

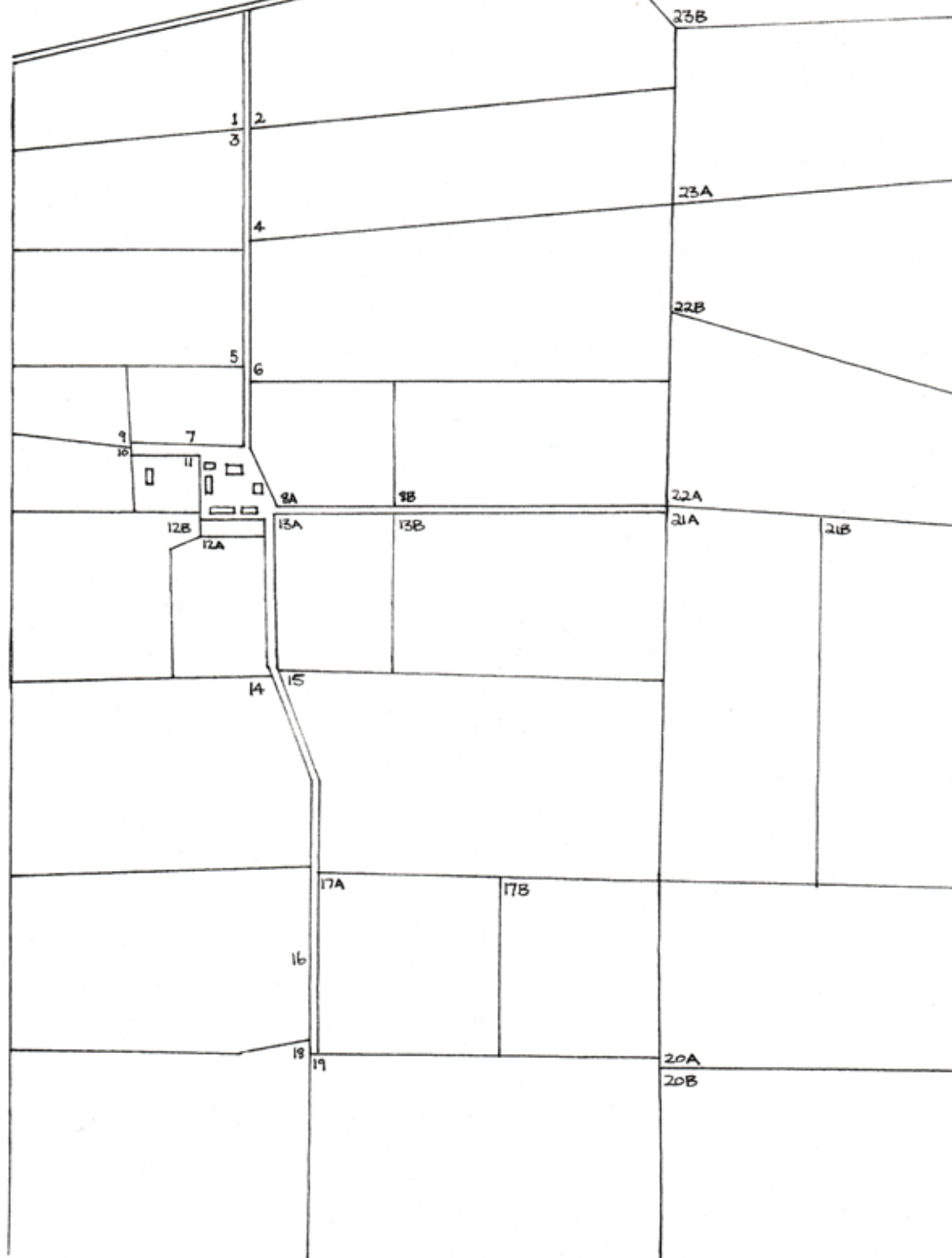
MY LIFE AT ILLOURA

BY MALCOLM PIGGOTT

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ILLOURA
MOORLANDS, S.A.



INTRODUCTION

Some years ago, family members suggested I write down my memoirs.

I made a start on this a long while back, but other things got in the way. As time is slipping by, I wanted to record some of the earlier history of my life, the history of Illoura and of the Moorlands District.

It is now 2023 and I am 91 years of age.

The first pages speak of the early history prior to 1932, the year I was born.

Details of this book are true and correct to the best of our ability at the time of printing.

Malcolm Piggott



Acknowledgements

This book would not be complete without giving
Praise and Thanks to our Lord
for having been part of our lives during the past 70 years.
Scripture tells us in so many places, how important is
the Power of Prayer and we have proved this to be so true.
God has answered our prayers and given us Wisdom and Guidance
in so many ways.
We have been blessed with:
5 Loving children and their partners.
13 Beautiful Grandchildren of whom we are very proud.
... and at the time of printing, 8 very special Great Grandchildren.

Malcolm & Beverley Piggott

PIGGOTT ANCESTORS ARRIVE IN AUSTRALIA

RICHARD & ELIZA PIGGOTT

My Great Grandfather Richard Piggott was born in Hampshire, England in 1820.

He sailed to Australia on the "Duke of Wellington" in 1849, with his wife Susannah, a daughter Martha aged 3 and an infant son John.

Tragedy struck when their two children died during the voyage, but Richard & Susannah arrived in SA on November 8th, 1849.

By 1853 Richard had established his residence at Clarendon and set up as a farmer.

His wife Susannah died of consumption on May 6th, 1854.

On the 9th August 1854, Richard married Eliza Anne Beaumont at Clarendon.

Eliza was born in Chatham, Kent, England and arrived on the "William Stewart" on 14th July 1853.



RICHARD PIGGOTT
BORN 1820 - DIED 1895



ELIZA ANN PIGGOTT (nee Beaumont)
BORN 1835 - DIED 1921

**Richard & Eliza had 3 sons and 3 daughters,
their 4th born was Robert, born in 1862.**

ROBERT & CAROLINE PIGGOTT

My Grandfather Robert Piggott was born 24th July 1862

He married my Grandmother Caroline (nee Duffield) 18th August 1887 at Strathalbyn.

Three years later he purchased Section 40, Hundred of Willowie, where they lived until Caroline's father died in 1912. They then returned to Wistow to live on Caroline's portion of the Duffield Estate.



CAROLINE PIGGOTT (nee Duffield)
BORN 1864 - DIED 1951

ROBERT PIGGOTT
BORN 1862 - DIED 1942

**Robert and Caroline had 3 sons and 3 daughters,
the youngest child was my Father, Robert Vernon Piggott, born in 1898**

ROBERT (VERN) & LETTY PIGGOTT

My Father, Vern Piggott was born on a farm ten miles north of Booleroo Centre on 9th October 1898. He moved with his family to a property at Wistow in 1912.

He was employed by a sheep farmer at Wistow and then returned to Morchard to help his brother Albert on his farm.

In 1920, in partnership with his brother-in-law Alf Wilmshurst (who was married to his sister Maud), they purchased 2500 acres of land at Moorlands, Section 1, Hundred of Sherlock.



ROBERT VERNON PIGGOTT
BORN 1898 - DIED 1984

LETTY PIGGOTT (nee Ford)
BORN 1895 - DIED 1976

**Vern and Letty had 5 children and I was the second to youngest,
born 22nd February 1932**

MALCOLM AND BEVERLEY PIGGOTT



And now here is my story.....

