

My Recollections



Nell Sidebottom

My Recollections

To my Dear Sons, Ron and Peter and their families

“ To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to be ever a child.

For what is the value of human life unless it is interwoven with past events by records of history.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC)

The Family Tree is a symbol to the ancestral lineage of every individual which can be traced back for many generations; ours could also if I had the ability for such a task.

Instead, I can only begin with the men and women who made their voyages from their native countries in the mid 1800's, uncertain to the obstacles that may hinder their long journey and who in later years became my Great Grandparents. I have only a glimpse into their lives, however within these pages I will endeavour to introduce them and their extended families to you.

After arriving on the shores of Victoria they established themselves within the environments of the coastal settlements. In time these intrepid folk favoured the wide open country which we now know as the Goulburn Valley, settling in the areas of Karimba, Tallygaroopna and Baulkamaugh.

It was in 1926 within the precincts of these localities I made my arrival and a place on the family Tree of the Harrison, Hehir, Montgomery and Marcus lineage.

I do not pretend to be a writer and hope you overlook and understand my frailty on this matter, yet it has been my goal to leave with you the background of the family you and yours are a part of. Also for you for you to have some inkling of the era I grew up in, my “play” times perhaps no different to your own, but progress over the decades has provided us to enjoy a more comfortable lifestyle of which we appreciate.

I have many to thank for their encouragement and assistance in the fulfilment of the book especially the efforts of – Tony, Ayela, Rosie and Leeane.

With love from Nell

My Recollections

Part 1

Many years have passed since my Great Grandparents Thomas Harrison and his wife Margaret Ann (nee English) with their family of young men and women wound their way from Mount Moriac to settle on their newly purchased property at Mundoona, a district South of Numurkah.

Passed also along with these enterprising pioneering couple are two generations of their family and as I attempt to record a little of their history in particular one daughter Lucy Jane who became my Grandmother only 4 of her Grandchildren dwell in this year of 2011 and all octogenarians.



Nell under the peppercorn trees.

My memories begin of my Grandmother Lucy Jane Hehir of her home and my unity with it and herself, as a tiny babe in 1926 within the arms of my Mother and continued throughout the years of her occupancy and life span.

I cannot recall when memories began to form but those that have are very clear pictures after many decades and it is those I wish to write, of her life style, her people, family and the fragments of the time which became woven into the ancestry of our own lives.

Her home at Bunbartha was of weatherboard construction situated on the Nathalia- Shepparton road, the iron gate slightly askew at the entrance to the track preceding down toward the house, where a row of old Peppercorn trees lined the front fence that surrounded a large yard, the spreading branches swept the soil around their gnarled ageing trunks while offering protection to the dwelling beyond. I fell from one of the peppercorn trees scarring my leg- reminding me to this day of early childhood.

The house consisted of four main rooms with a passage down the centre dividing them.

To enter, was to step through the wooden door from the veranda that sheltered the house front to then place ones foot onto the highly polished linoleum covering the passage floor, To the left was Gran's bedroom with a double bed, placed on it the deep cosy mattress which as children we loved to snuggle into, the bed head as the shorter foot end was of timber patterned with a decorative carved design this was also repeated on sections of the large wardrobe with a long mirror set between the two doors underneath the hanging space was a deep drawer that held many of her personal items, and one I remember well was the photograph album it was a link with members of her family living further away, a dressing table also with mirror was placed close to her bed on it her hair brush and comb along with lidded bowls containing what few treasures she had and some where within the room was that little cupboard necessary in her time of need that held the chamber pot ,the two windows were covered for privacy with Holland roll up blinds and pretty lace curtains.

This room always held an aura of being special as Gran's private domain.



To the right was the sitting room termed often as the parlour, furnished with a round table and comfortable chairs also a fashionable sideboard with pretty decorative china vaselike vessels and a lamp with a shade to match, the most prominent item was the piano with a seat holding sheets of music .In my vision I can still see the two little statues that was placed each end on top of the piano, one of a little girl looking demure as she held the skirt of her frock , the other was of a boy with a fish laying at his bare feet.

When Gran aged, unable to dwell in her home the house was left unattended possums entered and no doubt these remembered items were broken by their scampering feet.

The second bedroom also on the left of the passageway provided adequate requirements for her guests.

As with all homes the hub of family life is the dining room and this was so with Grans' many gatherings large and small enjoyed her hospitality within this room.

Surrounding the open fireplace was a solid decorative wooden structure with a mantle across the top on which held many items of importance for her use, under the window was the Singer sewing machine which Gran treadled to fashion lengths of material into clothing not only for her children but the ladies of the district Gran was a self taught dressmaker of which she was most accomplished, sewing added a little extra income for her, a sideboard contained the best crockery that was stored behind two carved doors on top was a cruet set and deep etched glass bowls also the most precious item her kerosene lamp with a glass flue, some times referred to as a chimney the glass was so fragile that often caused despair if broken and a replacement not at hand.

Standing across one corner was the solidly built gramophone cabinet with the player under a lift up lid, doors below opened to reveal the records plus other items.

I hold a picture in my mind of my brother Marcus when as a small boy 7years of age pressed tightly into the available space between cabinet and wall, deeply distressed when told of the accident of our favourite Uncle Alan our Dads brother had when working with his team of horses and as a result died of his injuries.

A long dining table and several chairs completed what I recall of this room.

To make way to the kitchen was to leave these main four rooms by stepping onto the back veranda, to the left tucked under the roof was this room added it would seem as an after thought, unlined with one small window, the black highly polished wood fuelled stove was situated in close proximity to the window appeared to a small child as rather large, there were two cupboards with perforated mesh ends holding necessary items for cooking I also see in memory an assortment of containers on the top and the open shelving of the tall dresser holding the row of cups hanging from hooks with plates standing up on the shelf above.

If water was connected inside from the rain water tank I cannot recall although I do remember a bucket placed on the floor in reaching distance to the stove the purpose of it may easily have been to catch the escaping drips from a tap.



**Nell on the back verandah
with door opening to the
kitchen**



There was no such item as a sink for washing up purposes but a kerosene tin cut and fashioned into the form of a W. My best way to describe it which was very ingenious the first section held the water for washing, the articles were then placed in the second half to drain, some pieces of timber would have been attached earlier to strengthen the tin this was set upon the table and when the work was completed the water would without doubt be emptied out onto a garden patch.

This room so rigorously simple was dark in winter and hot in summer where our Gran worked so laboriously to prepare her many meals. I see her now before my eyes especially on a Christmas Day when my Mother, Father, Marcus and I along with her Son William wife Lila and girls Lola and Yvonne perhaps Granddaughter Dorothy and husband were her guests.

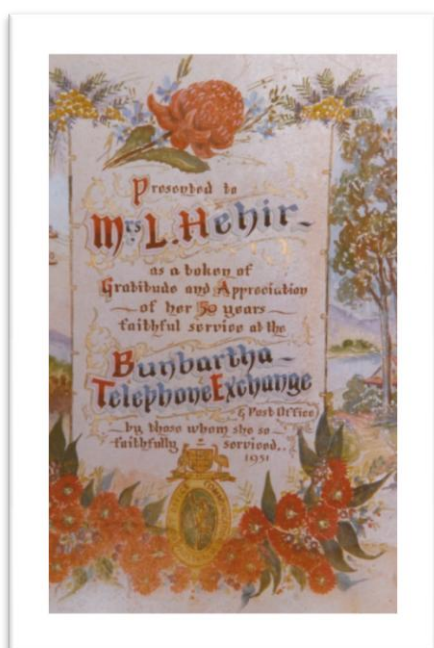
On arriving, Gran would be at the stove saucepans boiling away on top and the oven sizzling with the roasts and vegies. The day was hot and the fire in the stove well stoked with wood, Gran greeted us with her greying hair falling in clinging wet wisps down her hot moist face she never complained, her Christmas pudding held the good omens and the most sort after pieces of money, happiness for the children who found one in their plate disappointment for those who did not which would have indeed been rare.

On the opposite end of the veranda was the Post Office which Gran conducted having done so since 1901, as the years passed the telephone exchange was incorporated.

Mail came from Tallygaroopna by the contractor driving his horse and gig, he would have the mail sealed in bags, he then tipped the contents out on the counter to be sorted later and placed into the citizens allotted pigeon holes that was attached to the wall, prior to his departure.

Gran would give him the out going mail to take back to the Tallygaroopna PO. There were occasions he delivered bread or other food items if requested by residents of the district. As my cousins and I grew older we begged to help sort out the mail perhaps we got in the way at times yet Gran never stopped us, as with the exchange we felt so important when allowed to answer the calls and connect them as requested.

There were certain hours set for her work by the appropriate authorities but Gran and the district worked together she was always there when needed and if by chance a night call came she answered, carrying her lighted lamp out along the open veranda through all weather and when the many outside chores needed her attention her time was respected and understood if the call remained unattended.



Certificate of Appreciation for 50 year's service at the Bunbartha Telephone Exchange presented to Mrs Lucy Hehir (1951)



I remember the milking shed, the pig styes, the separator room, these buildings had stood for many decades constructed with slabs of timber cut from the trees off the property, laced together with wire, over the years many had moved leaving large gaps for the winter winds to blow through chilling the occupant while sitting on a stool extracting milk by hand from her patient cows, when completed the buckets of milk were carried quite a distance to be separated and the cream set to one side to be transported to a factory. The whey with the household waste added was referred to as slops and fed to the pigs, to be carried beyond the cow shed to the styes. Pigs are raucous, impatient and hard to handle when hungry Gran had a stout stick at hand that was used often on their strong backs or snouts as they jostled with each other for the food that was tipped over the fence into the wooden troughs that had been adzed hollow from the trunk of a tree the open ends enclosed with pieces of tin.

There may have been two or three pens used at times, one which may accommodate a Mother sow with her litter of piglets another for the middle growth youngsters and another for the boar and if in luck a mate.

Pens were constructed in similar style to the cow shed but with the walls shorter pigs with their natural activity to rout up the ground would dislodge and weaken the timber. Gran then had to repair the damage as a result in my memory I see many posts askew the portions plugged with sheets or part thereof with rusted roofing iron.

This was hard work for her when well into middle age but one of among many which she had come to grips with since widowed at a young age and in her perseverance to maintaining her independence she carried on alone with her young family. I smile to myself now as I recall her returning back to the house using a post a sentential of a fence long since fallen to scratch her back upon.

The garden in the front of her home was of several beds each edged with bricks one year I remember vividly the bed of "Russell Lupins" blooming in every shade of a rainbow I have often thought to also grow these plants enabling me to reach back connecting the years and perceiving through them the strength of the Lady who was my Grandmother.

One major problem she had was when heavy rains fell the flow from the house roof ran swiftly into the old corrugated iron tank as it filled the weakened parts were discovered as moisture began to trickle down the rungs from the small fissures or spurt from the larger holes Gran would be out in the rain attempting to stem the flow with pieces of soap or plugging the larger with cloth, saving water for her was of high priority.

In time to come irrigation channels criss-crossed through the district providing relief for the inhabitants of this area but for the present some where near on the property would be a dam scooped out to capture water falling from the heavens as required Gran with her buckets would carry it for her general use to the separator room, wash house and the garden. The tank water was too precious for such use spared only for cooking and drinking.

I peered into the tank once from the top step of a ladder and saw many foreign bodies floating around on the water, as it was "sight unseen" continuing to use the water was the least of the worries at the time this was all to be had, tanks were fitted with lids but in this case after long usage and through the elements of nature Grans old tank was the worst for wear and as she had managed all her life to make do with what she had this was what she did without question and her old tank stood for many years after the day I climbed the ladder as a youngster to peep over the rim into the unknown.

There had been another dwelling within the confines of this yard the remains still stood indicating a time long past one with a history we as children were not familiar with although we accepted its presence, we were to learn in time the importance it held in the lives of our Grandparents.





THE HARRISON'S JOURNEY

My Great Grandfather Thomas Harrison as legend is told was a Gentleman farmer when residing in England before he boarded a ship bringing him to Australia while making the journey he met a “little Irish maid” named Margaret Ann English and later on arrival as it would appear Geelong they married there and settled at Mount Moriac.

By working through the documents of the Family Registers’ of Births and Deaths and by calculating the years of their deaths and age at the time I have an indication of their years of Birth Thomas 1820 and Margaret 1834. The year of their arrival in Australia is unknown to me.

Thomas was 35 yrs and Margaret 21 yrs when their first child John William was born on the 1st April 1855 he passed away when 10 years of age on March 20th 1865.

Ten more children were to be born to the parents in order as listed are Hannah 17th August 1856, Francis James 23rd December 1859, Alice Margaret 22nd February 1861,

Thomas Henry 8th January 1864, Joseph 28th May 1866, John William 12th August 1868,

Lucy Jane 27th July 1870, George Newton 7th September 1872, Michael Redfern

12th August 1874 and Clara Henrietta 18th November 1877.

At some point of time Thomas and Margaret made the decision to move from Mount Moriac and take possession of their newly acclaimed property at Mundoona, a district South of Numurkah in the Goulburn Valley.

With stout hearts they loaded up the wagon, carts and sulky rounded up the horses and cows along with the fowls encased in a cage that was attached securely beneath one of the vehicles and so began their long trek into the unknown territory not knowing what was before them.

I recall my Gran telling while she was remembering the long trek and of the wagons piled high with all their belongings and we can only imagine the excitement and the adventures the younger children experienced as the long journey was underway the youngest not much more than a toddler the eldest perhaps 20 the planning to accommodate the sleeping arrangements preparing of meals and any one of the many activities carried out in the daily management of a large family leaves me in awe at the thought of it and admiration to the strength of the pioneers and in particular these intrepid folk

There is no doubt of the hardships that were confronted perhaps on a daily basis and the responsibilities of those in care of the smaller children, every day would begin with dismantling the camp plus preparing for the days requirements travelling was slow as the men encouraged the horses with their heavy loads drawn along the weary miles day after day through new tracks of land up and over hills crossing the watercourses and negotiating through the deep wheel tracks of those gone before them until at last reaching their destination where they settled on the little creek that meandered through the property namely called the 9 mile.

The land was thickly covered with tree’s which were cut to clear the land then when trimmed were used to build their home, the logs laid lengthways in the construction of the walls, with such a large family the kitchen was also with a equally sized fireplace at one end, in these early years all the meals would be cooked there the heavy iron pots and fountains hanging on chains or rods from the steel bar embedded into brick walls of the fireplace and always cooking utensils could be seen upon the hobs. Later the big cellar not far from the kitchen was constructed.

The work was hard and demanding as the land was cleared of the trees that were then laid to form fences known as “chock and log” limiting the size of the paddocks that were required for the stock but before crops could be planted in the larger areas the stumps had to be grubbed out and the undergrowth of the bush also cleared.

When the family had arrived at Mount Macedon Hannah met a young man named Tom Cleave leaving the family there to marry him her Father was reported too being very displeased with her with the result a break in the unity of the family remained so for decades and only recently a cousin mentioned "it was years before she was found" as a little girl I recall my Gran travelling to the Mount to holiday with her Sister and we sat enthralled as she spoke of the snow falling covering the branches of the big trees and garden beds, Hannah's husband was I believe a gardener.

Thomas junior told his Grand children as the trek was made he walked all the way along with his Father behind the cows and at night they would sleep under the trees he was a young boy of 12-13 years old, I would imagine his older sister and brother Alice and Francis would be required to drive some of the vehicles, and no doubt the younger boys Joseph and John were allotted tasks suitable to their abilities.

Their young lives were of difficult times without schooling and the work required to shape the property into a substantial farm meant everyone big and small to toil long hours, when the older boys moved on to work elsewhere is not known yet we know from the cards sent to their Mother over the years they travelled far and wide in search of employment.



Postcard from Jack (Bulumwaal)

John's {Jack} address can be found from Tasmania or the gold mines at Bulumwaal in Gippsland with a poignant message that he would not be home for Christmas as work is cutting out and he has to move on to find some elsewhere, Michael also sent his cards from New South Wales, Joseph made his way to the city where he married and settled there.

Francis remained in the district farming, Thomas continued to work on the home place passing it down to his daughter Janie and her husband, later on their son and family remained until his retirement.

Alice and Lucy Jane married. It is sad to note of the deaths of George Newton and Clara Henrietta in April and June dates of their departure, the year or ages were not recorded but we know they were young children and the cause was diphtheria.

This illness raged through the country at certain times, being very infectious and isolated from a Doctor many children within a family perished, heart breaking for the parents.

Thomas and Margaret had prospered since their meeting on the high seas as they both ventured forth searching for a new life in a distant country far from their homelands, they had raised a family to be proud of who also as the years past continued what their parents began in becoming notable and respected district citizens.

Thomas passed away on June 18th 1905 aged 84 years. Margaret Ann passed away on May 25th 1909 aged 75 years and 5 months they are both interred in the Numurkah Cemetery.



LUCY JANE AND MICHAEL AT BUNBARTHA

When Lucy Jane daughter of Thomas and Margaret Harrison married in the Bible Parsonage at Numurkah in 1887 at 17 years of age to Michael Randolft Hehir we gain insight into his family from his Birth Certificate. Michael was born in 1866 Manchester Road East Brighton to Martin and Ann Hehir, Ann's maiden name was spelt incorrectly on this document as Durick (one can almost hear the Irish brogue) 21 years later on his wedding day correctly as Durack both sets of parents had come from County Clare in Ireland their ages listed at Michaels birth as being Martin 30years Ann 27. Martins profession given as a Gardener, they had married in January 1858 at Brighton their children as issue being Margaret deceased, Bridget 6yrs11mts, John 5, Mary 2yrs11mts, Ann deceased Michael 9-9-1866(who became my Grandfather)following would be Patrick, Matthew and William.

SCHEDULE A.						SCHEDULE A.					
<i>BIRTHS in the District of Brighton</i>						<i>in the Colony of Victoria.</i>					
						<i>Registered by Samuel P. Smith</i>					
CHILD.		PARENTS.				INFORMANT.		WITNESSES.		REGISTRAR.	
When and where born.	Name and whether present or not.	Sex.	FATHER.	MOTHER.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	⁽¹⁾ Accoucheur. ⁽²⁾ Nurse by whom certified. And ⁽³⁾ Names of Occupiers or other Witnesses.	When registered and where.	Signature of Deputy R.			
ninth September			Mariner formerly at sea	Ann Kehier formerly at sea	Mariner formerly at sea	No. Accommodation	November 1866				
old	Michael	male	Gardener	Pearce	Father		at	Dumfries Street			
born about			20 years	27 years	Manchester Road						
not Brighton			John Mary	Eos Clare	East Brighton	M ^r s Bent	Brighton				
			Ireland	Ireland							

Michael Hehir's Birth Certificate

SCHEDULE D.				SCHEDULE D.						
is solemnized in the District of NUMUR KAH .				in the Colony of Victoria.						
Name and Surname of the Parties	Condition of the Parties. <small>Single or Widower, if a Widower of Wife, then of Name of former Wife or Widow.</small>	Children by such former Marriage		Birthplace	Rank or Profession.	Age.	Residence.		Parents.	
		Living.	Dead.				Present.	Usual.	Names. <small>(Mother's Maiden Name)</small>	Father's Rank or Profession
Michael Hehir	Bachelor	-	-	Baginlae	Form Laborer	21	Tamworth	Manston	Martha Hehir	Gardener
Lucy Jane Harrison	Spinster	-	-	16th Dorset	Lady	17	Tamworth	Mundon	Thomas Harrison	Tanner
Michael Hehir , being a Bible Christian Minister , on day of 11th 1887 at the Bible Christian Church, Tamworth , duly Michael Hehir Lucy Jane Harrison after Notice published, as by law required (and with the written consent of her father: day of July 1887 Signature of Minister, Michael Hehir					Marriage, By License , was solemnized between us { Michael Hehir according to the Rites of the Bible Christian Church { Lucy Jane Harrison Witnesses { William Howard John G. Lane					

Lucy Jane Harrison and Michael Hehir's Marriage Certificate (1887)

At the time of his marriage Michael was working as a farmer in the Mundoona district. When Lucy and Michael purchased one of the recently surveyed blocks at Bunbartha they were then a distance of approximately 5 miles from her parents.

The blocks ranged in size between 7 to 26 acres, this area had originally been marked for a public reserve in the plans set to the design of an English village, if finance was available it was possible to obtain a number and incorporate them into a larger substantial farm, I am unaware of the size the property was when first purchased but in the ensuing years it had been extended into approximately 100 acres.

Michael and Lucy built their home from the trees off the land the trunks were cut in lengths trimmed and adzed before setting them upright to form the walls into one long room, the gaps left between the slabs were plugged with a mixture of mud and sand there were two doors on either side opening off the kitchen one nearby to the square tank on the back wall, at the end of the kitchen was a large open fireplace and a big black stove on the side wall, I cannot recall where the windows may have been.

The slab walls on the inside were smoothed to a neater finish than those outside, these would have been covered with hessian bagging then covered with decorated wallpaper or pages from the local news paper adding to keeping the cold winds at bay also presenting a homely atmosphere, the sleeping area may have been divided with curtains as it appeared to me as a youngster to be of one room.

The largeness of the open fireplace gave warmth and comfort to the family and with the passing of the years and so many little ones there is no trouble to envisage them all gathered together in the glow from the big logs blazing within it the floor was of earth hardened to the texture of concrete from constant sweeping bringing it to almost shine.

Housewives in those times were very adaptable and creative Lucy would have fashioned rugs and mats for the little ones to rest upon from a length of hessian backed with any material at hand on the top side a patchwork of many coloured pieces of material from her scrap bag. The same was made for extra covers for the beds these were known as wagga's.

In my memory the wash house cum bathroom was but a leanto behind the separator room with the concrete troughs a tin bath and the copper although this may not have been so in their early years.

We shudder today when thinking of our pioneering families accepting bathing in such drafty places especially during the winter months, the copper lit earlier heating the water carried from the dam, the children then would be bathed first followed by the adults everyone scurrying through the cold to the warmth inside.

Daily sponges would be in a big tin tub I never knew of Gran having a "nice" bathroom.

The toilet a term not used then was the "out house" or "dunny" or perhaps other variations and quoted as being miles away from the house, I remember enduring similar situations albeit a little more update than the one that served Grans' purpose.

Her life had not been easy, as a young girl while milking a kick from a cow broke her right leg a summons was made to the Doctor in Numurkah to attend her which resulted in having the leg placed in rough splints she was to spend many long weeks under her Mothers care in great discomfort, eventually when the splints were removed it was to observe the leg had been set crooked and had stiffened she was to go through her life being hindered but never beaten in her determination to get on with her work

The first child born to Michael and Lucy was blind at birth and named John he died when 6mts old, Lucy was to give birth to 7 more little babes being Annie Margaret 1890, Thomas 1892, Martin 1894, Rose 1896, Mary 1898, William Howard 1901, and Alice 1903.





TRAGEDY ON LOCK GARRY

On Tuesday 30th January 1900 tragedy struck Lucy's Sister Alice and her family of 8, William Howard their husband and father had gone down to Lock Garry to seek out a friend he wished to contact on arriving the gentleman he sort had hired a boat and was fishing with friends he invited William to join them for a row on the water as they were returning to shore the boat tipped over spilling the occupants into water less than 2 chain from landing, of the 5 friends only two survived those who drowned were a Mr Twitt from Kaarimba, 18 year old F Mills Tallygaroopna and William Howard, the three drowned men were caught in the thick weeds in only 5-6 feet of water, between 150-200 people were on the bank when Senior Constable Hore dragged the Lock and recovered the bodies.

Shock waves spread through the Community Mr Twitt was 33years of age leaving a widow and 3 young children William was 44 who was reported as a thoroughly industrious much liked and respected resident within the Bunbartha Community. The district population rallied around the bereaved family with Michael and Lucy there for Alice.

They had both purchased their blocks at the one time being back to back with easy walking distance between them, Alice being 9 yrs the elder and with some of their children of similar age they were a great support for one another now Alice was alone.

The following year in March 1901 Lucy and Michael had another son who they named William Howard after their lost brother in law then 2 years later a daughter Alice, little did they know that in 12 months from her birth Lucy herself would be widowed at 33 years of age with 7 children ranging from 14 years to 12 months her husband had succumbed to a cancerous illness, knowing of his immediate departure he had asked his eldest son Thomas aged near 13 to take care of his Mother and the little ones a heavy load to place on one so young yet understandable when he would have been worried for their future without him. Michael was laid to rest in the Wunghnu Cemetery.

The two sisters now had between them fifteen children to support they faced a grim future which in those days did not include pensions or any form of social welfare support to assist them, although they had their ageing parents and adult brothers living in the district they were left to manage their daily lives within their own capabilities .

On the Shepparton Shire ratepayers Roll of 1899 the names of the occupants of the Bunbartha Village appear who became well known respected district identities, included in those whose names are familiar to us are Michael Hehir and William Howard. Sometime after the accident at Lock Garry when William was drowned his wife Alice and her Family left the district to reside in Melbourne.

As a young girl I remember seeing the last of the big poles standing unattached that had once formed a part of their home.

Although the distance between the two families were divided by many miles the bond remained strong and through our Mothers we country cousins grew to know their City relatives affectionately, I may add here Auntie Ettie's son Urwin lost his life during the second world war when the Ship he served, the HMAS Perth was sunk in the Sunda Strait by the Japanese in 1942.

The shell of Gran's old slab home stood against the elements for a decade after she moved nearby into her new home and it then became a playhouse for her Grand- children when left in her care, she allowed our cousin Gwen Broughton, Marcus and I to light a fire in the big stove to cook the mud cakes we had made and artistically decorated with the green and pink berries from the Peppercorn trees. Then one day Dad dismantled it piece by piece we as children were distressed our play house was no more.

