1908 in Scone. I can't tell you where Aunty Claire was born, I wouldn't have a clue. I have a sneaky suspicion she might have been born in Scone too actually. I think Gordon come along too quickly. Gordon lived there right up until he died, and he's only spent about 2 days in hospital. I think he had only been to hospital about twice in his whole life, I think. He was 80-something when he died, so he didn't do too badly.

Anvil house was actually slab too. Barbara and I started off there, and it was always all ironbark and slab. I am pretty sure Uncle Fred Barwick built that, as far as I know. I'm not 100% certain, but I think he did. I know Fred Bray, the bloke that married Aunty Claire - they were first cousins again - you know, all those sorts of things happened in those days because they didn't ride their horse far. It must be easier to go next door than 40 mile up the road.

So, on Gordon's property and your father's property, what did they use them for?

In the early part it was used for beef cattle and then it went to the dairy. They used to have to sell 2 cans of milk and half a can of cream, I think was their quota - they had to produce that. I think when we were milking, if I remember rightly, when I first started milking down there I was about 6 year old and I think we used to milk about 25-30 cows. We might have got up to 40 sometimes, but I think around about 25-30 pulled them up.

Was the milking done by hand?

Yes, all by hand. We still milk the cows by hand. I can do it faster by hand then they could by machine. My wife milks, she was actually taught to milk by her Aunty Flo - she used to go out there when she was a school kid. They had a little dairy they used to rear pigs and calves - I don't know what age she started milking, but I know she was only young, because I mean she could knock it out of the cows as quick as anyone else. So could all my daughters, they can all do it. The one that's just gone back to Sydney, she's 22, she can milk a cow as good as what I can. They were all got brought up with it. I said there's a cow, if you want the milk, start milking it.

So, did they grow any other crops?

They grew oats and stuff for the cows in the winter time. They did a lot of feeding my hand. They fed a lot of pollen, chaff, crack corn and meat meal in the winter months - meat meal was a big thing they used to feed in those days, you're not allowed to feed it these days. We actually used to chaff our own hay. We used to make hay; Dad and Gordon always used to make hay, just whistlecock it, you know, pull it together. I can remember carting hay down, and putting it in the shed with my two brothers, and falling off the top of the load of hay - I remember doing that. It was an old horse and cart it was. They used to make their own hay a bit, and they used to buy hay in, but they used to plant a bit of oats and stuff like that for the cows - but the property was quite big, I think all together it was about 1800 acres, I think, all up, or something like that. I know the cattle used to just graze on the grasses and that at the night time, and they used to feed hay and all that in the winter, I think.

The meat meal and pollen and all that, where would that come from?

I think it came from the dairy factory in Muswellbrook, from the co-op, - I'm pretty sure that's where it came from. Some of it came from in at Denman; I know that, because I used to go in with Dad and Gordon to get it when I was a kid. They used to take some home from in there. Canned in Muswellbrook used to have it, actually the dairy company wouldn't have been going then because Cannes had a big store in Muswellbrook, straight opposite the railway line. Huge store there, and the big shed's still there, but they used to produce pollen and stuff like that - I know dad and Gordon used to buy it in there as well. In later years I'm, pretty sure they used to buy it from the dairy co-op, but no, it wouldn't have been first up. It would have come from Cannes and from Denman.

The milk, was it sent to Muswellbrook or Denman?

Muswellbrook. I don't know if it ever did go to Denman. There used to be a cream factory in Denman, years and years ago. I don't know if it ever went in there or not. In my time it went to Muswellbrook, because I know when I was learning to drive a car, I was only about 7, 8, 9, 10; I used to drive the old ute out to the road every day with the milk. That was my big thing driving that vehicle mate. Gordon used to come with me, used to drive out there and back up to the truck and put it on. The blokes name was Hilton Barnett; he was the man that used to be in the truck. He used to take the milk off into town, and come back out the next day and give the empty ones back, and drop the full ones off, and away he'd go again.

Were they using tractors when you were a kid?

The first tractor I ever drove, which was the State's tractor, it was a Massey Harris tractor - 4 cylinder petrol - she was an evil bit of gear, but she done the job, and that was the first tractor I ever drove. I don't think they ever had any other tractor, I think it was the only one they had actually. Dad used to use a horse for the ploughing. I remember ploughing the paddocks over at Anvil Hill, actually I've got photographs here of Dad ploughing the paddock - with two horses out the front. He taught all of us kids to walk the trench behind the horse to turn the plough.

So how many horses would you use?

Dad used to use two horses. We used to scoop water too from the old Anvil Creek. We never had any big dams on the place, so dad used to take his scoop over. My job, because I was the youngest, I got the good job; I used to ride the old mare. I used to sit up on the top of the back of the collar and I'd lean in and out of the hole, and dad would be behind me, and he'd be scooping. He'd say pull up, and I'd pull up, and he'd tip the scoop back over the other way, and he'd take another scoop. I loved that, I used to sit up there, good job that.

I was only talking to my daughter here the other day and she was saying something about this kid, and I said "they need a job. She said "what do you mean, they are too young", I said "they are not too young, when I was 5 year old, I used to ride from my mother and father's place on a draft mare across to my grandmothers place and give her the milk. Every day - that was my job, I'd go over there, we used to get off, they'd have a saw horse there, and I used to get off on that, because I couldn't get off any other way, she was too tall, and I'd climb down." We used to have a stick up on the end of the saw horse, because the log was only in the saw horse, I used to climb up that, walk up along that, grab hold of the hames, throw yourself up on top of the horse, and I'd ride it home.

So how did you open and shut the gates on the old mare?

You would lean over and hang onto the hames, without falling off, because I couldn't get back on. Have to walk. Actually I did fall off at one time, but what I did, I actually pulled it up alongside the stone post and climbed up the stay, and jumped back on, got back on that way.

Was there any underground water on the property?

Yes, there were underground wells, which we used to bucket water and pull up. We used to lower the bucket down, flick it a certain way, fill the bucket with water and then pull it up. That was quite a feat pulling up 4 gallons of water. So there was a well there, a well on Uncle Gordon's property and a well just below where we were reared. We actually used to use that well to water the vegetables. Dad had had a flood system set up in the vegetable garden to water the vegies - he had these troughs that went along and we would block each one and then put the water through and it would water all the vegies. Quite simple but effective.

Were you nearly self sufficient?

Yes, Dad and Gordon grew a lot of vegetables. Uncle Gordon actually used to have a vegetable run in Muswellbrook, he actually used to do that and sell cordial around. I know Dad and Gordon used to grow the vegies and sell them. They used to sell a lot of firewood too, so did Stan. Stan is my first cousin - that was how he first started off, cutting firewood out the back of Dad's property. I can remember sitting in a 1948 Ford with Stan and I was playing with the gear stick, and I would not leave it alone and he gave me his watch to play with so I would leave it alone. That's the first thing I remember properly. Stan is now 75. He is exactly 20 years older than me.

Were there rabbits on the place?

At one stage, I had 2 jobs – I used to work for Gordon Simpson and Jeff Simpson. I was 10 years old and I used to run 100 rabbit traps. I used to set them right around the hill, from my fathers property, right around to the old hill, out to the creek and up to the wallet on the road. I used to put the rabbits in the wallet screen there on the road - I used to gut them and leave them in the wallet and then Hilton Barnett, he was the milk truck driver, he used to pick them up for me and take them into town and sell them to a bloke for me. He used to take them in every day and bring the money back the next day.

So I used to do that on my way to work and then I would ride down the road up into 'Callatoota' and work for Jeff Simpson. I was 10 year old and I used to ride his race horses to muster sheep. You could just steer them. I remember we got one horse up from Sydney and I took it for a ride. Anyway, old Jeff Simpson, he used to stutter, and he said "take that to muster the sheep". "Ok Mr Simpson", I said. Anyway, a few cattle were on Gordon Simpson's place next door – Gordon was Jeff's uncle. I went over to get them and go around the cows, and this horse just took off. I was holding the reins and kicking my boot and it would not turn – we were just going flat out. Eventually, I stopped it and we had to turn around and go back again.

So, I was doing that and I used to shut the calves up for Mr and Mrs Gordon Simpson on my way home and set up the rabbit traps again on my way home. That was a good day's work.

So did you run sheep?

Yes, we had sheep. The whole lot of us learnt to shear with the blades when the shearing was on – Richard, Malcolm, myself and my father. We used to do all the shearing.

What was the timber like on the properties? Was there much ironbark?

There was a lot of ironbark on that property, a bit of pines, not a lot, but a bit. Mainly ironbark, a bit of gum out the back, but it was mainly ironbark. A lot of rubbish and stuff too, but there is some really good bits still in there - beautiful timber out there, even now.

So did you cut any ironbark for milling, or posts?

Oh yes. We cut thousands of tonnes - that's what always makes me cranky when they talk about cutting the timber. We've cut those hills down over there for, I don't know, as long as I can remember. Stan took thousands and thousands and thousands of tonnes of wood out of there, so did Harold, so did Richard, my brother, I did, and you know, it's still there. There is beautiful ironbark in that place out there, I could take you out and show you some of the best ironbark you've seen in your life out there. It's still there today and they are all worried about cutting it out. You won't cut it out if you do it properly. You know, you don't go through and take and everything. Chippers are what the problem are, not cutting timber, it's the chippers, because they take everything - kill the lot. A bloke like myself might take 30 stays or we want to cut 500 posts, but while ever we doing that, all the other stuff is growing. A chipper would

go through that and take the lot. That's where the problem starts, it's nothing to do with the millers, but anyway, that's another story.

The pine that's out there, is it millable pine?

It was used for building, it was more black pine, but it was more used for building, like roof rafters and stuff like that was undercover. You could mill it, there weren't any problems with milling it, but no, there wasn't any sort of Cyprus pine or anything like that I know of.

Were there any burials on the properties do you know of?

Not actually on our property that I know of - I've never known anybody at all ever to be buried around there. There is on Ray Smith's old property - there is a child's grave over there on that place. It's actually the only one that I know of I think around there. I don't know of any other than that one.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

In Wybong itself, there was only a hall and post office; were there any other commercial buildings out there?

No, not that I know of. The nearest shop was at Hollydeen. There was only the post office and the hall. We had three Churches - you had the Catholic Church straight across from Dad and Gordon at the dairy there, then you had Manobalai Church, and Spring Creek Church.

Did Manobalai have a school and hall too?

No, they just had the school. They used to have a sports ground - there was actually two student sports grounds. I was actually talking to a bloke about that the other day, he rang me up to do a load of cattle, and he said 'I'm near the sports ground', and I said 'Which one?', he said 'what do you mean, there's only one', I said 'No there's not, there's two', and he said 'Nah, there's only one'. I said 'how long have you been in Wybong', he said '25 years'; I said 'Mate, you're a foreigner, I can happily show you where the other one is'. But he didn't know. We used to go up there and chase the greasy pig and hoopla, and all the horse events, and everything else. It was a great day for everybody from the area. Everybody used to come.

Was this the one on the Mangoola Road?

No, up Manobalai way. There was a sports ground up there. I believe they had one at Mangoola as well, but I don't know where it was held, I couldn't actually tell you that.

So the hall in Wybong itself, what was it used for then?

Dances, fire brigade meetings and all those sorts of things. It held the odd parties, like a whole group of people used to get together, sometimes we'd go to big gatherings, we used to go up there and have a bit of a time out. Whenever there was a sports carnival on - we used to come back and go to what they called the sports dance. We used to have a Christmas dance and an Easter dance, and all that sort of stuff. They used to hold a ball

there every now and again - that never sort of started until the vineyard kicked up - Penfolds first started the vineyard up there and then the ball started. I've actually got photographs of inside the old Wybong hall. My brothers and that used to go, I've still got photographs of when we had our band up there playing. That is where we all learned to play. We used to go up there, old Bill Baker; he used to do all the piano work up there- he was the piano man. The old Butcher from Denman, Tommy Day was the drummer, and every now and the he used to get a get spot, get up there and give him a bit of a bash, give a few people a giggle, and it was alright, you know, had a good time. But myself and my brother Richard we actually had our own band, besides the Ray boy thing - then a few of them got married, and they took off, so we went back playing with our cousins again. Richard still plays with them.

So when would those two bands have started - the Ray boys and yourself?

For the Ray boys band I think it's coming up to 50 years, very soon actually. I know it's been a long time. Tom was probably the one that actually kicked it off originally. The original people in the band - there was Tom Ray, Bert Ray, George Ray and Heather Ray. They were the first ones to ever start it. Heather lives down at Wagga Wagga, Tom passed away, Bert lives in Singleton now, and George lives in Maitland I think, I'm not exactly sure where he lives. They were the ones that actually started it all.

Then Richard and I, we followed our band up, years after that. We had the modern variety; we used to play the modern music, what they used to call 'go go' music. We used to play all that sort of music. Old Mrs Bray - I will never forget we were up there one night and we actually rented the hall ourselves to put a dance on. No we didn't sorry - it was when they were going to close down the Denman hospital, and we started holding dances to save it, and we were actually playing for nothing, trying to get them enough money to keep it all going. Anyway, we put this 'go-go' dance on, and there must have been about 200 young people turn up there. I will never forget Gladys Bray was there, and we switched the lights out, because we had all the flashy lights, you know the red and the green, and all this sort of thing, and Gladys Bray went crazy, you could have sworn the go damn devil grabbed her. She was terrified once we switched the lights out. All the young people thoroughly enjoyed it. They thought it was unreal. They were all going for it, and saying the music was too loud, and this was too loud, something else was too loud. We were having a ball, we didn't care, but we made a heap of money.

So did you all learn to play?

Just by ear. My uncle Max (my mum's brother) he was a musician who used to play with Chad Morgan. When Uncle Max came home (he was mechanic, a wanderer and used to go all over Australia - even now), he would show us half a dozen chords and go away again. While he was away, we would be frantically learning these half dozen chords, and then we when he came back, he would show us something else. We also picked up little things on our own as we went along. That's how we learnt to play.

There was another bloke called Jack Clarke, he came from Cessnock, and he taught Tom Ray and all those other fellow's how to play. He was absolutely unbelievable on the piano accordion. He actually used to come up to our shed to go shooting with his family (he had come for about 30 years) – we have all ended up like family, we still are to day, all his sons and daughters are like brothers and sisters to us today. Jack used to come up here, get the old piano accordion out and he would be in to it. He taught Tom how to play the accordion, then George picked up the drums (Aunty Joy (that's Jack's wife, used play to the drums and she taught George). Then away it all went.

So you had guitar, piano accordion and drums? Anything else?

We had the button accordion as well. We mainly had the drums, guitar and piano normally. Then when Richard joined back with them, we had the lead guitar, rhythm guitar, the organ (Bert took on playing the organ), Tom still played the piano accordion and George played the drums.

How far did you go around playing?

Just around the district here. We often went down around Singleton, Scone, Bunnan, Moonan Flat, Merriwa, Wybong, McCullys Gap, Scott's Flat and Ellerston (they used to have a big shearing shed at Ellerston where we used to play). We also used to play at Gundy.