EARLY HISTORY OF MOORLANDS

Mr. John Whyte took up the lease of Moorlands Station in about 1871. This property extended from Parrakie in the east, northwards nearly to Karoonda and south to the boundary of Coonalpyn Station. He then also took on the lease of Old Coomandook Station which increased his total holding to 696 square miles.

The old Moorlands Wool Shed in Whyte's day was reputed to have shorn 30,000 sheep a year. This shed was designed for 32 blade shearers and was built of local limestone and lime mortar. Round native pine was used for the timber work, water from the roof ran into an underground tank for domestic and stock use. The main homestead was a few km's north of Sherlock.



PHOTO OF MOORLANDS SHEARING SHED 2022

Numerous wells were dug for stock water throughout the property but there are now no known wells near the shearing shed because underground water was too salty.

The pasture on this country was regarded as spear grass with scattered trees and it was claimed that after a large fire, regrowth germinated and grew into thick scrub. Much the same happened in the Victorian Mallee where wagon tracks which had been made before the fire are now visible in the scrub.

The Moorlands Station was unprofitable and was closed after 3 years. Difficulty with the shepherds who were looking after the sheep and wild dingoes were given as the reason for its failure.

In 1904 this scrub area was surveyed and subdivided for closer settlement. Blocks were generally about 2,500 acres.

Where there were no wells, stock water was procured by selecting an area with a slight slope. It was then covered with asphalt directing the water into an underground tank. One of these areas was about 150m northwest of Peter Thomas's house with another on Marcus Kleinig's property Sec Pt 2 Hundred of Sherlock about 200m southeast from the northwest corner - not far from the road.

During the 1914 drought farmers with insufficient water carted it by wagon or train from Tailm Bend. Many a wagon wheel was broken on the rough limestone track that served as a road. To solve the water problem a farmer on Sec Pt 9 Hundred of Sherlock tried farming with camels, but he found their feet were too soft for scrub clearing. Camels do not turn corners when ploughing a paddock as well as horses do, but they can live on less water.

Twice a week the farmer would take his camels to the river in Tailem Bend for a drink. Some people today still know this property as the camel farm.

A large gum tree near the railway station in Tailem Bend still has a metal ring embedded in its trunk for hitching horses and camels to.



CAMEL FARM AT MOORLANDS

The railway line was put through to Pinnaroo in 1912. The steam train would leave Adelaide in the early morning, have a refreshment stop at Murray Bridge then continue onto Tailem Bend where engines were changed for cleaning. The passengers and freight trucks were rearranged for different mallee lines. A mixed train left Tailem Bend for Pinnaroo 6 days a week with the driver and fireman. The fireman's job was to shovel coal from the tender into the engine fire to keep up the steam.

The train may consist of trucks with livestock or other more urgently required goods. A carriage for passengers followed by a guard's van with 2 guards to load and unload goods. The train from Adelaide arrived at Moorlands at 11.30am bringing daily mail, newspapers and bread 3 times a week. They also brought empty cream cans, egg boxes and other parcels. The return train from Pinnaroo arrived at 10.10am taking cream to the Butter Factory in Tailem Bend, Murray Bridge or Adelaide. They also took dressed rabbits in wheat bags and the daily mail bag.

There were 2 freight trains from Pinnaroo to Adelaide each week with bagged grain, mallee stumps, sawn wood, empty fuel drums, skins and returning back with fertiliser, building material and full fuel drums. One or two rams could be put in individual crates and loaded by the guards. Larger numbers would be loaded in rail trucks.

Hitchhikers were frequently seen on the freight train; the guards would put them off when the train was stopped but they would walk up the line and get back on before the train got up too much speed.

EARLY DAYS AT ILLOURA

As a young man, my father Robert Vernon Piggott (known as Vern), was looking to buy a property. He went to the southeast of SA with a land agent. This was before drains were put in and much of this country was under water. Father's comments were "It was no good to him because he didn't have webbed feet", so he looked at the Upper South East instead.

In 1920 he and his brother-in-law Alf Wilmshurst bought Sec 1 Hundred of Sherlock in partnership. Their plan was to divide the block when cleared. The previous owner had rolled 300 acres which had been allowed to regrow because he spent much of his time building timber framed houses covered with corrugated galvanised iron for new-comers to the district. Father and Alf ploughed these 300 acres the first year using a sunder-cut plough. The horses learned to lift their heads up to get the couplings over the bushy regrowth.

The State Bank opened a branch in Taillem Bend and Father was there waiting at the door when it opened. His assets were £100 and 8 horses so with a deposit from his father he had to borrow the rest from the bank.

Alf Wilmshurst was married to Father's sister Maud and they had 2 sons. Their possessions and some machinery was loaded on a wagon at Morchard aiming to take them overland to Moorlands. One night was spent with their Uncle Herb at Porter's Lagoon south of Burra.

Father was travelling with them and developed appendicitis on the way so the latter part of the trip to Moorlands was completed by rail. Father went from Moorlands to Mt. Barker by train to see the doctor. By the time he got there he was feeling much better but his appendix had ruptured - the consequences of which were often fatal. He lived to tell the tale.



**MAUD (LEFT) AND ALF (RIGHT)
WITH JACK DAVIDSON, THEIR SCOTTISH
WORKMAN**

The Moorlands property stables were relocated from Paddock 3 to where the cottage now stands. Because of unreliable water supply from the Government scheme, a stone tank was built by the road as a reserve for stock water. Some tools were left on the edge of the tank when the water was connected and during a thunderstorm, lightning struck the tools and took the side out of the tank which was later replaced with bricks. A $\frac{3}{4}$ inch galvanised water pipe was later taken up to a tank and trough to a spot which is now about the middle of Paddock 7. There was insufficient water pressure to get closer to the stables and cow yard.

The galvanised iron house that Wilmshurst's lived in was built in what is now known as Paddock 10. The evidence of this are still present - soursobs and grape hyacinths which have spread from that location.



THATCHED ROOF SHED WHERE SPARROWS AND STARLINGS BUILT THEIR NESTS

Northwest of this house about 120m was their fowl house. It was constructed with broom bush, in a similar way that brush fences are made today. Just north of this was another shed made from native pine posts and pine rafters, on top of the rafters was a layer of broom bush making the foundation for the straw roof. Sparrows and starlings used to burrow in from the bottom to make nests.

When the property was first purchased there was a small natural patch of spear grass (bunch grass) in the southeast corner. This patch was burnt each summer, surrounding trees were scorched and eventually died. This area of grass expanded to several acres when this corner of the property was cleared (towards Crouch's)



Scrub Clearing

The scrub was originally knocked down using 6-8 horses (depending on the size of the timber) pulling an 8 ft. roller which was an old boiler built under a timber frame. It is now located at Old Tailem Town.

The rolled ground was burnt the following summer. Some effort was spent in leaving and clearing around some quite substantial native pine trees, these did not last long without the protection of the standing scrub so many of these blew over after the rolled scrub was burnt. When burning the scrub one whirly wind took sparks into the scrub to a western property owned by ND Smythe and lit many fires which were extinguished with shovels before they became established.



ROLLER MADE FROM AN OLD BOILER

Most of the time between seeding and harvest was spent cutting spring backs (these were small sticks that did not get broken off with the roller) generally the leaves had been burnt off, if left they would make reaping difficult as they would get jammed in the comb of the stripper.