But I wonder of Grans thoughts this had been her home built by her husband in 1887 it held so many memories that remained close to her heart she had brought her babies here after their birth to nurture them it was where she and Michael supported each other through the good and bad the happy and sad times, sheltered them through their life's storms and for Gran the darkest was when Michael died, 50 years had now passed since that sad time and the decision had been made for the remaining remnants to go.



When our Gran passed away in 1957 at the age of 87 years her name remained on the Shepparton Shire Ratepayers Roll as her husbands had been entered 70 long years before.

Quoting from the Bunbartha Centenary book Mr Bill Morvell wrote of Gran-

“If there was one person who embodied the spirit of the village, it was Lucy Jane Hehir overcoming adversity and hardship she set an example of service and devotion to the people of the village in those early days, which will be remembered for many generations to come.”

Lucy Hehir at Bunbartha circa 1948

AUNTIE MARY REMEMBERS

“Auntie Mary Grans’ daughter recalled her Mother gathering the wood from around the paddocks with the children helping her also of them carting water from the Lock in a cast which was mounted on a horse drawn sledge, one can only imagine the thoughts of this hard working Mother when as sometimes happened as they were returning home the cast tipped over spilling the contents and she would have to turn back to the pump to refill. Auntie never mentioned Gran ever taking her household washing to the Lock yet I have read of her neighbour having to do so when water was unavailable.

Grans days were full taking care of such a young family with only the help of the older children, the 3 little ones being Alice 1 William 3 and Mary 5, with the older ones at school perhaps under certain circumstances Annie or Tom may have been kept home to give some assistance.

Auntie often spoke of her Grandmother Margaret Harrison and of the old Homestead built beside the creek, the large kitchen where her Grandma pickled the onions and the bottles of jams and sauce stored on the rows of shelving in the big cellar her Mother didn't have a cellar and Auntie appeared to speak in awe of the delicacies to be seen there and remembered when elderly, she was fortunate in having a wonderful memory and for her to pass on to the next generation a little of the life she experienced in her youth, she remembered with affection walking through the paddocks from her Mothers home to visit Grandmother the fences being “chock and log” presented a challenge and enjoyment to walk along them as far as possible.

On one occasion her Mother had purchased from one of the Indian hawkers who travelled the district with their wares a small blue vase for her own Mothers birthday Auntie Mary and perhaps Rosie for company were chosen to deliver it, this little vase was held in high esteem it came back to Gran on her Mothers death ,then later many years later when Gran had also passed away the vase found its way into the home of a family contact though not a member, Auntie told me of my own Mothers distress when the situation became known to her but in time as the dust settles on such matters the vase was returned and given to Auntie Mary who remembered the day she was trusted with a special mission.

On her wishes prior to her passing at 99years Auntie requested her Granddaughter Rosemary to take care of this little antique into the 5th generation.”



I have an old battered and treasured album passed on to me by my Mother, in it are cards sent to Grandma Harrison from several of her Grandchildren also her sons. The few lines written give the reader an insight into their lives some lines are scrawled by an uneducated self taught hand but the words express their love for a Mother so far away, Annie with a beautiful hand addressed her card to Grandma from 'Fairfield' Bunbartha 1907, where I imagine she was employed she mentions the cropping and delivering the "lunches through the long prickly grass"

The Uncles Jack and Mick were bachelors and received a great deal of teasing from the nieces and nephews ,Cards are also there for Grans little daughters Mary ,Rosie and Alice from their Uncle Jack In his retired elderly age he visited his sister Lucy I have a snap of him nursing Ronnie as a small boy of 2years.

My Mother being the little one was allowed to use the blank cards and on one is written in a very young hand reads "From Mother to Alice for Xmas, I like you now dear Alice I must not growl at you" I wonder the story behind that message?

I recall my first visit to the city in 1942 with my Mother I was aged 16, we stayed with Mums niece Dorothy Maskell in Footscray at the time her husband Frank was serving in the Air Force beyond North Queensland.

We were invited to visit Uncle Joe and Aunt Lou who at the time were care-taking their sons' Percy's home who we were informed was away on business .

The home was double storied in a very affluent suburb I was wide eyed at the splendour that surrounded me and hoped as the meal prepared and served by the housekeeper my country manners rose to the occasion I need not have worried,

Uncle Joe was one of the young boys who took the long trek to Mundoona.

Within my possessions is a china bowl given to Mums brother Bill and wife Lila as a wedding gift in 1925 from Uncle Joe and Aunt Lou, I appreciate having been chosen by Auntie Lila to receive this bowl which in her words she knew I alone would care for it.

Auntie realized though not telling her health was failing and in her meticulous way began to distribute her many precious items, she was wisely preparing for her time to come. Her husband had passed away also their two daughters Lola and Yvonne several years before.

Compiling my knowledge of those who combined to make the family tree which I descend from has been most interesting, without research I drew mainly from memory of that which was told to me long ago of the Hehir family.

We know from Michaels Birth certificate the parents came from Ireland and later the Mother Ann died in 1882 I ponder the question if it were after her demise did the four brothers make their way to the Karrimba district where we know Michael worked. Matthew it appears was in New South Wales where he married Mary Bandfield they had a daughter Catherine known as Kate in her adulthood she married Thomas Hehir (our Gran's son), Patrick appears to speculate in leases and transfers of land his name is mentioned in the Titles office of April 1885 also June, July and August in the area's of Shepparton ,Kialla ,Caniambo ,and Pine Lodge, there is also a Mary Hehir Tallygaroopna 1882 research would be required to uncover her identity within the family, I was told Patrick died while staying with his Sister in law Lucy Jane the year and circumstances not known to me, William served with the AIF in France during the First World War there are cards in the old album sent to my Mother from his duties "Somewhere on foreign soils" also in a letter long lost, he wrote of the weak watery soup with maggots floating in it. How I wish today that letter had been preserved.

Another connection with Hehir family although a long shot in the arm so to speak is of Sir Thomas Bent he was as told a Grandfather to a cousin of a family member his Statue stood or stands in Brighton.

He served time as Premier of Victoria and as a Minister of the Railways prior to the turn of the 1899/1900 century, Sir Thomas was involved in the extension of country railways.

Bents Lookout at Mount Buffalo was named for him also the suburb of Bentleigh. In the Longwood Historical book is an article of the Centenary celebrations of the railway arriving there and the opening in 1873.

On loan was a Silver shovel used by Sir Thomas on that historic occasion One hundred years before. So special is this shovel it is kept in a glass case at the National Herbarium.

I also have an article from the RACV magazine that quotes a dark picture of Sir Thomas which concludes with "Bent by name and Bent by nature".

As oft times quoted "One can choose their friends not relations."





Jack Harrison



William, Alice & Mary Hehir



**Lucy Jane's Grandson-
Martin Hehir**



**Dorothy Tobin & Lucy
Jane (seated)**



Martin Hehir (1914-1918)



Alice Hehir



**R-L Alice with cousins- Ettie Bowan,
Maude Sandilands (nee Howards) and
sister in laws Vera (m. Jack) & Olga (m.
Newton)**



**Mary Broughton (Hehir)
90th Birthday**



Alice & Lucy Jane

My Recollections

Part 2



- WORRYING TIMES -

To make conjecture on how we might understand what Gran experienced as she confronted the future following the death of her husband alone with her 7 children and to claim so would be absurd.

Especially when one considers the complete difference in today's society and living conditions to that in which she had of a slab built home with earth flooring essentials taken for granted today to make housework less burdensome was not for her wash days for example would begin with lighting a fire under a copper more than likely placed out in the yard, or perhaps the buckets of water she had previously brought from Lock Garry were placed on the open fire in which to boil the clothes in, a scrubbing board and a bar of soap was required with plenty of arm action to remove the grime, such work may have continued for several hours, interrupted with other numerous chores to attend to in the daylight hours.

In the early years of settlement was to manage on resources available self-discipline and hard work, this life style not only for Gran but many families of that era except our Gran was alone.

In 1904 with the older children attending school Gran still had 3 little ones to care for while attending to her Post Office duties, I would imagine when at home the boys and girls big and small would be given jobs to help their busy Mother. And apart from Auntie Mary's recollections previously written there is little known to me of these early years, my Mother never spoke of them. And I never thought to ask.

Did the years of our forebears move along as swiftly as they appear to now, in this the twenty first Century?

Whether or no as time passes Gran's children grew and as each one completed their schooling they were to experience leaving from the security and care of their Mother to find employment I would imagine Thomas and later Martin found work on local farms, perhaps I could suggest their Uncles helped out as some owned properties in the district.

In a letter received from a son of Thomas he tells me his Father often spoke of milking the cows before going to school and again doing the same at night, on leaving school he drove a Baker's cart around the Dookie area delivering bread to G.J. Cole who was the founder of the dynasties we know so well, after his days' work Tom then returned home to again help with the milking and assist his Mother where he could.

Rose and Mary found domestic duties also within the area I am unaware of where Auntie Rosie was employed but Auntie Mary did tell me she was at Pinchbecks, they had a large holding and equally large house although about 3 mile from home without any form of transport she was unable to get there to see her Mother and was often very homesick, and we must remember they were mere children of about 14 years not only working but adjusting to the lifestyle so different from what they had known..



Uncle Bill (William) went to work in Tallygaroopna I cannot recall if within the grocery or butcher shop whichever he was to pursue these occupations throughout his life, he was a very jovial man and fond of whistling which created a pleasant atmosphere becoming his trademark as to his where about.

My Mother was to have advantages the older boys and girls were unable to she was boarded out in Shepparton to enable her to have 12 months extra tuition at the High School, with her schooling completed returned home to assist her Mother until her marriage.

Annie had married in 1909 to William Tobin eventually settling in Wunghnu where she became the sewing mistress at the school she was very gifted with needle and thread as were her Mother and mine. I have a sense of disappointment that some of the lovely work they created has been lost in the intervening years. Yet all is not so if through their knowledge and teaching to daughters and Grandchildren who continue to enjoy this age old craft.

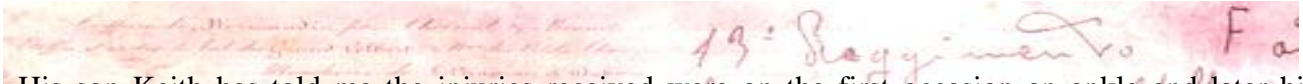
As these years unfolded within Gran's family so were the concerns of the district's community regarding the flooding of the Goulburn River and the unchecked waters of Loch Garry that was destroying many years of (sweat and toil). During these early floods some family homes built of mud brick were known to completely collapse leaving a pile of wire and a few sheets of roofing iron buried in a mound of sodden earth.

Not until 1898 with unemployment being a major problem throughout the State did the Government of the day decide to mitigate the problem by providing work for 200 men to construct levee banks at Loch Garry. With no mechanical aids in those times picks, shovels and wheelbarrows were their tools of trade, regrettably the soils used were not of good quality and with the big floods of 1905-06 and 09 caused them to fail against the surging waters.

I am not sure of Gran's position at these times whether her home and property was affected, the distance from the Loch was about 2kms although I have been told and it is recorded during the big flood of 1916 a local rowed his small boat almost to Tallygaroopna a distance of 8 klms from Bunbartha for supplies, so it could be assumed at this time at least some of her land to be inundated. I have read this flood, being more than half as great as that previously recorded in 1870. Is it then any wonder, those living through these times have spoken with reverence of the "big flood of 1916"?

Revival of the question of flood protection began once again especially when in 1917 another "super flood" occurred, still the authorities "to and fro'd". The country was in deep depression and also involved in World War I.

These were worrying times for Gran her son Martin at 22 years of age had enlisted in July 1915 and at this time as his Service record later revealed had already been in action and wounded. Martin's movements following his enlistment was swift within 3 months he was abroad the HMAT "Nester". Disembarkation details are unknown but he was taken on strength of the 6th Australian Infantry Battalion at Serapeum, Egypt, on 22 February 1916 then proceeded to France disembarked at Marseilles on 30th March 1916. When wounded in action he was evacuated to England entering the hospital at Harefield on 11th September 1916. He again rejoined his Battalion in France on the 15th May 1917, wounded again 10th August 1918, this time after arriving in England he was admitted to a hospital at Brighton.



His son Keith has told me the injuries received were on the first occasion an ankle and later his shoulder. This was to be his last duty, due to hostilities ceasing on the 11th of November. Four weeks later Martin boarded the HT “Saxon” for Australia arriving in Melbourne on 30th January 1919.

Discharged as medically unfit in March he was able to return home to his Mother, brothers and sisters waiting also would be Annie’s three children Thomas, Eileen and Dorothy. Their Father William Tobin was also overseas serving in the forces, he was to spend a long period of time as a prisoner having been captured by the German soldiers, with the war’s end he was released and returned home to his family.

In the Bunbartha School Centenary book Martin’s name is listed as a team member in the local cricket club which suggests in 1921 he remained close to home.

With the war now at an end the soldiers of the district gradually returned from their overseas duties to take up their lives again in the tranquillity of country well known to them. They had experienced a mix of situations during their time away, from seeing and visiting the historic sites of what all fondly called “the old country” to the horrors of the battlefields in France, of their experience’s they were rarely spoken of it was just something they were ordered to do. Only as time passed with the authors publishing books of the events during these years do we get the slightest glimpse of the circumstances in which they lived and fought.

Within a short time Gran’s young people began to marry and commence families of their own and noting the ages of four of my cousins reaching their 90th birthdays within a year or two of each other these times were both busy and interesting.

Listed in terms of position within the family not necessarily in order of marriage at this time, and having previously noted Annie and William Tobin. Are as follows:

Thomas and Kate nee Hehir first child Martin, in time to come Eileen, Molly, Tom, Jack and Les.

Martin married Freda Williams from Tallygaroopna naming their daughter Lucy after Martin’s Mother followed by Nancy, Dick, Eric, Ray and Keith.

Rose and Mary married brothers Richard and Robert Broughton who also served with the forces in France. Rose and Richard welcomed a son who was given his Father’s name but was always “young Dick” his sisters and brother were Sheila, Brian and Gwendoline.

Mary and Robert’s children, Joyce and Cyril he was always known as Pont how he came by that name and meaning of it, if known I have long forgotten.

One could be excused to assume that following the concerns throughout the years of war and domestic issues of the State regarding the constant flooding Gran would now be able to enjoy some peace and enjoy the newly arrived little ones.

Sadly this was not to be as Annie’s health began to fail she was diagnosed with cancer of the right kidney and peritoneum passing away after a two year struggle in the Mooroopna Base Hospital on December 3rd 1923 aged 33 years she was laid to rest in the Roman Catholic section at the Shepparton Cemetery.



The family were then living in Wunghnu and as William was unable to care for the children Gran took them into her home their ages being Tom 12, Eileen 10 and Dorothy 8. Their Gran would have known and understood the concerns they held with the loss of their Mother and separation from the Father, as her own had when their Father was no longer with them 20 years previously.

Gran had been endowed with a stout heart and didn't shrink from what she saw as her moral obligation to her daughter in taking on the rights of the children against the Catholic Church. It would seem a Priest from the local Church approached William offering to take Tom and educate him, it appears he was willing for them to do so but Gran was against this arrangement and in time when the Priest called many a heated discussion developed between them, the raised voices could be heard across the paddock to their Auntie Rose's house where Tom would run when the said caller was viewed to be approaching, remaining until the gentleman of the cloth was seen to depart.

The persistency continued and I have been told by Tom's daughter Nola of the desire of the Church to take the two girls also, this was too much for Rose's husband Dick "Richard Broughton" that he confronted the Priest warning him to move on unless he wished to have a shot of saltpetre in the seat of his trousers. No more intrusions into their lives were experienced again.

Tom was to spend the majority of his young life with his Auntie Rose, Uncle Dick and their family, he became the big brother loved and respected throughout his whole life. He continued his education at the Bunbartha School receiving a certificate from the Education Department for attending every day between the years of 1st January 1918 and December 1920 a record to be proud of.

Dark days descended once again upon Gran and her Motherless children, when in 1927 Eileen only 14 years of age died from what is believed to be kidney failure due to cancer. My Mother told me and she still living near home at the time, that whilst riding in a gig the horse shied resulting with Eileen being thrown out and a wheel passing over her, the length of time following this incident to her death is unknown.

Cousin Dick has mentioned more than once to me he remembers the little white coffin in Gran's sitting room waiting to be taken for burial to the Wunghnu Cemetery, he also recalls Eileen teaching him pieces of music on the piano she had learnt at her lessons. After her death this little room which had held so much pleasure for him as a 6 year old, he now was unable to enter.

I spoke with Auntie Mary of the gig incident and she couldn't remember hearing of it, at the time she was living at Avenel, her husband was the Postmaster there where he and his brother had lived before making their way to Bunbartha. Yet cousin Dick said only recently and he only weeks from his 90th birthday with excellent memory of past issues "well if Auntie Al said so that would be right."

Thoughts of compassion must be afforded for William Tobin the Father having survived his years of war as a prisoner with only the memories of his wife and little children the baby only 2 years old when he left them to serve his country, would have been his most sustaining possessions, now in 6 years since returning home he had lost his wife Annie and little daughter Eileen and unable to care for Tom and Dorothy meant being parted from them also.

Is it then any wonder this shattered man couldn't rise above his adversities to become the homeless alcoholic his son found many years later when he himself had become an adult, soldier and a Father.

Dorothy continued living with Gran taking part in the activities held within the district until her marriage to Frank Maskell residing in Shepparton to begin her married life, there be in time many moves. Frank served as a mechanic in the Air Force after his discharge he and Dorothy settled in Melbourne where he continued with his profession. Later a son was born to them whom they named Robert he was still a school boy in his early teens when his Mother died aged 47. Now as I write he lives in Perth W.A.

Tom married Kathleen Leversha yet always called 'Bay' they moved to a suburb in Melbourne living there when their daughter Nola was born prior to Tom joining the AIF and serving in the Pacific Islands. A son Donald was added to the family he was named after "our Don" the cricketer, who Bay insisted upon her Brother escorting her to the Melbourne Cricket Ground to watch him play in a test match although the arrival of her expectant baby was near, we have been told of the very anxious and nervous Uncle to be, when the said batsman was at the crease. Sadly Donald was killed in a motor accident at 19 years of age.

ROMANCE, MARRIAGE AND PARENTHOOD -



Official wedding photo of Stewart and Alice

Not until 1924 did the scheme get underway fulfilling the plan put forward to capture the waters of Loch Garry was accepted by the landholders and Government alike thus allowing the construction of the levee bank to begin. The span of time from the beginning of consultations with the Goulburn Shire Councils and State Government had been 33 years.

Immediately there began a hive of activity amongst the forest of trees within the centre of the dry lake bed when men with teams of horses began setting up camps, among them were two young men who in time were to become well known to the Hehir family. Their names were Stewart and Alan Montgomery from the district of Marungi situated 8 kms on the North side of Tallygaroopna.



They arrived with their teams and implements along with the horse drawn cabin that Stewart had built. Of a rectangular design mainly of timber walls with flaps of small sheets of corrugated tin on wooden frames hinged at the top which they substituted for windows when propped out on sturdy pieces of timber or a branch fallen from a tree, on the front wall sat the tin fireplace supported on the timber and steel frame of which the body of the cabin sat, two large iron wheels and a smaller one at the front which worked the turn table, coupled to bars were strong chains and fixtures to attach the horses to. Inside was ample room for all their requirements to make life comfortable protected from all weather under the curved corrugated iron roof how long the brothers worked on this project I am not sure of but I can imagine them on a winters' night with the fire burning and their evening meal sizzling in the camp ovens.

Snap taken recently shows some of the timber walls with gaping holes and being in its approximately 87th year, that is understandable.

Many decades have passed by since this Home on wheels was last used for the purpose in which it was built for, and the two young men it sheltered have long gone to their eternal rests. We can find the cabin today on the old home property at Marungi where it was built and where their parents settled in 1900.

A question I often ask myself is did Stewart and Alice Hehir know each other prior to his arrival at Bunbartha or did they meet if he called at the Post Office for expectant mail? Both being keen dancers and in their early twenties perhaps at a dance at Tallygaroopna or a football match there, Stewart captained the team at one time and Alan also was a team member. If Bunbartha had supported a team as it had in previous years there may well have been a little rivalry.

Interesting speculations and no one to enlighten me now. However I have snap shots of the horse teams at work on Lock Garry taken on my Mother's small box Brownie camera. Do they give an indication of a glimpse into their friendship? And for Alice a walk of a kilometre to watch a young man at work behind his team of horses enveloped in swirling clouds of dust to capture a special moment of their youthful lives might suggest so?



Stewart at work at Lock Garry with his team

Whichever way the paths weaved to their meeting in due course plans were being made for their wedding which was set for January 27th 1926. Prior to this day the family and friends of Alice and Stewart gathered at the home of her Mother on Wednesday the 20th for a gift evening in appreciation of her kindness and willing to give her services at what hour she was called upon in her duties of the Post Office and Telephone exchange.

In the Shepparton News following this evening is a report of the pleasant gathering and a list of those attending along with their given gifts.

The wedding was held in St Johns Church of England at Tallygaroopna West built in 1884, for more than twelve months the Parishioners worshiped without flooring or the walls being lined, as time passed and when sufficient money came to hand this was achieved and with the generosity of the members and district families, this little church became the centre of religious and social activity in the Bunbartha district. So it was here in this little country Church Alice and Stewart married surrounded and blest by their family and friends the service was officiated by the Reverent David Morse their attendants and witnesses were Thelma Williams and Alan Montgomery. Stewart's signature is small with the letters in more than one place detached while Alice has a firm hand their ages given are Stewart 24, Alice 22.

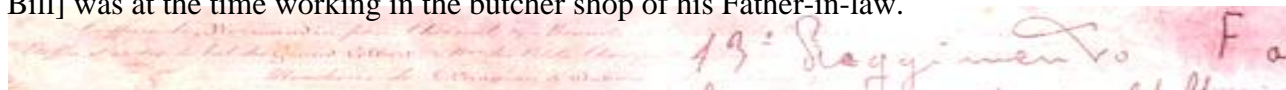
Following the reception at her Mother's home the young couple are photographed standing behind the car of a family friend which was to take them on the first stage to begin a new phrase of their lives. Alice is wearing a cloche hat with flowers around the brim a long sleeved full length coat covering her frock and her gloved hands clutches her handbag, Stewart in a three piece suit with the customary hat atop his head.

It was not until some months later that their official wedding photograph was taken at a Shepparton Studio in it as the fashion of the times the Gentleman sat with his bride standing by his side and this is so in the photograph I have. My Mother described her frock to me as of pale pink georgette, from the long hip length bodice fell a gathered skirt featuring an overlap of contrasting lace panels, the short sleeves also with bands of lace and a deep round neckline, she wore elbow length gloves also a short veil falling from a close fitting head piece.

I receive immense pleasure when looking on this photograph now, viewing my parents when in their youth Dad sitting on an ornate seat with his dark curly hair and handsome face and my Mother at his side petite and pretty.

There I see also a little of my Grand-daughters' features in her profile, or could it be my imagination wishing to bridge a span of ancestry, having not been blessed with a daughter to do so?

In preparing for the next season's crop Stewart had his team on the farm of McKenzies North of Tallygaroopna which adjoined the railway line that ran parallel to the Goulburn Valley Highway, there being an empty house on the property was to be their first home. Cousin Sheila told me as a small child she stayed there with Auntie Al and Uncle Stewart and would sit on the veranda step waiting for the team to come from their day's work as they passed by she would call to her Auntie the names of all the horses. When the cropping was completed a move was then made into the township of Tallygaroopna. Alice's brother William and his wife Lila also lived there, he [Uncle Bill] was at the time working in the butcher shop of his Father-in-law.



Both the Ladies were expecting their first babies and I can imagine the busy fingers of my Mother as she prepared the layette for her coming Babe. Lila's daughter arrived on the 23rd of November 1926 and named Lola Ann. And I followed in December on the 21st to be given the names Ellen Joan but always called Nell or Nellie after my Paternal Grandparent's little girl who had died at One year and 7 months in 1898.

Lola, as told me by my Mother was a happy laughing little babe while I was chubby cheeked and solemn, Mum always seemed to have a note of disappointment in her voice as she related this story to me and a snap of two little girls sitting on a rug together at 6 months of age portrays the truth of her tale. I wonder now reflecting back on snippets of conversations if there had been a touch of rivalry for my Mother to carry this feeling within her, if there had been a situation of this kind I doubt it was of Mum's action, but such occurrences if known are not to be written of here.

About this time my parents purchased a farm in what is now known as Labuan Road Marungi, almost back to back yet joining by a dividing fence to the property of Dad's parents George and Mary Montgomery where he and his brothers had spent their young lives.

Stewart had returned homeward, now with his wife and baby girl.



EARLY DAYS...



Alice



Stewart



St Johns Anglican Church
Tallygaroopna West



Alice & Stewart leaving for honeymoon



Nellie & cousin Lola Hehir

LABUAN ROAD MARUNGI

Taking possession of their newly purchased property would no doubt have been a very proud moment also they knew would demand stout hearts and years of toil to transform a large empty paddock into a productive farm.

The house had been recently built containing four main rooms with the kitchen encased under the back veranda that continued on around two sides of the house only the front section was floored, the remainder was dirt.