I remember one night we were playing at Ellerston for about 80 people on the searing shed floor and the wombats had got underneath. Well, they were all doing a dance (jumping up and down having a wow of time) and then next thing, BANG, the floor went through! The wombats had undermined it! It was a laugh – there was dust everywhere. We had some great nights up there. We used to play every single weekend. Every weekend we would be off playing Friday and Saturday night, full on, back to work Monday morning, eyes hanging out of your head.

Was there much Prickly Pear through the Wybong area?

There was a lot in the early days – a heck of a lot. Dad used to tell us a story about him and his brother Gordon -they had a horse drawn cart (a bit bigger than a box trailer, up high on wheels) and he said they used to get five or six loads of prickly pear in it, put it one spot and then burn it. All around the hill out there, there were prickly bear bushes. My mum and my Aunty Dolly (Uncle Gordon's wife) used to pick the fruit and make jam from it. Absolutely beautiful jam it was. But there were acres and acres of it. There was plenty of tiger pear too. Even to the day, there is plenty of it out there.

So when do you think the power and telephone come through to Wybong?

I remember Gordon had the telephone on first down there – 4D that was the phone number. I have got no idea when that came through. I know it was on in the Second World War because Heather (my cousin from Wagga Wagga) was telling me there used to be a description of the different planes (the Japanese and Australian planes) (it might even still be

on the wall of the old house) and if they saw a plane that looked different, they would have to ring up and report it. That was before the Second World War.

Was that through the Wybong Post Office?

Yes, through Mrs Payne - she used to have the exchange. I know when we used to go into town and sometimes we needed to have to get a message back to dad, so we would wind up the old phone and say "Hello Mrs Payne, can you put me through to 4D please?" Then you would give a message to Aunty Dolly or Uncle Gordon to give to Dad, because he would be down milking cows in the dairy. I actually used the phone myself as kid from the time to call somebody – you would give a penny to use it.

Who were some of the other property owners around you when you were a kid?

Alfred Smith and then Ray Smith owned the property straight across the creek. There was also Gordon and Jeff Simpson, who owned Callatoota. They were Uncle and Nephew - Gordon was the Uncle and Jeff was the Nephew. There were also Oscar Hogan and Pat Hogan (who is Oscar's son).

Then as you go further afield, you had the Doyle's, Roger Mc Taggart and all the Mc Taggart family. Roger Mc Taggart is actually Ray Smith's brother in law.

Alf Smith apparently won the lottery a long time ago – he was an Irishman, who loved his port – I will never forget that.

I remember once when we were kids, we used to go up there and they used to have a milk stand up right near the Catholic Church. We went up there one Sunday morning on our horse, it was Christmas actually. We used to live there – we would get on our horses and gallop across to see Ray. Ray was an absolute country gentleman – beautiful man. We would go over there and met Ray to take the milk up in the old 'Chevy truck he used to have. We would go up there and old Alf would come along and take his fiddle with him. Hilton Barnett would get on the milk stands and Alf would get the fiddle out - it was beautiful. Story goes he used to play in a big band in Sydney somewhere. I don't know a lot about that but I believe it to be right.

The way that man [Alf Smith] used to play the fiddle was absolutely unbelievable. We used to stand there, listen and carry on. They would all be drinking their port and they would be fair into it. I have seen Hilton Barnett that drunk he could barely drive the truck. How he got home, I will never know. You can ask anyone on Wybong – I have seen Hilton Barnett that drunk he could hardly talk, but he could still drive that truck. He would never miss a gear. He was an old soldier who served in the Second World War. He said "mate the only way to drive it is when you're drunk". These days, you would get locked up with the key thrown away. He was top bloke.

His family is still around. Val Barnett (his wife) used to own the property and just sold it actually. His brother Kenny Barnett is a fencer in town [Muswellbrook] – he is a top bloke too, a total gentleman.

I remember one Christmas morning, we were all singing Carols in the church and there was Alf - he was into the fiddle. Then the church music stopped, the organ stopped and Alf yells out at the top of his voice “play another, me lady”. I will never forget that – it was a beautiful time of my life.

There was also the Cowans who owned a property, and also Col Barry - he owned a property out there. Up the Wybong, there is also the Googe family – they are still there. We had a lot of interaction really, for the little way that we got a round. Us kids would walk a fair bit or catch a horse.

Noel Flannigan was up the Wybong further. There was another Flannigan too, but I cannot think of their name. There was also Danny and Patty Maloney – they were characters. They were Irishmen who also loved their port.

I can tell you a good story on that note – well its not a story, its true. I was riding back from Gordon Gallagher’s place on my horse and I would have been about 12 (at the most). I was riding along and got back to Danny’s house, and there was Danny in his old sulky outside his house, slumped over. So I rode over and said “Are you alright Mr Maloney?” He said “Oh I am ok me lad, I’m fine”. I said “Where Patty?” (Patty was his brother). He said “I wouldn’t have a clue”. I said “Where have you been?” He said “I have been at Sandy Hollow”, “Oh, at the pub?” I asked. He said “Oh, I might have had a few, but I don’t know where Patty is”. So I got off my horse and walked around the house and I couldn’t find him anywhere. I said “Well we better go back and look for him”. Well, I rode my horse and Danny brought the sulky and we went down to the Yarraman Creek and there was Patty, lying on the side of the road with a broken arm - he had fallen out of the sulky and Danny had ridden over him! They were both as drunk as monkeys.

Did any of these Irishmen start make potchine out there?

I don’t know, but they were fantastic blokes.

Were there any Sweeney’s out there?

I never knew the Sweeney’s, but apparently they were out there somewhere. Dad did tell me who owned Ray Smiths place before he did, but I can’t remember who it was. I can only remember that there were the Sweeney’s and Payton’s.

My mother actually used to take care of their children [Payton’s]. The Payton’s used to have a dairy farm just down from Pat Hogan’s property. I think they must have had a fair few kids, because when they used to go miking the cows, the kids used to go off and get in mischief.

So their mother used to tie them up so they wouldn't go in amongst the cows and get hurt. I remember that, so they must have had a few children.

I can also remember another story that Mum told me about Mr Payton. He would say to his wife "We are going into town at 9 o'clock in the morning". Then he would go and get his horse, put in the buggy, drive around to the front of the house, park there, get his pipe out of his waistcoat, light it up and look at his watch. When 9 o'clock came (and it wouldn't matter if 9 o'clock came and Mrs Payton was walking out the front door), he would get in the car, drive the buggy back round to the shed, let the horse out and say "Well, we will try again tomorrow". If you weren't in the car by 9 o'clock, you stayed there.

Mum used to tell me that story on a regular basis. Mum used to drive me mad, because I would be taking her into town and I would be waiting and I used to hate it. She would say "You sound like old Payton". She never forgot it.

There was also Reg Bray. He lived over Spring Creek – Neville Bray lives there now – I used to work with him. There was also the Doyle's – Ms Doyle was the school master at the Manobalai School for years. Then there was another Doyle (a brother) who used to live with her because she never got married and neither did he. I used to muster cattle and sheep for him.

Do you remember who has properties down near the Wybong Hall or Post Office?

'Callatoota' took in one side of it which was owned by Jeff Simpson. But behind the hall, I am not sure. I think Maloney's owned part of it early in the piece. There was also 'Rockhall' – that was owned by people from Sydney (Taylors). The Payne's owned where the Post Office was. Then where the Wybong vineyard is (that was a dairy farm originally), I can't remember who owned that.

The country on the other side of the Yarraman was all owned by Mr Simpson (Gordon Simpson and his wife). Gallagher's also had property further over. Ray Smith brought Payton's in the finish, I think.

Were there any Boorer's around on Millville?

There were, but I don't remember them. I heard my father speak of them, but I don't remember them. Out the back of Anvil Hill there, there were also a couple of dairies where they used to milk cows, years ago. There were two dairies out there – I am not sure who owned them, around the Limvardy area (where the actual mine is going). I wouldn't have liked to be working on those dairies though, I tell you. It was hard country.

The Hogan's had fair property out there too, didn't they?

Yes. I was once told the Hogan's had about 4000 - 5000 acres I think. At least 4000 acres, I know for sure. Oscar Hogan owned a lot of country out there. They used to cut a lot of pit props from their property.

Sandy Bailey, actually worked for Oscar Hogan, and he also cut the pit props and did whatever work needed to be done. When the pit props had to be cut, he cut them. My uncle Cliff (which was my mother's brother) cut a lot of timber out there too, he actually built his house out of it, and the house is still in Muswellbrook.

Richard (my brother) , and I cut all the timber to build sheds for Reg Osborn at the back of his property - not the new ones that are there now, but the original sheds – Richard and I cut all the timber for that.

Uncle Cliff bailey cut a lot of timber out there on the mill– they had a mill set up and they used to cut the timber there and drag it back into town and build the house. He actually used to own the house right along the motel opposite the technical college in Muswellbrook. The motel brought that house and moved it around to the back of the street.

But heaps of people brought timber from out of there, but the Hogan's cut a lot of pit props. I remember the old International trucks would be loaded up level to the roof with pit props heading to Muswellbrook.

What other interesting stories are there from characters around the district?

I suppose there are lots of stories, but one story springs to mind about Ray Smith. I can never speak highly enough about the man, he was a lovely bloke. He taught us a lot when we were kids, we used to go over there and cart hay with him - he was just a total character. He was always forever talking to himself, saying "Oh Crikey; don't know what were going to do now Dolly". Dolly was his big blue cattle dog. He was only a young man, about 40 at that time.

But anyway, one thing springs to mind about Ray that I will never forget as long as I live. Dad, Gordon and I were milking cows down at the bales, one Christmas morning. I went down to help dad, so he could come back and we could open up our Christmas presents. I would have been around 8 or 9 and it was a beautiful Christmas morning. Ray Smith came down from his house and he had an old Fordson tractor, and sometimes it could be a bit difficult to start, but he had it on the pump – he used to pump out of the creek.

Anyway, Ray gets out of the old International Truck down, slams the door and him and Dolly come down to the bank of the creek to where the tractor was. We were sitting quietly milking and of course we had no machines so we could everything that was going on - the voice used to carry and it was unbelievable what you could hear.

We heard Ray talking to himself and carrying on and the next minute we hear him give her a swing to try and start the old tractor, but she wouldn't start, so he gave her another one. Next minute, I looked over to see what the commotion was, because he was making a far bit of noise over there - he was about 300 or 400 yards at the most away from us, that's why we

could hear him so clearly. Next minute, he stands back and puts his hands on hips and sung out at the top of his voice "And a bloody Merry Christmas to you too, you blue mongrel", because it wouldn't start for him. That's just one of the things I remember him doing.

There is another thing I remember him doing. He had a little Farmall garden tractor and he used to use for harrowing, hoeing and sowing. I'll never forget once again, we were all at the bales in the afternoon milking and there was a big storm coming up over the top of 'Minnie Vale'. Ray was on this thing and I guarantee he was doing 25 to 30 mile an hour – he was flying, top gear, flat chat, with the harrows on behind it, sowing it. He wanted to get it all levelled off before the storm got there. Well, he was standing up (and you might think I'm having you on, but I'm not) with a piece of hose in his hand, belting the fuel tank, yelling out "Come on girl, go, well beat this one if we hurry". That was just the sort of bloke he was, he was a lifetime character. He was one of the nicest blokes you will ever meet, and well educated – I think he was going to be a lawyer at one stage. But he said it was too much fun on the farm. He would have made an interesting lawyer. His brother was a teacher though, a headmaster.

Poor old Ray died on his farm, sitting on his tractor. That's the way he wanted to go. His wife's name was Barbara, so he used to call my wife 'little Barbara'.

He had a set of twins – David and Sandra. His son, David lives in Muswellbrook. He had Dianne who was the eldest and then he never had any kids for ages. He had this blue cattle dog for ages, that got ran over one day and then next minute, he had twins. Someone said to Ray one day "What happened there Ray? You had a bit of gap, then Delli (the dog) got ran over and then you had twins". Ray said "I had to get rid of the dog, it was always between us."

I remember Gordon Ray was another lifetime character. I will never forget one day I walked into his house, his was sitting, reading the paper. I said "What are doing Uncle Gordon?" He said "Oh, I'm just reading the paper. Oh here is something interesting" he said. "What's that" I asked, he said "Bulldog to give away, eats anything, loves children." Oh, I cracked up, I will never forget it.

In the early days, who would dig the graves at the cemetery?

My father said he had dug some graves up at Wybong there, but I don't know who they were for, but he did help out and dig a couple of graves.

I thought there may have been someone in the area that did it?

No, I don't know about anyone doing it professionally or anything like that in the area. But Dad did go up there and help them dig up a grave one time, but I don't know who it was for. I think it was more of a community thing in those days. If someone died, you all jumped in and help dig the hole to bury them. I know there was a fellow in Muswellbrook who used to do it, but I don't think there was anyone in Wybong that did it - they would have gone broke.

I know there was one old bloke in Muswellbrook, who had to leave Muswellbrook, because he would go along, walk past an old lady and drop the tape measure along side her and say "yep, you will be right" and walk off. This bloke left Muswellbrook and went to the coast. That was another story Dad used to tell me.

Cliff Webb, who used to be one of the first ambulance drivers in Muswellbrook, he actually used to work for my father and uncle on the farm. He left as a young man and became an ambulance driver. Well, when we kids used to fall off our horses and break arms, he used to come and pick us up. I remember him coming out and saying "What have you done to yourself now" and throw us in the ambulance and away we would go.

So, did you break a few arms and legs?

I have broken my arm and my hip, from falling off horses while chasing kangaroos. We used to get them down on the flat and chase them flat out on the horse; then we would rip the stirrup off and bang them on the back of the head as we passed them. We used to ride with no stirrups.

I remember one day I was riding a young horse and I tried it. Well the young horse didn't like it and off I fell, snapping my arm. My brother did the same thing. Dad was going to kill us; he said "you will learn." We also used to break horses in for people.

There was a hell of a lot of rabbits and kangaroos out there - more kangaroos than there were before. I remember one weekend when Jack Clarke and all his family came up, and we shot over 500 kangaroos in the scrub out there. If you go out there now and fire a shot, you would be stampeded to death. There are heaps more kangaroos out there now, than back then.

Last time I was over there, 12 -18 months ago, I was going through the back on the tractor and it was unbelievable how many kangaroos there were. I love a few kangaroos around, but we need to limit them a little bit.

Where there any Koalas at Wybong?

I have never seen a Koala out there in my life and it's a load of crap they reckon they have been found out there. I said that one day at a meeting in Denman, they were going on about the koalas. My father said he had seen koalas there when he was a young kid, but I have never seen one. I am not saying there not out there, but I have never seen one and there are not many trees out there that I don't know by first name.

APPENDIX C-8

Roger and Shirley McTaggart Transcript

Interviewees: *Roger & Shirley McTaggart*
Association with Study Area: *Residence 15 in Anvil Hill EA*
Date of Interview: *24 July 2008*
Interview venue: *13 Palace St, Denman*
Interviewers: *Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker*

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

When were you born Shirley?

SM - June 1932.

What area did you come from?

SM - Murwillumbah, on the north coast, right near the Queensland border.

What did you parents do up there?