Because there were no weeds for the first crop, wheat could be drilled directly into the ashes starting about March. One year the seed lay in the dry soil for 12 weeks before there was enough rain for it to germinate.

The crop was reaped with a stripper which had a beater revolving at high speed over a comb. The beater knocked the heads of grain off the straw into a large compartment behind. When full it was emptied into a heap on the ground.

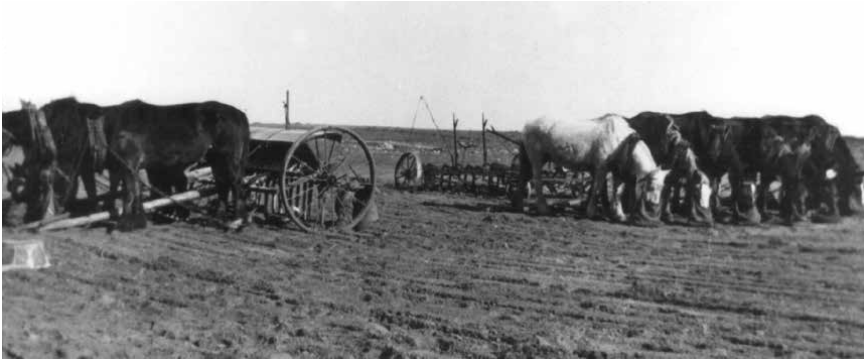
The next process was to come along with a winnower which had a thrasher, fan and sieve. The first winnower was turned by hand but later models were engine driven.

The heads of grain were forked into the top which then went through the thrasher down over a vibrating sieve. The wind blew the chaff away and the grain gravitated into a short elevator where it went into bags that were then sewn by hand using 14-16 inch stitches, each bag with an 'ear' on each corner. The ears gave the bag lumpers something to hold onto when stacking the bags.

The chaff was known as cocky chaff and was regarded as valuable stock feed. It also made a comfortable mattress for the bed.



REAPING AND BAGGING OATS 1963



SEEDING TIME AT MOORLANDS. HORSES HAVING THEIR LUNCH FROM THEIR NOSE BAGS.



REAPING WITH STRIPPERS



WINNOWERING GRAIN



SEWING THE BAGS OF GRAIN AT ILLOURA



CARTING GRAIN ALONG DUKES HWY

A NEW TEACHER ARRIVES

Letty Ford, who later became my mother, completed 6 month's teacher training and her first teaching position was at Wisanger, a little school near Emu Bay on Kangaroo Island.

Later she was transferred to Alawoona school in the mallee and then to Sherlock school where she boarded with Duncan Peter's family (John Peter's Grandparents). She was transferred to Moorlands school where her comments were "This is the last place on earth I'd want to live". Here she taught about 40 students in grades 1-7 in a small room and veranda of a house on Miatke's property. The house was near where Peter Thomas once lived.

Because of overcrowding at the school, Letty was anxious for a new building. The community proposed that a Community Hall be built. The Foundation Stone was laid in September 1922.

When the hall was completed in 1923 the school was transferred there, and Letty was the first teacher

As dances, social club and church were held in the same building the desks would be stacked in the back corner or in the galvanized iron lean-to out the back.



Some of the primary school students were adults in size being hefty 16 year old lads who hadn't had the opportunity of school earlier. They worked on their family farms before and after school as well as the weekends.





Some of the students were children whose fathers worked in the railways or in the local coalmine. After World War 2 this coalmine was cleaned out and a few ton of coal was sent to Germany for testing. The results showed that the Sulphur content was too high, but the overburden was considered suitable for making cement.

While Letty was teaching at Moorlands she met and married my Father. Little did she realize she would spend the next 34 years of married life here at Illoura.

Together they battled the depression and hard times, supplementing their income with the sale of eggs, cream, pigs, mallee stumps and rabbits. They burnt lime on the property which was used for shed construction.



My Father & Mothers Wedding Day – October 2nd, 1923



MALCOLM 3 YRS OLD

Mother gave up teaching and their first child Merle was born. Doreen and Robert followed soon after. I was born in the Taillem Bend Hospital on 22 Feb 1932 and was named Malcolm Vernon Piggott.

About 6 weeks before my due date, Father went fishing with some of his mates at the Coorong expecting to be home in time for my arrival. But I arrived early which left Mother home with 3 small children under the age of 3 ½. Loving friends Vi and Jack Jaensch offered to look after the children while we assume Jack took Mother to Hospital. She supposedly reported at birth that I was so small I looked like a skinned rabbit.

I survived this early setback till the age of 3 when I fell ill with Meningitis and was not expected to live. My parents were told that if I survived I may be mentally handicapped, however I am very thankful to God that I survived and developed into a normal healthy child doing all the normal things that small children do.

When I was 3½, Ross was born completing our family of 5. I did all my primary education at Moorlands school. My Mother must have been a very capable woman with all she had on her plate. She did have some help from Maggie Evans a neighbour.

When Maggie married Charlie Kowald she was given a Jersey heifer as a wedding present by our family.



MY MOTHER LETTY PIGGOTT



MERLE, ROBERT, MALCOLM & DOREEN

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF PEAKE

Three Piggott's on Council.

In 1928 my father was elected as a councillor to the District Council of Peake.

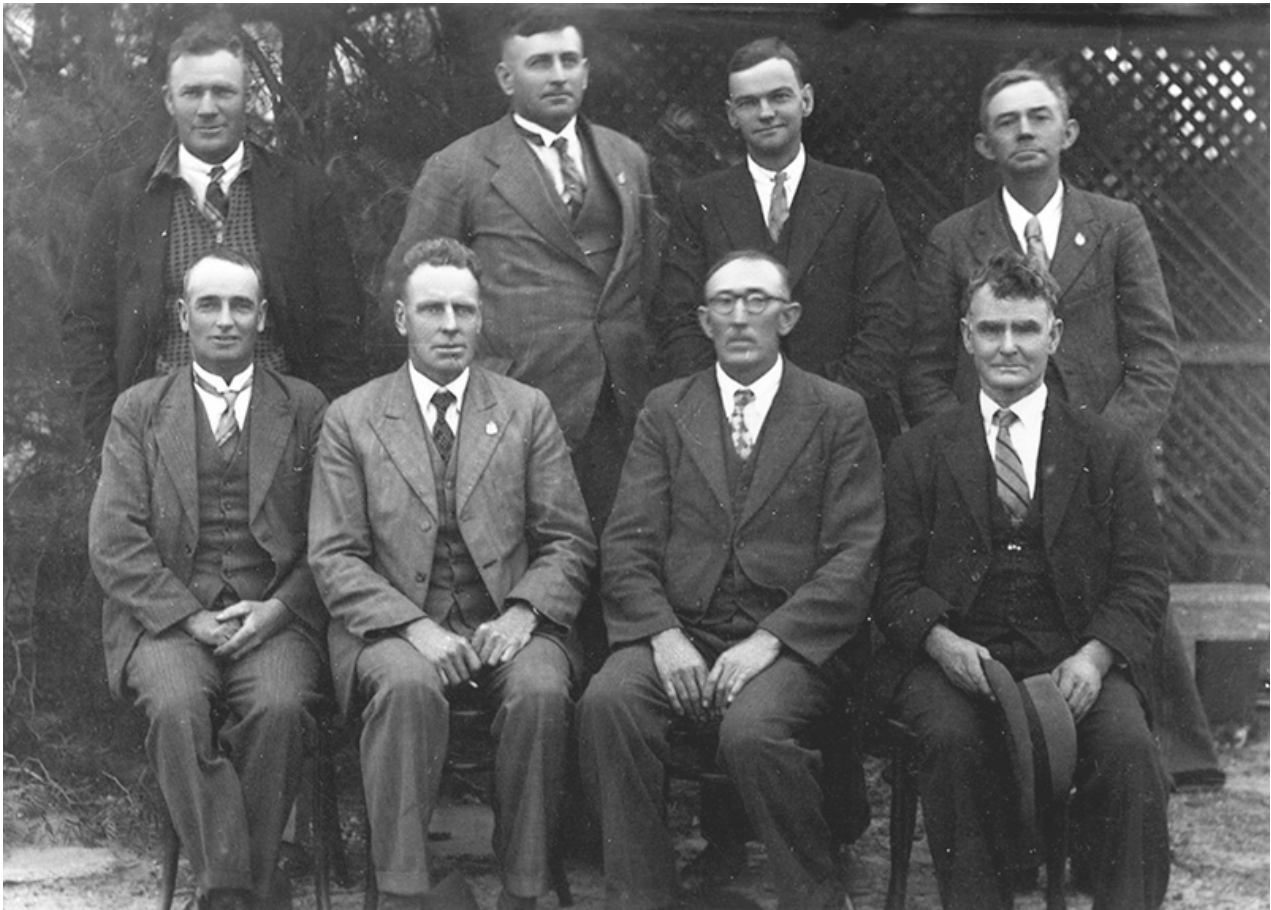
For his first meeting he rode a horse from the farm to Sherlock (15 miles) where the meeting was held. (In those days this is where Council meetings took place)