Stewart & Keith grooming a horse



Stewart at work



Stewart & Alice's first home



Stewart & Alice



Ready for a day's work

As work began with planning and building of sheds which was required for general running of the farm my Mother was again busy with her camera capturing these special moments, which now gives us a little insight into their daily lives. There are snaps of Dad with his offsider and friend Keith McPherson clipping the coat of a horse and viewing it now do I detect a little apprehensive glance within the eye. Was it due to a sharp tug of the clippers, or perhaps the approaching figure with camera in hand? Further away in the background posts can be seen suggesting fences dividing one large area into workable paddocks.

Another is of Dad and by his stance implies he to be cutting wood, in the distance is the skeleton framework of a shed this in time to be the dairy, or in terms used then the cow shed, this snap holds many visions, there is the cabin used before when it housed he and brother Alan at Loch Garry now for a time was Keith's sleeping quarters. Around this yard is a wire netting fence with a gate that gives the impression to have been "slapped up" in a hurry not quite complete to keep the Dog in as he is seen escaping through it.

We see the two horses waiting patiently for instructions from the driver who sits atop the high load of bags I imagine maybe fertiliser and seed to be sown for the fodder required for the future stock and planned dairy farm. I am secure in the arms of my Dad as he stands beside the loaded dray this must have been another milestone towards the development of their work.

These few snaps reflect the daily lives of our young family 82 years ago when hopes were high and future encouraging.

During the future years work must have kept the photographer occupied as there is a blank in the progression of the farm. Perhaps she used her talent recording the growth of her daughter as can be found amongst the snaps. Or perhaps the forthcoming event gave her less time for such exertion. On the 20th September 1928 my brother Stewart Marcus was born at the Numurkah Hospital, and not

until he was 2 years old do we have an image of him and this is a studio photograph of both he and I, both with fair curly hair and dressed in knitted garments from our Mother's hands.



**Stewart Marcus (Marcus, Age 2)
& Ellen Joan (Nell, Age 4)**

I was told in latter years Marcus wore a pale blue romper suit and my frock was white in a feather and fan pattern. There was never an enlargement or framed photo as seen in many family homes which suggests monies were not affluent at the time.

I recall Mum telling when she was alone milking the cows she would have to tie Marcus up to a post with a leg rope initially required to keep a cow standing still while in the bail otherwise he would run away.

Sometime during this period Mum had her appendicle operation I was staying with Auntie Mary Broughton at Bunbartha as I did when Marcus was born, then not 2 years old and when grizzling Uncle Bob asked "Well what's the matter with you?" to which I would reply "I;se shick Bob" at the time this must have been of some significance for it be repeated to me over many years.



I began school in 1932 during the year I developed diphtheria, an infectious disease which could be life threatening if neglected I was to spend some time in the infectious ward in the Mooroopna Base Hospital. The Dictionary explains the cause of this illness as the “formation of a false membrane in the air passages especially the throat.”

On the Doctor’s advice I was to have my tonsils removed as a precautionary measure against further problem so in 1933 I was again in hospital but I can’t remember where or the ice-cream and jelly that is prescribed for all who has this painful operation.

The following year an epidemic of diphtheria swept the countryside and I again was diagnosed along with my brother and cousins, this was stressful times for many families. I had always been unsure who passed the disease to whom and who entered hospital first, but sometime ago cousin Sheila, who was the elder, told me her version of how it was and I relate to that. It seems I caught the disease first and our parents attempting to safeguard Marcus took him out to Gran at Bunbartha she had her Grandson Raymond Hehir from NSW staying with her, within a few days Marcus, Ray, Sheila and Dick Broughton were all admitted into the infectious ward in the Mooroopna Hospital, the ward was set apart from the main section to reach it was by walking along the covered walkway until arriving at a gate here we were parted from our parents a nurse or Sister took over. We didn’t see our parents again until well enough to be discharged I doubt if any small child who has walked that long journey would forget the foreboding atmosphere that surrounded them.

There were so many children hospitalised the authorities were forced to erect a large marquee within the hospital grounds also many smaller children were placed two to a bed as this was in my case.

Some children were long term while others threw off the infection quickly. Dick was about 14 and one of the fortunate cousins he was a bit of a livewire and though not supposed to leave his bed he would slip from it to retrieve articles of other patients that had dropped to the floor a shout of an approaching Nurse would have him back where he was meant to be. The poor Nurses would be at the end of their tether by their patient’s calls of “my book is on the floor” they would threaten no more, Dick was doing them a service untold.

Ray living in Sydney and passed 80 still remembers paper fights attached to the rubber bands that just seem to appear in the ward, and the displeasure at not being allowed when leaving to take with him a favourite book he had been given and he being one of six in the years when the country was in depression, the gift of a book would have meant a great deal to him.

I cannot remember how long we remained in hospital or if Marcus and I were discharged at the same time my little bed mate was a “wetter” and we remained in sodden sheets longer than was healthy for us. When I was able to return home it was to be as a very sick little girl our Numurkah Doctor entered me into Mrs Michlejohns Hospital where I was to spend the next 6 weeks.

I had developed a bad cough which was suggested as being whooping cough an infectious disease, Doctor would not hear of it as it meant returning to Mooroopna from where I had come from, I was kept isolated in a little room painted blue, my heart was also a concern. During this time my favourite medicine was a spoon of Brandy with a touch of water and I often asked for more of that “stuff”. My night Nurse was often cross with me and declared more than once “there was to be no more of that nonsense” I have a notion there was a change of care but not clear of it, being so long ago.



Yet unmistakable is my vision is of the Doctor standing by the door to my room and making a cross on the framework as a reminder to himself that the next baby girl he had spare would be for my Mother communications broke down somewhere as I never got the Baby sister I had evidently requested.

Instead on the day I left tucked up on the back seat of Mr Norm Hickey's car a friend and neighbour of my parents I had a collection of 14 books with me. One I clearly remember was of white cats, one who wished to curl her hair for a party the following day set her hair in rags before going to bed, unable to sleep with them hurting her head she got up and cut them off we can imagine the result (in retrospect would be similar to the fashion of today) but if girls recall how uncomfortable to have heads dressed so we can understand poor cat's action, and the horror when she saw her mirrored reflection.



Nell's first school photo Marungi circa 1932. Nell is seated 4th from left.

Other events I recall of my childhood at Marungi is of one day while in class at school a neighbouring dog entered the lobby and stole my lunch from the school bag hanging on the peg. I was very upset so the teacher took me to his home and gave me lunch. I walked to school as far as I remember a distance of 1 km. Sometimes alone others with the family of the Every children who lived nearby.



Following rain, water covered a section of the road where it crossed the swamp. Dad constructed a raised track along one side to allow access, imagine his despair when overnight small boys of the Ford family had puddled it up.

And there was one time when I told the Fuzzard girls whose parents were family friends I was allowed to go home with them after school, they lived on the main road close to where my Grandparents also lived. Their Mother detected a flaw in my story and being wise had the girls take me home as our homes were almost back to back we walked through the paddocks.

Perhaps this indiscretion on my part resulted from the occasional times I was to go to my Grandparents and remain there until Mum or Dad called for me I would assume a note was presented to the teacher by me regarding this change in my routine. I remember one of the boys from the Burgess family who lived further away dinking me on his bike.

The old school has gone now although the school house remains amongst the scattered eucalypt trees where my Dad and his brothers, Uncles Bill, Alan and Colin and myself, Marcus and cousins Barry and Russell played their games. I cannot recall Marcus and I going to the school together yet pondering on age he may have for a short while.

The little settlement dates back to pre-1880 and comprised a hotel, store, post office as well as other substantial dwellings.

I can't remember there having been a Church at the Settlement yet I have read a Methodist Church stood there in the early days, I attended Sunday school which may have been conducted in the school as the Church of England held their services there. Mr Baydinhop drove his gig with a piebald horse from Katandra West to give the children their lessons. One Sunday morning I evidently arrived early finding no one there I didn't wait, but opened my mouth, filled my lungs and bawled loudly while running back home I believe I was heard the revertible mile away. As it transpired I was home long before the horse and gig was seen to be approaching, in my view I had gone to Sunday school and not going back.

In my memory I see a car in our yard I know it belonged to Dad yet I can't describe it yet the vision is there. Mum's camera must have been out of film as there to my knowledge is no record of it. I can't recall a ride in it yet I can remember being prepared to go somewhere, dark clouds appeared and anxious eyes scanned them for the threatening rain, roads were unsealed, dusty when dry, sticky and slippery when wet. Dad intimidated by the consequences resulted in our staying home. The vehicle was evidently sold long before our move back to Bunbartha as we were back to the horse and gig for many years.

When Mum drove alone with Marcus and I as little tots, to protect us from falling from the gig and no doubt take some worry off her Dad erected a wire netting enclosure around it, if the weather became unsavoury we would be settled on the floor comfortable and warm.



“When the cat’s away the mice do play”, also little children and on two occasions I vividly recall Marcus and I in BIG trouble for getting into mischief when our parents were otherwise occupied with their work which was most likely milking. We thought it fun as we lit sheets of paper from the fire in the kitchen stove and ran through the rooms to place them in the open fireplace in the sitting room. How long we “enjoyed” this game before being detected I am not sure but when smoke began curling skywards from the chimney where there should not be any, one of our Parents was quickly upon the scene to investigate, realisation as I write of the consequences of our action fills me with horror and there in the distant memory is of Marcus and I attempting to hide under a pile of papers in a tin bath that stood outdoors waiting for the punishment we had been threatened with.

At one other time we had evidently been told to keep away from the table drain which ran along the road fence but within our paddock in front of the house. There must have been one of many reasons why this request was made yet we ignored it much to our sorrow being severely punished to “teach us a lesson”. But what fun we had as we gathered the masses of frogs’ sperm as it came floating by on the water until caught up in the clumps of rushes along the channel banks.

Whether the punishment meted equalled the crime I am unsure but I cannot recall another that has imbued so deeply into my memory.



Stewart, Alice, Nellie & Marcus with cousin Ivy Montgomery

As mentioned previously I don’t remember Marcus beginning school yet we played the sequence out at home, with our two pet sheep as our white horses emulating teacher Miss Green arriving at school, there was one day when returning back to the house we tied them up at the gate before going indoors. Our Mother becoming aware of the distressed pleating rushed out with a knife in her hand to release the two choking “horses” and now in the depths of my recollections of this faraway happening I have in mind only one recovered from its terrible ordeal. There is a snap taken at the back of the house beside a rough structure supporting grapevines and it was along the path behind this that Mum ran in haste in her effort to rescue the lambs. Facing the camera is our family with Dad’s cousin Ivy Montgomery from “Killarney” at Tallygaroopna taken perhaps in 1932.

19: Reggiamento Fa



Lucy Jane

In the front garden Mum has captured her Mother against a background of shrubs and roses. She stands on a circular path surrounding a grassed area, dressed as if prepared for travelling, she is smartly attired in her overcoat which is topped with a fur collar a cloche hat sits firmly upon her head and within her hands are her gloves. As I gaze at this image of her I conjure up thoughts of her returning to her home at Bunbartha driving the horse and gig along the unmade roads which she was well equipped to do from her earliest of years.

There is another snap taken on this day with a little girl of perhaps four or five years at her side which was most likely one of her Granddaughters, her name was not recorded a common flaw which all photographers adhere to, however I recall being told it was Sheila Broughton, on this day company for Gran and for Sheila a visit to see her Auntie Alice.

On a day when Dad was down in a paddock slashing hay Mum, Marcus and I walked down with his afternoon Smoko, we waited while he completed the circuit he was working, arriving to where we stood he halted the horses and before he dismounted Mum who had brought her camera along lined Marcus and I up beside the outfit to record another event of life on their farm. I held the tucker bag (a most important item on a farm being a sugar bag folded in half with a piece of rope or leather handle, it became a carryall for the farmer). In it today was our mugs and

I am surmising now biscuits and cakes enough for all to enjoy our Smoko with Dad. Marcus is holding the billy of tea, he has his hand to his face and later said he was swatting a fly, he was rather adept at that, and there were always masses around.

The horses patiently stood arching their necks to ease tired muscles and the end of their day's work still many hours away. The season appears to have been substantial, the next job for horse and man would be to rake up the cut fodder load it upon the cart to be moved to a shed then stacked for the time when it was needed. When viewing a snap such as this taken on only a portion of daily life many years ago brings to the present day the aspects of those times.



Taking smoko to Dad



Another snap is of the house taken from the road looks through the orange grove which had recently been cleared of any grasses that may have set root there, the house is framed with greenery, Marcus and I stand either side of the front doorway I am holding our fluffy white cat. To the viewer this image indicates the work and pride of the occupants, our Parents. I wonder now were they recorded at a time when thoughts of leaving appeared inevitable?

To move onto their own property they would have been filled with expectations of bright prospects, resulting from the visions held to turn this bare acreage into a productive unit and this they did but with an overhead debt and with uneasy times of the depression they had to contend with and darker prospects looming on the horizon regrettably the decision had to be made to “clean the slate” so to speak and begin again.

The move was made in 1935 only 8 years after their occupation.



Stewart and Alice's Home-Marungi

We would miss the walks through the paddocks to visit Dad's parents who lived nearby, to do so following one behind the other along the channel bank until reaching the regulator that directed the flow of water where we crossed over the narrow foot bridge before climbing through a wire fence into Grandad's bush paddock, reflecting on him now I realise he was a man close to nature as there remains to this day 110 years on the acres of native habitat he wished to leave as it was. These visits were always such happy occasions especially for little children and long remembered.

Although at 8 years old I can only recall one incident of our move and that being with Dad driving cattle along a road, the journey was long and tiring with little conversation we were in the light dray that is captured in one of the snaps later taken at our Bunbartha home. I cannot recall a dog being with us perhaps I was taken along to do the chasing if needed. I am now aware that our destination was to Mum's Mother's farm at Bunbartha where we were to stay for the present time.

Dickie Broughton has told me that when he became a member of the Bunbartha Young Farmers Dad gave him a bull calf, Dick rode his bike out to Marungi to take possession of it, the calf was so quiet it walked alongside him on his way back home he spoke very proudly of owning the calf and of Dad's gift and this memory of his young life was shared with me when nearing his long stay upon his earthly home.

I never heard tell from either of my Parents if the move was ever regretted however they must have wondered when, as time passed the Water Commission, whom the property was purchased from, waived the debts on many such blocks as theirs, the remaining recipients continued to "do well" The years spent on their property had been fraught with many difficulty's to overcome, hard work was second nature to both which they wouldn't shirk and that is evidence in the snapshots we look upon , what must have taken toll on their resources was the downturn in the price of the dairying industry plus a mouse plague, for their work there was no income and debts to be attended to .My parents were proud and honest and to owe money was an item unheard of , the decision to sell and start again was to them the only alternative.

Such are the chances taken when focussing on decisions as to the benefits of one's self and the future of their family.



Without any definite plans as to where to begin again the decision was made to move out to Bunbartha where we settled in with Grandma Hehir.
Mum was back home again only 9 years after her leaving to be married.

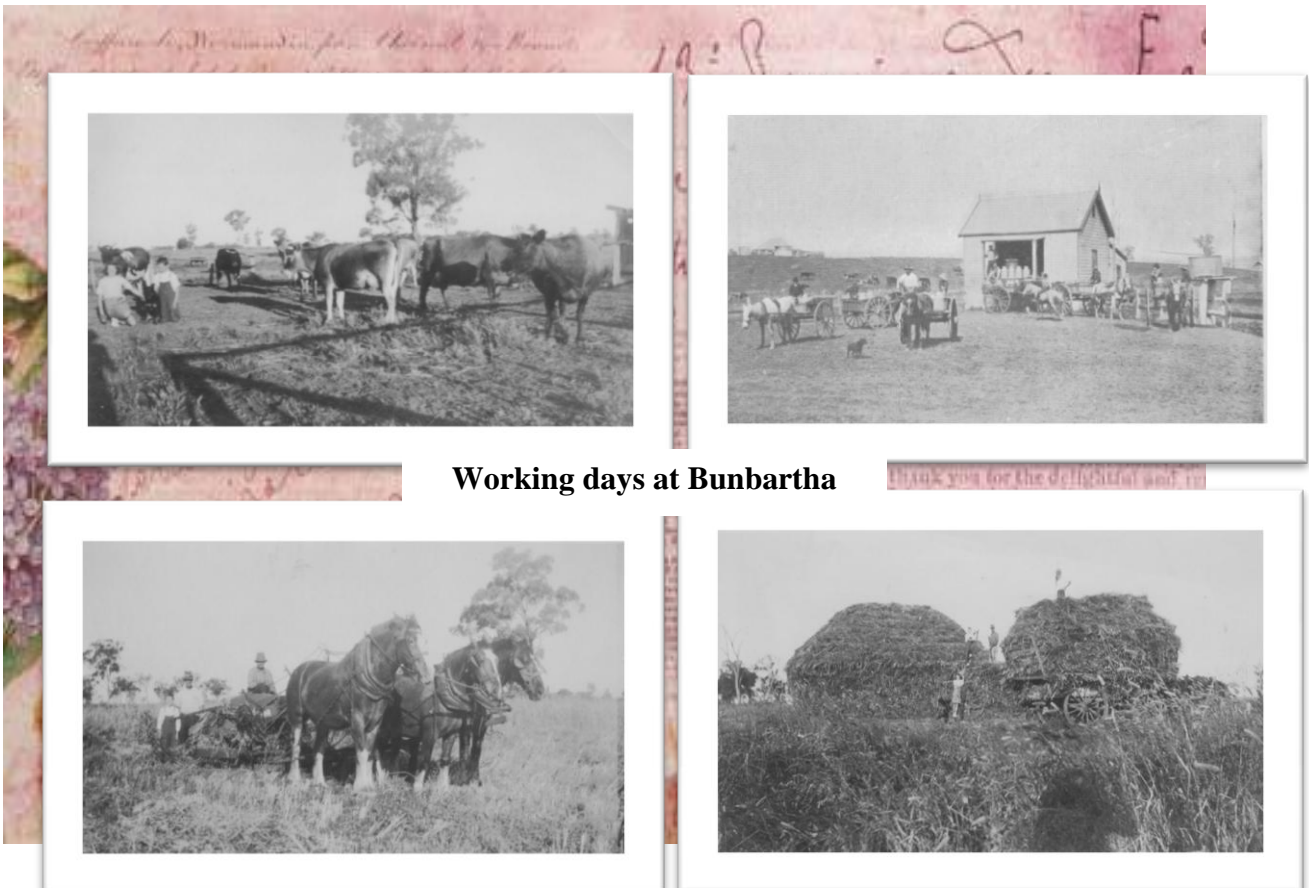
Marcus and I were enrolled into the Bunbartha School walking the same track formed by Gran's children many years before, the wheels of time were turning a full circle we had for company our cousins Brian, Sheila and Gwen Broughton, their mother Rose being an elder sister to our Mother.

When a 20 acre block was purchased from Mr Young a local resident also a family friend residing less than a mile away, Mum's Mother gave her another 20 from the property she owned next to it bringing the acreage up to 40 which made a sizable working farm at that particular time of resettlement, the next decision to be made was to acquire a house for us and when a building became available for removal at Lemnos it was purchased and transported onto the block, set into position for our future home.

It was of four main rooms with a veranda along the front, timber clad with an iron roof, the floor plan consisted of the main bedroom which opened off the sitting room with an open fireplace and a door leading onto the veranda the other rooms were divided with a passage one used for a bedroom for Marcus and I which we shared for many years until such a time finance allowed alterations, the other

the kitchen with the wood stove and always sitting on the hob was the cast iron water fountain complete with a tap, hot water was always available as required. The back door led outside to where in time paths were laid to the wash house and a small gate opened onto the backyard that housed the sheds, being the core of running a farm.

The first shed was erected from trees cut into slabs set upright then the roof thatched with straw, partitioned into two being for the gig, feed for the stock and whatever paraphernalia needing protection. The remaining section was the cow shed with provision for the milking of two cows at the same time, gradually as needed other buildings were added such as a separator room, fowl sheds, sties for the pigs and in years to come a small garage.



Working days at Bunbartha

Unlike most city dwellers who sell and move their weekly income is assured if they happen to be on a pay packet, our parents had to make improvements and at the same time earn an income which meant Dad had to seek work away from the farm, combining both would have been demanding with many sacrifices to be made. When this occurred it was left to Mum to hand milk the cows alone as well as separate, attend to feeding the hungry stock. And in the middle of this work supervise her two children, making sure they left for school on time and suitably dressed.

As we grew older we were called upon to help, there were many chores we could assist with after school, although unlike some youngsters we were never required to milk before attending school. I remember well of disliking the heat when milking, the flies the misjudgement of the milk from teat to bucket that cumulated onto the bag across the knees, used for this purpose to save our clothing but in time the bag became a horrid smelly sticky mess and not forgetting the often fidgety cow who became impatient with the length of time a learner had her stand or the number of flies annoying her.



She had her own way of displaying her disapproval one may be to switch her not so clean tail that was meant to be secure on the nail attached to the rail preventing such action across one's head or to relieve herself, had she been relishing the fresh green summer fodder the milker with anticipation and speed had to make a grab for the cut down kerosene bucket nearby then by placing it where it was most needed thus saving an unpleasant situation, cleanliness in the shed was most important the cows' udders were washed thoroughly before sitting down on the stool or in our shed a box, perhaps to ease the discomfort of a long sit a folded bag was placed on it for a little comfort.

In these early years the floors of a cow shed was dirt hardened by constant wetting and sweeping, the farmers best used item was the hessian bag and it was used here for the cow to stand upon while in the bail, should an accident occur it made the cleaning up lighter work, when I reached my teens my views hadn't, I voiced my thoughts to Dad and his reply was "But the cream tastes good doesn't it?" I had to agree it did and I suppose if I enjoyed it so I had the right to earn it.

The farm was extended to more acreage which meant we could run more cows' longer milking time and more cream but one can only partake of so much. Perhaps the bank balance showed a little extra profit no doubt it would have been welcome.

Marcus would do the separating, singing and yodelling to the rhythm of the turning handle, the operator had to be consistent for the machine to act effectively the speed of the handle fast or slow controlled the quality of the cream as it was withdrawn from the milk if it were either too thin or too thick either way effected the price received from the butter factory of Numurkah or Shepparton a truck called from the factories on alternate weeks to collect the filled cans and leave those taken earlier, the farmer's name and address was stamped on the lid for identification.

Another chore not graciously accepted was the washing of the separator with all the intricate pieces that fitted together to separate the cream from the milk, every piece had to be dismantled scrubbed thoroughly, cleanliness was of the utmost importance, the sun did the drying process. This was a most ingenious invention and having our little machine was immense value to the running of the farm. The remains of the milk separated is called whey which was fed either to the young calves or pigs, nothing is wasted on a farm if profit is to be made.

In years gone by the farmer didn't have the benefit of a vehicle arriving to collect his cream, instead he yoked his horse and dray loaded the cans then drove to the nearest railway station some miles away from there to be taken by train to a factory elsewhere. Can you imagine the arrival of the farmers, the greetings and general conversation as they awaited the train? Many a yarn and the exchange of the latest news would have gone the rounds.

Within a few years it became one of my farm jobs to help Dad with the feeding of little calves when taken from their Mothers, this was an inevitable task they were nervous and frightened, referred to as stubborn when objecting to their heads being lowered into a bucket and not believing the finger offered was a good substitute to mother's teat, Dad lacked patience and often Baby was left with milk dripping off its coat with the passing remark "If you don't take it on the inside then have it on the out" I would go up to the house complaining bitterly to Mum vowing I wasn't assisting Dad again, of course I had to, it would only take a day or two for the calves to learn then all was well and not all acted in the same manner.



When the extra land was purchased we owned a little piece of Bunbartha history.

During the early years of planning the settlement in 1877 a village was to stand here taking in the whole of the triangular land formed by the crossing of the Shepparton, Nathalia, Mundoona and Burgess Roads. Our home was situated on Burgess Road and with the inclusion of the extra land, brought the boundary fence along the Shepparton and Nathalia Roads and in doing so what might have been long ago a row of little cottages was now part of our farm. The planning of these little settlements being in close proximity to another was an idea brought to Victoria by Governor La Trobe son of a Moravian missionary who had been interested in village settlements in Europe and in doing so offered an opportunity for those on limited finance to have their independence. It is to be remembered those with backing in finance secured large areas of land, often beyond their capabilities and in due course many lost all.

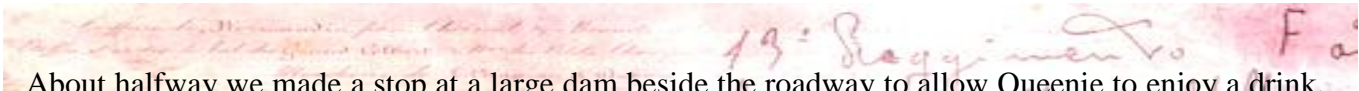
An early settler Mr Mannion built a store where the fenced off reserve is today, when we were children this was open land and we played and fossicked under the trees for treasures there on many occasions, often people would off load their unwanted articles which we found great pickings for our cubby house.

There was one time I remember well and the disappointment felt when our friends Betty and Gladys Tremellen also neighbours and school mates arrived before Marcus and I, they were jubilant with their finds, this particular morning the girls found jewellery, handfuls of beads, necklaces amongst other items. It was to quote "the early bird gets the worm". The girls being early got the first pick of the treasures, but after further searching we managed to locate some things to take home.

Another little story is of a store built further along the Mundoona Road by Mr and Mrs Longstaff for the settlers of the area, this following the closure of Mannion's store. The store at times was managed by their 14 year old son John, who was later to become Sir John Longstaff one of Australia's greatest painters. It is reputed that if he was unable to remember the name of a customer who wished for credit he would sketch their faces instead. This establishment had been quite close to where I grew up albeit a half a century earlier.