SM - My father worked at the sugar mill and my mother was a housewife. I went to school up there [Murwillumbah] and I came to Muswellbrook nursing - I was at the old Brentwood hospital nursing for 3 years. That's when we met, married and shifted out onto the farm.

Did you live in Birralee?

SM - Yes, in the good old days.

Who was the matron there then?

SM - Matron Dugan.

What was the name of your parents?

SM - Stellar and Charlie Negus.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

SM - Two sisters - Daphne and Billie - she should have been a boy, so she always got called Billie.

So what was her actual name?

SM - Nowla.

And you went to school up there?

SM - Yes, at Murwillumbah High School.

So Roger, what's your full name?

RM - Lawrence Roger McTaggart.

And what year where you born?

RM - 1934.

What were your parent's names?

RM - Austin and Martha.

Are you connected back to Amus McTaggart?

RM - He was a great uncle. They were all brothers. My grandfather, Amus and Michael - there's a heap of them. They all settled down around here, I think Amus originally settled in Muswellbrook, or the Muswellbrook area, but the others settled at Wybong - Johnny was at Wybong, Michael was Hollydeen (Reedy Creek) and my grandfather was at 'Rosevale' - that was Charlie.

So your Grandfather was Charlie?

RM - He was Charles, yeah. Dad was Austin Charles.

So what was your Mothers maiden name?

RM - Taylor, no sorry, Gardiner. She was married twice.

So what happened to her first husband?

RM - That was Dad - he died.

What was your grandmother's maiden name?

RM - Which one? One was Heggins and the other was Ferris. Ferris came from up around Armidale, and Heggins came from Wybong, that's where they were.

So which one was married to the McTaggart?

RM - Heggins.

So where did you go to school?

RM - I started at Castlerock, near Spring Creek. It used to be there. It's not there now of course. I started there, and then went into Muswellbrook when the petrol rations came in. They used to drive us to school. My mother used to drive us to school but it used too much petrol, so my Grandfather actually owned a house in Muswellbrook, it became empty, so we shifted into there, and went to Muswellbrook School until we were finished, then back to Wybong. We went to school on the bus.

Did you have Brothers and Sisters?

RM - I have 3 sisters. Barbara was the oldest, she married Ray Smith of Wybong, the second one was Janet, she married John Farrell from Muswellbrook and Margaret, she was the youngest, she married Roger Holt, and they live at Newcastle.

RM - Barbara has died and so has Ray – they used to live at ‘Collareen’, near the old Catholic Church at Wybong. He lived there his whole life and his dad did too. I think his dad came up in the 1930’s after he won the lottery - he come up from Sydney and brought the place. His father grew up at Charters Towers; he bought the place there after he won the lottery apparently in the early 30s - 10,000 pounds, that’s what he won. It was a lot of money in those days. That’s what he won apparently.

So how did you actually meet, was it at a dance?

SM - Through Rogers’s sister.

RM - Through my sister – Barbara, she was a nurse and we met through her.

SM - Barbara started taking me home for days off, and that’s how we met, yes. Barbara finished her training there at Muswellbrook too.

Which college did you go to?

RM - Hawkesbury Agricultural College - it wasn’t as exciting as university these days, but it was pretty good.

Was that something your parents wanted you to do or you did?

RM - A bit of both I think. But I didn’t like it much – I figured out after 12 months it wasn’t something I wanted to do, so I packed up and came home. I sent a telegram to dad to come and meet me at the station. In those days, it was good if you wanted a government job, but I didn’t want a government job, I just wanted to work on the farm. If you got your passes, you could walk straight into a job.

SM - The girls went away to school too. It was done more in those days, when you lived far out. I mean its not that far out at Wybong, but at that stage, it was.

RM - It was a good half hour or more drive to get to Muswellbrook in those days, which was a lot. Jeff McTaggart used to ride it on the push bike to go school – he lived closer to town than we did, but he used to ride it every day to school on his push bike.

It certainly would have been a challenge to ride a push bike to Muswellbrook on a gravel road?

RM - He did it. He used to live on the back road, and their property came right through to Wybong Road. He used to ride from there to Muswellbrook and back again.

SM - We have sat my mum down over the past few years and wrote her history down for us to pass onto the kids.

How many children do you have?

RM – Two, one of each

And their names?

RM - Peter and Leanne.

So when were your children born?

RM – 1957 and 58. Peter was born in 57 and Leanne was born in 58.

SM – Peter was born at the old Orwell hospital, and by the time Lea was born 14 months later it had closed.

RM - The one at Muswellbrook, the one up there was open then.

SM - But Peter was born at the old Orwell hospital.

RM - I nursed him before Shirley did.

SM – It was the rough old days.

RM - We used to sit on a stool in the corridor, didn't see what was happening, you know.

SM – Different to these days, quite different.

RM – The matron that was on that night Peter was born brought him out and dropped him in my arms and said “there's your son”. She [Shirley] hadn't even known what she had yet.

SM – It was old Dr Rutherford who used to be there all those years.

Who was the matron?

RM - I've forgotten her name.

SM – It might come to me. I know, but I can't remember.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

So after there you went on to 'Rosevale'?

RM - No, we lived out at Mangoola, at the top of Mangoola Rocks they used to call it, after we got married, on Coolabah Road. We sold it to Centennial Mining Company a couple of years ago.

SM - Your father had sold the property at Wybong [Rosevale], but owned two properties that we shifted onto.

RM – Onto two dairies out there. He sold the Wybong property [Rosevale] in the 1950's.

Who did he sell that to?

RM - Gordon Simpson. He used to live next door at 'Callatoota'.

So is the house still standing on that property?

RM - Yes. There was also was a small cottage that's not there anymore. Simpsons bought that place, and they pulled it down.

SM – Its just as you go over the bridge, before you get to the Catholic Church, you just go over the bridge and it's just on the right hand side there. Don't know who is there now.

RM - It's all split up now.

SM - Yes, it's gone through a few people since then.

RM - It's been subdivided. [Rosevale] Used to go up to Bengalla through the creek, we were able to cross it up the river, come back down around the hill, cross the road and we'd be at the Catholic Church. It was 500 or 600 acres on the property. He sold back that in the 50's and it got subdivided since then.

What about the other two properties, the one you were on and the other one, when did he buy them?

RM - Well one, Dad bought, he owned half and his father bought half originally, and he bought part, in 1900's around about 1921 I think, and the part that my grandfather owned was bought in the early 1930's, and we had it ever since up until Centennial come along.

What size were they?

RM - There was almost 1000 acres between them together.

SM - You joined them together eventually.

RM – We put them together in the one property eventually, it used to be two dairies but we put them together eventually. I think it was 976 acres all together, to be precise.

Do you know who owned the properties previous to your father and grandfather?

RM - No, I don't. Mr Nowland I think owned part of it, before that, he probably thought it was no bloody good with any water on it – but I was irrigating out of a well sometimes.

SM – There was a lot of little blocks to start with in the early days.

RM – There was, but I think the Government has taken them back. There were about 9 or 10 sets of people. Pikes are one I can think of - he owned part of Bengalla originally. There were 109 blocks all together originally. We had the old deeds, we looked through them a

couple of times of times, just out of curiosity, but the government has taken all that, so all that history has gone to wherever they keep them.

So did you run a dairy farm out there?

RM - For a little while. Then we gave it away and ran beef ever since.

Why did you do that?

RM – I didn't like dairying much. Beef was easier than dairying.

How was dairying 7 days a week?

RM - We did it for 6 to 7 years or something like that.

SM - I liked it.

RM - Yeah, I didn't.

SM – It was 7 days a week, and it was very hard to have holidays. It's just much easier with the cows.

And did the milk cart go around?

RM - Yeah, the old 10 gallon milk cans.

SM – Yeah we kept the little tag, you know the little brass tag - my son likes to keep those things, and my daughter, so they have each got a little brass tag that was on the cans. Just as a keepsake.

So did that got to Muswellbrook or Denman?

RM - Muswellbrook.

So how did you find the well?

RM – I don't know - dad found it. Divine it, dad used divines. Mum used to be able to divine.

SM – She was good. She could divine.

RM – It never did work for me.

SM – You couldn't do it, I couldn't do it.

RM - She was pretty good at it. She found it.

SM – She used to do it with a stick. A willow tree stick.

RM – Some used a bit of wire but she used a willow tree stick. I seen her hold it once, someone reckons she was letting it go, you know, she'd just hold it up and it used to go down, and the stick cut her hand across the palm of her hand, so something's buried in the ground. I saw her do that one time, she cut both her hands with the stick - something was making her do it. She wasn't dropping it.

I know where I grew up you wouldn't put a bore in the ground unless someone had divined it.

RM - Not many do it now days. A couple of fellows at Wybong used too. Mum divined for everyone. Mum found the bore on our property - I wasn't there when they found it, I was away at college, so I wasn't there to see it, but she was the one who originally found it. They took old Billie Heggins down there and he found it too. They put a bore down and got plenty of water.

It's unusual in that area though wasn't it?

RM - it apparently was the best one [well] around, but it was 50 feet down to get water, and 10 feet of gravel. You could run a couple of sprays 24 hours a day from it, so there was plenty of water in there.

Were the houses on the property very old?

RM - I don't know how old, but they were old, they all had those pressed metal ceilings, very basic, and it covered us really.

SM - The house we lived in had two parts, the back part and a walkway between the two that joined back into the kitchen that went out the back. We had all these bedrooms up in the other part.

That's very early style.

RM - Yeah, we pulled the back part down. Some of the timber is stored down under the house.

SM - I don't know what sort of timber, but our son loved the timber.

RM – Some sort of pine that polishes up.

SM - He made bookcases and things out of it. It was lovely timber, but it was very, very old the back part. I would say it was built way before this was built. It was hard to go out in the cold to get from the kitchen out to the bedrooms, with just a little roof bit over - it was all open.

So what was the main vegetation out there?

RM - Oh, essentially what is there now, only there is only more of it than there was. I can't think of what they called it. Centennial gave it to me in one of their environmental studies. We always called it gum, but they called it box.

Any ironbark?

RM - There was a bit, it was mostly cut up before I got there. I got a few fence posts out of it, that's all. It's what's called slaty box, that's what they called it.

Besides the houses, were there any old shearing sheds or anything like that?

RM - No shearing sheds, there was never any sheep. There were dairies, just a couple of dairies, hay sheds, that sort of stuff and machinery sheds, but no shearing sheds.

No posts and rail fences?

RM - It was interesting, I dug a trench one time up near the road, oh about 50 yards off the creek and about 3-6 foot down, under the ground, I struck the post of an old fence. I never knew it was there, just a bank went down, it was on the side of an embankment, you could make out where all the post and the rails - so it's been silted up pretty well.

So there were no burials on the property out there?

RM - No. Only our pets - dogs and cats over the years.

So where you were living, was that considered part of the Wybong area?

RM - No, that's not Wybong. It was Mangoola. It had its own school and hall at Mangoola where our children went to school. There is a little school and hall so it was a separate little community to Wybong even though they are very close together - they closed over the years.

So if you weren't quick enough getting away, what sort of jobs did your dad get you to do?

RM - Well he used to run sheep, so in the summertime you would have to catch the sheep, which would be a bugger of a job. When I was 14, I put the last one on the truck and I made sure it was on there. I would also have to dig out the boxthorn burrs, because that was all over the place in those days - it was a bad weed. I remember people who had to leave the district because they used to get an allergy to it. I remember a couple of families had to leave because of this allergy - it didn't worry me too much, but a lot of people it did. Then in a couple of years it was all gone - just disappeared. Those were the sort of the things we did in the summer. Sometimes you would get away for a fortnight at the beach in the Christmas holiday.

Were the sheep for wool or meat?

RM - Dad ran Polwarth's, which was a dual purpose kind of sheep. He used to shear them at Hogan's because he did not have his own shearing shed, and for some reason he took

them up to Hogan's – it was only a couple of miles drive up there. I used to help taking the sheep up and brining them back again – that wasn't too bad.

You mentioned share farmers. What families were share farming?

RM – Oh, they come and went. Sam was with dad for about 31-32 years, he was the one that stayed, they just tended to come and go.

SM – Robertson's?

RM – Yes Robertson's were there for 6, 7, 8 years or something. They vary you know - I've forgotten all their names now. Robertson was another one. Gardner was another one, they came after Sams. Larry Atkins was another one. He was there for a little while, he is out at Wybong now, Eagles were the early ones - they were the only ones I could remember as a kid. Coleman was another one.

SM - They must have come and gone.

RM – They come and went fairly quickly, staying for about 3 or 4 years. Sam and Dad were together for 30 odd years share farming. He had 7 or 8 kids reared there.

That would have helped the school.

RM – I think Bill and his son are still in Muswellbrook, as far as I know, I haven't seen him in a good while. He grew up out there. Bill was older than me, so he was one the young ones.

So what arrangement did the share farmers work under?

RM - I think they worked on a 50/50 basis, half the profit each.

And who would have owned the stock?

RM - Dad owned the stock. They supplied a little bit of machinery I think, but he owned the stock, so they don't need to supply stock. Some of them supplied the machinery, or in the early days they supplied horses, they were still using draft horses after the war.

So what crops would they be growing then?

RM - Mostly lucerne and oats, that sort of thing.

So were they hand milking or were there machines?

RM - They started off hand milking, I can remember when they were hand milking them. Machines went in early once they started to become effective. I can't remember seeing them milking by hand, but apparently they did – that was before my time. But I think they were hand milking and some of the others on the other farm I can just vaguely remember them hand milking, and dad put machines in once they became effective.

What size herd would they have been hand milking?

RM - 50-60 cows – of course the kids help. That's where kids come in handy in those days.

Another bit of a jump, were there many rabbits out on the property?

RM – Yeah, you could walk into the paddock and the whole paddock would run away in front of you, quite literally. Dad bought me a rifle when I was about 14, and I could sit on the bank of the creek and fire about 100 shots and not move, and hit a rabbit with every one, and go back the next day and do the same thing over again.

So when did mixomotosis start working?

RM – Oh, it came in the 50's and it wiped them out. We used to have to catch them and take them up to the Wybong hall and you used to inject them there and come home and let them go. That was a bit hard for them, especially the older fellows like Dad to take, you know, letting these rabbits go once you had caught them. He couldn't see any sense in letting it go once you caught hold of it. They put it in there and then 12 months, 2 years it was finished.

They used to quite literally put big fences around and drive them into a corner and hit them with a stick, kill as many of them as they could kill and go back in a few days and do the same thing again and hit just as many. Dad used to run poison trails and poison 400, 500 a night. I only did the work; I didn't do any of the poison trips. You used to have to dig burrows and all that to put poison baits in, then pick up the rabbits and spend all day skinning them, we used to sell the skins we got. That's how we spent our Christmas holidays.

Where were the skins sent to?

RM – Muswellbrook – they used to go to an old guy in there.

Was that a big grub unit?

RM – Yeah, it was originally near the Commonwealth Bank, just down there. No, it was just in Brook Street.

Were the rabbits sent in to the freezing works?

RM – Yeah, they used to catch them in traps and send them in. We had to clean them and get the skin off them. They had a screen hung up where you had hessian and you would take the rabbits up and put the hessian over them to keep the flies off them. Then a bloke used to come around in a truck and pick them all up.