Norm Mc Ardle was Council CEO. On one occasion he and Father were to go from Coomandook to Coonalpyn on road inspection but because of the sandhills their vehicle couldn't negotiate the sand and they never got there.

Father was a councillor for 20 years.

Robert followed his example and served on Council for 10 years before moving to WA.

I was then a councillor until the Coorong Council amalgamation in 1997.



**BACK: BERT BALL, HERB NOACK, VERN PIGGOTT, MR PANICK
FRONT: LES WILLIAMS, GEORGE GOODALE, NORM MCARDLE (CLERK), TOM COOLEY**

SCHOOL YEARS



CUP HOOKS FOR THE SCHOOL STUDENTS STILL REMAIN ON THE RAINWATER TANK AT MOORLANDS HALL

Merle and Doreen started their education by correspondence. Later Mother's sister Una came as a teacher and was able to take the young children to school at Moorlands until they were old enough to take responsibility of driving the horse and sulky themselves.

Jack Pritchard was my first teacher who lived in the asbestos house in Jaensch's paddock by the highway and was close enough to walk to school. He taught 27 students in 7 grades.

As a teacher he was very strict and would not tolerate under achievers. A cane was a major part of his learning strategy and wooden rulers were frequently broken on students (3 in one week!) . 2 students had black eyes from this teacher.

At about this time World War 2 had started with news that England was being threatened. Jack joined the Air Force where he saw many hours in active service over Germany.

Some of the school requirements were:

- Saluting the flag each morning as we all stood in line.
- Repeating our times tables forwards and backwards as we marched into the classroom. This helped us to remember them in later years.
- Another thing teachers were strict on was sitting up straight with pens pointing back over your shoulder.
- A neat copy book style of writing which could be done best using pen and ink.

School picnics were held either at Coronation Park or north of Moorlands in Ben Miatke's scrub. It was an outing for the whole district and sport for everyone. Events like broad jump and high jump, hop step and jump, three-legged and sack races were held. Egg and spoon race where a child would put a spoon in their mouth with an egg on it and run the distance.

Another favourite was the paper chase where 2 participants would have a large container of finely torn up newspaper. Leaving the picnic area, one left a small amount of paper along trail and the other would walk backwards and forwards across the trail to confuse those who later tried to follow it. Periodically a note would be left giving instructions to find a hidden chocolate which may be in a bird's nest or under a stone. Later the other school picnickers would set off and try and follow the trail. The leaders would get back to the main gathering and hide from those following the paper trail. When the followers returned and searched out the hidden leaders, the chase was on to catch them. At Christmas time a school concert was held before Father Christmas arrived.

On alternative Saturday nights at Moorlands Hall, the Social Club ran an evening where Bridge, Euchre and Crib (card games) would be played till 10 pm then a dance till 11.30. Locals would supply the music, my Father on the piano playing by ear "There were ten pretty girls" and Alf Wilmshurst on his button accordion giving his rendition of "Click go the Shears".

DISTRICT SPORT

Before the war exodus each small settlement including Moorlands had their own football, netball and tennis team. Bigger towns like Cooke Plains and Coomandook had a cricket team as well. When travelling to far away matches like Coonalpyn, the whole team would travel on the back of the truck sitting on bags of chaff or boxes. In wet weather a tarpaulin was used to keep rain off.

ARBOR DAY

One day a year was set aside as Arbor Day where planting of trees was promoted. Tuart Gums, which are a native of Western Australia, were planted to commemorate people who went to the war. Sam Collins, a local identity, would propagate these seeds and when big enough they were planted. A row of them were planted between the Moorlands Hall and the Highway and each Friday afternoon they were watered by students using buckets of rainwater from the Moorlands hall tank. A few years later borers killed them all as Tuarts were very susceptible to them.

One year 2 of the children from one family had diphtheria and 1 had died. The rest of the school children were taken to Tailem Bend for a vaccination. For the remainder of the day, we inspected the railway workshop including a large turntable in the centre which could rotate the biggest steam locomotive and be run off on to any one of about 20 sections in the round workshop for servicing.

Tailem Bend was a Railway Town and most people lived in railway houses and were employed by South Australian Railways. 500 workers were employed here.

Another vaccination day was used to inspect the Riverbend butter factory which was situated on the main road to the northern end of the town, close to the cliff. Much of the cream came by train from various mallee lines. Road trucks also had rounds picking up eggs and cream. Some cream came by river boat and was hauled up the cliff by horse and dray.

As the war continued school students were depleted. Seven students was the minimum number required to keep a school open. Students were recruited to keep the numbers up.

Eddy Stevens was a beekeeper and lived in a caravan at Cyril Stock's farm. His 3 children helped to keep the school open for some years. With low numbers of students, sports days were cut out and activities limited.

In the early 1940's rabbits were everywhere, it was possible to catch several with your bare hands, under bushes and logs and in small burrows. Many school lunch times were spent in the railway yard or nearby areas catching rabbits. When adults were not watching empty railway trucks could be pushed up and down the railway loop-line which was a sideline for loading and unloading merchandise, using the pinch bar which every railway siding had.

When I started, school transport was by horse and cart and it took nearly an hour to harness the horse, load everything that was required, get to school, unharness the horse and get into class. The cart was made from the back end of a Swift car which had been cut off in front of the back wheels. Shafts were added to the front. While I've never seen a complete Swift car it must have been about the size of an Austin A7.

We had a boot behind the seat where we put our school bags, cans of cream and eggs to take to the train. On the way home in the afternoon we carried bread, mail and empty cans. Cream was in 3-gallon cans as this was the size we children could handle.

The axle of this cart is in the scrap heap behind the workshop although the wheels have been altered. During the war tyres and tubes were unprocurable so the old tyres were filled with horsehair to keep it mobile.