Bunbartha had more than one Hotel in the early years; one was on the site where the Methodist Church stood when I was attending Sunday school. Now the Church has also gone a number of years ago and a private home occupies this piece of land which holds so much history in the development of an area that was once home. When in 1894 the Hotel was sold, renovated and advertised as having "Superior Accommodation and Best of Liquors" it was hoped to be a favourite house of call. But within a few years the Hotel was burnt down and Bunbartha became a "DRY AREA", remaining so today.

At this period of time we owned a pretty little light brown filly she was quiet and gentle, her requirement to our lives was to draw the gig whenever it was necessary for either Parent to have need of transport. She was bestowed with the name of "Queenie". I remember the many times she was driven out to Marungi to visit Dad's parents or to a football match in Tallygaroopna or as sometimes occurred to shop there these outings were very special yet there is one in particular when Mum with Marcus and I drove into Shepparton perhaps it was during school holidays as we never had a day from attending unless ill.



About halfway we made a stop at a large dam beside the roadway to allow Queenie to enjoy a drink, these dams were standard requirements for those travelling with stock, this one was in front of Breens' property their home was placed well back off the road and from an early age I admired the rambling old home with a veranda enclosing it. Breens were very early settlers so I imagined the house had stood for many long years and I doubt if there had ever been a spot of paint applied to it and even in those horse and gig days I can't recall a garden surrounding it.

Arriving in Shepparton we first passed the Sale Yards then situated on the edge of town in Wyndham Street near if not on the land where the RSL is today in 2010, further along also on the right was a large wood yard, then the Queens Gardens as they are today, in the centre of them was a large cage holding several monkeys and I think at one time before being removed there were birds, Marcus and I begged to stop being anxious for a closer observation of these interesting animals but we were told that would come later the horse and gig had to be attended to first, as the yard where Mum wished to go was at the rear of a hotel we continued on towards the premises whose name escapes me. I imagine it would have been situated in the vicinity of where the RACV is now. I can't recall in which direction we entered the yard or if Mum released Queenie or left her in the care of a person in charge of the yard as I imagine there would have been in those busy times of patrons travelling with horses.

Before entering the street we were ushered to a bathroom for a much needed tidy-up after such a long drive, Mum would remove the dust coat she had worn to protect her frock, as I now wander in memory of a day long ago I see it of being white with purple spots over it.

Mum would then commence to do her shopping McLennans was a shop where we stopped as Mum was interested in sewing there was bound to be some much needed items to purchase in this bright extensive building and the shop assistant I see now helping my Mother was Miss Lesley, we may have walked to the show room at the further end of the shop, the floor was elevated and spacious. There was no running around or touching articles in reach we stood quietly waiting, I don't know of what Marcus' thoughts were while there, mine was in awe of being surrounded with such a lovely array of all items girls and ladies admire.

If we walked a little further along the footpath we came to Williams Shoe Store and there enclosed in a show case was a replica of a little boot maker, he sat on a little stool with a hammer in his hand mending the sole of the boot he had placed on the last before him. This busy little man spent a lifetime working on that boot while giving such pleasure to the generations of children who pressed their faces to the glass to watch him as Marcus and I most likely did. And if we entered the shop to be fitted for new shoes then our day was made.

And I on such a time would not have imagined that in future years I might kneel on the floor of this same shop in front of a little child and fit a shoe to their tiny feet, the pleasure they received at owning a pair of brand new shoes was equal to that I had long ago.

There are many shops remembered as I write O'Gilpins is one being a haberdashery store, it was long with counters down the sides and in the centre forming two isles, the wooden floor creaked as it was walked upon and I felt the shop dark and unfriendly so unlike the first place Mum had stopped at.



We would then make our way to the grocers' where the office was situated high above the floor, when the customer had completed their purchases the sales person would then place the docket and required monies in a container clip it onto an overhead wire give it a tug and it would spin across to the office where an attendant checked the contents returning the container back to the counter with change if any.

In those far away times children with their parents would receive a little bag of lollies. If not they would more than likely be placed in the box with the groceries Mum had purchased.

By now it would be time to consider returning home. I can't remember where we ate our lunch perhaps in the Queens Garden and if so Mum would have kept her earlier promise that we see the monkeys as was our request when arriving and being an energetic pair we could enjoy a run on the lawn surrounding the garden beds.

This is another memory of being out in the horse and gig yet there were many, perhaps it was

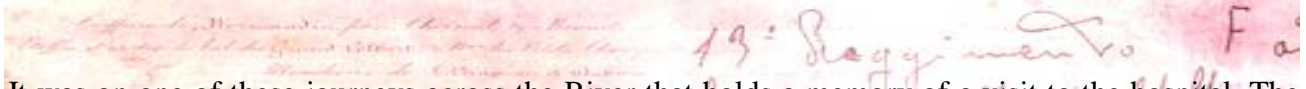


necessary to go further to Mooroopna to do so we had to cross the Goulburn River at the end of Fryers Street over the long bridge spanning it, once over the horse was guided off the road down to the track that meandered between the trees only returning to the road when a deep water course cut across our path, this may have been repeated more than once until reaching our destination.

As children when requesting for something Mum thought unaffordable she would reply "When my ship comes in" and on these journeys Marcus and I would search longingly upon the waters of the river for the ship that never came.

At this time of the mid 1930s Mum's brother Uncle Bill and Auntie Lila with their two girls Lola and Yvonne lived in Mooroopna owning a shop in the main street, we would visit them if it was necessary for our Parents to be there.

From our life on a small farm far from a town to that of walking into a shop with shelves holding large jars filled with lollies and the glass topped counters displaying rows of decorated cakes was in our minds comparable to Hansel and Gretel of the fairytale story often read to us, when lost in the forest they found the little cottage of gingerbread adorned with an array of coloured sweets, being hungry did they wonder as they gazed upon it that from "morning, noon and night we could satisfy our appetite." We secretly envied our cousins as we imagined them dipping their fingers into a jar whenever they desired to do so.



It was on one of these journeys across the River that holds a memory of a visit to the hospital. The Base Hospital was built there many years ago serving communities covering a large area. Perhaps our long drive was initially to visit an ill family member being a patient there and there is such a memory, I was a little girl when with my Mother holding my hand we entered a very long ward with rows of beds lining either side, we approached one bed in which a gentleman was laying, on greeting him he and my Mother conversed with each other I can't remember being told at the time who the patient was although I have no doubt I was, this vision has remained with me as if it was yesterday, at the time I was 6 years old. As I attempt to put it into perspective I now know Mum was visiting her Brother Martin who was affectionately called Mat, he had been ill for some time at his home in New South Wales before returning back to his family and loved ones, to enter the hospital. Was my Mother saying farewell to the brother being 10 years older than her when their Father died and had taken care of his baby sister for his busy Mother? Whenever his name was mentioned by Mum there was always a tone of reverence in her comment. Martin passed in February 1932 aged 38 years, leaving his wife Freda and 6 small children aged between 14 years and 9 months.

The memory of when his Father Michael died leaving a young Mother with her children of similar age must have touched the hearts of all who knew the family, Martin was buried in the Mooroopna Cemetery, after which Auntie Freda gathered her children to her and returned to her home in NSW. Due to lack of finance at the time his grave has until now remained unmarked and as I write Keith the baby who never knew his father and brother Ray then 6 are the only remaining children with us and at this point in time a memorable stone to honour their Dad is being placed upon the gravesite.

As the years passed the house yard was sheltered by a hedge of Boobyalla trees planted for their durability to withstand dry harsh conditions as well as being fast growing while keeping the foliage compact and green. As they grew Dad would be continually trimming in order to contain a neat and serviceable height, the flower was white and rather tiny, which when treaded onto a thin reed made pretty necklaces.

The feature from the front yard was a large circular flower bed surrounded by a path with lawn on either side, I visualise one season when this bed was extra colourful with a variety of plants blooming in the Spring, Mum picked and boxed a lovely arrangement for a Lady who had recently arrived in the district then without a garden, perhaps she was remembering her own early days when beginning a new home with a blank outlook. Continuing on toward the small front gate which accessed the road that was our property's frontage onto Burgess Road was along a path dividing the orchard.

When Marcus grew older he became interested in growing vegetables and I recall a time when he had success with small white turnips they were round sweet and juicy, one morning when leaving for school I pulled some sharing the spoils with Gladys and Betty, Marcus wasn't at all pleased, I wonder if he were here today would he also remember and of the days long before electricity came through the district, listening to the wireless and the aftermath of spooky stories. The set was housed in the sitting room with the speaker attached to a long lead located in the kitchen which was now situated on one end of the back veranda this meant whenever the set was to be switched on or off someone was required to go out onto the veranda up a step into the main rooms without adequate lighting. There was one play we all enjoyed, even though it was really **spooky**; called "Frankenstein". Once finished, and to save battery power Marcus and I were requested to switch the set off.



There would be much shuffling and thumping of feet accompanied by squeals as we ventured forth to do our parents' bidding. They must have smiled at our anxious moments but to us those nasties lurked in every shadow.

Then came the time for bed and the trek to the lavatory which was out in the back yard behind the big wood pile Marcus would make all manner of queer noises which not only frightened me but himself as well then there would be a rush to the safety of the house. The lav' was a "drop hole" and very deep, one time Marcus dangled himself down into the hole his only support being his two elbows on the bench seat. It doesn't pay to think what would have been his fate "if".

Although in later years we learnt of a young cousin in Rand NSW had done so he was fortunate some one was available to rescue him, although I doubt if it was a pit, if so certainly not to Dad's standard. Imagine the clean up!! And the fear in a Mothers' heart when they learnt what their young sons get up to.

As children we had a free and happy life I guess with a little mischief along the way. It is remarkable I cannot remember those incidents clearly to record them here perhaps it is just as well.

We could wander the country roads with our friends without fear of the dangers that are abroad today, we made our own games, perhaps a couple of jam tins on the end of a piece of rope would suffice as stilts, building cubby houses or billy carts with what material found around the farm.

The game of marbles or hop scotch on an area swept of hazards could occupy us at any time. Rabbiting also was such fun with our cousins who had ferrets, with good results we were assured of a very tasty meal to come. And there was yabbing, I doubt if there is a child growing up in the country who does not remember the pleasure they had when gathering together the requirements needed for a morning down at the dam or similar water hole to catch yabbies. Our Mother's meat safe would be raided for the pieces of meat required then we needed bits of string a few sticks, buckets and Mum's colander, if this was unavailable we had to fashion something favourable from a piece of fine wire netting attached to a circle of strong fencing wire.

When the lines of sticks with string and meat were secured along the waters edge we then sat back on our heels waiting for the tug on a line this we hoped was the elusive quarry we had planned to catch, gently the line was brought towards the surface and the long fine feelers of a yabby began to appear all was quiet as the scoop was both gently yet quickly thrust under the catch to be dropped into the bucket of water standing nearby.

Excitement grew as the morning passed and our buckets filled with the yabby thrashing in turmoil of his confined and crowded space luck may not have always been on our side often the meat was taken by a crafty crab who knew how to nibble the bait without giving the fisher an indication he was no doubt enjoying a meal supplied for him. We trudged back home delighted with a profitable catch knowing we would enjoy a feast, a fire was lit in the yard with a kerosene tin of water placed on it to boil when ready the yabbies were tipped in to cook, shelled, sprinkled with salt, pepper and a touch of vinegar our plate of yabby tails were "fit for a King".



I remember when a mouse plague crossed through the paddocks Marcus and I with the dog trailing along with us would take a couple of kerosene buckets of water, jam tins and a stout stick for our waddy and set off to eliminate the marauding enemy, the dog on the scent of the foe knew instinctively he would enjoy the action about to take place, with a tin of water poured down a hole the mice would quickly emerge the dog pounced with alacrity on his foe with Marcus and I bringing our weapons down on the fleeing marsupials, there was no shortage of the enemy so our morning was spent until we were satisfied with the catch or heard the call from our Mother to return home for dinner.

Mum told the story, when living out at Marungi the mice entered the house Marcus then a very little boy would sit on the floor allowing them to run up one leg of his trousers and out the other without any fear at all.



Bridge over the Lock Garry spillway

When the heavy rains flooded the rivers across the Goulburn Valley the waters gradually entered Loch Garry. Bunbartha district was now protected from flooding by the levee banks built some years earlier, but as the volume increased concern did likewise for fear of a weakness in them giving way. The landowners and members of the district were requested to participate in patrolling the banks by working in teams throughout day and night until all danger had passed.

From home we could see the glow from the lanterns the men carried as they walked to and fro along their beat, when the river reached the height of 34 feet on the Goulburn River at Shepparton the decision would be made to lift the bars on the Spillway and thus release the pressure up stream. This was hazardous work for the men as they manoeuvred the large logs and mountains of debris that had been swept off the floor of the lake by the surging swirling water through the open sections of the Lochs' wall. District inhabitants who could afford the time would gather as we did to witness and marvel at this wondrous spectacle, huge trees were being tossed around as if no heavier than a match stick continuing ever onwards spreading across the open country inundating large areas in the move towards the Murray River.

During one if not the last big floods that entered Loch Garry a young man working for the water commission lost his life while working off the unprotected platform that was how it had been since the 1920s when the lake had been cleared, levee formed and the high bridge plus the Loch built to protect the flooding, this loss of life caused the commission to build a substantial railing the length of the platform as a safe guard for the future.



It is ironic how nature can alter the lifestyle of a community and its people for today Loch Garry is dry due to years of drought also the distribution of waters by those in Government, the floor within the banks have returned to a forest of Eucalypts as it might have been before man settled within the area to tame that which had been created thousands of years before.

The bridge is decaying; the spillway is now a reminder of what was its purpose. I returned there recently letting my vision drift back to the days of my youth when riding with friends up and over the levee bank or standing well out of harm's way watching the swirling waters passing from the confined banks of the lake under the bridge to spread freely where the undulating ground allowed its movement.

With the coming of Spring when the waters had receded and the flooded areas had dried out Marcus and I in company with Betty and Gladys would walk through the paddocks to the lightly covered fringes of the bush and discover to our delight large groups of native flowers all mingled together in every delicate shade imaginable, a few species I recall as in vision of the scene remains, there were the Early Nancy's, Blue Bells, Chocolate Lilly's so aptly named for their fragrant perfume and the mauve Broughton Pea not as plentiful as one would wish it to be which made the find all the more pleasurable. The Billy Buttons waved their yellow nobby tops from the low areas where water remained and under the canopy of the Eucalypt trees the shrubs of the Acacias bloomed with masses of tiny yellow balls against a background of green feathery foliage and a perfume that filled the air, this was one of the many hundreds of Acacias that heralds in the coming Spring.

I still remember the joy I received, when at school and the class was requested to draw and colour a spray of this plant being our National Emblem, and to this day a drive through bush land to see them in bloom never fails to delight me. In later years long after I had married and during a time of creating gardens there was one, set on the banks of the Sevens Creek at Kialla of all Natives that Stan and I at the time received many accolades for our "bush garden" my photograph albums brings back the pleasures of creating it and the beautiful flowering species within it, there was extreme concern when in 1993 the creek flooded, covering the whole garden with many plants showing only their tips above the murky waters, we found them to be very resilient when the waters subsided and the sun shone again they quickly returned to their former glory.

When nature tips the scales and drought descends harsh and unrelenting upon the land, animals relying on their natural sustenance are quickly deprived of it and being without are soon reduced to begin feeling the effects.

I recall such a time in our early years at Bunbartha with the concern of my parents when cows 'went down' thin and weak unable to find the strength to rise once they laid down, these then had to be assisted back onto their legs again, Dad would call on our neighbour Bert Tremellen for his help, sometimes once the cow was again on her feet that was all that was required if not she was with encouragement brought into the yard near the sheds. When there a frame was erected and a sling fashioned from hessian was secured under her body enabling her to stand yet supported which kept some strength in the legs, fed and watered, protected from the searing heat this special member of the herd would be saved, although often a slow process.

This was before irrigation came through the district and after many a meeting held to convince the unbelievers the benefits to be gained by such a venture. The land holders on small blocks were reluctant to have their properties divided plus the loss of grasses from the channel cutting through.



The benefits were paddocks of Lucerne crops which could be cut and stacked for fodder as required and to obtain this during the summer growing and harvesting time watering had to continue on a regular basis for further production. This often fell to our Mother; the paddock being divided into bays meant only a certain number could be opened at a time. With a shovel over her shoulder and her water boots on, she had to leave her household chores to check progress, open or close them until the paddock was completed. Dad would be away at other work, when wheat was bagged in the paddocks it was then transported to the Congupna Railway, where it was unloaded either onto stacks within the yard or directly into railway trucks eventually arriving at a destination in Melbourne. This work was all achieved by men humping the bags of wheat upon their shoulders until work was completed.

To get to work Dad rode a push bike a distance of 8 miles leaving home early in the morning with his lunch in the sugar bag across his shoulders, lunch would be sandwiches of bread that was delivered twice within a week and a bottle of cold tea, at the end of a hard day's work, he had another long ride home and to finish jobs Mum was unable to do. I have heard him remark of a certain person owning a truck and travelling the same direction as he, would pass by never offering a lift, leaving him to continue in a cloud of dust.

Now as I write, in reflection I realise how hard my parents worked and combined together to secure their livelihood.

Dad was as I remember the authoritative parent as I presume from time began they were considered to be the Head of the House instructions given were to be adhered to or matters were taken in hand, this is not to suggest lessons to teach were unreasonable. As small children fidgeting at the mealtime table was frowned upon and brought to bear by being removed from the chair on which we were sitting and placed on a box. Most likely one which had contained on purchase two 4 gallon tins of kerosene being a much needed component to a farm with a number of functional usage especially for keeping the lamps throughout the house alight, a pump accompanied the tins to extract the fluid. The boxes were sturdy and not very comfortable which I wonder now if we were granted a cushion as the rough texture of the timber would not have been agreeable to little children's soft bottoms.

As years passed and we were excused from the table and free to be out to continue our games, in the rush one of us would inadvertently let the exiting door from the kitchen slam then a commanding voice was heard "come back here and this time close the door quietly". I wonder how often through the years we heard those same words, surely it wasn't always our lapse of action or memory for this to occur, the door must have had some fault with it to bang the way it often did.

Perhaps Mother's commands were in a more gentle tone of voice and not remembered with the same definition as a Father's, but they were there and also to be taken heed of. I have an image in my mind of Mum keeping close on the heels of Marcus as they sped around the front garden, Mum waving a wooden spoon in her hand. What caused the affray and if she caught up with him is long erased from memory. The incident is remembered purely because of its rarity pertaining to our Mother.

I can never recall Dad reading to us, perhaps he did and forgotten over the length of time and I don't wish to discredit him in any way, the days were long and work was hard, only now when we reflect back and consider the improvements of lifestyles over 80 years can those times be appreciated. Mum read to us, with Marcus and I tucked up each side of her begging for her to keep reading the pages of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' even when her voice was succumbing to a whisper.



And in those far off times there was only the flickering light from a small kerosene lamp. When we were settled in our beds Dad would more than likely draw the lamp closer to his end of the table to peruse the farming news in the Weekly Times or the Stock reports in the local Stock and Station Journal.

As I draw on my memory of life and of those family and friends who contributed in many ways into the fabric of images that come to mind I find myself drifting into the sensation of an incident which occurred long ago. It was on our little farm when there was a rare time for one of the fowls to be “run down” to supplement food for the table, on my pondering and I can only refer to our home the consumption of poultry was when the larder was very low and the supply of meat had diminished, unlike these times when we partake of it in various forms several times a week. More than likely this unfortunate was required for the Sunday meal, the following day being Sale Day in Shepparton meant stores would be “stocked up” but at this moment work was waiting.

Who chose which of the number that were busy scratching and pecking in unison within the group I am unaware but it meant all out to the capture of the “chosen one”. Dad appeared with a length of fencing wire fashioned at one end to form a hook, but not before he had tethered the Dog to his chain knowing his interaction would not have been of any assistance even if in his mind he imagined otherwise, especially when at most times he was encouraged in farm life to work beside his Master now he was left to ponder his rejection as he lay with his head resting upon his paws.

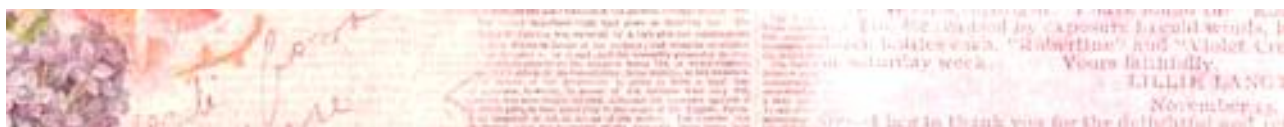
The pursuers with their eyes focused on the “chosen one” moved stealthily toward the unsuspecting victim the plan was proceeding well until the warning clucking of imminent danger alerted the flock to scatter in all directions this may reoccur many times. We were then required to regroup and attempt to outwit the flock back toward Dad and his length of wire, securing the catch depended on him. Fractions began to appear and I seeing the situation from a different perspective to that of the adults dissolved into laughter which wasn’t appreciated, this I was sternly told was “no laughing matter.”

However the chase continued until a fluttering bird complaining loudly and vehemently was attached to the hook held firmly in Dad’s strong hand whether in the affray of flying feathers and squawking chooks the one now limp in his hands was the “chosen one” or not was an item not to be questioned after all that mattered following the trying time we all endured we had secured our meal.

Yet there was much to be done the fowl had to be prepared, first a bucket of boiling water was brought from the house for the feathers to be plucked {a smelly business} the internal contents emptied, lastly to remove the small feathers or spines that remained the fowl was singed held aloft over sheets of burning paper as the final cleansing. And I have no doubt we all enjoyed with satisfaction the roast chook and veggies Mum later set before us.

Country homes were fortunate in having both the butcher and a baker calling to their properties on a weekly basis, although I can’t vouch if it was always so but this was the case at the time of my childhood .If a farmhouse was set off the road a note of their requirements would be left in the structure provided at the gateway to the property. The “structure” may be a once used drum, a kerosene tin or a large box, the mailman also left the much looked for and appreciated correspondence and papers here for the titleholder.

I



I have been when travelling always intrigued when seeing a row of mailboxes of odd shapes and sizes grouped together in a higgledy piggledy array on an intersection of roads, also the ingenious masterpiece invented by the farmer in his workplace using bits and pieces of long discarded though well used material of bygone days.

For us at “Willowdene” being situated close to the road there was no need for a container how we knew either of the men were approaching or arrived out front I am unsure, I cannot recall a whistle or horn being heard, but when alerted to their presence Mum quickly gathered up her purse and hurried to exit by the front door with two kids in tow departing down the path that was flanked on either side by a row of grape vines towards the small gate set into the high Boobyalla hedge. If the caller waiting was the butcher we would be greeted by Roy Collins known to us as Raff he knew my liking for sausage and I always received one or a piece thereof to eat uncooked. Raff drove a horse and cart out from the shop in Tallygaroopna when the door to the cart was opened he was busy keeping flies at bay with a switch of Eucalypt leaves.

The bond that grew between us on these days remained a lifetime. His brother Mappy (Ron) delivered our bread but I cannot bring his conveyance clearly to mind yet deep in memory a motorised vehicle is visible, for the moment I will leave it at that If Mum was busy and Marcus and I were nearby she would send us out, we would run through the house shoving and pushing one another in our quest to be the first to arrive and be given the bread that was required I remember the high tin loaf when broken in half and it sometimes occurred not to be equal with one half disclosing a hollow while the other had the hump, on the way back inside we picked at it, there was nothing as delightful to eat as bread freshly baked and for country folk back in my childhood with a weekly delivery and freezers in the unknown such an occasion is long remembered with pleasure.

Mappy later married a Bunbartha girl and their daughter Vicki is my favourite assistant in the fashion shop in which she works and I often browse in.

At this period in our lives we had been settled on our farm for perhaps 4 to 5 years, the house now nestled into an oasis of greenery as Dad had envisaged when he planted the rows of Boobyalla trees around the perimeter of the house yard and extended outer fences clipped regularly they formed neat hedges to the desired height he required. Along the edge of the nearby channel bank grew a row of Willow trees with their long thin branches weeping to touch the ground, brushing to and fro with the rhythm of the elements the soil underneath that gathered around their strong trunks. Following their winter nudity the trees in spring were re clothed in a delicate lace of translucent green as the new leaves appeared en mass, their vision is one of beauty that only Nature can create.

The Willows were immortalised in the naming of our home “Willowdene”.

When the winter months set in, the fire in the wood stove in the kitchen was kept stoked for warmth and the preparation of meals, on the hob sat the fountain kept hot at all times for the many usages required of it. The oven of a wood fuelled stove produced the best meals that ever graced a table the most delicious puddings and cakes but the cook had one concern when after much beating by hand with a sponge placed in the oven a banging of the door or a tampering with the stove in any way would ultimately lead to failure for her, the cake would sink and her disappointment could be seen etched upon her brow.

Dad always had a large stockpile of wood, yet when I was asked to gather kindling to boost the fire I would call out and complain “there’s none here I can’t see any, where is it?” and the reply would come back, usually by Dad “well go down to Tremellens’ (being our neighbours) and find some there.” I do admit now I would be standing on a heap that had built up over the years yet those little chips so useful for setting a fire were elusive to me.

There was also a large pile of wood down near the hay stacks that one day brought grief to us all when our little dog Tiny while fossicking for a rabbit he knew to be in amongst the timber dislodged some pieces which killed him. In my memory I imagine this took place during a winter’s day and that evening a fire was burning in the open fire place in the sitting room, when Mr Tremellen came down to listen to the Cricket match, obviously a Test being played in England, he found this night a very glum family, I can’t confirm with any one of the time as with little Tiny they too have all passed on yet for me the scene within our home that night remains very clear to this day 70 plus years hence.