How often would he come around?

RM - Every couple of days I think it was, every second day, I think he used to come around. If we didn't have rabbits in [the hessian screen] we used to fold it all up on top so he didn't stop, if there was nothing there. If you spread it all out along the pole then he stopped, because he knew there were rabbits in there.

Would that only be in the winter?

RM – Yeah, mostly in the winter, they did it in the summer too though. I think we weren't so fussy in those days.

Were there any professional Rabbiters around?

RM – Yeah, dad had a fellow that he used - did about 3 years with him. I think his name was Wilf Galvin and he lived out there - he shifted into that little cottage that was there, because he had trouble, bought a little house in town and then I think he had trouble getting tenants there, so he sort of lived there as a temporary thing, and he used to do rabbiting for dad while he was there. He was about the only one that I knew of. Then he got tenants in his house and he moved into Muswellbrook.

Did they ever use those smoke machines on the rabbits?

RM – Oh, fumigating? Yes, all sorts of different ideas we used there. Chemicals, pipes shoved in the ground coming out of the exhaust pipe and stuck in the burrows, and pump the gas into them. Dad used to pour a bit of oil into the carburettor of his truck so it would smoke, then you would see the smoke coming out of the burrows and you would know which ones are being hit. Then you had to go and fill them in then before the smoke got away, and all the rabbits. We used to fumigate them that way. Then they had charcoal burners, they used to do it with. I never used them, but I have seen them around. They used to burn charcoal in the gas; of course, it used to burn into the burrows. Then they brought out the chemicals, and stuff, lavaside and that sort of thing they used to squirt down in them. They all worked to some extent, but there was too many, rabbits start breeding too fast, couldn't kill them quick enough.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

Where about was the Castlerock School?

RM - Well, you know where the Mangoola Road joins the Wybong Road? At the top of that hill, further towards Wybong, at the top of that hill, it's before you get to the Castlerock turn off.

Do you remember who the teacher was?

RM - Helena Doyle. She lived at Bundabulla, which is just up past the school. She used to ride a horse to school when I was a kid. She taught in Muswellbrook for a while, and went to Scone, in the old people's home in Scone I think. It hasn't been that long since she died really.

So how far was the Mangoola School from you?

RM - About 3 miles. It was just far enough to get the subsidy. They used to close the subsidy over 3 miles, I think – it made us a couple of hundred dollars. They used to give subsidies for fuel.

SM – Both our kids went to fifth and sixth class, then the little school closed, it closed through a lack of numbers - there were only 8 or 9. So then we took the children out to Wybong Road and they would take the bus.

RM - George Priddle was the last teacher at Mangoola. I don't know what happened to him afterwards, he got transferred of course, but he was the last teacher.

SM – They were excellent little schools.

RM - He was good with the kids.

SM – When ours [children] went into town it was a big thing, as they would be the only one in the individual classes, but they were well and truly up to the standard.

RM - Lea came top on the first exam didn't she?

SM – Yes, the biggest thing was the shock of the numbers. That was a big shock to them, but they adjusted like they do.

What about the Mangoola hall, was it used much?

RM - Oh, they used too, when we were young - they used to use it all the time, every month or something there would be a dance or something on, meetings, and that sort of stuff.

SM – Christmas parties and school concerts.

RM – It was used, the only trouble then of course, once the school closed, and it started to break up a bit too, with people going in all different directions. You didn't need P&C meetings anymore.

SM – Wybong's the only one that's really kept going, their hall.

RM – They ran into trouble there for a few years, but they have got it back out of it again.

SM – We always attended a lot of the things at Wybong because of Roger's connections. He was on the sports committee, something we worked at. We went to church there, just the little church, we still go there to the little church Wybong.

RM – It's at Manobalai, at the top end.

So did the Mangoola hall have a set of trustees?

RM - Yes, I am not too sure who they all were.

SM – They were some of the earlier ones that had been there before we came out.

RM – The Ayres arrived in the 20's.

SM – They were some of the early ones at Mangoola weren't they?

RM – Lawrie Ayres was around there. His father was there in the early years. He would know more about the Mangoola area even than we would, because they were all there when we shifted in.

RM – We have only been there for 50 years, 52 years.

SM – Yes, but when the hall and the school was working, we were newer to the area.

Was there a cricket Club?

RM - No we used to play tennis at Landers place - they had a tennis court, we used to play a bit of tennis there, but that was about all, during my time.

What about the mail, was there a mail run down along that road?

RM - We got our mail from Muswellbrook originally 3 days a week.

SM - You could order your groceries and meat, everything would come out from Campbell's.

RM – A train served from Merriwa from Muswellbrook.

SM - There is a little siding down at...

RM - There were two sidings - there was one at Mangoola and one at Rothbury. I think it used to start at Merriwa, just a little petrol motor, you would catch it to Muswellbrook. Catch it first thing in the morning and back in the afternoons – go in to Muswellbrook shopping.

SM – It's hard to imagine now isn't it.

RM – Oh yes that was still running when we were out there. A couple of the share farmer's dad had there; they used to catch it into town. One of his cousins, Bob Thorley out at Sandy Hollow - he was blind, he used to get on it and go to Muswellbrook. He was as blind as a bat, couldn't see a thing, but, he could always get in there on the train.

What about power?

RM - Power didn't come on out there until in the 60's, I think it was.

SM – After we were there.

RM – We started off with an oil stove and kerosene lamps.

SM – It was after both our children were born, before we got electricity.

RM – No, it was in the 60's when they put power out down out through Wybong. I've just forgotten the year now.

SM – We didn't have electricity or phones.

RM – No, until 1964 or 65 the phone went in.

Do you still remember the number?

RM – Oh yes, I still remember the original number. We always had the same number; it was just that we stuck 65 in front of it.

What was the Brentwood hospital like as a building?

SM - Well you see it actually had been home. It was nothing like a modern hospital today is. To start with, it had these narrow little stairs up to the top floor and the private and intermediate wards were the rooms up on the top. It had this narrow stair case that went up, turned a corner and went up again. So you spent half your time – the bell would ring and you had to run up these stairs. You had a female ward down one end and a male ward up the other end, and they enclosed the veranda's and made that into a big ward, then there was a separate children's ward. It was probably built, the children's ward, because it was a separate building just off the male ward. It was very well run.

Where was the kitchen and all that sort of thing?

SM – Yes, that was part of it in the centre was a kitchen, a big kitchen, a dining room off that where we ate, the matron's office and the theatre - this all made it difficult, the theatre was on the bottom floor, so if you had patients that had to be brought down or carried down on a stretcher down to the theatre, and back up the stairs, there was no lift back up the stairs to their rooms. Everything was spotless, absolutely spotless. You didn't stop.

RM – Did she [the matron] go to school with me?

SM – Yes, she did. You didn't stop from when you went on shift, and you did all the cleaning. You didn't have the amount of cleaning people that I think they have now, in the hospital from what I see. Matron inspected every morning at 9 am, and she used to walk around with a white glove on and run her finger over everything to see, if she could find a spot of dust anywhere, then you went go right through it all again. It was very, very strict. They didn't have all the modern equipment and things that of course are there today, so it was a lot more hands on mostly. You spent a lot more time actually with your patients, rubbing backs and sponging and things, because there wasn't the equipment, nothing like there are today - I mean my mind boggles at how they work all those machines.

We lived in the nurses home and you were allowed 2 passes a week, other than that you had to be in by 10 pm. When you did have a pass you had to check in, if you'd been out and had a pass to midnight, when you came home you had to go in and check in to the night sister at the hospital and tell her you're back. Nothing like now.

Were there any other buildings around the main hospital? The reason I ask is out along Edderton Road there is a corrugated iron building that was supposed to be shifted from the hospital ground. It's a little bit off the track.

SM - There was a morgue, it was another building, but there probably was.

That might have been it.

SM - It was outside, in the grounds but not attached to the hospital, but I just can't clearly remember now - there was a tennis court. I can't remember, can you?

RM - No, not really.

SM - Seeing you spent a bit of time up the road.

RM - Yeah, but I didn't get into the hospital.

You didn't have a pass.

RM - Well that's right, I had to sneak around a bit.

SM - And Birralelee was the sister quarters, and the nurses, - it could have been that - the nurses quarters were some sort of pre-fab that was built. The nurses lived in that, the trained staff and the matron lived in the nice home, and they'd built these other buildings beside it that we lived in, just a hall with all little rooms everywhere.

So was that in the grounds of Birralelee?

SM - Yes, beside Birralelee.

Just below it?

SM - Just below it, come down the road a bit. The little shop was there, but I just can't remember what other buildings were outside the hospital.

In Wybong area itself, was there a post office and a hall?

RM - The post office was down from the hall there on the corner, I think a Campbell ran it - that was the post office and the telephone exchange. We had a manual telephone exchange - that there was there when I was a kid, and then his niece, I think he died and then his niece took it over. She had it there for a few years until they closed it down. Then you would have to car pool to Spring creek. It used to open from about 9 am until 6 pm at night, or something like that. She might have opened Saturday and Sundays. If she did open, you had to pay them a fee, for opening out of hours

So did your line go through Wybong?

RM – Yeah, at Rosevale, I think grandfather had the first phone in Wybong. His phone number was Wybong 1. I think Hogan's, Oscar Hogan was the second phone - he was Wybong 2 back in those days. Dad went to work it a couple of times when the old fellow got crook and went to hospital or something, and they used to get someone who knew how to work the exchange, go down and do it properly. I think Dad did it a few times.

He was a cranky old bugger

RM – He used to abuse us kids.

You wouldn't have been doing anything wrong though...

RM – No, of course not.

So did Wybong ever have a cricket team?

RM - Yes, they had a football team too. My uncles and that played, it was before my time. I played a bit of cricket there; I used to play cricket up there at Brogheda.

SM – Who did we give the photo to? The photo of the...

RM – I don't know where that is now. Linda McIntosh had that for a while.

SM – I might still have it... that was of the football team?

RM – That was the football team.

SM – The whole football team, and your father was...

RM – Secretary I think.

SM – Something or another. He wasn't playing, but he was in it.

RM – No, he was secretary or something. I don't know, it was around here, so it could be here somewhere.

SM – I'm the keeper of all the photos, so it must be around here somewhere. We got it back didn't we?

RM - Yeah, I think Linda dropped it back.

SM - Because she had it and she put it in the Chronicle

RM – I think it was one of those that name the people that were in it, you know they used to put the photograph...

SM – Yes, because you didn't know all of the people that were in it, it was pretty old.

RM - I didn't know all of them. Not all of them. I'd say she probably got a copy of it; I wouldn't be surprised if she had.

SM – They played tennis too?

RM – They played tennis at the sports ground up at Brogheda where they played cricket. They had a concrete pitch and used to put a sort of mesh, cable (what do you call it, that stuff, we used to make mats and stuff out of it, can't think of the name of it now) on the pitch so you didn't get too knocked up. Ray and Dudley Gooze played there; they played in teams at Wybong.

SM – I was just going to say Ray and Dudley told me about playing tennis there, they played a lot of tennis.

RM – There were a couple of sets of tennis courts at Brogheda.

So how far would it be from say the Wybong Post Office up to Brogheda?

RM – 4 or 5 miles. What's that work out in kilometres - 7, 8 or so.

So they never actually had one near Wybong hall or anything, a tennis court?

RM – No. I don't know why, but it was up all the way in Brogheda country, it wasn't at the homestead, it was a bit further. I don't know why they did it up there and not down at the hall, but that's where it was. They used to have their sports, the horse sports up there at the same place, same area, and same place sort of thing. It all happened up there. Probably made the country available.

So what other clubs would they play, would they go far away?

RM - Oh, it would have been Muswellbrook. Wybong football used to play Sandy Hollow, the football team. I think they used to play. My uncles used to play in it, but they are all dead now, but they used to play there and play against each other - when they weren't fighting each other.

So where was the closest wine shop?

RM – At Hollydeen, where Reg Graham let out his garage – that was one side. The wine shop was actually bought out by Arthur Stilling; I think there was somebody after him, which was the last in the wine shop. It was in front of what you'd call the main building now. That's where they used to hang out, and the pub was at Sandy Hollow. That's another meeting place.

So when did Penfolds arrive?

RM – I suppose it was in the 50's, it would have to be late 50's I think. I couldn't tell you the year.

SM – It was after our children were born, wasn't it?

RM – Yeah, it would be late 50s after they come back. They bought the place that we had, I think that would have been in the 60's, and they bought next door, - Bill McTaggart sold the company next door to us, he was one of Dad's cousins. They bought it and set up the winery and that where it is now, and they bought where we were later on, like from Gordon Simpson, and they resold. I think it was late 60's when they moved in there, because Bill McTaggart didn't sell it to Penfolds , he sold it to a guy from Sydney – Thompson, I think. Thompson's were there in the 50's because they were in Army national service in the 50's with the youngest bloke.

And they were the first major vineyard in the area?

RM – Claimed it, claimed to be. But there were a lot of vineyards there apparently in the late 1800s before that and they didn't advertise it. Penfolds were the first to advertise it, when they put it in and advertised that they were the first vineyard open there. There was part of the country that joined us, there was a block there, I forget how many acres it was, more than 100 acres or something like that, where they made wine back in the late 1800's.

SM – Because they did in those days. They had the small vineyards.

RM – There was plenty of them around. Penfold's claimed to be the first one, but they actually weren't.

SM – First big one.

RM – First big one. Yes, but they were not the first vineyard. They reckoned they used to grow pretty good grapes, I don't know what the wine was like back in those days. So they weren't the first one, they just claimed to be.

Is there anything else we should know about the area?

SM – There was a convent there early.

RM – Oh yes, there was a convent there. You know where the old Catholic Church is there still, up past the bridge, going towards Denman? There was a convent and a Catholic School there. Before my time, but it was there. Dad went to school there, and Oscar Hogan went to school there, Gordon Ray went to school there. They are all dead now, but they all went to school there. I don't know how long it was there for, or lasted, but there was a convent there, the convent was down below the old church - I can't remember if it was below the old church or behind it up the road. I think the school was across the road.

There must have been a fair Catholic population?

RM – There was, go and look at the Wybong cemetery.

SM – Yes, I was surprised when we went out, we did a lot of work out at the cemetery out there.

RM – All the McTaggarts are buried there. We were reared Anglican, mum was Anglican.

SM - But all the rest, there are heaps of them in there.

RM - All the rest are McTaggarts.

SM - McTaggarts and the Flannigan's

RM – Yeah, it was a Catholic area. The Anglicans were up the top end, up at Manobalai where the Church is now, over Wybong creek just up there. That [church] was there at the Yarraman and they shifted up there, I don't know when. They shifted up there before my time.

SM - We haven't got a lot on the early church have we? The one that's there is relatively new.

RM – No. The old church prior to that comes from Spring Creek. I know the building came from Spring Creek and they must have built another one at Spring creek – the one they have got here now. I know that wasn't the original Anglican Church at Wybong, the original one was down at the Yarraman and I don't know when it went up to where it is – that was before my time.

The Catholic Church that's there, that's on the edge of the road now, how old is that?