The horse was a bay pony from Wedge Island, named Clementine. She was a bit bigger than a Shetland pony and she would shy at anything - a rabbit jumping out of a bush, a bit of flapping paper or some other imaginary thing. She could do a 180 degree turn in about 3 steps. About every 6 months she would bolt upsetting cans of cream and kids. One time near the house she got off the beaten track, tipped everything upside down and finished up with 4 legs in the air.


When meeting another vehicle on the road we would get out of the cart and hold the horse's head. This could take some time especially if we met a convoy of American army vehicles travelling from Melbourne to Darwin. This is the first time I had seen a semi-trailer. Because of petrol rationing some people fitted gas producers to their vehicles. A gas producer was a steel cylinder filled with charcoal lit at the bottom using a kerosene saturated wick. The smouldering fire produced a gas which was channelled into the vehicle engine. The engine produced less power than petrol. The gas producers were renowned for dropping sparks and coals and so started many fires.

One day I was holding Clementine as a truck was approaching as it was unpredictable what she would do. The truck driver stopped to ask directions and his gas producer periodically let out a puff of smoke. With each puff Clementine would give a jump.

As she aged, she mellowed and on her retirement her hooves grew long and eventually she had to be put down. I don't have a photo of Clementine and when asked why I said, "I've had enough of horses to last a lifetime."

When it came to my secondary schooling, I went to Woodside to attend Oakbank Area School and lived with my Auntie Annie, another one of Mother's sisters. Three months after I started, Rheumatic Fever struck me at the age of 13. That finished my education and then later I had a relapse and that set me back again. While convalescing from Rheumatic Fever my teenage years were spent working with my parents on the farm.

I didn't qualify for National Service Training, which was compulsory for young men, but I did read a lot of Agricultural journals on sheep husbandry which placed me in good stead for later life.



Success Story

From A Staff Representative
MOORLANDS, Aug. 6.

A man who was able to complete only three months of his secondary education because of a seven-year rheumatic fever affliction today runs one of the most advanced Dorset Horn studs in the State.

Mr. Malcolm Piggott, of R. V. Piggott & Sons Ltd., of Moorland, was severely stricken with rheumatic fever when 13—only three months after he had started high school.

Today, Mr. Malcolm Piggott, 31, is busily preparing his stud stock for this year's Royal Adelaide Show in the hope that he can add to his already impressive collection of blue ribbons from the Adelaide Show and the Royal Melbourne Show.

Mr. Malcolm Piggott said his "convalescent studies" must have borne fruit because the property had been able to increase its stock numbers four times in a matter of four years.

Mr. Malcolm Piggott

I would spend regular holidays with my Grandparents at Wistow on their property known as “The Willows”. Situated about 5 miles from Mt. Barker in beautiful undulating country, they grazed sheep, cattle and 3 horses all on 60 acres. Maize and potatoes were grown around the house acting as firebreaks. Maize was cut daily with a pocketknife to feed the horses.

Another part of their income was 300 fowls. To keep that number of fowls each year they would kill or sell off the oldest 100 and replace them with 100 day old chicks. A story was told that one year a rooster was missed when sorting, and when he grew he took a liking to one hen in particular. Each year she would hatch out a batch of chickens.

The butcher, baker and greengrocer would call each week to the Wistow farm, delivering their wares. One of the highlights would be to harness Jack the horse, put him in the buggy and go into Mt. Barker on sale days. In those days there were unemployed men wandering the roads calling on people, doing odd jobs to get a bit of money to take them a little further. One such chap called on my Grandparents and wanted to do a lead pencil drawing of their house.



CHARACTERS

There were plenty of people walking the roads looking for work, some would call in and have a good meal at night and a bed but would be gone before work started next morning (one took ½ a dressed sheep that was hanging in the shed!)

One chap claimed he was riding his push bike to Melbourne to see his sick wife. He found it hard going so called in to sell his bike so he could buy a train ticket. Father didn't want to buy the bike thinking it may have been stolen but offered him a pound for his watch, which he accepted. The watch went for many years, and I understand the bike was sold a bit further down the road.

Another young chap called in with his bike and was prepared to work without pay, only food and a bed. He had ridden that bike from Adelaide to Melbourne and was on his way back without getting a job. His name was **Ron Clayton** and he proved to be a very good worker and stayed on till he joined the army at the beginning of World War 2. I can remember Ron standing on a horse's back gathering sparrows' eggs and young birds from the thatched hay shed. At this stage these birds were in plague proportions and used to fly around in huge flocks and would make their nests anywhere. Sheds, stone heaps, and every mallee tree near the house seemed to have several nests in them. The Government used to pay 3 pence per dozen for sparrow and starling eggs and heads as an eradication program. The heads would be threaded on a piece of wire, the eggs would have a hole put in each end and the insides blown out so they would not get too smelly if left lying around too long. At that time hen's eggs were only worth a penny a dozen. Sparrow shot was available for 12 gauge shot guns. By shooting into a flock many a sparrow could be brought down with one shot.

Scotty Truscott was another elderly gentleman who worked around the district on various jobs. I can remember him camping in the chaff shed on the north side of the cow shed. I remember being with him when he was by the back boundary fence in what is now paddock 19. He had his push bike loaded with rabbit traps. A sudden heavy shower of rain came, and we sheltered under a tea tree but still got wet. Scotty was in the Tailem Bend Hospital when he died, he had a small insurance policy to cover his medical expenses. The insurance agent called at the hospital regularly to collect his 2 shillings insurance money but when he died they would not pay up because his death certificate had a different initial to what was on the insurance policy. Some of his tools are still about, including the Footprints pipe wrench behind the seat in my ute, the 2 foot by 1 foot steel square in the workshop and until recently a folding pair of wire cutters that he used in World War 1 for removing barb wire entanglements.

Another was **Jack Parnell** who though he had a bit of an alcohol problem, was involved with erecting many buildings in the district. Once he was helping us build a cowshed. The method of building was to crack stones with a hammer to about 5cm in diameter, mix with a lime mortar and pour in between planks. While building this cowshed the walls were about 3ft high by Saturday night. During the night there was very heavy rain and the wall collapsed. Jack said that was the end of his building but after breakfast he reassessed the situation and by Sunday evening he had it back to where it was before the storm so he was ready to go on with the building on Monday. Other buildings constructed this way were our original shearing shed and Stan Smythe's shearing shed.