Now as I continue my reminiscing I wonder if this and the following paragraphs relate to the same time. Tests were played alternately between the two teams every four (or two) years and being cancelled during the years of World War II, I feel this could be so.

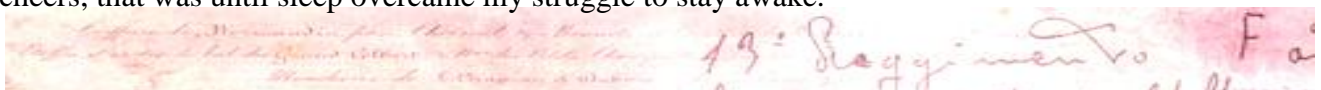
I recall in the mid 1930s the forth coming broadcast from England of the Test cricket match being played there between Australia and the English team was eagerly looked forward to by our parents, such an occasion was a rare event unlike today with the TV coverage through satellite providing worldwide news updating the results as games are in progress was not for them.

They were relying on an erratic wireless served by battery which would have been recharged in readiness, until this point of time knowledge of selected players etc. would have been acquired through the newspapers. Being mid-winter the dairy farmers with small herds would spell their cows for a few weeks prior to their next calving, this break in routine allowed those with interest in the Test to endure late nights supporting their teams, in our house to be Australia but in the homes of those who had left England’s shores to reside here which could have been decades gone by still retained their loyalty to the Mother Home.

As time drew near Marcus and I would be excited for we too were allowed to remain up a little longer with the adults, the open fire in the living room was stoked up providing warmth for the long hours ahead with a plentiful supply of wood nearby and the kettle on the hob bubbling in readiness for the cuppas’ and eats Mum had prepared.

We gathered around listening through the static which depended on the weather conditions for quality, our parents explained to us how the voice we heard was travelling through a big cable lying on the sea bed and we then asked “are they the waves we can hear?” It was all beyond our comprehension.

Mr Tremellen our friend and neighbour with perhaps Mrs Tremellen and the girls would walk from their home to join with Mum and Dad, much later from my bed in the adjoining room the encouragement as runs were made or wickets taken for the Aussie team could be heard by their cheers, that was until sleep overcame my struggle to stay awake.





Alan McIlvay was the popular and competent commentator and with the tap of his pencil he authenticated the bat striking the ball as he declared the batsman had hit a mighty six but that the listener wasn't aware of at the time, not until he disclosed his actions in interviews many years later.

During the late 1930s the country was in deep depression, work was almost unavailable especially to the City dwellers as factories closed their doors this forced many men to "take to the roads" accepting any employment available.

I have a most interesting book written by an educated man who during these years lived the life of a swagman after losing his job and unable to find work this was his only alternative to join many hundreds of others in a similar situation trying to keep body and soul together, in the melting pot of humanity. He was a single man although his funds may have been stringent his position didn't have the pressures to that of the married men with families relying on some monies being forwarded home this would have been a constant concern to all parties.

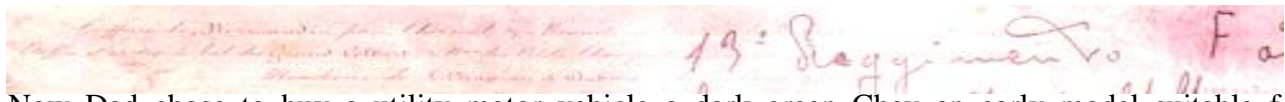
The old men of the road had always been a part of the community whether by choice or circumstance few people would know or dare to question when he appeared at a farm house with a polite request by asking "could you spare a bite to eat mister?" We would have had many such visits over the years while I was at home on the farm. But there was one that has stayed in my memory, when this elderly "old chap" walked into our yard Dad met him half way, following his request Dad asked Mum to prepare a sandwich and add a piece of cake if she had some on hand, in the meantime we kids stood alongside Dad no doubt gawking at our visitor.

With lunch in his hand he thanked Dad in appreciation of his generosity remarking he hoped he could do him a good turn one day, as he turned and walked away toward the slip rails near the cow shed, a large three cornered tear was revealed in the seat of his trousers displaying a sun burn to match that of the tear. Dad remarked "well I hope never to be in such a position as to have the backside out of my pants." Knowing my Dad to be a fair minded person the comment he made was not inferred in a derogatory tone towards the elderly man perhaps down on his luck through no fault of his own. And in reflection he himself would in all probability not have many extra pairs to offer the poor man. For the men of the road their main hazard was barbwire on the fences which resulted in the tearing of their clothing.

Over the years I have often thought of this incident and wondered if when our lives on this earth is over as Dad's was in later years, does the spirit of those who received an act of kindness assist the new arrival into the fold of Peace?

Mere speculation yet thought provoking.

Our daily lives continued for a time in much the same vein but for one incident which brought an over whelming sadness to us all when we learnt our faithful horse Queenie had broken a leg and had to be destroyed. I may have been about 12 at the time. Queenie had served us well for many long years and her passing left a void in the family farmyard friends also our Mother had lost her independence, ever since her childhood her conveyance had been by gig and horse, Queenie would not have been the only horse she and her Mother owned in fact there is a snap of her with a beautiful black horse in the shafts of the gig.



Now Dad chose to buy a utility motor vehicle a dark green Chev an early model suitable for transporting the pigs and calves for sale to the Shepparton saleyards, when we all went out as a family we were pushed for room as we crowded together alongside the driver I in the middle, Marcus squeezed beside Mum, as we grew space became less inside so we had to move out to the back somewhat embarrassing for an up-and –coming teenager the horror of it if by chance someone, anyone may see me. Why couldn't we have a car my cousins did? The reply was well we didn't and that was that.



Nell & Marcus with the Chev circa 1938

Mum never learnt to drive but years later she managed to accomplish staying upright on the black bike, starting was a problem which meant her holding onto a solid structure then at the end of her journey gently guiding the bike into a fence, gate or whatever object nearby to stop.



**Nell & Marcus with
Uncle Alan's bike**

About the same time as the motor vehicle made its appearance at our home Marcus was given Uncle Alan's bicycle he was so proud of it as snaps depict, when on a visit at a later stage from Grandma Montgomery and Mum produced her camera he could not be persuaded to leave it aside in order to have snap shots taken as required by Mum, we two kids alone with Gran, and viewing the response resulting from that time he obtained his wish for snaps recorded show Marcus and I plus the bike. There were times it was ridden to school with me on the bar, I received many a hoist from his right knee and often as we followed the track that weaved through the trees on the roadside verge he would steer directly toward one swerving to bypass at the last moment imagine the squealing and yells that was emitted from the passenger.

The Bunbartha School children were fortunate to have Stuart Thompson as our teacher for a two year plus period of time, we the students in grades 7 & 8 benefited by his dedication and at the end of our schooling we had all received our merit certificate.

The attendance of students rarely extended past the mid twenties with grades from beginners to 8th all seated in the one room.

When Stuart arrived he brought with him his wife Vera and two little children Valerie and Leon, baby Yvonne was born later. We older girls made a great fuss of them and if Valerie escaped her Mother's eye she could be found sitting next to one of us in the school room and to be found in school snapshots along with Leon while Stuart holds Yvonne.

To remain home from school on wet days was unheard of, Mum would forgo her gumboots and yard coat for me to wear I am not sure what protected Marcus perhaps it was a cloak of sugar bag similar to that which Dad fashioned when he worked in the rain, arriving at school there would be a fire blazing in the open fireplace to get warm cold fingers and toes before settling into class and due to the small number of students in attendance we were given extra privileges and my most treasured memory is of the large scrap books Stuart would bring into the class room for us on such days. They were filled in sequence of comic strips, pages of nature or the beautiful and famous buildings of the world, some not adhered within the pages were later used in our books which I still have tucked away in my archives.



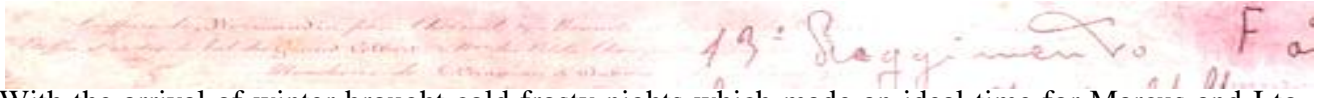
**School children at Bunbartha State School
circa 1938**



**LtoR Betty & Gladys Tremellen, Stuart
Thompson & Nell at School Centenary**

In 1981 when Bunbartha held the school Centenary Stuart and Vera attended and he was pleased to know they had been retained and enjoyed glancing through the pages. In the intervening years we had kept in touch Stuart later moved to Glenorchy to teach and while there joined the Air Force continuing to correspond with his students. I was perhaps 16 when I spent a holiday with Vera and the children while she remained in the School house there. As years passed Leon also became a teacher and was for a time Principal of the Murchison State School where I met up with him once again. By this time my three Grandchildren Tony, Jacinta and Jeremy had completed their formative years of education there.





With the arrival of winter brought cold frosty nights which made an ideal time for Marcus and I to set ice cream our recipe was simple. A saucer filled with rich cream milk from the dairy added to it a few drops of vanilla essence then placed on the top of the Furphy tank that stood outside the garden fence.

The remainder was up to our friend “Jack Frost” to do his bit spreading his icy wand over the countryside and by doing so in the morning we would have our ice cream or the next best thing. And for a couple of country kids who rarely had the pleasure of such we couldn’t have wished for anything better.

For many years our parents relied on the Coolgardie safe for the preservation of our food, the safe was given the name form the gold mining town in Western Australia. It was constructed in size to the dimension made to suite the requirements of the family. Of a light wooden frame covered with hessian being a strong fabric made form jute, this material had numerous usage within the workings of the farm depending on the quality and strength of which it was needed.

Our safe was enveloped with a light open weave fabric to allow any prevailing air to pass through, on the top was a deep tray filled with water and from it hung several lengths of porous material such as flannel to soak up the water thus allowing it to then wet the hessian, the cool air moving through into the interior kept the food from deteriorating, the legs of the safe stood in tins of water as a deterrent against the ants as was with any piece of furniture on legs that contained food indoors or out.

Sometime later a kerosene refrigerator was purchased and also placed on the veranda this was a vast improvement on the primitive Coolgardie also to the meat safe suspended from the roof this was made of perforated tin assisted in keeping cooked meat edible. The new fridge often brought its problems if perchance the fuel became too low or a strong wind blew through the veranda extinguishing the flame it would become difficult to relight causing a great deal of anguish to whomever was near at the time and the job fell to either Mum or Dad, yet allowing for the occasional insecurities our Mum would have welcomed this new addition now she was assured her essential items for the preparation of meals was secure no more rancid butter her jelly set or ice cream and custard ready to top off one of her delicious puddings, not forgetting the sponges, powder puffs, lilies and lamingtons all filled with whipped cream. The fridge served her well as she did us.

I remember the butter churn which also had a place on the veranda a wooden box like vessel with a handle attached requiring patience and unfailing arm to continually turn keeping the blades inside rotating until the cream thickened into the consistency of butter when completed the mound was washed before being placed on a large board and using small bats, pattered it into blocks, a house wife may then press a carved decorative item on the top before placing the blocks aside to set.

Looking back down the years I realise the busy life our parents had in particular the Mothers every duty she performed was by her own hands, one could fill pages of her achievements in keeping her home and family provided for.

A remembered excursion was on one day when we top grade students were taken into Shepparton by parents of those owning vehicles. We visited the premises of the printing firm which was situated in Wyndham Street somewhere in the vicinity where Aldi Store is today.



We were shown around and explained the procedures of the printing of reading matter from a large role of white paper to the completed item that became the paper that eventually entered our homes.

On the same day we climbed the stairs in Fryers Street to the 3SR Broadcasting Studio which was a momentous occasion such outings for country children were very rare indeed. I remember a later project was to depict our impression of the road taken from the School to Shepparton most of us recalled as it being almost straight; Ron Burgess was more alert adding all the curves and change of direction. And recently with both of us in our octogenarian years I mentioned this to him and although having been kept in my memory was lost to his.

End of year celebrations was looked forward to with anticipation we practiced for the pieces to be performed at the concert which was held in the shelter shed our audience not only parents but most of the district also, instructions were “to stand still with arms firmly down the side and focus those eyes on the opposite wall”, thinking back we must have appeared as objects created of stone, so unlike the artists of modern times.

The big night arrived, hair curled and a new frock, Mums and Dads had worked during the day to set and decorate the Christmas Tree added in place were the gifts, loads of extra seating arrived and placed in position most likely borrowed from the Methodist Church nearby. At an arranged time word would be passed around Santa had been seen to arrive with his Reindeers and sleigh, the room would buzz with excitement, then could be heard with much ado his HO HO HO's as he entered to a welcoming applause, for most of the children this night would be the only time with the coming of Christmas to see this special old Gentleman known only to them by name. Of course the older and wiser students would recognise the true identity through the disguise of the red suit.

Following his departure a feast of sandwiches, cakes and Raspberry cordial completed the end of the school year. But for some it meant a step into adulthood with happy memories to reflect upon. Yet there is one that has haunted me over the years when some students ganged up on a fellow class mate, for what reason, only known to the aggressors but for those gathering on the outskirts perhaps tossing a cow pad into the melee were also guilty in taking sides. The boy walked miles to school often late having completed his chores at home, his Father was a returned serviceman from World War I struggling more than many to make a living for his family. As years passed our school friend fell on the wrong side of the law and it troubles me still if such incidents left an indelible mark of low esteem on his character.

In later years our school teacher Stuart told me how it grieved him when he used the strap on the boy for removing fruit from a vehicle within the school yard. I have no doubt the previous mentioned aggressors encouraged such action but escaped the sting of the strap through their own so called astuteness. The family extended from one of the earliest settlers arriving in Bunbartha during the late 1870s.

I recall my Mother sewing frocks for more than one of the ladies of the district. And our school boy's Mother was a welcome visitor to our home as a new frock was fashioned for her.



Returning back to my school days we were encouraged to maintain the garden patch and to participate in all sports, with a limited number of those eligible to make up teams boys and girls had to combine, as was the time when we gathered at the property of Mr George Billingham's about 3 mile from the school to participate in a game of cricket against a team from Tallygaroopna West school. Our transport was by bike, horse or shanks' pony (being one's own legs) yet there may have been some lucky to be driven by car.

Who won was not an issue and if so long lost from memory the important lesson was the interaction between children of similar age. Questions arise as I write, was this a picnic day for both schools? Did our parents come to cheer the teams on? Were we treated to cakes and cordial at the games conclusion? They don't come to mind yet the day taking part on this field many years gone by is very distinct in my vision.

Without giving much thought to the uncertainties regarding the world affairs escalating on the horizons over Europe also being far beyond our perceptions of the consequences involved, we children continued our free and easy lives, fortunate to be country kids with space around us and food on our plates. The years of economic depression had not affected us personally and if there were better to be had we were unaware of its existence.

I do remember. When evidently I was in need of "something to wear" Mum recreated a frock for me from one which I had outgrown, it was split up the front and around the middle then adding a wide band of contrasting material for length and width, being of different texture the front panel puckered into irregular folds, this may not have satisfied Mum's sewing skills of which she was accredited for, but in a snapshot taken later of me wearing it I appear unfussed by the strangeness of her creation.



Nell

There were families in the cities throughout Australia living under extreme conditions with little children ill fed and clothed in mere rags, with no proper housing, pensions or health care as there is today as assistance in the year of 1939.



Nell & Marcus



Marcus with his dog



**Nell wearing cousin
Dick's uniform**



Stewart and Alice

This was to change somewhat when the German armies continued hostilities over their neighbouring countries, invaded Poland with uncontrollable force. Britain and her allies stepped into the fray for support declaring War against the perpetrators, Australia as a member of the British Empire was compelled to also add her support.

I was then 13 ½ years old little knowing what the years ahead would bring into the lives of my school friends, their families and those of our relatives. The older folk were optimistic in their outlook this war they empathised would not be as the last, only 25 years previously. They nor anyone could perceive the outcome and the amount of cruelty against the defenceless human populations and of that would not be told for many years.



Not having regular income thousands of men quickly joined the armed forces not only to be patriotic to the “Motherland” as had been so years before but as a security to having an income of 6 shillings a day. (60 cents) and keep, became their financial saviour.

Economic status was their priority in the making of this poignant decision. Wives were left to manage small families alone and in many cases the Home and farming property as well.

In a book which I have, produced many years later by Daughters of Servicemen from the letters that transpired between the men and home depicts the ongoing struggles that befell the Mother and children in their everyday life, also the joyous times when outings occurred and the children wore their newly knitted outfits. Then there is the poignant letter with farewell messages from a battle field far away from a loved one knowing he may not be returning.

This anguish may not have been so for the young men who would foresee the opportunity to travel, experiencing adventures not available to the working class citizen at the time. Within the year of 1940 the reality of the war was brought close to home as many of the local boys offered their services by joining the forces, my cousins Dickie and Pont Broughton also, they were encamped in various areas within Australia while trained in accordance to the AIF discipline of army life and future warfare, restrictions and hardships encountered was to become a lifestyle unrelated to their easy going civvy days.

When word came Dick or Pont were expected home on leave there was much excitement with many a walk through the paddocks to visit them, we youngsters were so proud of them dressed in their uniforms many a snap was taken to record these precious moments, there is one of myself in Dicks outfit, and of Pont in our Grandma’s house yard.

Time passed quickly and all too soon they had to return.

When Dick was leaving I was included when his younger brother Brian drove his Mother Auntie Rose, sisters Shelia and Gwen into the Railway Station at Tallygaroopna to farewell him such times were rare and savoured. His father Uncle Dick a returned soldier of the 14-18 War was now in service at the Dhurringile Internment Camp as was men of all services who had served their country during those years.

As each soldier of the district received his final leave prior to embarkation they were given a farewell held in the little School shelter shed the dimensions of it are beyond me to note but when stepping into adult life not only myself could comprehend how this unpretentious building could accommodate the numbers who arrived to wish the lads their own personal “farewell”.

Local members of the Shire and Church expressed the gratitude of those present for their forth coming involvement confronting the hostilities in far distant War zones. Each received a gift with a blessing of “God speed and safe return”. These gatherings were repeated on several occasions as the war expanded into the Pacific Islands and our own country became a threat from the advancing Japanese Army.

In the years of 41-42 cousins Dick and Pont along with some of their local mates were located to Egypt, Dick was with the Signals Corps laying the lines for communications, Pont in the Field Ambulance Division.

They were to experience the sights and lifestyle of a country learned since childhood through their Sunday School bible lessons in the local Methodist Church. Pont recalled his disappointment on his first sighting of the River Jordan expecting a large mighty river he found only a meandering stream, and Dick's leather bound photograph album purchased while there held many scenes of ancient historical places. In recent years he loaned this special item to me to peruse at leisure the images he had recorded of his time in a land far from Home.

In 1943 when their homeland was threatened the Government of the time began bringing our boys back, this I might add was very much against the desire of England's Army Command Winston Churchill who was earnestly desirous to secure the freedom of the United Kingdom above all.

The ships with our soldiers on board began their long journey back to the shores of home, however not all arrived due to interference by the fore mentioned English Commander. One ship unfortunately heeded an instruction not given by our Government and altered course, pulling into Jaya a Port held by the Japanese. All onboard were to become prisoners. On board was Sapper Bill Goodwin a former Bunbartha school boy now a POW, he died as one. A little story I must tell of Bill, is of one day as a teenager having left school he had ridden his bike into Shepparton he arrived at school next day to deliver fists full of sweets to us from the shoulder bag he wore I would doubt if anyone questioned how or why we were privileged to receive and enjoy such delicacies.

The soldiers on arrival were quickly directed onto their next stage of Service Dick was to remain on Australian soil, stationed in the Northern States as a linesman it was imperative the large open spaces were connected to the populated Southern areas.

Pont along with every available soldier Australia wide was to spend the remaining war years in the jungle Islands of the Pacific and with him many local boys.

The fall of Singapore brought further tragic circumstances to the personnel of our armed Services, thousands were captured as the enemy swept in without the support that was required to defend the British owned territory or themselves, they were to spend over 3 years as prisoners of the Japanese beginning in the notorious Changi goal before being sent to work on the Burma railway.

Bunbartha lost Billie Tremellen at this period of his POW life his brother George also with him returned home following the surrender by the enemy. Their younger brother Les had been killed in battle. This family had paid dearly in their participation to free the world of evil.

Their cousin Henry also fought in the jungles was decorated with the Military Medal for his bravery while in combat at Salamoa the incident has often been recorded in the local papers.

From the Bunbartha Centenary Book I read the list of names recorded on the Honour Roll which is displayed along with the 1914-18 board depicting the names of district soldiers of that time and note the family names repeated in the years of 1939-45 the two Honour Rolls are placed side by side in the Community Centre close to the tennis courts.

The school a district icon, albeit with many changes due to the progress of time since it first opened to educate the children of those who pioneered the area is no more, also the little shelter that became the hub of the community. Not so the memories of the students and fellow citizens who shared the many activities held within its precincts.





Included in the names on the 1914-18 Honour board which is placed in the Bunbartha Community Centre is Martin Hehir brother to my Mother who I have mentioned in previous pages.

And somewhere in New South Wales in a country town there may be a 1939-45 Honour Roll on it with the name of Hehir, if not, perhaps a monument is set in a park with the name of his Son and nephews chiselled into the granite, we may note another Martin, Thomas and Richard the latter names were in the armed forces while Martin had enlisted in the Air Force.

Above his name will be written "Missing in Action". On his Statement of Service records it notes he enlisted on the 27-4-1941, his age not stated but most likely in his early 20s. His training took him to various camps within Victoria before embarking from Sydney eleven months later on 30-3-1942 to arrive in England 6 weeks later to be placed at the Reception Centre at Uxbridge from there in June he attended an Air Gunnery School at Stormy Downs for four weeks then moved again to the Operational Training Unit at Litchfield before joining 142 Squadron at Grimsby October 17th.

When reading the movements of the young men there doesn't appear any time for them to become acquainted with the surroundings they were placed in.

On the 7th of November 1942 Flight Sergeant Hehir was in the crew of a Wellington 111 BK 198 which was detailed along with nine others from 142 Squadron for mine laying operations and took off at 2243 hours. The route from the base was given. No further news was received after his plane had taken off. Of the crew whose bodies came ashore only one could be identified 3 were unknown. On the following day Mattie was reported missing, as with many thousands of young men willing to serve their Country their demise came all too soon and with a suddenness they couldn't predict.

I am now 14, School Days behind me moving into the sphere of adulthood yet looking to the year of 1941, I still remain a child a country kid protected within the confines of family. My Mother's wish was to have me enrolled as a student at the Shepparton Convent for a 12 month period evidently Dad wasn't agreeable as I remained at home, Grandma Hehir having raised her family of seven alone when left a widow in her early thirties managed to send her youngest child, my Mother to higher education at Shepparton High in 1917, then she, my Mum, must have wondered "why not her daughter"?

The war was intensifying around the world and although our district so far away began to "do their bit" Mothers taught their daughters the art of knitting, woollen items were needed for the soldiers such as helmets, scarves, gloves and socks. Mothers patiently guided the inexperienced fingers to manage four small needles to knit socks around and around we went until it was thought the leg was long enough, this was found to be the easy part, not so the turning for the heel which was a work of art requiring many a call for assistance, when finally completed a note was often tucked within, wishing the receiver well and secretly hoping for a reply, this may have taken place for many but I cannot recall so for me.

Fruit cakes were also appreciated by the armed forces, families with husbands or sons away prepared many dozens over the years, placed in tins and securely wrapped in layers of hessian bagging they were sent to areas worldwide. As we didn't have a soldier from our home Mum baked "with a little help from me" for the local Welfare Fund which was organized by members of the district of which she also was a member, these may have been addressed and sent to local lads or dispatched to headquarters in Melbourne.



There was to be no waste, as issued by the Government that every man, woman and child were required to save, silver wrapping paper, spent toothpaste tubes, scrap metal all to be recycled. Every household was issued with books of coupons ranging through a variety of food products, clothing and petrol. I can't recall it being a hardship for us being young and never having an abundance it was accepted, although I would presume our parents had to juggle with what was needed at the present time and that which could wait.

I remember my Mother making me an evening frock from mosquito netting evidently available without using precious coupons she dyed it pale blue then using large flowers of various shades that were cut from a hand me down frock of a cousin in Rand NSW they were then laboriously appliquéed by hand onto the skirt. Years later the skirt was used to "dress up" the baby's cot in preparation for my second child, there are snaps of Peter surrounded within all the finery.

I was given the task of collecting donations for the Red Cross from the neighbouring farms, which meant riding my bike once a month to each one in my given area, I must admit there were times when I was hassled by Mum to be on my way. Now as I look back I remember the names, the friendly welcome I received the drink of cordial and the faces of folk long gone from their toil upon this earth, in memory they live as was, on any one of cycling days so long ago.

Euchre parties and dances swelled the coffers of the Welfare Fund when the district card sharps gathered to pit their skills against opponents encountered. The walls of the shelter shed appeared to expand as tables and chairs were set in place. The players arrived in time for an exchange of the latest news of the soldiers either scattered in every State and of those already serving overseas, as the years moved on bringing with them the concerns of the boys known to be caught behind the enemy lines brought such evenings into a tighter compassionate unit, news was shared with a mixture of delight or an overwhelming sadness and those within this little building were powerless to alter that which was taking effect so far from home.