RM – It's over 100 years, we were invited over to the 90 year celebration they had. A couple of years ago I think.

SM – Oh yes, it is. I remember going to it, it was back a bit.

RM – I remember going to it. It was 90 years then, it would be over 100 years now.

SM - It was still functioning for some time.

RM - Oh, yes while we were there. It was only in later years when they stopped using it. It was still operational all those years that I was growing up. Grandfather used to go up there sometimes, until he got too old, then the priest used to come and call in there. He was about 96, 97. He used to go up there when we were growing up, I remember. It was functioning

long after that too. I don't know, I suppose Hogan's would be able to give you a better idea, Pat's at Muswellbrook somewhere.

We have spoken to Pat and Peter.

RM – Marion , Pats sister is in there somewhere too, I think she is overseas at the moment, but she moved to Muswellbrook now - Flannigan she is, she married Noel Flannigan, moved up to Wybong. They are both into it. They could possibly give you a better idea of how old it is. But I know it would be over 100 years. They did the 90 year thing, and that was a good few years ago now. Close to 20 years nearly, at least.

What about fire services, was there a rural fire service?

RM - We had a bush fire brigade. Not formal like it is today, you just turned up with your own gear, whatever you had to put it out, and the old fellow at the exchange used to plug all the telephones into one hit. They did that for years and years, and all the locals used to turn up and put it out.

Did you have any major bush fires out there?

RM - Yeah, they had some good ones there. The biggest one ever I saw started in January, around about January, something around that time, Christmas time, I've forgotten now, and we had to fight it. We used corn bags half the time, or a branch off a tree. I always thought that was the biggest one I ever saw. It went straight across the creek from one bank to the other. The wind just picked up this ball of fire and blew it straight across the river, you couldn't stop it. There were 200-300 trying to fight it all together. Reg Graham, he was the captain. They were the two captains trying to handle it at this end. We eventually stopped it.

Did it rain?

RM – No, it didn't actually, it pulled up at Wybong and it stopped at a little stream of water that was just trickling down the creek, and we managed to stop it. We got a calm night, and it didn't blow over, of cause once you hit the front of it you're starting to win.

How did you fair during the 1955 flood?

RM – I was actually in hospital when that was on. Dad had shifted by then into Muswellbrook, and Mum was sometimes at Wybong, sometimes in there. They worked around on the 3 farms. It did knock the ones out here at Mangoola, that country got knocked around pretty well - spent months putting fences up and everything like that again. The ground was squashed badly, and Wybong was alright, the country was alright, but Mangoola got knocked around a bit. People had to swim their cattle in and out to milk them. They got caught on the other side of the gate; they had to swim them out. They will always be chasing floods there. Come home from holidays, and that evening you had to walk around and swim the cattle out. The flood had come down while we were away; it was on its way down.

Do you have any other interesting stories?

RM – We used to go around the countryside on our horses, growing up. People knew everyone because they knew your horse. You could go any where as long you shut the gates – you would get a kick in the backside if you didn't shut the gates. We just used to wonder around, riding around all day, going up the hills, seeing where you could get – it was free and easy in those days, as long as you were back by dark. It was a bit hard to ride back in the dark, but you learnt it. Dad always made sure you had a good horse.

SM - Roger has a wonderful sense of direction, which I don't have.

RM – At college, they took you out on an initiation in those days – they would take you out in the middle of the night in the bush, lead by some rope, turned you around half dozen of times with a blindfold on of course and then let you go and you had to find your own way home. They stood in a semi circle further out and if you started to go the wrong way, they would push you back in another direction and away you would go again.

So when did they asphalt the road?

RM - I am not too sure – it was done in patches, maybe the 70s.

SM - Our road at Mangoola wasn't done until – I was taking the children up to the bus stop in High school by then – it was a dirt road for a long time. It was a headache in the wet weather when you had to go and meet the bus. Eventually the bus came around past us, but that was just the last couple of years of schooling. It is surprising how much that takes out of your day. You had to always be aware of the time, because you did not want to leave them stranded out on the Wybong Road, so you had to be ready to be out there with them in the morning, but you had to be ready again to be out there with them in the afternoon to pick them up.

RM – It wasn't too bad out at Mangoola because everyone looked out for everyone.

SM - But I didn't like leaving them out there.

RM - Because the bus just dropped them off and went again.

So did your father have a car?

RM - Oh yeah. The original was 1920 Essex and the next was a 1935 Hudson and I learnt to drive on it. He also had an old international truck. He had the Hudson until the 1940s or 1950s and then he brought a Dodge. We always had a fair size car because in those days you needed it – because the roads would rip it too bits. We always had a car and always had a truck.

SM – Tell them about the early dances

RM - Jessie Hogan and Alf Smith used to play – Jessie played the piano and Alf played the violin. He was a very good violinist, Smith was. It was beautiful. Apparently he grew up at Charters Towers and Alf was talking that one time they wanted to send him to Vienna and he wouldn't go. So he kept playing with the symphony orchestra somewhere in Sydney before he won the lottery and then shifted up to the farm.

SM – He was a beautiful violinist. My mother was a beautiful pianist, so when mum and dad came down, we would all go over the Smiths and mum would play the piano and Alf would play the violin and everyone had a great sing-song. You had to make your own entertainment in those days because you didn't have the television. Our children didn't grow up with the television – they still talk about the sing-songs around the piano.

RM - We had a wireless of course but that was all we ever had for years.

SM - They used to have the serials and you would sit there glued, fascinated by these stories on the wireless. Strangely, I can never remember the kids being bored.

RM – The kids made their own entertainment. They used to go to the dances up at Wybong and they used to own a horse and take that around.

How often were the dances?

RM - They were fairly regular – probably once or twice a month.

Were there any fights out the back?

RM - Oh yes, there were a few. You weren't meant to have grog, you see. Outside of the hall, there were rollie pollie bushes, and they would all put their bottles of grog in the rollie pollie bushes and you would see all these guys walking across the paddock. And of course, once they got a few more into them, they didn't worry about getting their own, so they would go to the closest rollie pollie bush knowing there was a bottle in there somewhere. Then someone would start to fight – they had some good brawls, they would half kill each other at times.

So who were some of the good fighters?

RM - Wilsons from here weren't bad – Roy is up here is Hunter Street. Paul, I think is his cousin, he could always fight and Neville was another one - he was always in a brawl. Roy grew up in Denman and worked at the power station for years. Roger, his brother used to cut railway sleepers and he camped out for about 2 years cutting sleepers – he cut some at our place and then worked for Hogan's. There was an old caravan park up there and he used to camp in it. He was the best I ever saw use the Hogan's saw – they used to take a log and cut each end to make it the right size for a sleeper and then he would take the saw and go straight through – no marks or lines to follow – he just went straight through – he could fight too. All the Wilsons could fight.

I guess with hard work like that, they would be pretty fit.

RM - Oh yes, he had the stamina. The only trouble with Roger was that he used to drink pretty well in those days, back then. He died in Newcastle – he retired down there and was out on the footpath walking to the club for a couple of drinks and then he died. Roy would know a fair bit about this area too – he lives up in Hunter Street.

You mentioned the Wilsons camping in the caravan, were there many other people around in temporary accommodation?

RM - No, not that I knew of. There was one that used to knock around Wybong when I was a kid - Harry Jackson was his name. I don't know where he used to come from – he used to stutter like blazers and he died on my grandfather's paddock. Dad found him dead in the finish. Harry would disappear for a couple of weeks and turn up again – no one knew anything about him. They all reckoned he was too bloody silly to ask anyway.

SM - Before we were talking about graves on places, there was a grave on the Smith's wasn't there?

RM – Yes, on Smiths property. There is still a grave there. Where the Catholic Church is, that was 'Collareen", where the Smiths lived. It was a boy that had drowned in Wybong creek. There is a grave there.

SM - I can remember when we were over there and our kids were over there playing and they were always fascinated by this grave. The fact there was a burial there.

RM – It is all fenced in and everything - someone had been there before the Smiths arrived. But I don't know the early history of there before they arrived.

SM – Because it again, had a lovely old place with the separate house at the back. The back part always fascinated my son Peter who was always interested in the early history. It was a slab house, had 2 rooms and a veranda. There was a kitchen with an old stove in it and there was another room which I gather was the bedroom. They had a house built in front of it. It is possibly pulled down now. Sandra Whatling thought they might have. She would know the history from there. Sandra is our niece. You don't see any of the house from the road because it is right behind a hill. So as you come along the road, you see the old Catholic Church and then you drive right around – you don't see anything from the road – you wouldn't know there was a house there. It was very picturesque, because it is settled underneath a big mountain, with caves. You would look across the creek and we were on the other side. Sandra is one of the daughters of Roger's sister 'who died.

RM - She had four kids – David is in Aberdeen, Sandra is in Muswellbrook and Dianne is in Newcastle.

What about the bridge across the Wybong? When was that built?

RM - Up along the Wybong Road - that is actually the third bridge that was built there. The original bridge was built upstream from it, because when we were there growing up there used to still be a couple of pylons in the creek. You could make out the approach, where the road used to come to the bridge on our side. There is still a little bit there. I think they had a big flood and it took the pylons out. The next bridge was a wooden bridge and that collapsed with a load over it from memory – a big truck. Then they put the concrete one over it.

SM - Do you remember the people that used to come around, as well as Worley's?

RM – Oh the hawkers? Yes. Harry Robinson used to bring his truck around and it had everything in it. Clothing, materials, ornaments, cotton – you name and he had it on the back of it. He used to come around the Wybong. He played the violin when he was around too, at the dances, when he was in the area. He used to come around for years, every 2 or 3 months they would turn up.

SM - All the family and kids would rush out to have a look and see what they had.

RM - His wife died and she used to travel with him. She died in the truck one day when they were driving along. He came around too for a while after it, but not for long.

SM - He had the biggest assortment of everything on his truck. I can remember Worley's coming for some time, bringing ointments and those sorts of things.

RM – Watkins used to come around too for some time. There was an Indian bloke that used to do Mangoola, but I have forgotten his name, he had the same sort of thing - he had a bit of everything.

SM - If you wanted something, he would dig through his truck. It wasn't really organised, it was just all in boxes, but he knew where everything was and what he had.

RM - Old Harry Robinson was a good old bloke, I knew him better than the Indian fellow. He was a good old bloke.

SM - You didn't go in to town shopping as much as you do today, so it was a good service.

RM - Campbell's used to run a delivery service out to Wybong as well. Every couple of weeks they would run a truck out as delivery service with whatever you wanted. You would ring up and they would bring it out. I remember when we used to go to town on a Friday afternoon and you would put in your order into Campbell's and they would do it up while you did other things and went down to the Royal. If you didn't get back before they shut, they used to stick all your boxes of stuff in the doorway, with your name on it. You would go through them until you found your box and then take it home. If you didn't take it that day,

they would put it in the shop the next morning, until you came in to town to pick it up. They did it for years, everyone used to do the same thing.

SM – The shopping was so different to today. You actually got served. The other place was John Foley's shop. He used to say "Do you want any..." and then he would run through the contents of the whole shop - barley and split peas were always the last two. You would sit at these stools at the counter and he would run through your list.

RM – And you paid him when you had the money.

SM – He was the one that looked after country people. He was very good. He would always say 'come and get your goods and pay me when you can', so you could pay it off if you were having a bad month or if something happened on the farm. His daughter was with him – they were very, very good.

RM - You got everything delivered between their truck, the mail cart and the milk lorry used to cart stuff out for you.

SM – Oh yes, the milk lorry would always bring things too.

RM – He would come around every day and bring things to you.

Was there any charge, like the milk lorry?

RM – Yeah, you would pay them a few dollars, not much.

SM – Not much, more like a tip I think, you know, something for doing it. We used to go out on the milk lorry when Barbara and I were nursing, and we had days off, instead of someone having to come and get us. We would get up early and he would come and get us actually, he used to come up - Barney did with his milk truck - and we would get on and he would take us out to the farm and the same thing when we wanted to come back. If they weren't available to bring us in, we would come in on the milk lorry.

Did you get to the pictures at all?

RM – Yes, we used to go to the matinee when I was a kid, on Saturday afternoon - 6 pence to get in and 3 pence to buy an ice cream. Yes, of course we used to go to the pictures together once we started going out together.

SM - It was one of the main outings in that era of ours.

RM – There used to be a ball every Saturday night, you could go to in Muswellbrook.

SM – It would either be that or there would be a dance. They were the two main things. We didn't go to clubs and that, did we?

RM – Was the old workers club going?

SM – Not until after we were married, not in that period, it was more going to the pictures and going to a dance. It was a great life at the picture theatre; the old picture theatre was marvellous.

RM - I was a funny designed place that picture theatre in Muswellbrook.

SM - I know, but it was lovely to have.

RM - They had a slope on the floor going all the way back up. We used to try and get up the back with the girls, but that didn't always work.

SM – To roll your Jaffas.

RM – Yes, to roll your Jaffas - we would get a pack of Jaffas and roll them all the way down there, but there was steps, and we used to rattle them all the way down theatre, and the ushers would be running around with a torch trying to figure out who did it. We used to wait until there was something dramatic coming on in the movie, and then roll the Jaffas. That was the good old days.

Who owned the picture theatre?

SM – Waugh's.

RM – The Waugh's had it.

SM - One brother had a chemist and one had the picture theatre. Merv was the theatre, and I can't think of the one that had the chemist. That's where I have trouble remembering how the town was. John's good at that, my brother in law, he's from Muswellbrook and he's married to Roger's sister.

RM - He knew Muswellbrook backwards too.

SM – Yes, and he could say, can you remember when that cafe was there, and I have to struggle to remember now exactly what shops were where, because it's changed.

RM – There used to be cafes there, where the Chinese restaurant is now, was a café.

SM – Cafes were big things in our day too.

RM – The 'Silver glue' came later though.

SM – Yes, John has an excellent memory for that.

RM - Then there was Mrs Wilkinson or something across where the Commonwealth Bank is – she had a café over there, Mrs Wilkinson, or Miss Wilkinson.

The hawkers you mentioned travelling around, where would they camp when they?

RM – Wherever they were when it got dark. I think Robinsons used to have a bed in his truck - they just pulled up when it got dark. The Indian fellow, he used to cook his meals – Dad had a share farmer out there, and they used to let him cook his meals on the stove at night time, at the camp there. He didn't camp in the house, he camped in his truck, but he used to do his cooking there - he used to have places all the way around I gather. I remember he used to cook his tea there at night time. He used to use the stove and cook it. He never washed his frying pan - he always wiped it out, because he reckoned he never should wash a frying pan because you will wreck it, I remember him saying that. He used to wipe it out with a piece of greaseproof paper.

SM – From cooking nice hot curries...

RM – Oh, he did that. Yes, they used to just camp where they were, stop where they were and keep going again the next day. I think Robinson's used to turn up about every 3 months, something like that. That was their life. Sid I think this fellow was that used to come out here. They told me, I didn't see it, but they reckon he started with a horse and wagon did for many years, before my time. But that's what I was told he used to come around with a horse and wagon.

SM – Well they would have done, they did early in the piece. Yes.

RM – He used to turn up with horse and wagon. Then he got into a truck after that.