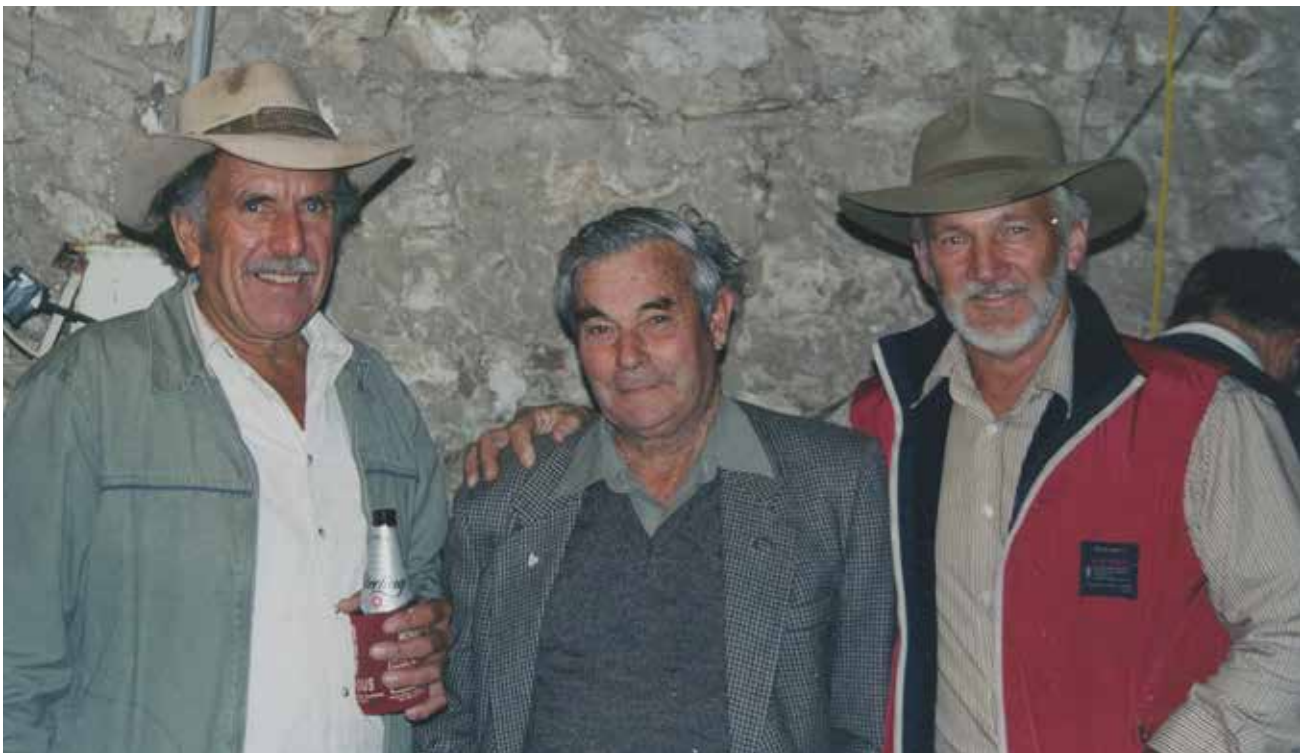
Morrie Graetz was an ex-school teacher who helped us build our first shearing shed. He and I were carting hay from paddock 17. Morrie was ahead of me on the Fordson tractor. When I came over the hill with the Ford truck I could see that the tractor had started a fire and it was heading in a northerly direction. I raced towards this fire flat out in third gear and broadsided which showered it with dirt. When we found how successful that had been, we did the same across the front of the fire and extinguished that too.

In our early married life, I had 2 young men working for me at different times.

Peter Stone worked for his uncle at Moorlands before coming to us. After some time, he fell in love and married Sally, who was helping Joan Piggott who lived just across the road from us. He was a good worker but a larrikan at heart.

If there were any shenanigans going on in the district, you can be sure Peter was involved. From what I can gather it was all good fun and quite harmless.

Jim Hailes was another farmhand. On his first day at work, he roared up the track on a very noisy motor bike. Leather jacket and long hair flowing out behind him. I didn't know what I'd struck, but two nicer guys you wouldn't find anywhere.



FROM LEFT: PETER STONE, MALCOLM PIGGOTT & JIM HAILES

DEPRESSION, DROUGHT & WAR YEARS

A good year's profit was made from a partly cleared mallee farm, along with a healthy bank overdraft, but during the 1930's Depression the profit was much smaller. Having a mixed farm helped, if one enterprise wasn't paying another could help out.

The sale of mallee stumps for city wood stoves was one of the best enterprises at the time.



MOTHER CARTING STUMPS

Other enterprises were wool, prime lambs, grain, cream, eggs and pigs. Some farmers burnt charcoal which was sold as fuel for the steam engines that were used at the time to power the Wellington ferry. Wood was also used at the lime kiln and butter factory at Taillem Bend and Jervois. The railways used some wood to start the fire of steam engines. My Father would go to Adelaide annually during the depression to visit his creditors to explain his financial situation and obtain an extension on his bank overdraft.

There was a great exodus of people from the district at the beginning of World War 2. Some joined the Army while others joined the munitions factory at Islington. Some of the women joined the land army producing food. Farewells were a regular thing in the local hall. A comment was once made that the last person leaving the district would have to farewell themselves.

Because of the shortage of labour during the early war years the side lines were sold off, fertilizer and many other goods were unprocurable. Petrol, tea, butter, sugar and clothing were rationed. Hand-me-down clothing from older siblings were often the norm and we couldn't be fussy eaters. We learnt to eat everything on our plates.

My Father had 3 properties to manage because there was no one else available. Up to 2,000 sheep were shorn giving us a total of 80 bales of wool. The Government rostered shearers throughout the state. Father and Stan Smythe worked together to keep the shearers going. Merle helped with the mustering and wool picking for at least one year.

With a shortage of shearers, Father at the age of 45 bought a single stand shearing plant and taught himself to shear, supplementing the farm income. By taking the shearing plant on the ute, along with the Ajax wool press if required on the trailer, he did quite a lot of shearing in the district.



PRISONERS OF WAR

Towards the end of the war there were quite a few Italian POW (Prisoners of war) working in the district on dairies along the river. Their outer clothing was dyed red which made them easily identified.

Salvadore Polombo (left) was one that Father took on to help with manual work.

It was the employers responsibility to take the POWs to Church on a Sunday.

Grubbing stumps by hand, picking stones, helping with fencing, milking the house cow. He grubbed stumps in paddock 20 and made heaps all over the paddock. He would put stumps with long roots poking out of a heap at 45 degrees imitating canons. It made the paddock look like a battlefield.

He was most upset when they were all sold. After the war he returned to Italy and continued to keep in touch with my Mother for many years.

1944 DROUGHT

This was the worst drought on record with little rain, no fertiliser and lots of rabbits. Sheep feed was very scarce and all sheep other than the Dorset Horns were sold. Paddocks 17 A and B and paddock 19 was all one paddock at the time and sewn to oats that year. Some was tall enough to cut with a binder for hay, but the rest was too short and was either reaped for seed or cut with a mower and stacked as loose hay.

Sand drift was bad, evidence of which can still be seen. The primrose hill in paddock 16 and 18 still show the scars. These blowouts started from rabbit burrows on sand ridges. The centre of paddock 22A is another example. This was a good patch of native pines which had been left when clearing. It became full of rabbits which bared the ground around it. The tree lined fence on the north and south also had the same problem with rabbits. By the end of the 1944 summer the entire paddock was drifting.

CROPPING & MACHINERY

The first tractor was purchased in 1944. It was an old second hand 2-cylinder kerosene Hart Par with steel wheels. The large steel spikes for grip on the back wheels made it extremely rough to ride on in stony paddocks. The steering wheel had 1¼ turns of free play making straight rows difficult. The front wheels were taken to Bowers Garage at Tintinara to have rubber tyres fitted. The rubber tyres an improvement. Mrs Bower, who was known to the family at Auburn, had worked at Islington war munitions factory and had learnt how to weld. Bowers had started the garage after the war and it was one of the few places that oxy welding could be done. Behind their garage was an artesian bore with a tap on it. This underground water rose above surface level and was controlled with this tap.

On one occasion this tractor was used to try and rip rabbits using a 4 furrow Mouldboard plough. Just east of the gate between paddock 20 A and 21 B the tractor became hopelessly bogged in the rubble soil. It must have shaken the foundations of the burrows as I don't think the rabbits ever returned.