I was not interested in cards but when an extra player was required to "make up a table then it became a duty to fill in, a sharp contestant was often unsympathetic for the lack of knowledge of a beginner, to trump or renege was next to an insult toward a playing partner's hand which often lost the round for them especially if up until then their night had been successful, to win at the end of the night's proceedings was highly sort.

Most importantly a parent knowing where a daughter was enabled them to enjoy their own game without added distraction, later when the lone musician struck up a tune we young ones would not wish to be anywhere else but on the dance floor.

Now as an octogenarian a glance down memory lane and to peep through the door into this little building brings images of the many happy times when friends gathered for social occasions, when future Brides of the district were honoured with a "kitchen tea" families and friends rallied from miles arriving with their gifts and congratulations. To dance and enjoy a sumptuous supper as only country cooks know how to prepare concluded an evening never to be forgotten.



Nell-Debutante 1941

The highlight for me in this year of “growing up” was to become a Debutante.

The suggestion of me doing so came from Auntie Eva Montgomery who was at the time President of the local Katandra West Country Women’s Association who were organising a Ball of the young ladies who wished to participate to receive a formal introduction and entrance into society.

Auntie offered to provide the material for my frock and to stay with her and Uncle Bill for the period of time required to practice for the event. My cousin Gwen was also included in these arrangements.

The group of girls and boys who were to partner them, gathered at the Hall previously spending several hours during the forthcoming weeks learning the dance chosen for the occasion along with the procedure to take place during the presentation, the patience of the Ladies in charge was tested many times as we negotiated the instructions required by them. My partner chosen for me was Harry Powles.

The night duly arrived and the showers of rain that fell lightly as we received once more the final instructions could not dampen the excitement that circulated in the small anti rooms of the hall where we waited. The strains of Gervesoni’s dance band floated from the hall heralding the evening’s dancing had begun. For the Debutantes program, Ruth Tait was the pianist with Hedley Kerr on the drums. There were 16 Debutantes to be presented they were preceded by three little girls who each carried a bouquet of flowers for the official party. As each girl made her entrance into the hall she was met by her partner who escorted her forward to be introduced to the official party acknowledging their presence with a deep curtsy after which each couple moved into their allotted position until all had completed the routine, we were then able to perform the dance so patiently taught for the Mums and Dads who came to experience and celebrate this special night with their Sons and Daughters.

My frock made by my Mother was typical of a young girl’s first long gown, of white net with puffed sleeves trimmed with lace as was the peter pan collar, all girls carried a posy of Maidenhair fern with pink Carnations on a background of pink satin.

The matrons of the day would be mortified to view a young Deb as seen in today's fashion with her strapless top and bare shoulders and I clearly remember a cousin and her friend from NSW attending a ball at Tallygaroopna in the early 40s dressed so and the raised eyebrows and tut-tutting of her Aunts in attendance.

Within weeks of the ball at Katandra, West 11 (eleven) of the young men who were partners in the Debutante set had entered into the armed services to do battle against the enemy a contrast indeed to that of the "Dorothea Waltz" so gallantly expressed. Lifetime friendships were made with correspondence contact until Civvie life returned and each sought their personal paths.

Concern mixed with anticipation of a different nature toward the year's end, when the Government made the announcement that every able bodied person not employed was required to fill positions vacant due to the influx of young men and women who had enlisted into the armed forces. The local districts throughout the Goulburn Valley were preparing to supply their produce of fruit and tomatoes to factories such as Shepparton, Ardmona, Kyabram and Douglas sauce factory for the coming season which continued for around a 4 month period when in full production. Hundreds of workers were required from harvesting fruit to finally having it in cans or bottled ready for the market and for those at work regardless of task at hand the incentive was "support and feed our troops".



Nell working at SPC

And I along with my cousins Sheila and Gwen and with our school friends settled as boarders into private homes to become labourers within the factory of the Shepparton Preserving Factory (SPC) for the remaining season of 1942.

Those first few days were some I have never forgotten, the complete change of environment was beyond description from the quiet country paddocks at Home to this huge building pulsating with noise and unfamiliar activity that I had been thrust into. When the "old hands" had dispersed and taken up their positions at the long tables anxious to begin the day's work we new hands were taken under the wing of one of the Foreladies to be shown the correct way in which the fruit was to be cut and handled. Placed in front of a box of peaches and two tin dishes nearby, we began with the sharp knife to cut around the fruit and then with the spoon insert it into the end give a flick of the wrist to the right and left of the stone, the fruit fell in half then by attacking and removing the stone in the same fashion meant continuing on until the box emptied no sooner than one blinked and another took its place.

And in this manner for hours that seemed never ending I stood trying carefully to please the sharp eyes of the Forelady and not blemish the fruit that after going through a machine to remove the skin would ultimately be canned for the table or made into jam.

I, in those first few weeks hated the work I was lonely and homesick, I recall a time when I heard my Mother's voice calling to me, glancing up from my work with expectation she was coming for me I realised my mind had played tricks on me as the familiar figure was nowhere to be seen.

As time passed I became acclimatised to the conditions and the work that was required of me and if I was to collect a pay packet at the end of a week's work I like everyone in the workforce be they young or old had to earn it, as my parents had in their chosen profession.

As the season continued the production of the pear crop began and with it a change in occupation, I was one to be chosen to move into the canning section then began the art of selecting the certain sized fruit that was required for the four cans lined up in front of me and each portion of fruit was to be placed perfectly in position and size required to do otherwise was to receive a rebuff by those in charge.

Conditions to the canning routine was strict unlike what is to be seen on a Television Newsreel today, handfuls of fruit are scooped up and placed "willy-nilly" into the cans as the fruit passes by on a fast moving belt. Our Foreladies of the days long since gone would shudder to view such a scene.

Regardless of my earlier findings when I entered into the workforce of the SPC once I settled into the functioning of this huge building throbbing with the noise of strange machines designed to keep the factory working I like every employee found my niche and returned for many seasons to earn needed funds to assist in adding requirements needed for running my own family home. This available place of employment has served the community over many decades and we who have walked through those large doors untrained, confused, gained in knowledge, not only of the workings of a factory but of companionship.

We looked forward eagerly to being accepted into the workforce as yet another season approached. The passing of years have brought many changes as larger more economical machinery replaced hundreds of positions familiar in my memory and in more recent times the amalgamation of the two local factories that now carries the combined name of SPC Ardmona bears witness to the progress of the modern age.

Between seasons I returned home to the farm back to milking cows and being general "Jill of all trades and master of none". Socially we young folk had our dancing, some functions were organised in private homes or perhaps a large barn which was always lots of fun the proceeds from these evenings forwarded toward the war effort. There were times when I was able to go into town of a Saturday with cousins Brian, Sheila and Gwen during these years Saturday was a working day for business and Wednesday allotted to a half day holiday. Most weddings and social events took place on that day including available sports of the season so for most of the young folk from the country Saturday was looked forward to with anticipation and speculation on who we might meet on the busy streets, in the evening we may have gone to a dance at the Star Theatre where the Bowling Alley is situated today or to a movie.





There were however occasions when we waited for their Dad to arrive from his duty at the Dhurringile Internment Camp for a few days Home leave. Uncle enjoyed his few drinks of ale and usually being a placid friendly man could if opposed at such times become agitated and so I would be required to remain incognito for fear of disturbing the peace. On arriving at their home and seeing me emerge from the car I was always welcomed by him with “you here too Kel”? being his pet name for me “come in for a drink” which I did before I would then walk home through the paddocks without any fear.

I have to this very day wondered of the nervous actions of my cousins and discretion of not to ask was better left unsaid. I hold fond memories of Uncle and of his calling at our home on hearing of me as a small child being unwell.


These were troublesome times for Uncle, his wife Rose my Mother’s sister was desperately ill in the Mooroopna Base Hospital, his eldest son Dick serving in the armed forces as he was also, leave was not easy to obtain for servicemen to be with their loved ones and when Auntie passed away on her 47th birthday in 1942 Dickie stationed in Queensland was unable to attend her funeral.

I recall a day with Sheila, Gwen and I rode our bikes from Bunbartha to the hospital to visit her, for a patient receiving visitors and the opportunity for them to be able to make the journey to do so were of rare occasions, hospitals of the time had very strict rules and transport not available as today, for those hospitalised for lengthy periods as was Auntie their days were long and lonely.

On this particular day we stopped in Shepparton at a Cafe in Fryers Street for a break before continuing our journey home while there striking up a conversation with a couple of Air Force boys who were then camped at the Showgrounds, one lad asked a loan of my bike to go for a ride, my heart was in my throat until I saw him peddling his way towards us if he hadn’t I would have had some explaining to do apart from a long walk home. Unlike today when one can make a call on a mobile phone to “come and get me”, and I doubt that even if possible such a request wouldn’t have sat easily with my Dad.

This delightful piece of advice printed on a card was given to me as a gift by my Granddaughter Donna it is relevant to times gone by although in memory seems but yesterday. And today we Great Grandmas also enjoy the privilege of modern technology and on wash day’s remark with pleasure “wash days are not what they use to be”.





GRANDMA'S WASH DAY

Years ago, when my Mother was a bride, my Grandmother gave her this routine for washing day. This treasured bit of writing now hangs above my gleaming automatic washer as a reminder of today's mechanical blessings.

1. Build a fire in back yard to heat kettle of rain water.
2. Set tubs so smoke won't blow in eyes if wind is sharp.
3. Shave one whole cake of lye soap in boiling water.
4. Sort things, make three piles; one pile white one pile coloured, one for britches and rags.
5. Stir flour in cold water 'til smooth, then thin down with boiling water for starching.
6. Rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, boil. Rub coloureds but don't boil, just rinse and starch.
7. Take white things out of kettle with broomstick handle, then rinse, blue and starch.
8. Spread tea towels on grass.
9. Hang old rags on fence.
10. Pour rinse water on flower beds.
11. Scrub porch with hot soapy water.
12. Go put on clean dress, smooth hair with side combs, brew cup of tea, sit and rest and rock a spell, and count blessings.

And this was for me another reminder of a day within my Mother's busy week but for her as a farmer's wife was after the outside work was completed. Yet she like her Mother before her did not fail to pass on to me the fundamentals of wash days to adhere to in my early years of marriage.

Not all of these instructions were relevant to my Mother's wash day, for instance she didn't have to light a fire under a kettle in the back yard although she may have in her early days at Marungi I can only refer to Bunbartha where there was a wash house cum bathroom detached from the house. It contained the copper, twin concrete troughs, a small bench that held the face dish and a tin bath, on the back of the door hooks of some kind for coats, yard clothes etc.

The copper was placed in a corner next to the troughs before the fire was lit Mum made sure the copper insert was thoroughly cleansed by using salt and vinegar with startling results. When removing the clothes from the copper with her broomstick they were placed into a wooden box that had numerous holes drilled in the bottom to drain the hot soapy water back into the copper, before then being placed into the first of the cement troughs for rinsing from there wrung out into the blue water after extracting as much as was possible again by hand the items were ready to hang on the long lines stretching across the yard.

This was her routine for many years until she unfortunately had an operation that affected the strength of her arms. It was then imperative she required assistance which Dad gave when he was available and when he did so his actions were so strong and thorough one could hear the threads of the well used articles breaking under the strain, as he was not always about a decision was made to purchase a mangle it was fixed between the two troughs and by turning the handle the rotating rubber rollers squeezed the water from the articles as they passed through, this was an excellent addition to the wash house. But when in use one had to be watchful, at times the smaller items preferred to roll around and around the rollers thus encouraging others to follow until jamming occurred then to unravel meant patience vowing to be more alert in future.

I am not aware if this predicament was a factor or not in the Bunbartha wash house but as I write visions float before me of many a time when in my own laundry and having acquired a washing machine with a ringer attached some years after I married I was not always alert to save the problem that was about to confront me.

I cannot remember the tea towels being placed on the grass if that suggests lawn then I doubt if there was any as it was Mum had ample line room. Starching of the linen was important from pillowcases, tablecloths, doilies, tea towels, aprons, handkerchiefs no self respecting housewife would consider her washing complete unless this was perfected. Before the late afternoon milking the clothes line was emptied items folded and damped in preparation for ironing the following day. Routine was the management of a well run home, every day there was a set programme for major work with the run of the mill chores fitted around them.

Mum for many years used flat irons heated on the top of the stove there were three of different sizes with a handle to interchange with each one, the fire was kept alight regardless of the temperature and in the small tin kitchen during midsummer her work must have been uncomfortable yet nothing was shirked every item that had hung on the line the previous day was ironed to perfection.

In time she enjoyed a little respite when she acquired an iron that produced heat by using a fluid called shellite but it too had worrying moments when after constant pumping the flame would refuse to ignite and if and when it did flames flared out in a menacing fashion, to offset this hassle that she could well have done without now in the days of hot weather the fire in the stove could be extinguished thus giving her some relief.

The kitchen table was her ironing board, and in my musing I ponder on the many procedures within the household that centred around and on this sturdy piece of furniture flaked in places from previous coatings of paint, scored from years of use it remained the nucleus of our family life. Every meal was prepared and served upon it every culinary item used in the process was cleansed in the big tin dish before being placed on the tray to drain.

Her babies were lovingly bathed there and in later years Grand children also sat upon it to enjoy the pleasure of her gentle hands as they attended to their needs.

As years passed by I took notice of the demands that were placed on the table, it supported the buckets of fruit to be converted into pickles, relish, sauce or perhaps jams of the fruits in season. And in particular I recall the night when the big green melon was brought in and set upon the table which meant there was a job for the smallest of fingers. Dad would cut through and slice the fruit while Marcus and I flicked out the seeds Mum then prepared the sliced and seeded pieces to her satisfaction for cooking, no factory could perform a more efficient line of workers than ours around that substantial table.

Our small unlined tin kitchen was far from grandiose it was crammed with the desired assortment of furnishings required for everyday usage, there was little room if any to spare, yet there came in future years important to add a cane armchair for our Mother's comfort after she underwent the first of several operations. By then I had married and perhaps Marcus away making his own way toward his future and the chair never failing to rest for many years her aching and ravaged body.





Yet apart from the armchair the kitchen remained the same and this is as I see it in my recollections, the open shelves of the dresser holding the crockery with a row of cups hanging from their individual hooks below on the wider section an assortment of bowls with an array of much needed essentials, opposite against the outside wall was another cupboard with the door and sides covered with a fine mesh allowing the air to circulate over the groceries within, placed on top were several containers ranging in various sizes to accommodate the bread, cakes and biscuits or perhaps the ingredients for the making of same also in equal importance for us to follow our favourite radio programmes was the speaker connected to the wireless from its position in the sitting room.

The table with the four chairs tucked underneath was placed under the small window, opposite the door at the end of the room was the black wood stove set in brick and always with the fountain on the hob as the brick surround was called, it was an important element for keeping the saucepans simmering, meals always arrived on the table with wisps of warm vapour hovering above the plate. At all times the wood box on the hearth was kept filled and this job we children were often requested to perform. Fitted across the corner was a very small cupboard built by Dad to hold the pots and pans.

The years moved on swiftly we children were soon young adults seeking our own way in life's span. I had met a young man and married at age 19 in the year of 1946 leaving the home that nurtured me, as my parents had also in their youth when making inroads into their own future journeys, commencing another branch to their respective family trees as I was also twenty years thereafter.



Stan & Nell

“Willowdene” was to always remain home and with the resemblance to the flight of homing pigeons I with my husband and two little boys returned constantly receiving the loving care and succour only parents with their understanding and experience can tender.



**Stewart & Alice
with Ron & Peter**



**Uncle Jack Harrison
& Ron**



**4 Generations- Lucy,
Alice, Nell & Ronnie**

It is well the future within our lives is beyond our knowledge and vision, if it were not so we would spend our days treading fearfully not permitting ourselves to enjoy to the fullest the pleasantries of life which surrounds us. And this was so for our family especially our Mother, the ensuing 8 years were fraught with a series of occurring ill health accounting for several major operations to constrain the cancerous tumours that continued to invade her body, treatment which followed took her away from home for many weeks, staying and being cared for by her cousins in Melbourne, with no telephone link up for a supportive conversation with her husband back at home there must have been for her many a dark and lonely hour, and for him with farm work and stock to attend to he also anguished alone of her welfare.

In between these ordeals when home again and health restored she continued performing the required deeds that she perceived was her duty to do so and it transpired in the midst of Mum's recovery periods she was confronted with news that I had also been diagnosed with a bowel cancer. I was then expecting my third baby and appeared to be in good health so this analysis came as a shock but had to be accepted. Doctor Roy Mills my local GP transferred me to a Specialist in Melbourne and I was entered into the Alfred Hospital, this was in September 1950 the continuity of my pregnancy was not possible which resulted in a caesarean operation taking place prior to the major operation to remove the cancer.

I was as Mum had when in need of family care had my City cousins to look after me in the interim, I returned home early in November having been away from my little boys for 8 weeks. Dad and Mum took care of them during this time Ron had his fourth Birthday there and Peter was 18 months.

Stan and I had taken possession of our new home in Leithen Street, Shepparton in June and Ronnie kept telling his Nannie she could go and live there with him no doubt he was missing not exactly his new house but more perhaps his Mum and Dad. I was told later his Dad did make a brief call one day when passing by in the truck on the way to a job of work nearby when leaving he left behind one very distressed little boy, though I do believe he was happy being with his Grandparents.

Returning to the home I had occupied for such a brief period was a joyful moment and with gratitude for being restored back to health, there were intervals of adjustment and acceptance of the procedure that occurred during the operation I was young which often helped to recognize the sometimes unexpected.

Another week or two passed before the boys were brought home and we were then a family again.



**Ron & Peter Sidebottom
at Willowdene**



Ron & Peter with Nanny (1950)

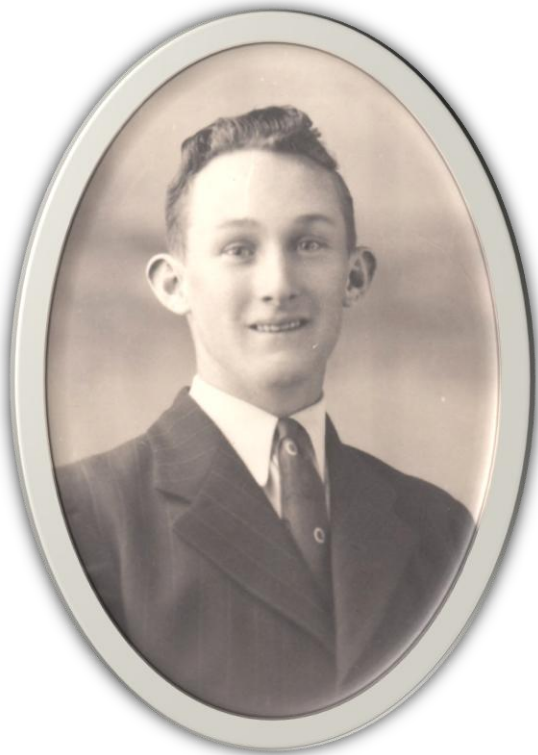
Stan began the New Year transporting fruit to the factory's in Melbourne or to the Victoria Market, the summer season was now in full production which meant long days on the road with little time at home, he at this juncture was the owner of his truck loading and driving for every trip was the responsibility only to himself. During the winter months he continued working away from home cutting timber from the surrounding forests of Greytown or Rushworth the wood was carted to the factories or wood yards also to the City for this work he had contracts which had to be filled this meant spending the week camping on location along with his off sider and the wood cutters who were aboriginal men from their communities of Mooroopna.

Gradually as the months passed the bare ground around the house was transformed into lawn with garden beds and a row of "Lorraine Lee" roses along the front fence which as the boys grew became their bugbear when balls they played with found a way under them recovery was often a hazardous matter to dodge the sharp pointed thorny stems (not pleasant even to the Gardner) the boys vowed into their adult lives never to plant such into their yards and that was one pledge they upheld.

I recall one time when Mum was away having treatment I went home to spend a few days with Dad driving out of town we stopped for meat pies for our lunch more than likely at Uncle Bill Hehirs' shop in Wyndham Street forgetting to load the pusher leaving it on the footpath, resulted in a turnaround to retrieve it, we set off again I nursed Peter with Ron standing between us, seat belts were not an issue in the 1950s Ronnie evidently tired and hungry was being a bit grumpy, to amuse him Dad said "look at the rabbit" if there was one we were well passed it which did not please Ron from then until reaching home he asked repeatedly "where did the Wabbie go" sadly for him none were sighted. Arriving home with the pies warming in the oven we began preparing for the drive to Tallygaroopna to watch the football match being played there lunch for Ron was another problem he wanted cream on his pie not sauce, persuasion couldn't alter his want for cream in desperation and I guess for peace and quiet Dad poured a little on, it was eaten up with Ron satisfied he in the finish had got his wish.

Another little story I recall of Dad is at one time when travelling to Melbourne by train to visit Mum I inquired of his luggage I have it he replied "in my hip pocket" and there was all he felt he required for an overnight stay was his toothbrush.

NEW BEGINNINGS FOR WILLOWDENE



Marcus



Marcus & Marj

In 1950 Marcus was living back on the farm, after trying out several types of work mainly in Shepparton where he began as a telegraph boy in his teens, later to a shop assistant, none were to his calling now he was building sheds with the purpose of raising poultry for egg production.

During the year he had become engaged to Marjorie Gundrill from Congupna who was a sister of his best mate, they planned to marry the following year so began busy times at Willowdene as alterations to the house soon got underway providing for a two family home an extra room was added to the front of the house and what was then the bedroom occupied by Marcus was extended and returned back into the kitchen as it was when the house was transported from Lemnos 16years before.

The little kitchen under the back veranda with so many memories embedded within the walls remained attached until in time transformed into a bathroom.

The months of 1951 sped quickly by until September 8th twelve months to the day when I closed the door of my home before travelling to Melbourne for my stay in hospital, but today we gathered at the Methodist Church for the marriage of Marcus to Marjorie after the wedding breakfast they returned to our house preparing to leave for their honeymoon snaps taken depict the car in the driveway decorated with the usual cans etc plus a "Just Married" placard for all to see, the well wishers assembled nearby enjoying their participation in the hilarity of the occasion.



Within a short time when all at Willowdene were settling into their own little niche as a family of four Dad became ill with pneumonia entering into the Mooroopna Base Hospital, in my memory it may have been his first experience and that if he ever had a time of not being well, he returned home after a short stay but failed to regain his health as time passed further tests were programmed disclosing he was suffering from leukaemia a cancerous disease of the blood.

Christmas was approaching and I attempt to draw my mind back to the activities of the time, if we Stan myself and the boys shared this Christmas Day with Mum and Dad as we had in previous years my memory fails me and as I write of the following events it would be pleasurable to do so .

Within a week or two Dad not responding to the treatment being provided was again in hospital where plans were made for him to be transported by Ambulance to the Masonic Freemasons Hospital in Melbourne, Mum travelled with him sadly within a day he was to succumb to a superior force beyond his ability to withhold, passing away January 18th 1952 aged 50 years.

For Mum this was a shattering blow again her resilience was revealed as she had portrayed throughout the previous six years when confronting the many complications that faced her during those times of her illness.

But this was to the outside world no one can know of the heartache and loneliest that engulfs a person's soul when repeatedly anguished There is no doubt she had inherited the strength of her Mother --Lucy Jane--who in her lifetime confronted hard times when succouring her own children through their Fatherless years, and her Grandchildren also.

Marcus now held the role of "the man of the house" with the responsibility of running the farm on his own with Marj at his side she was also familiar with country life. Throughout the proceeding months Mum alternated her time between her home and with me with the occasional holiday to visit relatives, she continued her interests in knitting and sewing for her Grandsons.

I never heard her complain despite the fact of knowing she grieved her loss.

Within this time her elderly Mother was being cared for by Sheila a daughter of Rose one of Mums older sisters, Sheila with 5 young children to care for besides the responsibility of the local Post Office and her farm work had more than her share of work. Nursing establishments were in their infancy in the early 1950's if at all which meant caring for the aged unable to remain in their own homes fell to family members unfortunately not everyone within it were able to "take a turn" either through their own ill health as was the case with our Mother or circumstances beyond that of a daughter or sons control.

Sheila accepted this extra role into her already busy days, Gran was confined to her wheel chair, Mum with the assistance of Marcus and Marj was able to take her Mother over to the farm for a time thus giving her niece a well earned break. Gran continued to remain in Sheila's care for some time before it became necessary for her to enter the Mooroopna Hospital.

Our Mothers health once again became a deep concern to her ,on attending her Doctor she learnt there would be another return to hospital an operation was inevitable , this was later performed and confirmed it would be her last the Dr explaining to Marcus and I he could only relieve the pressures that was building within her body no more could be achieved other than to stay her pain , we her family and friends were there to give our support in the coming months until Peace was hers when she passed away on October 12th 1954, 3 weeks after her 51st Birthday relieved from the bodily pain she had endured, she was laid to rest with her husband Stewart in the Shepparton Cemetery.

Marcus was now the occupier of Willowdene in his own right, he continued to improve and expand while having his Fathers ability to keep a pleasingly orderly condition to the surroundings. My family continued to return at regular intervals the boys enjoying many school holidays with their Uncle Marcus and Auntie Marj.

The years moved on as has been since the beginning of time when the footprints of man put his mark upon the earth and for Marcus and I the years were to bring many changes into our lives.

My boys had passed through their school years, Ron had secured his apprenticeship as a motor mechanic the road ahead not always smooth to travel with the "ups and downs" the young have to adept too when entering into the work force of mainly experienced and older employees in this case men, through study and dedication toward his chosen profession he achieved in due course becoming a respected operator of his own business. He had married on the last day of his "teen" years to Margaret who had celebrated her 19th Birthday the previous day and so began a new phrase in their young lives and of Stan's' and mine also, in the advancement of time we were to welcome the first Grandchild to a family of three being Anthony, Jacinta and Jeremy and there adding another branch to our ancestral tree.