Roughly when would they have stopped travelling around?

RM – That's a good question. Robinson's stopped first; he would have stopped sometime in the 50's.

SM – Yes, Worleys and what was the other one? Watkins, they all came around later, after, but I can't remember when they stopped.

RM – The old Indian fellow just seemed to disappear, and I don't remember when he stopped coming around. I know he sort of come around for a little while after Robinson had stopped. They drove different runs. He used to go out this way, and Robinson's used to go through Wybong.

SM – I suppose people finally had easier access to shopping, so there possibly wouldn't have been the call, would there?

RM – Not the call, it wore out, you know, as time was changing. Because we used to get fruit and vegetables delivered, a bloke used to come around with fruit and vegetables at one point when we first got married - turn up every week, every Thursday he used to come down for us.

SM – We didn't go into town regularly through those early years. Later we probably did more when the roads were better and we had a better vehicle and things like that, but in the early days you depended on them coming to you, and having things delivered. Then it became a thing of coming to town to do it. The kids used to love it, when we went to town, because it's the one time they got some lollies – on town day. It wasn't a regular occurrence, because there were no little shops, there were no shops for them unless they were either taken. Going somewhere like into Denman and having an ice cream was a big thing - it was really exciting to come, just into Denman to have an ice cream or something.

RM - Yes, well we used to ride our horses into Denman before that, when I was growing up down there. Two or three would hop on horses and then we'd come, and go home again afterwards. But we used to have a horse up here about every month or something. I remember Dad used to buy these bloody horses and take them home and tell me to ride them - you know when I was about 14 or 15. He brought some mongrels though. I got a kick in the backside once, because he came home with this horse and he threw me in the yard, and I said to him "I got a better idea you know dad", so I went to play basketball. There was a method in the madness with that too, but I got a kick in the backside for being cheeky. But he used to bring some stuff home, the trouble is he didn't get on them; he used to tell me too.

After you had broken them in would he just sell them then would he?

RM – Some of them he kept, some of them he sold again.

SM – You probably broke them in for your sisters did you, because they all had horses. There was another 3 girls.

RM – We started riding, must have been two years old, hanging onto the back of my grandfather - he would swing one of us up behind him on the horse, and away he'd jog, around the paddock. I was probably only 2 years old, when we started doing that. So we graduated to our own from there.

SM – He was still riding when he was...

RM – When he was about 93, I think he stopped.

SM – Amazing isn't it?

RM – He used to ride across through the scrub there and go crook at his share farmer and get on the horse and ride home again.

SM - Roger was attached to his grandfather - he was lovely. I never knew him; I would have loved to have known him. Tough, wasn't he?

RM – Oh yes, he got a bit stocky at us a couple of times.

SM – Was he was a drover?

RM – He was a drover, and all that sort of stuff - he started young.

SM – He did, really started early and built up some properties.

RM – He never went to school, but he learnt to write his name at some stage or another, and that's all he could write - he never went to school, never read a book or anything like that. Yet he added up his money – you couldn't catch him for 3 pence. He was quick enough for that. I think he came up when he was 17 or 18, or something or another. All the way up from Queensland anyway.

SM – You've got some of his history, did he come from Ireland.

RM – Yes, he was a convict, got sent out.

SM – Yes, he definitely came from convict stock. We started to get some of it [family history], and Frank McTaggart's son in Muswellbrook gave us some also.

RM – I think his wife did that.

SM – Yes, it's his wife that does it - one of them anyway, one of the family there. They were good enough to give us copies of what they had, and we got some of your mum's, haven't we? - Margaret's, and some of dad's. It's time consuming and can be expensive trying to trace. My sister went overseas a couple of times and tracked down some of my mum and dad's heritage. That's why I think it's good to get some idea while you've still got your parents. Mum had written down – well, my sister copied it out - she could recite bits off, about what boat, what ship so and so came out on and where this one was born - so you had something to work on then if you wanted to do something with it.

RM – Mc Taggart was a convict, he married a McNamara , she was a convict too I think.

SM – What did he do? I have forgotten, he stole something, I can't think now what it said, but it gave a description of him and everything, his height and colouring and so forth.

RM – He got 7 years anyway for what he did.

Couldn't have been too serious?

SM – No I don't think it was very much.

RM – They didn't hang him or anything. He got 7 years; he was out here for about 10 years I think when he got married. I don't know whether he got married in Ireland or not, because apparently when they used to come out they could declare the marriages null and void over there - the woman could if the husband got deported - she could stay there and call the marriage off and start again. But from all accounts, I heard it was somewhere in Ireland. He came out in 1818 he landed here, 18 December 1818 I think it was just from memory. A long time ago wasn't it.

SM – Some of them had such big families to try to sort out too didn't they?

RM – Well, they did, and of course the girls back in those days, they didn't have to register their births until about 18 something - the 1850's I think it was. All you saw [on the certificate] was a female, when you look at the old records.

SM – There were 13 in my mother's family, and the same in your mother's family wasn't it?

RM – Well 12 grew up.

SM – Yes, one died, but it's still 13. In my mum's family, there was that many too.

RM – I've still got one aunty alive. She is 93, 94 or something.

SM – Got some long living ones. My mum was over 90, still had all her faculties, still playing the piano and everything at 90. We went to her 90th birthday party. - took her out, took her up to my sisters up at Murwillumbah and took her out to lunch. Yes, there were certainly some long livers in yours [Roger's family].

RM – Yes, mum was 89, about a month off 90 when she died.

SM – This aunt that he's got, she is still living at home, in her own home - marvellous, absolutely marvellous at that age.

RM – Yes, she's still going.

APPENDIX C-9

Sandra Watling Transcript

Interviewee: **Sandra Watling**
Association with Study Area: **Formerly lived in residence ID 59B in Anvil Hill EA**
Date of Interview: **6 August 2008**
Interview venue: **5 Almond Street, Denman**
Interviewers: **Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker**

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

What is your full name and date of birth?

Sandra Elizabeth Watling, nee Smith. I was born in 1958.

Where were you born?

In Muswellbrook.

In the old hospital, Orwell?

Yes.

Who were your parents?

Barbara June Mc Taggart and Raymond John Smith.

Where did they come from?

My father originally came from Camden in Sydney and Mother has been in Wybong all her life – she was born in Muswellbrook. My father was born at Redfern, Sydney.

On your Mothers side, the Mc Taggarts, do they go back to Amus?

Yes, as far as I understand it.

What did your parents do?

Mum was nurse and dad was always a dairy farmer.

What is your husband's name?

His name is Rodney Watling and he works at Drayton coal.

Was he a local?

He originally came from Singleton and then moved up to Denman and worked on a dairy farm up there and I meet him through football. My little brother was playing football on the same team, so that was how we meet in Denman here.

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

I have a sister Dianne, twin brother David and a younger sister Suzanne. Four in the family.

So where did you grow up?

We lived at Wybong up until I was 18, but I did my schooling at Muswellbrook. We just basically caught the bus in every morning, caught it at 7.30 am every morning and got home about 4.30 am every day.

Who was running the bus?

Brambley's years and years ago. Mr Brambley. There was Mr Brown for a little while. The bus always started at Peachey's at Sandy Hollow and came from there and went through.

At school, did you get involved in any activities?

Not so much through the school, because years ago travelling half hour in the family car was too much. But out at Wybong, we were involved with the Wybong church choir, each Christmas we used to get on the back of the cattle truck and drive around the district and sing Christmas carols. Our main concentration was the farm, because at that some money was pretty tight, so we never got involved in much in town. Mum's main involvement was with the church. Then you got involved in the activities out there like the Wybong sports. I think Dad was in the rural fire service and mum was involved in the Wybong Women's Guild, which built the church out up at Manobalai.

You mentioned your brother playing football. Who did he play for?

He was playing for Denman. Denman Red Devils is what they have always been called. He started that when he was about 16. The majority of kids from out there – my cousin Pete played football for Denman, Greg Parry played football for Denman, there wasn't much else for the young boys to do. Years and years ago, Dad said when they were younger they had a cricket club out that way, but it never carried on. The main activities were football for the boys. For the girls, there wasn't a great deal of activities for the girls.

We were lucky because we had to entertain ourselves at Dad's place, and there was a nice little hill. Basically we kept ourselves amused for days on end, exploring that mountain. It was a family farm, so you got down and helped milk the cows and made the hay. There were four kids, so there was enough there to keep us amused and occupied.

We would have family friends over once a month, like the Parry's – they worked on a farm at 'Rockhall', my Aunty and Uncle Shirley and Roger McTaggart used to come over. Then we had friends at Penfolds winery. So your entertainment was getting involved when friends and family came over. My mum was an excellent piano player, so quite often she would be playing the piano and that's where we learnt to dance – on the lounge room floor and sing songs. Mum played the organ at the church. It was like the little community gets together and does those sorts of things.

Did you learn to play the piano?

No, I didn't. As I said, finances were tight, so she could never really afford too and as she said, she wouldn't have the patience to sit down and teach us. But I have got a

granddaughter who is learning. My father's father was an excellent violinist. It missed our generation, but on to my children and grandchildren, which is a good thing.

What was your father's father's name?

Alfred John Smith.

Where do you think your Mother learnt to play the piano?

Mum went through private schools and it was taught. My mum played the piano, my uncle played the piano, and their younger sister was a music teacher at the Newcastle University. It was something my Grandmother decided to do that all her children would learn the piano.

So where did you mother go to Boarding School?

It was in Sydney, - Skegs it was called.

With the football, did they travel around much?

The basic football was involved with Muswellbrook, Denman, Merriwa, Scone, Aberdeen and Singleton. Greta Branxton wasn't involved then. I think Murrurundi might have been involved early in the piece.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

How big was your parent's property?

Originally it was around 375 acres (I think it was) and they bought 160 acres. Dad had the original 'Collareen', what Cathy [Hopkins] has got now – that was 258 acres I think it was. Then he brought 160 acres of 'Rosedale' and he also had a 150 acre lot called "Abbeys" which is literally just across the road from where Peter Hogan's is. I think he ended up selling that.

Can you remember who he brought it off?

On 1986, Mr M.J LeBreton brought 'Abbeys' off Dad.

What was the name of your parent's property?

'Collareen'.

Was that the name your parents gave it?

That name was already there, as far I understand it.

What was the property used for?

Dairy farming.

Was it a big dairy?

Dad basically milked 60 to 70 head of cows, which was a medium dairy. I remember stories of Dad saying they started off hand milking 15 head of cows once a day, then they developed

to hand milking 15 head of cows twice a day, which my Grandfather was terribly upset with because he thought they would go dry. They then progressed onto going electrical once the electricity made its way out there.

Where did the milk go to?

Very earlier in the piece it would go to Denman, but that shut down years and years ago and it would go to Muswellbrook.

Do you remember the milk going to Denman?

I have a vague recollection, but they stopped it because there were so many farmers. Our run was the Muswellbrook run and then there was a Denman run. I think they pulled the Denman factory down 30 years ago. Dad's always went to Muswellbrook. I think one of the drivers was Hilton Barnett, who used to do the milk runs. Dad was always the last stop so they used to have a beer there, on a Sunday. Another driver was Bernie Logue .

Out there now where the gate is now, just beside the church, there is a peppercorn tree, and there was a milk stand there and they used to come in little cans and Dad used to take it there. Once they developed the milk vats, they used to come right down to the house and do it.

Can you remember when they changed to vats?

I would have been 10 or 12 at the time, so it would have been about 35 to 40 years ago.

Did you father grow any crops?

No, it was basically Lucerne or whatever you needed to feed the dairy cows. He never sold any crops from the place.

What about timber on the property? Was there any ironbark?

There was ironbark, but he basically used it just for fence building. The only thing ever taken off the place was the odd Christmas tree – people found the nicest ones on our place so they used to get them from our place.

Did you have a large garden?

There was one flower out the front of the house which Dad planted just after he got married and it was called a December lily but always flowered in November. Mum, in regard to the flowers she had there were basically geraniums, of all different kinds. Back in about the mid 1970s when we had the severe drought, the gardens just went, because we had the priority to use the water for the cattle. That was the first real drought I remember, where we really had to truly conserve water – that was back in the mid to late '70s. The stories go that the Wybong Creek never dried up, but it did in the late '70s, as much as I can remember.

So did your Dad record the rainfall?

He would record the rainfall and keep a history of it.

Did you have a veggie garden?

Yes, they had a veggie garden. We had it down on the creek and had rockmelon and corn, those sort of things. Then, up at the house, you had pumpkin, carrots, tomatoes and things like that. You would try to irrigate things like the tomatoes with rain water, but if it ran out there was nothing, because the creek water was too salty for those types of plants. You had to be careful of the season. We had a well down there, which was fairly salty as well and at times, it did restrict what you could grow. With some of the Lucerne types, they weren't tolerant to the salt water.

Dad had problems growing Lucerne when he had problems with Aphids and when the flow in the creek was low – due to the lack water and the increase of salt in the water. Otherwise, I don't remember Dad having any other major problems with growing Lucerne when the creek flow was good or with the salt content of the well water.

Dad also ended putting in cow peas and things like that to also balance the nitrogen.

Were there many wells on the property?

Only one well, directly down from the house. There was an old little well to the left of the property, to the boundary fence. The early people who lived there years and years ago, used to use that well for stock water. Dad never used it. Dad and Pat Hogan built the well that we used on the flats and just irrigated out of the creek.

So was the Wybong Creek the main water supply?

It was. As you got more people on the creek, the quicker it would slow down. As I understand it, because it is such a good, reliable creek, it was spring fed from a lot of underground springs from the Mountain. It was always a truly, good reliable source. In regard to restriction on irrigation, that didn't happen until the late 1970s. That was the first time I can remember they had to do that, but they were always pretty conservative.

Were there high water users upstream?

A lot places started. The Simpsons subdivided 'Callatoota', and then you had the vineyard which increased its production at the old Penfolds. Some other places further up, were broken into smaller places and that meant more people were using it. I know they said years ago, it was Penfold's taking the all of water out of the creek, but at the same time the water patterns had changed too – we were not getting as regular rain. It was just the increased number of people and availability of people to start plating more crops. There wasn't as many planting Lucerne when were kids, compared to when time went on.

Were there many dairies around then, when you were a kid?

Dads was the only I knew on the lower Wybong, and then you had the ones further up. Flannigan's did dairying and I think the Googe's did dairying too, but there wasn't many around our way. The next closest one was at Sandy Hollow as far as I can remember.

When did they start to regulate the usage of the water out the Wybong Creek?

They didn't do that until the late 1970s. I had left home by then. It was when the drought really started and then they started pushing it again in the late 1990s when the drought started again.

Was that a government initiative?

No, I think most of the people in Wybong got together and started organising themselves, because they had the Wybong Creek Committee and they decided that those down flow of the creek should have as much availability of water as those upstream of the creek. I am not too sure who initiated that, but as far as I am aware most of the Wybong people just organised themselves.

What was the house like on the property?