In 1945 we purchased a Massey Harris 102 Junior tractor. I think it had a Vanguard car engine. This was purchased from a potato grower at Woodside. Once warmed up, the engine could be switched over to power kerosene and could pull a 16 row combine. This tractor had a self-starter, lights, turning breaks, rubber tyres, PTO, road gears – what a beauty! A power take off was fitted to the header and binder, then some contract reaping and hay cutting was done using this tractor.

Stan Smythe had a paddock which he had not stocked and was saving it for his lambs. Then one windy day grass blew up against the netting fence and sand was blowing over the fence by nightfall.

Stan Smythe sowed 2500 acres once over with the combine to stop drift. Much of the oats was cut for hay. Barley was reaped and averaged 8 bags to the acre while rye was sown and reaped off the best patches. Some of the hay was cut and then grain reaped with our little Massey 102 Junior tractor.

1945 hadn't started off too good in SA. The Government wanted to buy hay to distribute to the worst districts. Paddock 20 A and B were cut for hay. Many other farmers in the district also cut hay and about 400 ton of sheaved hay was stacked in Jaensch's paddock at Moorlands near the highway ready for distribution. Seasonal conditions were such that the hay was not required that season and it was eventually sold to a local grazier.

It was a wet summer with 2-3 inches of rain every month. Hay was still being carted in March, much of it was weather damaged.

Horse drawn machinery had a large cog on the main wheel driving onto a small one which turned the machinery, this system was known as ground drive or crown wheel and pinion drive. When tractors were first used, they did not have a power take off shaft. Energy would be lost converting the tractor into forward motion, more power would be lost when machinery converted that energy back into driving the works. Later tractors had a revolving PTO shaft connected from the engine with 2 universal joints for cornering. By driving the machinery this way, we saved power. Because a header works on a different angle to a binder the shaft was run through a car differential to get the right angle. The power saved by using the PTO meant a smaller tractor could do the same job saving fuel and reducing the chances of getting stuck in the sand.

Father was reared at Morchard in the mid north -a wheat growing area. So wheat growing was in his blood. At Moorlands the first wheat crop after burning the rolled scrub was usually satisfactory, possibly due to there being no root disease along with an accumulation of balanced nutrients in the root zone. Later crops were generally less productive.

In the mid 1930's my Father started growing barley. One day while reaping with an AL Harvester in a paddock by the road, a passing motorist stopped to examine the bagged barley. When emptying the next box of grain the motorist was still there and offered a very good price for the barley. Father said he was ashamed of the sample as a horse had put its foot through a sieve when adjustments to the machine were being made. By reaping with one sieve instead of two the grain sample was very rough, so he offered to re-clean the barley at no cost before delivery. The motorist said that if the grain was re-cleaned there would be no sale as he was a buyer from Barrett's maltsters in Adelaide. They could re-clean the grain without affecting the malting quality which no one else could do. This motorist claimed malting barley needed damp nights to finish properly. That is why Yorke Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and this district being near the lakes was suitable. They bought our barley for many years before the Australian Barley Board was formed.

The only way my Father, an addicted wheat grower could stop growing wheat, was to sell all he had at harvest time so there was no seed wheat for the following year. He then referred to wheat as a weed.

FATHER PAINTING A PLOUGH

During and after the war, fencing material was unprocurable and one farmer had a lot of second-hand fencing material along with several pieces of agricultural machinery which he wanted to sell all in one package. My Father bought the package and included in this was a Sundercut disc plough which he didn't want. Before selling it, he thought it would be best value to give it a good coat of paint. The original colour was red, so he got busy and painted most of this plough but ran out of paint. So he opened another tin which he thought was the same colour and finished the job. Alas it was green paint! My Father was colourblind. Even the little patches missed earlier didn't match. The result - one very patchy disc plough.

For the same reason he couldn't pick red tomatoes!

LUCERNE

Hunter River Lucerne was first grown by Father over much of the farm and did very well despite what some consultants said. It was first sown at ½ pound per acre and after his trials this was increased to 2 pound per acre. Medics (legumes) were also sown. Ron Badman was a ram buyer from Naracoorte and frequently went past the property and said “the whole property stood out like an oasis in the desert”. Besides the 400 stud ewes and their progeny, cattle were also grazed - heifers from the dairies or store cattle from Alice Springs. One year 120 of these cattle were fattened on our property. Some were well bred bullocks from Derwent Station. One of them when sold, topped the Adelaide Abattoirs market.

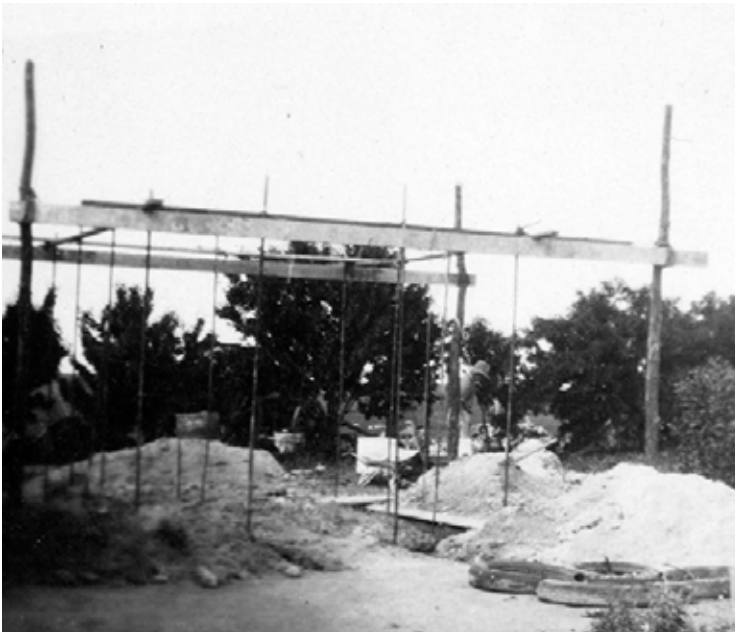


CATTLE FROM NORTHERN TERRITORY ARRIVING AT ILLOURA

THE FARM BUILDINGS



**ORIGINAL PART OF THE HOUSE,
THIS IS THE LAUNDRY WHICH WAS BURNT.
MOTHER'S RUBY ENGAGEMENT RING
WAS LOST IN THIS FIRE.**



THE CELLAR BEING BUILT

The cellar with a store room above was built about 1931. When the cellar was being built Robert as a 3 year old tried to crawl down the steps on all fours imitating a cat. The angle of descent in relation to the forces of gravity combined to put one small boy---base over apex to the bottom. The cellar had shelves for preserved fruit and a safe to keep mice away from the home made jam.

HOMESTEAD

The first part of the current Illoura house was built in 1923/24.

A 2,000 gallon rainwater tank supplied the entire house with water for 7 people. The bath and dish water were saved in buckets and then carried out on the garden.

Saturday was bath day. Water would be heated in the copper and girls bathed first. More hot water was added and then boys followed. Sometime later a second rainwater tank of 3,000 gallons was added to take any overflow.