Peter found his 'teen years difficult on leaving School he hadn't a mind set on any given vocation , he lent toward farming so began work on a dairy farm but when given the task of disposing of a paddock of thistles alone it wasn't in his personal view requiring the knowledge of becoming a dairy farmer .Yet it was one learning experience of entering into the adult world and that is way it has been for generations his attempts to find his niche were many and varied, seasonal work at the SPC suited his personality.

Where he spent time before joining the Army to serve during Australia's commitment in the Vietnam campaign, on his return and discharge he settled permanently into this immense organisation that has supported the well fare of the local inhabitants since its inception, until ill health brought forward an early retirement.

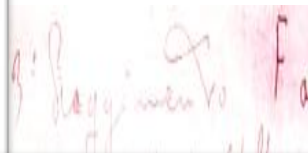
In 1972 following his Army Service he and Joy had married ,now Stan and I in time were to welcome Travis and Tasha's additions to not only our own family tree but to the original ancestors that formed our line in other countries long ago.

During the time when I was experiencing the pleasure of becoming a Grandparent for the first time. Marcus and Marj after 15 years of marriage were making plans to adopta family into their lives and three months prior to the arrival of my Grandson Tony they brought home to Willowdene 3 week old Helen Louise who fitted perfectly into the household then later Dianne Gaye arrived as a few months old chubby redhead, two little girls keeping their parents busy. When their time came to attend school they were to follow the bike tracks Marcus and I had in our young days.



In 1981 Bunbartha district began preparing plans to celebrate the Centenary of the School Marcus along with a committee spent many months gathering the history of the district together for Mr Bill Morvell to compile into a book marking this special occasion, with only weeks to go before the event Marcus who had worked so tirelessly for its success took ill entering the Freemasons hospital in Melbourne to undergo a major operation, this was an enormous disappointment for him and district felt it also.

The reward for his involvement was a presentation of a painting depicting the Districts well known landmark of the bridge spanning the Spillway at Lock Garry, this was the handwork of Joan Wall the daughter of Mr Fred Hutchinson who was the Head Master at the School from 1929-1934 many of his Students were attending the celebrations this day.



Familiar faces at Bunbartha Centenary



Also within the large gathering were several older students who had begun their education in a little school on these grounds so different to that which stands here now, casting an eye through the school roll dating back to 1882 surnames listed there can still be noted through the years to a beginner in 1978 that of the name of Burgess.

Our Grandmother's eldest child Annie is listed in 1895 followed by Thomas 1897 Martin and Rose 1900 collectively in the years 1904-5-6 Mary and William then Alice 1909 as the years passed by children of their families are also recorded and in 1981 Kirsty Ramadan became a fourth generation as the Great Granddaughter of Rose Hehir.

I find it significant to record here the number of children descending from our ancestors Michael and Lucy Janes' families who have attended the Bunbartha School and recorded in the Centenary Book there are 15 Grandchildren, 10 Great Grandchildren and one Great Great Grand Child.

From our very young pioneering couple who turned the first sod of their land, putting their roots down to sustain a Birthright for their young family and future generations that would follow achieved their goal.

Our Auntie Mary in her 84th year travelled from her home in Beechworth to meet her old friends, her attendance was significant to her family also the nieces and nephews, she being the only member of Lucy Jane Hehir's children remaining with us.

Returning home Marcus quickly picked up the threads of his farm work not withstanding at a slower tempo this was against his nature as being very active he was habitual in producing immediate effects.

The years moved on as years do with challenges to be dealt with and pleasures welcomed to balance the down times as developed in 1989 when the wedding of Helen was celebrated and in the following year embracing a Grandson but those dark clouds as witnessed previously in our family were building up preparing to descend with an undeniable force Marcus was again diagnosed with the cancer in his remaining kidney this news was overpowering with the removal he would now rely on a dialysis machine to do the work his body had.

Unable to continue farm work the only alternative was to put the property up for auction an agonizing decision but one to be without question, the conception of the event taking place becomes reality when seeing items familiar from childhood laid out in preparation for sale then later being moved away with new owners.

This was now the end of an era for Marcus and his family also to me and mine to the connection of our old home known as "Willowdene" holding memories since the period of time when in 1936 the home stood alone in a bare open space.

Marcus and Marj moved into their newly purchased Shepparton home where with the guidance and care given by Marj he managed the dialysis procedure for a further 2 years before passing away at home on the 6th of March 1992 aged 63 years.





AN ENJOYABLE RETURN

The long drought that had kept Lock Garry dry had now broken the favourable weather in the year of 2010 with an abundance of rain falling waterways throughout the State were filled to capacity as was the Goulburn River this then flowed on into the Lock until the need became necessary to release the volumes within it through the spillway.

Time had lapsed into decades since I had wandered the levee bank and looked upon the water within it and never with my Son so I was thrilled when Ron suggested we would drive out, the morning was bathed in sunshine, paddocks green with new growth and amongst the roadside verges the golden blooms of the wattles announced their welcome to Spring. On arriving, we left the car clambered up the bank to make our way toward the spillway we were greeted with a wonderful spectacle of the vast expanse of water sparkling in dappled sunshine the sturdy old Eucalypts stood firm against the strong current not so the young growth that had formed a forest on the floor from previous floods their tips swayed to and fro as the turbulent waters swept around them birds flitted through the trees their calls expressing delight of this long awaited happening and one lone Euro swam with urgency to find a solid foothold. We could hear the water thundering over the bars of the spillway long before we arrived there, for me it was a renewal of times long ago to see the water thrusting in a frenzied turmoil forming mounds of froth in its quest for freedom down into the shallow creek below rushing ever on to engulf the outlying land beyond.

The bars are of heavy lengths of timber lifted and replaced according to the volume of water to be released, we remained for some time engrossed in the event taking place watching the men of the water commission at their work and the continuous movement of the water.

The bridge spanning the spillway is now closed to traffic due to it falling into disrepair several pieces of the flooring and the railing of the structure are missing, only when the waters recede can anyone wishing to move on toward the Goulburn River do so by leaving the levee to negotiate the bed of the Lock for a short distance then mount the bank again.

On the opposite side of the bridge there once stood on the periphery of the levee a large mud brick home set within an orchard and lovely gardens it also was surrounded by its own small version of the levee the home was there in my Mothers youthful days then presided over by the Patterson family, in my time school friends Irene and Ron Burgess lived there but today only the remnants of the orchard and the scattered mounds of discarded items not required when the mud bricks were pulled down and rebuilt into a home in Shepparton remain among the tussocks of grass.

The farm of the McDonald family was further on near the Goulburn River the children were also my school friends and we along with those previously mentioned have remained so through our entire lives, in later years Harlows occupied this site and were unfortunate to lose their home to fire, One of the boys of the family was to become a son-in-law to Marcus and Marj when he married Helen.

Ron and I after retracing our way to the car drove down Burgess Rd with desire to take a glimpse of Willowdene Ron hadn't been in the vicinity for many years while I had bypassed a couple of times, Ron wished for a snapshot and while doing so the owner Billy Gardner came by learning who we were he enthusiastically invited us in, his wife Gaye escorted us from room to room anxious to hear the history of my childhood home as we were to note changes and learn of their future plans, For a brief time I turned my mind back to living within the external walls as they were before alterations took place prior to 1951 when Marcus married while at the same time Ron was recollecting his memories spent there on his school holidays.

Bill and Gaye are anxious to restore the years of neglect from when the property passed from the family until they took occupancy the yards are neat with colourful garden beds the boobyalla hedges all gone and we were pleased to see the willow trees still standing. Ron and I both enjoyed the hospitality of these folk so readily given, we also had an added connection as being followers of Collingwood Football team we were thrilled to see the Magpie emblem proudly displayed at the entrance along with the name Willowdene chosen by our Mother over 70 years ago .

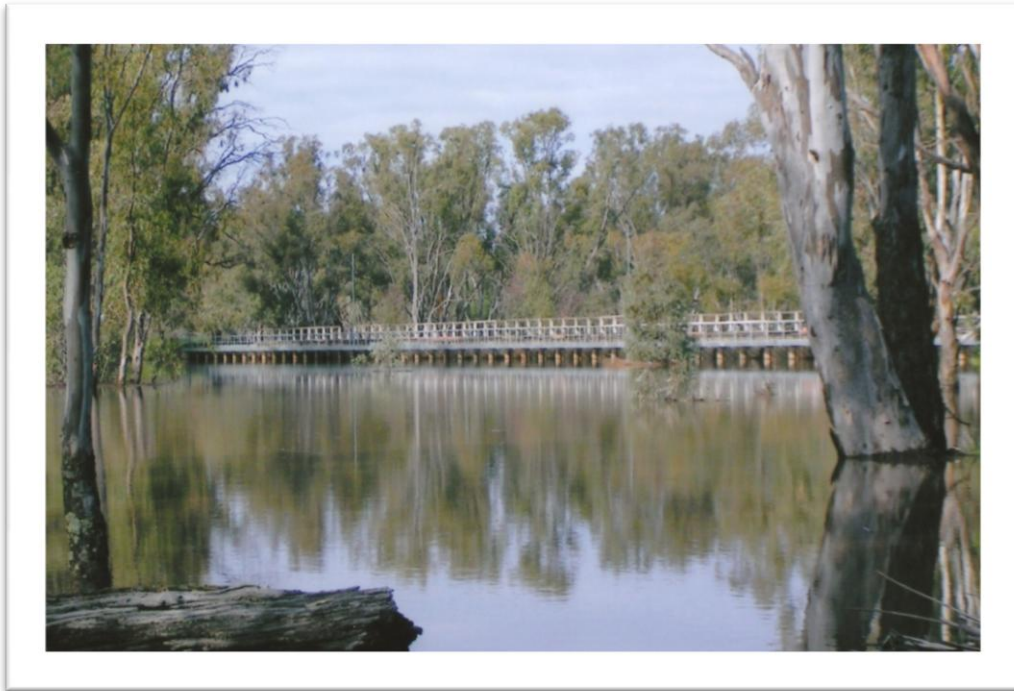
To have been given this opportunity to revisit the home and play ground of my youth was received with a great deal of happiness and an ideal time to bring closure to my memoirs of Bunbartha.



WILLOWDENE-2010



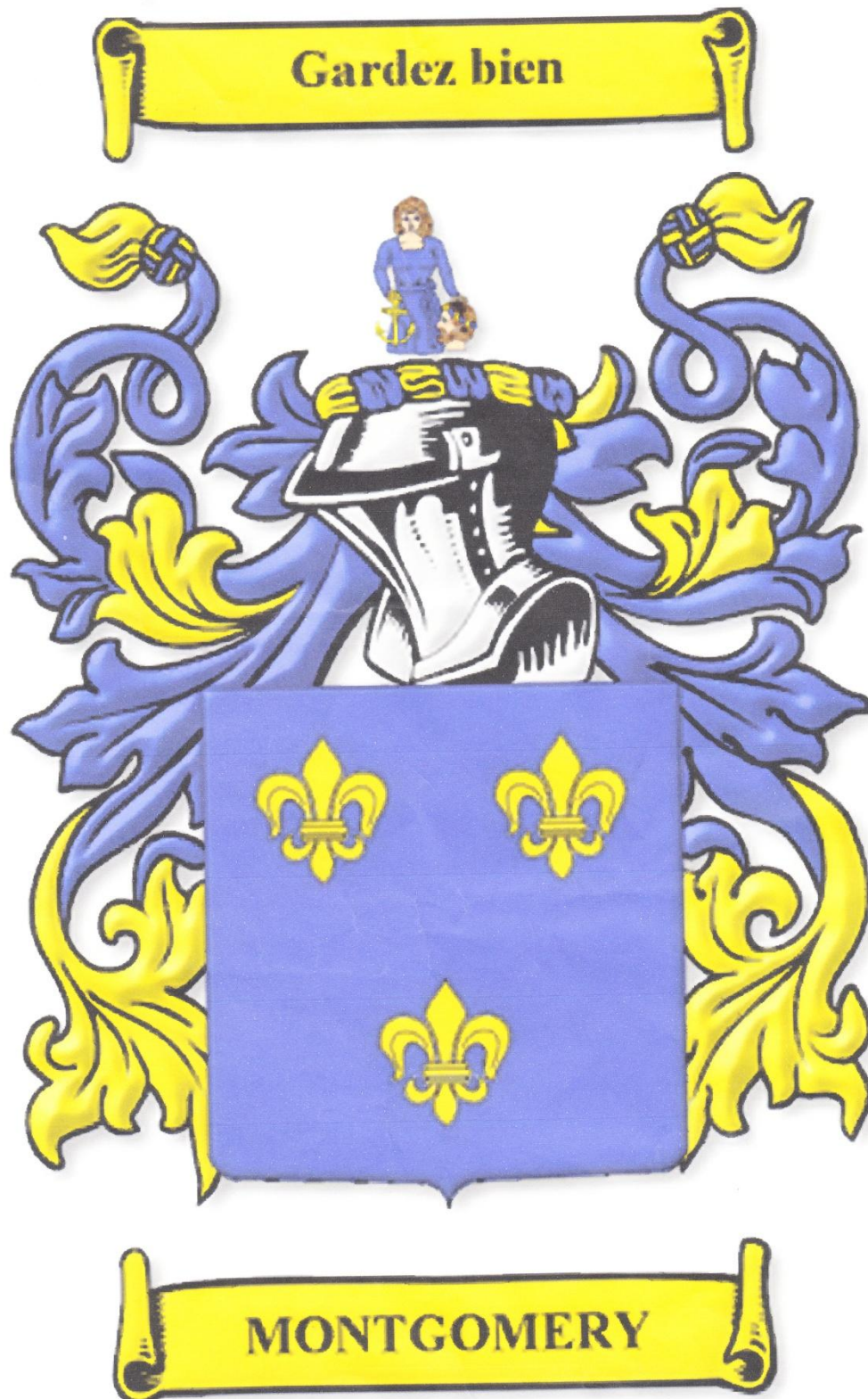
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LOCK GARRY 2010



My Recollections
Part 3



CLAN HISTORIES OF MONTGOMERIE

The family are of Norman origin and were found in the Lowlands in the 12th century. Eaglesham was the early home of the Montgomeries

Sir John of Eaglesham captured Percy Hotspur at the battle of Otterburn in 1388. Sir Alexander was Governor of Kintyre in 1430 and later created Lord Montgomerie. The 3rd Lord was raised to Earl of Eglinton in 1507. The 2nd Earl was taken prisoner at the Battle of Langside when fighting in support of Mary Queen of Scots.

The surname when found in Scotland is not of regional origin, that is surnames that stem from place name in areas where, or near people lived, that gave identity to that person.

In this case the name is territorial from the ancient castle of Saint Foi de Montgomery in the diocese of Lisieuse in Normandy.

The Normans were instrumental in introducing surnames to Scotland during the 11th century circa 1000 AD; the Scots were reluctant to adopt this custom until Malcolm Ceannor (1057-1093) commanded his people to adopt surnames from their territorial possessions.

Investigations of the Montgomery surname or variants show that it appears to have been Robert de Mundegumri who obtained a grant of the Manor Eaglesham in Renfrewshire in the 12th century.

He appears as a witness in a charter by Walter FitzAlan, circa, 1165 AD.

He also appears as a witness to many charters to the abbeys of Paisley, Kelso and Melrose between 1165 and 1177.

Later references include John de Montgombro who had an indulgence granted in 1354.

This information comes from two sources, and I appreciate the family members who thought of me when in Scotland, my Grandson Jeremy gave me a scroll which I have framed and placed amongst the Montgomery portrait's also there is the family crest a gift from my Scottish brother in law Jim Hunter when he returned from a visit to his native land after a long absence.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MONTGOMERY CLAN

I begin the Montgomery family with John our Great Grandfather who was born circa 1816 in Killaugh Downpatrick, County Down Ireland although he was born in Ireland, the family came from Aberdeen, Scotland.

It is assumed the family may have been on a visit at this time of his birth I have no background knowledge of his parents, siblings or of his or their occupations,

Yet deep in my memory I recall hearing of a poem written by a brother who travelled with John from their home in Aberdeen through England to the ship on which they travelled on to Australia, a number of years ago I did enquire of it through cousins of my Dad but due to distance of time it could not be located.

Also I am aware of hearing one of my Uncles' speak of a family member missing from the Clan, in those early unsettling times of finding their way in a strange country such occurrences are understandable.

However we do know John arrived in Australia in 1849 making contact with his new country at Geelong where he required work at a blacksmith and stables.

Soon after his arrival he married Elizabeth Ann Sandilands on the 22-8-1849. Elizabeth was born at Harrow on The Hill Middlesex, England. On the 15-7-1829 at the age of 21 years she remained there with her parents.

It appears her Sister Margaret and elder brother James came to Australia on the "Himalaya" in 1842. I cannot confirm Elizabeth's arrival, only her wedding date of 1849.

John and Elizabeth had a family of eleven, 2 girls and 9 boys. Their births list from 1850-1872. 3 of the boys died in infancy and as was the custom their names were passed on to the future arrivals. Their 7th child George Stewart born 4-5-1862 at Duck Pond Creek Victoria became my Grandfather. 3 of John and Elizabeth's children are registered in this area and 3 at Mount Moriac.

With little employment following the decline of the mining boom, many of these migrants turned their eyes enviously toward the vast tracts of virtually free land held by the squatters. Their agitation for land to buy resulted in a series of Land Acts which aimed at reclaiming land from the squatters being passed in 1869.

When Mr Coldwell reported favourably on the district of Tallygaroopna several families from the surrounding environs of where John resided decided to try their luck travelling up together to select their blocks.

John applied for a licence to the Benalla Land Office on the 19-3-1875, a receipt from the Lands Office for a survey dated 31-3-1875 shows a fee for Nine Pounds and One Pound milage His lease was granted on the 1-6-1878, he later applied for freehold grant 5-3-1885. There is no mention of the acreage purchased but under the free selection, the land was surveyed and divided into sections of 640 acres. Each farm was a half section of 320 acres which somehow I think this was.

The property as shown on the map No 42a bounds Zeerust School Road and Bunbartha Road.

When the family made their move to Tallygaroopna from Mount Moriac John travelled first by dray with their possessions and then returned later to Seymour to meet the rest of the family having arrived there by train (this was the terminal at that time,).

Visualising the open cleared land we see now being thickly clothed in bush is beyond our comprehension yet this was so when the family settled Willie aged 9-10 years wandered away shortly after their arrival as small boys are wont to do and became lost for a day and a night when found he was within 2 to 3 hundred yards from the home suffering from exposure and left with a permanent trembling which the Doctor called palsy.

Due to the accordance with the Land act it was necessary to enclose the property John enlisted the help of his children to build the chock and log fences. In fact by July 1878 they had built a 30 by 15 foot log house of two rooms a four stall stable and sheds also had sunk a 12 foot dam. They had cleared land, cultivated and ploughed 43 acres in which wheat had been sown 12 acres the first year and a further 15 on each of the following two years they had also erected 28 chain of log fencing, 129 of chock and log ,42 of log and brush and 30 of log and bush.

The little school occupied a corner piece of property owned by Henry Sandilands situated on the Zeerust Church road and the Bowey and Bunbartha road.

Great Grandfather John passed away one week later on the 10-6-1892 aged 76 years. Elizabeth lived on for another 11 years before she also passed on aged 73 years on the 25-11-1903. Both are interred in the Wunghnu Cemetery with an imposing Headstone immortalizing their long and successful life. Their son William was placed with them on July 12th 1929 aged 64 years.



78



Elizabeth Montgomery

The area of land John selected in 1875 so far from his Scottish homeland is still occupied in his surname, at this point of time 136 years on by his Great Grandson Graham Montgomery and his family.

The children of John and Elizabeth put their own hallmark down in the Tallygaroopna district their son Henry became a builder, bricklayer and also a publican within the area until late in the 1890's when he moved to Melbourne then later to South Australia. John went over to New Zealand as a young man contact with him lapsed in the early years.

Elizabeth married Robert Canet remaining in the district with a family of 11 surviving children their descendants can be found over a wide area of Australia only in recent times through modern technology I have been able to have contact with a distant cousin within this family in Queensland.

I will cover George Stewart my Grandfather in his own Chapter, William who was lost in the bush remained single living on the home place until his death in 1929.

Jain married Alex Anderson they farmed in the district also in N.S.W. before returning back to Tallygaroopna. Thomas and Robert remained on the selected property with readjustments when due to ill health Thomas moved to the City.

In 1900 Robert bought land nearby with a little creek meandering through it where he built his first home of mud brick, he had married Fanny Gertrude Sandilands in 1908 a member of a family of 20, her father Henry George came from England with his parents as a 4year old they settled in Bullen near Melbourne, in 1864 he married Lucy Hicks and moved to Tallygaroopna West selecting 320 acres in 1874 we have an extensive line of relatives from this union.

The mud brick kitchen was washed away in the 1916 flood and another had to be built, in years to come Robert built the spacious home called Killarney and this was where my parents visited namely for a night of cards possibly a hand of euchre I can easily recall the joyous shouts as the winning card was thumped upon the table with such enthusiasm the lamp quivered while the applause reverberated to the rafters where the hanging lamp was suspended, we kids loved the excitement as our home was normally quiet.

There was a family of six at Killarney, apart from the youngest John who was only a few years older than Marcus and I his brothers and sisters were adults, if one of the men passed our residence at Bunbartha after a successful days fishing at the Goulburn River they would drop in to share their good fortune Dad wasn't a fisherman, so a Murray Cod made a tasty meal for us.

I remember when on driving into Tallygaroopna and passing Killarney we oft times observed Uncle Bob out in the paddock with his team of horses, on recognising our vehicle he would stand alongside them dancing a jig while twirling his hat around in the air.

Dad would have his arm out the window of the utility hat in hand waving his greeting in return with Marcus and I joining in from our position out the back.

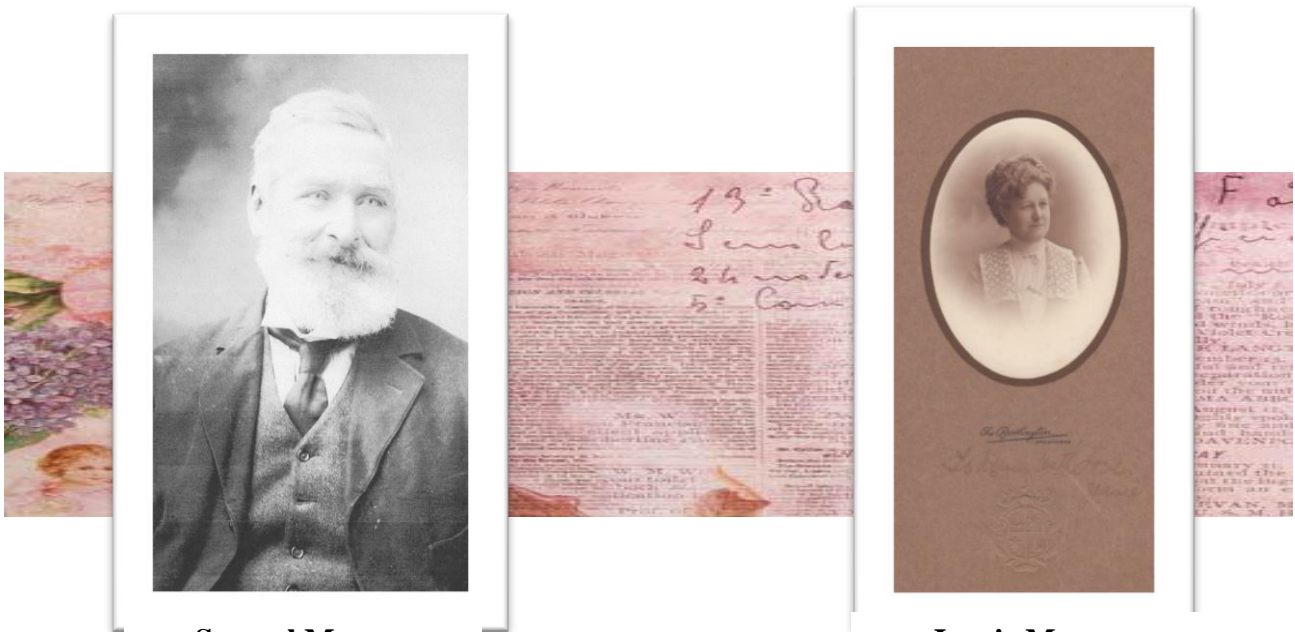
Robert was noted for his thoroughness in all his work neighbours envied his eye for symmetry and beauty of his completed work of his straight and even furrows with single or multiple ploughs, haystacks and fences, there is beauty in achieving near perfect work.

George Stewart and Mary Ellen Marcus



**George Stewart Montgomery &
Mary Ellen Marcus**

Stewart Age 2



**Samuel Marcus
Mary Ellen's Father**

**Jeanie Marcus
Mary Ellen's Sister**

George Stewart continued working at home as a youngster before to work away on a thrasher machine round the district. He married Mary Ellen Marcus at Baulkamaugh Presbyterian Church on the 9th July 1890 Mary was 22 years of age on the Certificate of Marriage George states his abode as Tallygaroopna giving his age as 28years.



Mary Ellen (Minnie)

Mary or Minnie as she was addressed within her family was the 7th child of Samuel and Mary Wilson both were born at Anthrim Northern Ireland in 1833 and 1837 respectively, they also married there on 9-11-1855.