It was just a basic weatherboard, fibro house. I do know there was a wood and slab house at the back which was apparently over 100 years old – that was where my grandfather used to live. The house originally I think when my Grandfather brought it was just a 2 bedroom home. My grandfather brought it when my Dad was 6 or 7 after he won lotto, years and years ago. Then he brought that place, finished his job on the wharfs and moved to Wybong. He wasn't a true farmer, but he developed into it. It was just a 2 bedroom house with a kitchen and veranda off it. Then eventually when Dad and Mum got married, my Grandfather moved back into the top house and Mum and Dad had the main house and they closed in the veranda, which created an extra 2 bedrooms. It was just a basic old house.

Does the old slab house survive?

It was still there when I left. I think Cathy [Hopkins] was going to develop it and make it into a feature. You have the big pieces of wood which have been chiselled, the bedroom and a half divided lounge room and a kitchen. I know its over 100 years old.

Do the old stockyards survive?

From what I gather, Cathy [Hopkins] has taken them down. We had an old dairy, dairy yard and loading spot up the top. Where the dairy used to be, Chris [Hopkins] has got a round yard for doing dressage and things like that. As far as I know, they have changed the infrastructure a far bit. Dad had at least 10 paddocks associated on the creek flat where he used to rotate Lucerne, oats and things like that. I think they have taken a lot of the internal fencing out.

I think there is one farm over near the boundary fence where you have the grave for the young fellow of Galvin , I think it was – he was a little boy that was killed in the creek flood, and it's in the corner. I know Dad's place at one stage over in the far corner, had an acre, because the people who owned 'Minnie Vale' wanted to put a church on the main road – they were catholic. So they gave the Galvin's (who owned it before Dad) an acre, so they could put the church at the front of Dad's property there. But years ago, they gave that up,

because it was lost cause to put a fence around there. So it basically went back to 'Minnie Vale' – you will notice it on the titles, there is a little block that sticks out near the grave.

Do you know much about the grave?

All I know from what I can gather is that there was a house down near the bank, near the orange trees and Kurrajong trees –they had a house there. Anyway, they had a flood one late night and the young boy, he was only about 10, was taken away in the flood.

Was he a Galvin?

Yes, I think he was.

Is the grave marked?

Yes, the Heritage Society went out there and fixed it up and re-did the fencing all around it. It is literally on the boundary fence of our place and 'Minnie Vale', closest to the creek. As far as I know, it is still there. As I said, the history society went out and fixed it up about 15 years ago.

Are there any other burials on the property that you know of?

Not that I know of. I know Dad used to blame the ghost of the Mountain when ever anything went wrong, but I don't know of any. Whenever anything went wrong, Dad used to say it was 'Con's' fault, and you would say why? He would say because it's a "contrary bloody thing!." There were some stories, but I think it was joke. Whenever anything went wrong, it got blamed on Con.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

Who were your neighbours?

At 'Minnie Vale', you had Mrs Potts for years and years and she sold it to Mr Nesbitt, who then sold it to the Sheppard's. Then we had old Mr and Mrs Simpson that owned 'Rosedale' and their children owned 'Callatoota'. Of course there were the Ray's across the creek. That was pretty stable until Mrs Potts sold her place when I was 16 and the Simpson's sold their place when I was 18 and Penfolds winery brought that and they had a winery there for many years. I think Simpsons divided their property back in the late '70s; they were the first ones in the area to break it up into hobby lots.

Did Penfold's employ many people?

Yes, they were quite good. My brother worked there for a while, my sister did and my mum did. They did a bit for the community. As much as everyone complained about it, it was a saviour in regard to helping boosting the incomes of a lot of people out there – they were starting to go through a drought, so it did boost the incomes of a lot of people out there. Quite a few of them did work on the vineyard.

Did Penfold's bring any new people in the area?

Where Penfold's is, there is about 7 or 8 houses there and they did bring managers in. But in regard to the tractor work and things like that, they basically got most of the local people to do that and get involved, which was good.

Was it a very big vineyard?

It wasn't overly big. It was only a small vineyard – Penfolds itself and then Rosemount brought Penfolds out. Then Rosemount started buying people out in the area to expand it and then they started bits of pieces of land back again 15 years later, because the grapes went into a slump and it wasn't viable.

When did John Cruickshank arrive?

There was no vineyard there when he arrived. He brought part of Callatoota and he would have been here since about 25 years ago.

So was the Penfold's winery abandoned or has someone taken it over?

No, someone has taken it over. Penfold's sold it to Rosemount which resold it. I think it is called Barrington Wineries now, I think. But Penfold's was there every since I was a child. As you go up the Yarraman Road and go back over the Wybong Creek, Penfold's was mainly on that side of the road which went to the Mountain and the creek was their boundary. Their winery went onto the back of 'Rock Hall'.

Did any of the smaller farms have vineyards on their properties?

No. Most of them were dairy, beef or sheep. If that's what their father's taught them, that's what they did - they didn't really expand too much in those days.

You mentioned earlier the Rural Fire Brigade – was it always in existence?

Yes, it was always there when I was a child. Dad was involved and I think Mum was the secretary once. But basically we got involved, because living in a rural area; you don't know it might be your place you will be trying to save one year. They had an annual meeting and they all took turns being the president and secretary- they rotated it around. I think they used to keep the truck at Dudley Gooch's place, I think. They just used to meet at the Wybong Hall once every couple of months, have a meeting or do a bit of training. I think the fellows saw it as a bit of an opportunity afterwards to have up for a beer. Same as the Wybong dances they used to have years ago.

How often did they use to have the dances?

Once every couple of months - as much as I can remember as a kid. We went along every time there was one on. Every one used to bring a plate and you would have a dance and there was usually a bonfire out the back.

Do you remember who used to play the music?

The Ray boys – the younger ones and the older ones. The older ones did the waltzes and things like that, while Richard ' and them did the younger music. It was a big thing over a lot

of local areas – you had the Wybong dances, the Sandy Hollow dances and McCully's Gap dances. Most of the young ones would go around to each of the dances and do the trips, so there would nearly be a dance every weekend for them – that was their outing. We loved it as kids. We would always be waiting to see if the drummer lost his stick, because there was a little hole in the floor and the drummer would throw his stick in the air and you could guarantee, it would always fall in that hole. So the drummer would pay a small kid two 'bob' to go under the hall and get it out for him. It was just their meeting place where everyone caught up with everyone else and kept in touch.

What about Churches in the district?

You had the Catholic Church on the corner of our place and then you had the Wybong church which was at the top end of Manobalai – they built it back when I was about 12. The Wybong women from the Church of England got together and started catering for weddings to raise money to build the new Church, which took about 10 years or so and then old Mr Bray built the Church. They were the main Churches out there. The Catholic Church used to meet once every month and that changed to once every three months. The Wybong Church always had a service every month, on the third Sunday at 11.00 am. Then once every couple of months, there was night time service on a Sunday. Mum used to play the organ and there was a church choir which all us kids were involved in. We were told we could leave when we turned 16, but then they changed the age to 18, so we got stuck there again for another 2 years – much to my Sister's disgust because she was the first one in the area to turn 16.

Everyone rallied around whenever there were problems or family problems and the Church was also there to help them out.

Is that Church building still there?

Yes, it is at the top end of Manobalai.

Did your grandfather buy the property when the Church was on there?

Yes. It was there for quite some time. That deal was organised between the Galvin's. I think the Church is over 100 years old, but I think they have let it go in the last couple of years. Apparently, there was a vacant block across the road from it, which used to be a Catholic boarding school for girls way back in 1910's.

There used to be a school somewhere near the Castlerock intersection with the Wybong Road. The kids used to ride their horses every morning to go there. I remember there was a little shandy pub along Denman Road too.

Was there a shop at Hollydeen?

There was a quaint little shop there at Hollydeen, where everyone went to get their supplies when they ran out. Mum was very good friends with the lady who owned it – Mrs Stilling. They had two girls – Jan and Robin. That's also where you would get the petrol from.

The petrol used to get delivered to our place by the Caltex company truck, but if you ran out you went to Hollydeen. I think Shane and Sharon that were there, demolished most of the old shop and redid it up, but it was just a little grocery shop. Mr Stilling had a little garage at the side where he could fix cars up and do repairs. He passed suddenly, so Mrs Stilling just kept the shop running.

Was there a wine shop there?

No, not in my time. I was told about something closer to Denman, near the first Rosemount turnoff between Denman and Hollydeen, there was some sort of little pub, off the road. Because I remember my father saying how my Grandfather used to get on his horse and the horse would know its way home and he would be asleep on the horse by the time he got back there.

Do you recall the cemetery getting used much?

No. I think there was funeral service there when I was older. My Great Uncle McTaggart used to go there and keep it tidy and look after it, because I think most of them that are in the cemetery are McTaggarts and Flannigan's. I understand that my Grandfather Charles McTaggart started that.

Can you remember the Wybong Bridge going in?

Yes, I would have been around 10 or so. It was just after Mum actually ran into a cow which was sleeping behind the old bridge.

So what sort of cars did your parents used to have?

I remember we had an old Austin. He had a blue Dodge truck and then he started in Holden's when they came out. I just remember this big blue Dodge truck and then we had a little Austin car, which lasted us about 10 or 12 years that they beat into the ground. The he had a Ford Falcon and a couple of Holden's after that – as long as it went and worked well, it was right.

What was the road like into Muswellbrook?

It was dirt for many years until they put the bridge in and then they started grading and tarred the road. It was a slow old trip into town on the dirt road.

Was it something to look forward too?

Well it was, because when you went to town it was only once month. Mum used to go to town when we were at school and get all the groceries and then sometimes pick us up from school, which was always exciting because we didn't have to go home on the bus.

The bread was delivered on the mail days which were Monday, Wednesday and Friday – you would get the bread put in the mail box. Early in the piece, they would kill their own cows – then they decided it was easier to go into the butchers and get it.

Do you remember who did the mail run?

No, I can't. I think Mrs Stilling started it at Hollydeen years and years ago, but I can't remember to tell you the truth.

Who would be the main store in Muswellbrook, you would deal with?

It was the old Campbell's store. It was a franchise and there was franchise in Denman, but for some reason we didn't go to Denman as much, it was mainly Muswellbrook.

Were there any other deliveries in the area?

There was, years ago, a guy that came around with his fruit trucks. There also used to be Rawling's that used to have bits and pieces of everything – home remedies and socks and things like that. He was a travelling truck and would come around once a month, which was a big thing. The fruit guy stopped because it wasn't very viable for them. That was about most of the deliveries I can remember. The newspapers of course, always got brought out on the mail run – you would send the Sunday paper on Monday and things like that.

Were there any sports days?

The Wybong Sports Day used to be once a year. That was major event. Dad was in charge of the bar and Mum would be doing the catering and things like that. There would be hoopla and those sorts of games. The worst thing happened one year was a poor person came off and broke their leg – that was major catastrophe.

Once the sports finished, you would all go to Wybong Hall and have the dance and that sort of thing. They didn't have camp drafting as much, there was a bit of cattle work. I suppose there were the major horse events, but I just wasn't interested in it as a child. There were the egg and spoon races for the kids also.

Where were the sports days held?

They were held at the Wybong Sports Ground. I think Dudley Googe donated the ground at the top end of Manobalai and for years and years; they also had the cricket matches there. There used to be a full cricket pitch around. They had a shed there – I remember one year we were so excited because they a put a proper toilet in there – it wasn't a flash toilet, but it was better. As far as I understand, Dudley Googe owned the land and donated the use of, to do whatever they wanted with it. When the sports were not on it, he put his cattle on it and then organised to slash it ready for the sports day. It was a good day.

The accident at the sports day – was there an ambulance service then?

Yes, there was. I think at that stage the ambulance was actually at the sports day. Otherwise, if anything bad happened someone would have to run over to Googe's and give them a call.

Did you have the phone on at your house?

I can remember we always had that – it was a party line phone. Mrs Payne was the one who put the phone calls through when we were kids. We kids used to pick up the phone and have a chat to her every now and then. That went on for quite a few years until they put the automated service which was built at the second intersection of Roxburgh and Muswellbrook Road. I have a vague recollection Mrs Payne used to sort the mail there too. She was the one doing the telephone exchange when we were a kid.

What about rural power? Did you have power as a child?

I always remember having the power on, but apparently they got the power on when I was 3 or 4, because I do remember Mum and Dad saying (because they had twins), how much of a major task it was washing the nappies in a boiler. I think the power got there when I was about 2 or 3. I do remember my Grandfather brought a TV, when we were about 6 or 7 – he was one of the first ones to have a TV there. The story was that my Uncle Ron was the first one to have a car accident out at Wybong – near the bridge in Pop's brand new truck, years ago. Pop Smith was the first one to have a TV out in that area, apparently.

That would have been exciting?

It was. We used to sit on the veranda and watch it because we weren't allowed to go in. We were allowed to sit there and watch it for an hour at night, which was exciting for us. I have a vague recollection watching 'The Monkey's' and the basic black and white cartoons. We didn't watch a great deal, because we didn't find it as a necessity as kids – it was just for an hour at night before we went to bed. Most of the time during the day, we were outside playing, giving my mother a heart attack, climbing over rocks.

Were there any injuries from falling off the rocks?

To be quite truthful, no there wasn't. I was the only one who broke an arm, and that was because I jumped into a tank, when I shouldn't have. Dad was building a new septic tank when I was 8 as part of the improvements and Dad had just cemented it. Well, I went to jump in and realised it was full of water, so I put my arm out to stop myself and broke it. That was the only time any of us broke anything out there, and we did some pretty hairy things.

Did your parents take you into town to fix your arm?

Yes, mum drove me into Dr Rutherford to fix my arm.

Going back to your Grandfather and you said he won the lotto. Do you know how much it may have been?

I wouldn't have a clue, but I know it was enough to buy the farm put a bit away and send both Dad and his brother to boarding school. My grandmother ended up with Tuberculosis (I'm not too sure if that was just before or after he brought the farm), so he put her in one of those nursing homes, where they looked after those dying from TB, years ago. My uncle Ron (Dads younger brother) was only 4 when my Grandmother died. Dad went to boarding school and my Grandfather tried to send Uncle Ron off too, but they sent him back, saying he was too young. So then Uncle Ron went and lived with my Mum's parents – Austin and

Martha McTaggart who used to own 'Rosedale' and he was raised by them until he was 7 or 8 and went back to my Pop's place on weekends or when my Dad was there. He went to school there.

But it was enough to keep him happy and buy the farm outright. I think it was the Queensland lottery he won. He brought this place back in 1936 I think.

Was he working on the wharfs?

Yes, he was working on the wharfs back in Sydney as far as I understand. I think my sister has still got the newspaper article saying that he won the lotto. I think my Grandfather originally came from a small farming area near Camden and his parents had a property. But I think he mainly worked on the wharfs to get some money.

Are there any other stories which spring to mind?

I remember that the biggest python they have ever seen was just up from Dad's place and was about the full width of the road – that caused a fair bit of commotion for a couple of months and we weren't allowed to go up the Mountain, because of this huge python. We weren't allowed to go across the road to the top Mountain, because there were death adders up there.

I do remember as a kid watching the dingoes go across the top of the Mountains as I was on the bus going to school.

Did you have horses?

Yes, we had a couple of horses which we would ride to get the cattle in. Dad had a saddle and I would be doing bareback, or Dianne would go up to 'Abbeys' and bring the dairy cattle down. Because Dad would rear his calves up at 'Abbeys' and let them grow until they were 18 months or so and bring them back down and then put the dry cows up there and rotate them.

I remember seeing Platypus' in the creek, years and years ago. Wombats used to be a major problem, but there are not as many as when I was a kid.

What about rabbits. Were there many rabbits out there?

There was a major rabbit problem. We used to have a group of 4 or 5 people that came up regularly from Cessnock, I can't remember their names, but they would come up every couple of months and ferret and kill the rabbits for us. They would sleep in the hay shed and though it was a great thing to do. They used to help keep the rabbits down at our place, as they came up regularly.

We never really had a problem with Kangaroos, as they pretty well stayed up in the Mountain. The best thing was that there was a couple of Wedge-tailed eagle's nesting at the base of the Mountain and you could get in close and see them. There were a few possums

up in the Mountain. There wasn't much wildlife around because I think us kids frightened it away, climbing all over the place.

What about the belief that there was Koala's out there?

No. It would be nice to think about, but all through my life out there, there have never been any Koalas seen or heard about out there. There were lyrebirds out there which my Dad saw and the basic reptiles. But I never saw any Koalas.

On the back block, where your father put the dried cattle, were there any buildings out there?

No, not that I know of.

So you relied on the creek up there for water too?

No. Dad's place had 2 dams, but one was a spring fed dam, so they always had water in them. I think there might have been a building there years and years prior to Dad being there, down on the corner where Pat Hogan owns now.

Do you have any children?

Yes, 3 children – Vicki, Robert and Ian (order of birth). Vicki is in Brisbane, she is a teacher, Ian is an electrician and lives in Singleton and Robert is a fitter machinist and he lives in Denman.

Do you have grandchildren?

Yes, Vicki has 3 children - Jamie, Kirsty and Nicholas. I see them about every 6 months – I will go up there for a couple of weeks or they will come down here. Her husband works for IBM, so he is doing a lot of travelling and he is in Singapore at the moment.

Did they have anyone play Santa?

Yes. I think Reg Parry did it one year – it was a great event for us kids to figure out who it was because it kept changing each year. We used to do the Christmas carols and then go to the hall and have the dance and sing again there. I think Bobby Potts organised that years ago. We would go there for 3 Sunday's before and learn our songs – 'Away in a Manger', 'Silent Night', 'Come all ye faithful', 'The first Noel' and we always finished off with 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'. It would take us 2 nights to travel around. We would go from 'Minnie Vale' to the top end of Wybong, all around. It was a great community spirit.

Do you think that spirit will stay there?

I truly think that spirit has passed, because all the old ones have gone. There was family connection too – Mum was a McTaggart and the Hogans were related to the Flannigan's, everybody knew everybody. So they all relied on the community.

APPENDIX C-10

Harold Ray Transcript

Interviewee: *Harold Ray*
Association with Study Area: *Residence ID 84 in Anvil Hill EA*
Date of Interview: *7 August 2008*
Interview venue: *2291 Wybong Road, Wybong*
Interviewers: *Rob Tickle, Melissa Walker*

1 HISTORY OF FAMILY

What is your full name?

Harold James Gordon Ray.

What year were you born?

1929.

Where were you born?

Muswellbrook.

Was that at the old Orwell Lodge Maternity Hospital?

I don't know. I can't remember.

Who were your parents?

Gordon Phillip Ray and Harriet Ray.

What was your Mother's maiden name?

Bates.

Where did your Mum come from?

Spring Creek – around this area.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

Yes.

What are their names?

I am the eldest, then Edna (my sister) , Stan (he lives at Denman road, Muswellbrook), Phyllis, Heather (there was quite a few), Tom (he has passed at 62), Mavis, Bert and George.

Who did you marry?

Mary Deever.

Where was she from?

Denman Road, just up over the hill.

Is your wife still alive?

Yes, she has gone to town today.

Have you got any children? What are their names?

From oldest to youngest: Norma, Shirley, Kay, Judy, Christine Phillip, Neil and Sonny (Sonia).

Are they all married?

No.

Is Norma married?

She was, but not anymore.

Who was she married to for a while?

A Watson.

What about Shirley? Is she married?

Shirley is married to Raymond Beveridge.

What about Kay? Is she married?

No.

What about Judy? Is she married?

No.

What about Christine? Is she married?

Sort of, to Rodney Kerr.

What about Phillip? Is he married?

No.

What about Neil? Is he married?

Yes, to Kelly – Sorry, but I can't think of her surname - she is a kiwi though.

What about Sonny ? Is she married?

Not married yet, but talking about getting married next year.

On your brothers and sisters, who did Tom marry?

Carol Moffat.

How long ago did Tom die?

I don't know really, quite a while, 4 or 5 years I think, I am not really sure. He had a tumour on the brain. They operated on him and he was going really well, until he had Chemotherapy – he was here one day and gone the next. They reckon the chemo contaminated his blood - like putting dirty petrol in vehicle.

Where did Tom used to live?

He lived up the top of the [Wybong] road, just of the top of the hill near the crossroads with Castlerock Road. My brother Bert used to live in another house near there, but he has gone to Singleton now. Tom was next door to Bert. Carol has gone to Scone now, to family up there.

Who did Bert marry?

A Budden - their a big family in Muswellbrook.

What about George, did he marry?

He has been married a couple of times.

Where does George live?

He lives at Cardiff. He drives one of my trucks in Maitland at Bloomfield Colliery.

What about Edna , did she marry?

Yes, she married Adrian Ashleigh. They originally lived at Moonan Flat, by now they live on the other side of Scone.

What about Heather, did she marry?

Yes, she married a Smith from Wagga Wagga - not the Smiths from Wybong.

What about Phyllis, did she marry?

Yes, she married a Googe from Wybong here. He also died a few years ago from cancer. Phyllis lives in Muswellbrook now.

What about Mavis, did she marry?

Yes, she married a bloke of Danies, but they split up. She is now she is married to another bloke whose name I can't remember. I should remember, but there are too many.

Where did you go to school?

Spring Creek.

Who was the teacher?

Ms Doyle.

How long ago did your father die?

Dad died in 1975 and Mum lived on 3 years after that. Dad was aged 90 and Mum was aged 89.

What about your grandparents – did they live to a good age?

Grandfather didn't go so well, he got to 72. Grandmother got to 93, which was pretty good. I hope I get that far.

What about the grandparents on your mother's side?

I don't know much about them. All I know is that Mum's mum died when she was a baby – I don't really know too much about that at all.

What did you do when you left school?

I carted wood, timber.

From your properties?

We did at the start and then we worked out to other places. We carted a lot of wood - all the way to Denman, Muswellbrook, Aberdeen - that was about as far as it got. We supplied all the bakeries and some of the pubs - we had a good run.

Did you supply the hospital?

I did cart something to Denman hospital, but after that not really. I supplied many farms and horse places and all the bakeries in Muswellbrook and Denman. I think there were 3 bakeries at Muswellbrook, we used to cart too.

You said 'we'. Who gave you a hand carting the wood?

Stan (my brother).

So you and Stan got on alright?

Yeah, we got on alright. We didn't have that many problems. We did very well though.

What did you do after the wood carting?

Stan kept in the wood business. I kept carting – I did gravel carting and then I carted coal after that.

Where did you get the gravel from?

I got some from Merriwa and Denman for quite a bit time. Then after 1971, I went on to the coal and I was there for the rest of my life. I was at Howick Mine for 32 years and at Cumnock, in between. Boral took over our job and then we ended up out the gate and I was lucky enough to end up at Bloomfield – another 10 years of work there. So, from there I went to Maitland at Bloomfield Colliery. I have been carting all my life.

So who looks after your trucks?

I do and Neil helps out. I have brought a place on the other side of Muswellbrook and when I move there, I have got to get all these trucks over there, which are sitting here doing nothing at the moment. I have a got about 8 of them – a couple are at Maitland (Bloomfield Colliery). One truck is blown up at the moment.

Did you employ people?

Yes. At Howick I employed five or six people. I had some good ones and some not so good.

I notice there are a few loaders outside too. Did you do earthmoving too?

At Sandy Hollow, I had a sand and gravel quarry out there for about 6 years. I got good sand and gravel from out there, but I didn't have enough money to keep things going.

Did you have a crushing plant out there?

No, I had a screening plant.

How did you meet your wife?

I was carting wood into town and I meet her in town.

2 HISTORY OF PROPERTY

What about your parents. Where did they live?

Along Wybong Road, down a bit further, near the Anvil mountain.

Did they have a name for the property?

I don't know, I can't remember. I know Dad used to own land of the Anvil Hill (mountain). Dad used to own that and left it to me, down the line.

Your grandparents, Charles Ray and Harriet Ray (nee Barwick) where did they live?

They lived not far from the Anvil Mountain, on the other side of the valley from here. Noel Ray he used to live there for a certain length of time until he sold it and moved on.

What sort of things did you do as a kid after school when you came home?

I remember I used to ride a push bike to school and I remember riding home against the westerly wind, pedalling my heart out. We had lots of jobs to do on the farm like help Dad milk the cows.

Were you milking by hand then?

Yes.

Where did the milk go to?

Muswellbrook factory.

When do you think the Ray family first came to live at Wybong?

Well, you got me beat, I don't know, a long while ago.

Was your grandfather the first in the area, do you think?

I wouldn't know that. He was one of the first. The Hogan family have been here a long while.

Where about has the Ray family owned properties around Wybong?

They owned the Anvil Mountain and the valley around it, another piece along the Wybong Creek. They had a lot of land.

Do you know how many acres they had?

I should now, but I really don't know. It was a lot of acres.

You mentioned your father had left some property; did he leave some to the other boys too?

He did leave some to George, but I don't know where it went from there.

Who did you buy this property off?

Dad left me this little place.

How many acres?

I sold some to Tom and then I ended up with 8 acres. This used to go right through – from the crossroads [at Castlerock Road] over the hill and down the hill there. Bert and Tom used to live there.

How big was this property?

I should know that, but I am not real sure.

Were there any old houses on it, before this one?

No, but there was an old hut up the road. I think this was owned by the McTaggart family originally, years ago.

What sort of things did your father do?

He was a dairy farmer.

Noel mentioned that he used to have a vegetable run. Can you give details about that?

Yes. Dad used to have a vegetable run from town [Muswellbrook] into Wybong. He would sell vegies and apples and cordial.

Did he used to grow them on the farm?

No he used to buy them and sell them on - he was a bit of dealer. I didn't think much of that; it was a bit of sideline project from the farm. He went out about once a week. I sometimes went around and helped sell. He used to get cordial from the cordial factory in Muswellbrook

when it was going; I used to see how they made the cordial, which was interesting. Dad used to run around the Wybong a fair way. I went with him a few times.

Did he keep the dairy most of his life?

Yes, as far as I know. I know he used to do alright when the weather was good in the good times, but when the weather was bad, he used to go backwards - it all depended on the rain.

Did he have irrigation?

Yes, he did a bit of irrigation, but I think the old Wybong creek used to dry up.

Did you ever feel like going into dairying?

No, it wasn't in my blood, it just didn't appeal to me.

Did any of your brothers carry on dairying?

No, they all went their separate ways. We had enough of it [dairying] as kids.

Did you ever go rabbitting?

Yes, lots of times.

Did you use the rabbits for skins or send them to the freezing works?

We sent them to the freezing works in Muswellbrook. That's was when I was a young fellow.

Was there much prickly pear when you were around here as a kid?

A little bit, but not a lot.

Any tiger pear too?

Yes, I remember that.

Did your Dad run the sheep too?

Yes, he had a few sheep.

Did they have a shearing shed?

They had an old rough set up. I did help him, there was big money in shearing in those days, which is why I had a go at it, but I changed my mind.

Who normally did the shearing?

My uncle – Noel's father did the shearing.

Were there any burials on your fathers or grandfathers property?

No.

Where were the Rays buried?

In Muswellbrook.

Where were you during the 1955 flood?

I was at my parents place down the road.

Did you ever get flooded in?

Oh yes, we couldn't get out for a week or so. It cut us off. But ever since I have been here, it has never flooded us in. The little creek or gully at the back of the place just about ran over the banks, but didn't go over.

So is there underground water here?

Yes.

Is the underground water any good?

It is very salty, but shallow. It is only down about 15 feet - I haven't seen it dry. During the really dry times, it never went dry.

What did you use it for?

The toilets and bath. During the really dry times, the groundwater went down but I got my young fellow to dig down a bit more and it came through like a hose.

3 HISTORY OF THE AREA AND COMMUNITY

Who were some of your neighbours around here?

Smiths – there was a cemetery on his property, I don't know who it was know but he drowned in Wybong creek.

Who else lived around?

Smiths , Hogan's and McTaggarts - Roger's grandfather used to live at Wybong.

Did you ever play in the Ray Boys band?

No I didn't. I did the dancing and stuff like that. I still go around to the dances – I am going to one tomorrow night which the Ray boys are playing at. I used to go around to the dances quite a lot. I used to see the White Rose Orchestra a lot too. They went all over the place.

Did they play at Wybong?

Yes. They played at Muswellbrook, Scone, Windy, Tamworth, Singleton, and Maitland - everywhere. The best one was is Scone back in the 80s. I still have a bit of trot around the floor.

So the Ray boy's band, did they go a far way around too?

They used to play at Wybong, Aberdeen, had quite a few at Bunnan, quite a few at Whittingham and Jerry's Plains,

Can you remember who ran the bakeries you supplied?

Some of them I do. One was by O'Brien (near the spare parts shop now) and another was down near the railway – I can't remember his name. Another was run by Torpies at the top of end of town. We used to supply the drycleaner too – called Airds and another called Holdsworth. There were about three places we used to cart too - the market place and another down near Sydney Street near the railway and another just over near the tyre place in the lane way.

What about the bush fire brigade, did you belong to that?

No, wasn't involved in that.

Did you ever do any horse sports?

No, that wasn't in my life.

What about football?

No, that wasn't in my life.

What about Cricket?

I did have a bit of a go at that but didn't go very well. That was only when I was a young fellow.

What about Tennis?

No, I was too busy working.

Did your parents have a phone?

Yes.

Do you remember the number?

No, I should do, but I don't.

Did you go on any holidays?

No not really, I just worked always.

So travelling all these long distances, did you have a good car?

Yeah, I had a good car.

With so many children, what type of car did your father have?

He had an old '29 Chevrolet, I can remember that. After that he had a little truck - a Dodge - to carry a bit of wood and things like that to a café in town and then everywhere.

Did you go to the local show at all?

Yes, I used to go to the show at Muswellbrook, when we were kids and bit of later on.

Did you cut pit props?

No, Hogan's did that. We just used to cut the firewood.

Was that an agreement or just how it happened?

It was just how it happened.

Did the Hogan's have a saw mill?

I don't know.

What about the road out here, when did that get sealed up?

I should know that too, but can't remember. I know there used to be a gap out here for about 1 km of dirt road, going back 45 years or more.

What was the road like when it was gravel?

Not real good, it was pretty rough. In the rains, it would run down the middle and cut it out.