Their first child Sarah Jane was born 13-4-1856 at Anthrim, at some time before son Thomas joined the family in 1858 Samuel and Mary with baby Sarah had left Ireland to travel across the seas, as we note Thomas was born in Geelong as was their 9 children to follow.

I can only assume Samuel worked on the land as in due time with all his family he took up land North of Numurkah at Baukamaugh, there are only a few snippets of insight into their lives that I have but a copy of my Grandma's Mary Ellen Certificate of education dated 1883 when she was 15 years old.

I remember her telling me of her brothers cropping land on Ulupna Island and the girls at home driving out with the provisions provided by their Mother, on one occasion she sent some small seedlings of Peppercorn trees for the

boys to plant at their camp and within one of the old slab sheds on the Montgomery farm at Marungi shown to me by their nephew my Uncle Colin is a box safe the men of the Marcus family used in which to store their requirements.

Following their marriage my Grandparents established a bakers shop in Tallygaroopna the remnants of the Oven may still be identified in the back yard of their former home or perhaps the house has long since paved way for a more modern structure but it is in very recent times I was told that the Oven or part thereof remained. The bakery was sold in 1898 before a move to a farm on the Katamatite road at Marungi.

Their first two children were born whilst in Tallygaroopna William was adopted as a new born Babe in 1894 he told me in my adult life he could not have wished for a more loving Mother and my Dad felt likewise toward his brother.

Mary Ellen (Nellie) birth was 1897 hearts were broken when little Nellie died at 19 months in the Numurkah Hospital subject to a "summer illness" she was to be their only daughter.

I have the doll of which she played, with a lovely china face and arms the broken legs were as the arms and head attached to a cloth body, she stands now in a glass dome on one of my china cabinets a very cherished item to be passed down to a Granddaughter, One future day.



**My Grandparent's house
& Baker's shop**





When the Grandparents took possession of their farm the only original building was a small log shed it remains there today under the branches of the aged peppercorn trees, perhaps the previous owner used it as his dwelling but I, since early child-hood remember it as the separator room with the cans of milk and cream, a long timber bench held Grandma's preserves the walls were plastered with earth and white-washed and the solid earthen floor spotless, it held a reverence indicating a privilege to enter

It has to be said Grandfather had an affinity with the land and nature he saved sections of the property to the pockets of trees that existed and I would doubt if the area of bush next to the driveway leading toward the home has ever had a plough disturb the soil. He passed on to his family the importance of his decision and now a century plus eleven years on these areas remain as he envisaged Three generations of his children have enjoyed the pleasure of playing "in the bush" paddocks'.

Cropping the land was his first priority and the home to be built perhaps with the aid of elder brother Henry who was both carpenter and bricklayer.

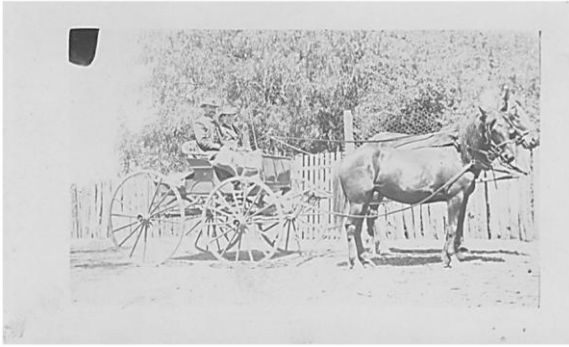
He began forming a herd of dairy cows, the years were busy and into the midst in 1901 Samuel Stewart arrived to be known as Stewart in the years to follow Alan John 1904 and Colin David 1908. The country was in drought round this period of time which had a devastating effect on the stock with only two of the 20 cows surviving despite Grand-dad having stripped the thatch from the roofs of the sheds in an endeavour to save them.

Our early pioneers had stout hearts and strong backs to face the many adversities that they were to encounter.

Grand-dad continued farming with his team of horses well passed what is today retirement age and on his 80th Birthday he was down the paddock walking behind the team as he had done over his long years of work. I remember my Dad remarking that when he as young lad had been out dancing, as Grand-dad suggested "until all hours", he was warned next morning not to strain the horses by riding on the machinery attached to the team. For Grand-dad there was a measure of solitude being in the open spaces in which he evidently preferred.

I was in my 17th year when he died yet I cannot draw to memory having a conversation with him, in retrospect we were a world apart a span of 64 years, his bearing was of quiet dignity and a man of few words only when we attain the distant years to come can we perceive those intervening between the young and elderly as I now attempt the undertaking to link.

SNAPS FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM



Grand-dad died aged 82 years on the 23-10- 1944 he was buried in the family Grave-site with-in the Numurkah Cemetery with little daughter Nellie, son Alan John, and Baby Grand-son Alan Kenneth son of Colin and Beryl.



When spoken of it was indicated as he being tough on the boys but that had been his life, he knew no other from a lad of 15 or younger there was no easy way only man and beast against the elements.

My Mother often spoke to me, of as a toddler Grand-dad would put me on his knee and I quickly wriggled down she felt compassion for this dear elderly man who had lost his little girl and I, having been given her name would have granted him some measure of pleasure denied. Mum would say “I was so disappointed” she was very fond of her Father in law.

I remember staying with the Grand-parents when I was older perhaps 5 or 6 and can visualize their house before the many alterations that have taken place over the years, the picture is there in my mind like a faded photograph yet difficult to explain what one sees in memory where a door once was and the window that replaced it etc.

The two main bed rooms stood away from the house and I recall Grandma carrying a lighted lamp as she with me beside her walked toward them under the covered walkway. I spoke of this to Auntie Beryl on one of our reminiscing days and she confirmed my memory as being correct although before her time, she had known of it, she explained it had been the intention to add extra rooms in the space between these rooms and the main house which I imagine was the kitchen at the time, instead the bedrooms were later moved as seen today.

I remember also the large room that was detached being the wash house and bathroom combined, along one wall a row of pegs for the working apparel to be placed upon, immediately inside the door to the right was a bench with the hand dish on it to the left a long circular towel hung from a wooden rod.

When the move was made from Labuan Road to Bunbartha Marcus and I were still small children, when returning to visit we loved to roam the big yard with the slab sheds that housed the gigs and buggies of many years vintage and the paraphernalia used and not discarded through the years.

Near the house was an arbour with a white flowering Rose bush covering it, a slab of timber supported on a couple of logs served as seating, walking with Grandma we asked where did you find Uncle Alan? Her answer was “here under the Rose bush” the next question where was Dad? “I found him in the cabbage patch” Dad being born in the first year of the move to the farm I dare say the Rose may have been but a cutting, and in the imagery world of little people the answers were accepted without question to be forever remembered and the Rose always referred to as Uncle Alan’s.

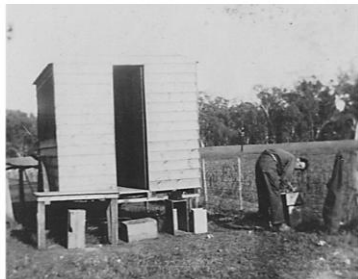
I fancy Grandma chose to tell us this lovely story for she was grieving the loss of her Son through a tragic accident and on our visits Marcus and I were also missing his presence when the family made their frequent visit home to Marungi Uncle always made a fuss of us never failing to line us up against the wall to have our height measured and exclaim with pride that we were growing up and for a child there is no higher acclaim, we couldn’t ask for more.



Alan Montgomery

When Uncle Alan suffered his accident on Anzac Day 1936 his parents I believe had taken their holiday away from their farm to relatives in Melbourne.

Uncle was share farming at Congupna with his team of horses reputedly as being the quietest in the district but for unknown reasons this day they bolted while being driven harnessed to the wagon that was loaded with bags of chaff endeavouring to vacate the wagon Uncle jumped resulting with the heavy steel wheels passing over him ,his friend on whose property he was working saw the accident and rushed to his assistance, a car was summoned without delay taking him to a Doctor in Shepparton who authorised an ambulance to transport him to Mooroopna Hospital where he passed away in the early hours of Sunday morning.



Alan's work hut

Dad when receiving the call on Saturday of the accident was able to reach the hospital and exchange a few words with his Brother, he later gave testament at the Inquisition, stating Alan was his Brother aged 32 and single a share farmer at Congupna where he resided. The post mortem medical report told of the severe damage to the body that one shudders when reading.

Alan John died 25-4-1936. He was laid to rest in the old section of the Numurkah Cemetery.

I was never entrusted with any of the antedates the young Montgomery boys were involved in during their early years, what games they played or their mischief and no doubt with four small boys there would be a little at times William being the elder by 6 years would be responsible for taking care of his younger brothers.

They all attended their schooling at Marungi and Sunday School at Drumanure, as the years passed and on completing their education they were required to work on the farm or as so often occurred find employment elsewhere.

I will endeavour to draw upon my memory to record here a little of their adult lives.



**Back: Alan, William, Stewart
Front: George, Colin, Mary Ellen**



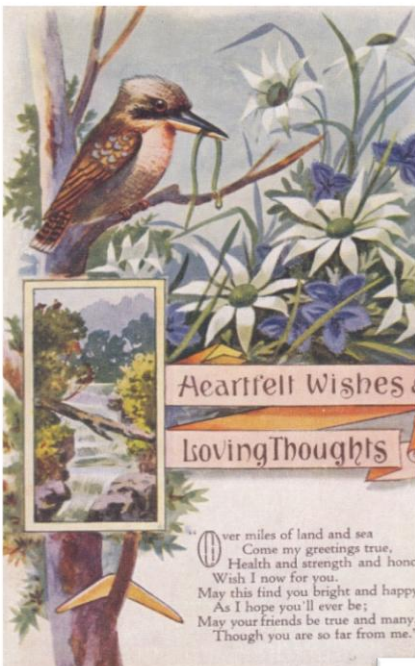
Bill Montgomery

William was always Will to his Mother yet throughout his life known as Bill he was 22 years of age when he enlisted joining the 24th and 25th Reinforcements of the 6th Battalion A.I.F on the 17th March 1917, His Service No 7529. On the 2nd August 1917 he writes to his Dear Mother from the Military Camp Broadmeadows telling her “he is going on board at Port Melbourne Saturday, everybody is looking forward to it as we are satisfied to go now we have had a good final”, he also sent a Brooch the best I could get with the colours indicating the 6th battalion which he was assigned to.

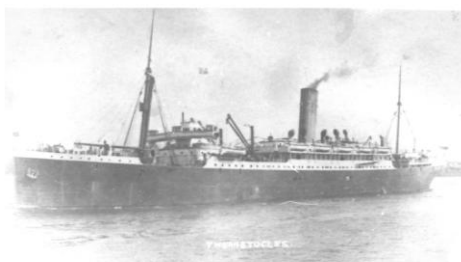
Two days after penning his letter he embarked from the Port on the H.M.A.T Themistocles arriving in Glasgow October 1917 where he trained for four months before crossing the channel to Le Havre in February 1918, wounded to the hand at Boulogne on 17th May after recovery was again returned to the front line where he suffered a very serious wound to his left jaw he was transported back to a military hospital in England where he spent several months before being returned to Australia in January 1919 and discharged in April.

Uncle spoke to me one day of that boat trip following his injury unable to talk he said he nearly died of thirst.

While away he sent many cards to the family back at Marungi dated early 1918 from the Village Sutton Veny of London where he went to the Tower for a Country lad these sights would have been an exciting experience.



**Alan & Stewart
(Bill's brothers)**



HMAT Themistocles

In 1920 on the 15th October he married Eva Tyres at Naring his Brothers Stewart and Alan were his attendants of the Bridesmaids I can only assume they were Eva's Sisters.



Eva & Bill 1920



The Wedding Attendants 1920

Uncle was granted a purchase lease of land consisting 320 acres in January 1923 at Marionvale which he and Auntie found to be a hard grind they remained for twelve years spanning the years of optimism during the early twenties to the years of despair from 1929 onwards. They made the decision to leave the farm in mid 1935 only a short time before financial relief was applied through the Debt Adjustment Act.



Eva & Bill milking



**Bill, Eva & Alan
(note the fence!)**



Bill's transport

Uncle then purchased a truck
farm, both Aunt and Uncle were rec

business as well as a small mixed
football team for the away games a

canopy was thrown over the tray seating arranged for the players comfort until about a Klm from their destination the boys would be let off to run the rest of the way to soften up their legs.

They had no children of their own yet their home was made welcome to the nieces and nephews at all times, Auntie created beautiful needlework receiving trophy's for her entries at the local shows ,her cakes and preserves always drew recognition .

Auntie Eva passed away 3-6-1968 aged 72 years

Uncle Bill passed away at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital 14-8-1978 aged 84 years. Both are buried at the Katandra Cemetery.



Stewart

There is little I can tell of my Dad when he lived at home he worked along with his brothers and Father with the farm work as well as taking on jobs around the district, Dad would have been a lad of 16 when William left for the War there is no doubt then his presence was essential. At 22years of age he joined the Police Force in Melbourne which was evidently found not what he desired for he resigned .In a document it states “from the 19th January to the 26th September 1923 during which time he served his conduct was good”.

This knowledge I found in a very old well worn wallet along with a tattered snap indicating those in it are at a picnic being himself, brother Bill and his wife Eva.

Also are a number of faded and creased receipts three are from R Thomas Grainbuyer at the Tallygaroopna Railway Station dated January 1922 ,one quotes 214 bags of wheat @4/6a bushel (shillings and pence) 45cents at today's money. A receipt to J S Rennick for a pair of boots being 1pound 9shillings and 6 Pence with 9 pence discount (3\$) A Ladies Seasons ticket to the football club in1920 ,2 Shillings and 6 pence it is incredible to imagine and attempt to relate the then and now prices.



Mary Ellen with Nellie



**Seated Auntie Ginnie with Nell
& Mary standing**

Two dance programmes of 1920 has Miss Hehir pencilled in for the Schottische on each occasion although faded I found reading through the programmes most interesting, of the 24 listed almost half were lively set dances with four couples participating together that kept the feet a-tapping.

As we now know from an earlier chapter he married Miss Hehir in 1926.



A black and white photograph of five people standing outdoors. From left to right: a man in a light shirt and dark trousers, a woman in a patterned dress and glasses, a man in a suit, a man in a light shirt and dark trousers, and an older man in a light shirt and dark trousers. They are standing in front of a building and trees.

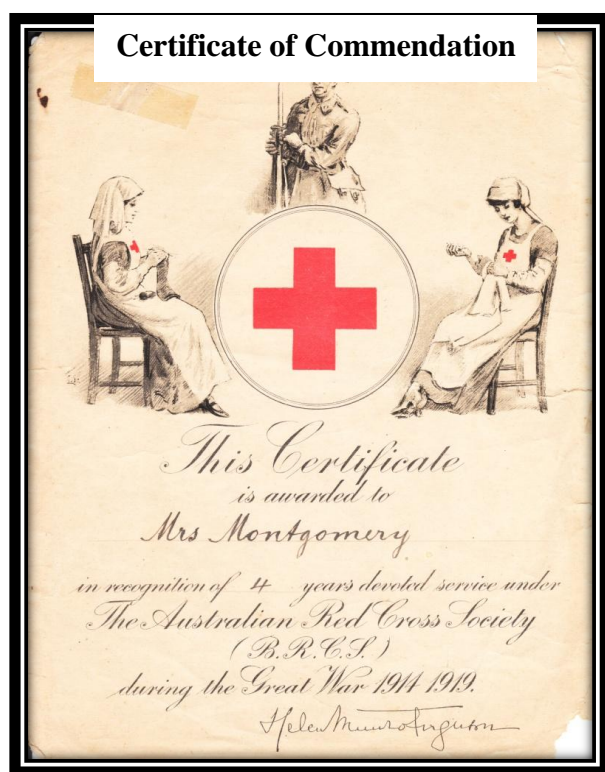
A black and white photograph of a group of nine people, including men, women, and children, standing outdoors in front of a building. A small dog is visible on the left. The group consists of a man on the far left, a woman holding a baby, a man behind her, a woman in a patterned dress, a woman in a light dress, a man in a suit, a woman in a light dress, and a man on the far right. The building has a corrugated metal roof.

After Grand-dad died our Grandma remained at her home of "Glenhope" with her youngest son Colin and family for a further 23 years until failing health required nursing facilities which she received at "The Haven" a private nursing home in Archer St Shepparton after several months it became necessary for her to be moved to the Numurkah Hospital where she passed away on the 24-6-1967 to be then reunited with her loved ones who had predeceased her long years past.

Grandma had almost reached her 99th year her Birth date being 30-8-1868.

In her remarkable span she had lived during the reign of five British Sovereigns being those of Queen Victoria, King George the Fifth, Edward the Eighth, George the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth the Second. She had witnessed Australia through two World wars with colossal loss of its youth on foreign soils and for her devoted service to the Red Cross during the 1914-18 campaign was awarded a Certificate of Commendation.

This document came to me in a suitcase holding a quantity of beautiful cards that had been received through the years from her many relatives and friends many dating back to early last century also an odd photograph or two of well groomed ladies regrettably without a name of identification.



In time to come I was also given items of Grandmas keepsakes lovely bowls of Carnival glass a much treasured item to be found in antique shops today imagining the items as being wedding gifts to her I passed them on to my two Grand-daughters on their wedding day to be a link to the Great Grand-Mother they know only by name, there were smaller pieces

also of china that at one time caused concern for the breakages had been glued in several places yet kept for her life time as I will mine

A special item is a foot stool obviously made by a wedding guest as it is inscribed underneath "wedding present June 26th 1890 from Mr and Mrs Ziefell" the velvet cover with corded motive remains as it was all those years ago albeit a little tattered round the edges. In addition the remains of a dinner set exquisitely decorated with a spray of green leaves with pink blossom.

I recall her telling of the day when members of the Kelly gang arrived in their yard riding splendid horses their visit was of a friendly nature as they politely requested directions to elsewhere.

I tend to think this was when she was living at Baulkamaugh.



MARUNGI PIONEER 90 SATURDAY

1968 There were many happy reunions at "Glenhope," Marungi during last week end, when friends of Mrs Mary Ellen Montgomery paid tribute to a wonderful pioneer of the district who celebrated her ninetieth birthday.

Mrs. Montgomery was born at Bannockburn, on the Moorabool River, near Geelong in 1868 and is the only survivor of a family of eleven. She was the sixth child of the late Mr and Mrs Samuel Marcus who came to Australia from County Antrim, of Northern Ireland in 1856.

The family moved to Baulkamaugh in 1878 and Mrs. Montgomery attended the State School at Baulkamaugh East. In 1890, she married the late Mr George Montgomery and lived at Tallygaroopna where they conducted a bakery business for ten years before moving to Marungi. Mr and Mrs Mont-

gomery reared a family of five, two of whom are living. Mr William Montgomery of Katandra West and Mr Colin Montgomery of Marungi.

Mrs. Montgomery was delighted to have her four grandchildren and two great grandchildren attend her birthday celebrations which were prolonged throughout the week end. Her son and daughter in law, Mr and Mrs Colin Montgomery, were host and hostess at the open house gathering of "The Clan" and a feature of the table settings was the beautifully decorated cake which was made by Mrs Colin Montgomery.

Among those who

came to wish Mrs Montgomery birthday greetings were Miss Parker of Middle Park, Mr and Mrs Ray Millgate and children of Caulfield, Mrs Beattie of Clayton, Mr and Mrs Marcus McDonald of East Preston, Miss Neta Montgomery of Tallygaroopna, ~~son~~ ~~William and his wife of~~ ~~Bacon~~ as well as grandsons Barry and Russell Montgomery, Mr. Marcus Montgomery and wife Marjorie and granddaughter Mrs Stan Sidebottom and her husband with great grandsons, Ronald and Peter Sidebottom were very honored to see their "grandma" taking such an active part in the celebrations.

Mrs. Montgomery was the recipient of dozens of cards, telegrams and tokens of good wishes from many friends, including a card from an old friend, and teacher who resided at Marungi forty years ago. There were others from Sydney, Oaklands, N.S.W., and many far away places.

Apart from her eyesight, which has failed a little over the years, Mrs Montgomery is very active and blessed with good health.

She was the envy of many of her well wishers for her good memory, when she related some of her experiences and quoted dates and happenings of her journey by camel wagon from the district.



Mary Ellen, Colin &
Celebrating her 90th birthday

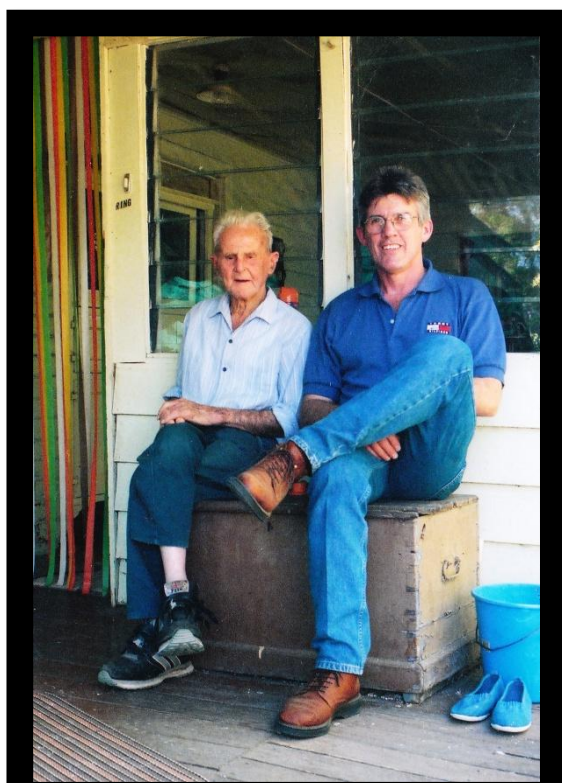
Uncle Colin remained at the old home named “Glenhope” until days before he died he was of small stature, on arriving to visit when he was well passed his 90 years I found him descending the ladder from where he had been clearing the guttering of the house, he and Auntie Beryl had been twice robbed while sitting in their chairs warming in front of their fire on a day in the midst winter, elderly country trustworthy folk who had never experienced such in all their years could not understand the modern trend of today’s society.

After Uncle died Auntie lived on alone for four years despite her failing eyesight her memory was clear to her last days and I being only 10-12 years her junior shared many an interesting hour of her company, she had been born in England sailing from there with her parents in December 1924 to take up farming, Auntie was one of the first children to begin schooling in the newly built Zeerust School, bad times had her parents leave the farm and move into Tallygaroopna where a butcher shop was established.

Sometime in their latter years Uncle and Auntie had travelled to England. Her return gave her such pleasure to see once again the old home the family had left in their quest for a different life in a faraway land.

Uncle Colin passed away in the Numurkah Hospital 19-7-2002 aged 94 years.

Auntie Beryl passed away in the Goulburn Valley Hospital 13-9- 2006 aged 91 years. Both are buried in the Numurkah Cemetery.



**Colin & Ron
Sitting on old woodbox at Marungi**





Following the deaths of their parents the property came into possession to Barry and Russell to continue devoting to it the attention as our Grand-dad had during his long years of toil on the land that he had selected.

Due to necessity the iron gate at the entrance to Glenhope is now closed to make it known the home at the end of the long driveway is now vacant.

“I stopped on one occasion when driving by to walk the familiar track alone with my memories of the times I had been taken along it by horse and gig and motorised vehicles, the bush land area on my right is as it was in those far off days lightly timbered with the undergrowth of various species of indigenous plants.

When stepping into the house yard the myriads of twittering birds herald my arrival I wandered through the remnants of the garden once lovingly attended the rose so well remembered still sheltered the framework of the arbour.

Letting my thoughts drift back down the years enveloping the past to the present and of those who had dwelt here their presence were felt as of ore and I embraced this special quiet moment of solitude within the confines of this old yard known intimately to me throughout my life time, closing the gate in farewell I returned down the driveway to my car beyond the closed gate.

*To those whom I have loved
And passed along this way
I'll not forget the memories
Of a bygone day.*



**The family highchair. First used for Bill circa 1895.
Pictured left is Nell (1927) and right Nell's Great Grandson William Sidebottom (2010)**

Stewart's "mobile home" featured in
"Caravan World" magazine 1996

The Odd and the Interesting

Max Tulloch brings us a few more fascinating items from his travelling scrapbook.

A MOBILE HOME

We had the privilege of a brief opportunity to photograph this dog-eared and torn old snapshot. The little tot's name is Nell, see her there in the arms of her

The windows are large shutters, timber framed and clad with 25mm (1in) corrugated tinplate, the same as was used to make petrol and kerosene tins and for home lining before plaster sheet was readily available.

Our friend Nell is now into her seventies so this snapshot is around 70 years old! The rig would be some years older! Perhaps the most amazing thing is



The 70 year-old snapshot showing, in the background, Stuart Montgomery's mobile hut.

father Stuart Montgomery. Before he was married, Stuart with his team of horses and a monkey-tailed scoop were employed on the construction of Lock Garry in Bunbartha in northern Victoria. The lock forms part of the Nagambie Weir system. Accommodation was BYO, so Stuart built this mobile home.

The design is based on that of the farm hand's hut. It is timber framed and roofed with corrugated iron. The large iron wheels came from a harvester, as did the small dolly wheel at the front but not visible in the photo.

The home heating and cooking appliance is housed in the chimney seen at the front. These folded galvanised sheet iron chimneys were available off the shelf at plumbers and tankmakers.

that the rig is still parked on the old family farm at Marungi.

We understand that photos of the mobile home have been published before, but we doubt that they would have also had the owner/builder posing in the foreground.

Ron pictured with "mobile home"





Peter, Nell, Stan & Ron