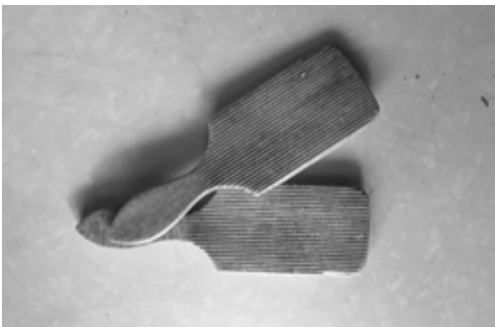
In 1926 a towel close to a chicken brooder in the bathroom is believed to have started a fire which burnt that corner of the house, the valuables were hurriedly removed through the bedroom window. In the process Mother's ruby engagement ring was lost and never found. Fortunately, the fire was extinguished with the main part of the house being saved.

As the family grew, a sleepout was built on the eastern side of the house down about 4 steps from the main part of the building. The roof butted up to the stone wall of the main house and the east side of the sleepout had 4ft. galvanised iron walls with fly wire and canvas above. The girls slept one end and the boys the other. The girls learnt music and one would tap a tune on the iron and the other would try and identify the song.



BUTTER CHURN

The butter churn was stored in the cellar. The churn consisted of a wooden box with a handle on the outside which revolved a paddle inside the box. Cream would be placed inside it, the handle then revolved for some time depending on the temperature during the day and the age and thickness of the cream. A wooden lid kept the splash in. Eventually the watery buttermilk would separate from the butterfat. The buttermilk would then be saved for making pancakes or little current buns, these were known as possum knockers or sinkers. My wife says she can't make possum knockers like my Mother did. They were made with self-raising flour, buttermilk, little sugar, currants and salt, this was then mixed into a dough like scones. They were much sort after by children after school.



BUTTER PATS

The butterfat would be washed twice with cold water salt added and then beaten into square packs with 2 wooden butter pats. Delicious homemade butter.

The cellar was also where home made cheese was made. This was never a threat to Kraft.

About 6ft. on the end of the cellar was cordoned off with fly wire for storing meat and hooks in the ceiling for hanging meat. A cement slab was used for salting meat for preservation as there was no fridge but there was a cement tub for brine for curing meat.

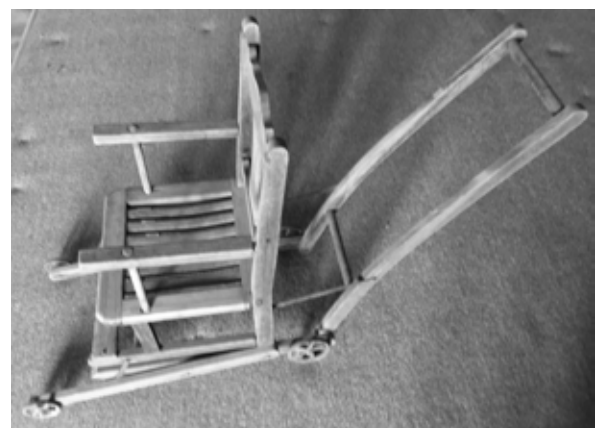
The 70 lb bags of sugar and flour would be emptied into steel drums and groceries such as currants, sultanas and dates etc. were then put into a cupboard with doors to keep the mice out and a lock to keep the children away from the dried fruit. This cupboard is still in the Homestead at the end of the passage, used as a Linen Cupboard.

In the early days groceries were purchased from Uncle Walter Paterson's grocery shop in Standen Street, Murray Bridge. Walter used to run quite a few fowls and the eggs were sold through the shop. He delivered groceries using 2 horses and a trolley.

We would exchange wheat for the fowls and chaff for the horses for an annual supply of groceries.



**HIGH CHAIR THAT
CONVERTS INTO A
PRAM**



HOMESTEAD RENOVATIONS

After the war it took a while for things to turn around. The house was improved in 1949 when the sleep out was pulled down and 2 bedrooms and a bathroom were added on the east side.

A lounge was built on the north side and the area between the house and storeroom was enclosed with walls and louvres.

Not enough new iron could be purchased to cover all the roof so some second-hand iron had to be used. The roof was put on by Dave Boyd and he was paid £10 an hour for himself and the team of 8 neighbours that came to help. He supplied all the hand tools - no electric tools back then, and he could keep them all busy. The house is about 7 inches off square.



SEVERAL PHOTOS OF HOUSE RENOVATIONS IN 1949

STONE SHEDS – THE BARN

The barn was the first stone shed built with my Fathers comment “If it doesn’t fall down before it is finished the shearing shed will be next”. The builders were Father and Morrie Graetz, an ex school teacher. Neither had any building experience. They built the scaffolding out of thinnings from the pine forest at Kuitpo costing 6-pence each. For a high wall the uprights were stood in tar drums packed with stone. These uprights formed part of the scaffolding.

All the stone sheds were built with local stone from the paddock with local sand and lime mortar.

SHEARING SHED

The original shearing shed was about 1/3 as big and half as high as today’s shed. It was built with cracked stone and lime mortar and because there was no dampcourse, salt damp was a problem as shown in the photo.



**SALT DAMP ERODING AWAY
THE ORIGINAL SHEARING SHED**

The northern half had grating and catching pens, the other half had a shearing board at the western end where a 2 stand portable shearing plant would be brought in by the shearers. The wool table was close by down one step from the board. A couple of box wool presses plus bins were down one side then in later years a manual Ajax wool press was purchased.

The full bales of wool were rolled outside (up to 80 bales during the war years.) Sheep from 3 properties were shorn during this time - sheep grazed on Illoura, Alf Wilmshurst’s property next door, and the southern half of Section 2 which was owned by Jim Allen back then. He was away at the war. This property is now owned by Kingsley and Jarrad Maczkowiack.

The box presses were made of wood about the same height as the Ajax press, the wool bale would be held in place by 6-inch nails around the top. The wool was regularly pressed down by foot and when a bale was full one side had a flap which was pulled over the top and hooked down all round. The press was held together with pins in each corner and by taking one side off the press the bale could be removed. These bales were longer and softer than those pressed in the Ajax. All wool was sent to Adelaide by train. During the war years wool was stock piled and known as JO Wool. Subsistence money was paid for it, about 10-12 pence per pound. When the wool was later sold, an additional price was paid to the producer.

There were many good reliable Aboriginal shearers from Point McLeay employed in the 1930’s.

In 1953 a replacement for the old shearing shed was built measuring 60'/30' with a concrete band around the top of the wall. One day while in the shearing shed I heard a noise behind me, to my surprise a 4ft brown snake had fallen from the rafters. We'll never know how he got up there.

This was followed by the sheep shed which was built over where the old pigsty used to be. This was 32'/20' it had a 4' wide race down the middle with 4 pens either side. It was built for hand mating sheep and fostering lambs.

Next came the implement shed 60'/30' with an adjoining workshop (20'/30')

IMPLEMENT SHED

The first implement shed was built where the present shed now stands. The roof was of iron and the walls were made of tar drums which had been opened and rolled out flat. The height of the shed was adequate for the stripper but when the Sunshine AL Harvester was bought, a trench had to be dug for the wheels to get the elevator under the gutter of the implement shed.

This shed was also used for bagged superphosphate which was loaded by hand at seeding time.



SUNSHINE AL HARVESTER – AN AUSTRALIAN INVENTION OF HV MACKAY



MOVING THE ORIGINAL TOILET TO THE JUNK YARD!

STABLES

The cottage now stands where the Illoura horse stables used to be.

Keeping the horse team healthy and in good condition was quite a skill. When the team was working in new ground, sometimes there were injuries from stakes, and sometimes the harness rubbed causing sore shoulders and the horses needed to be spelled. During slack times they would be turned out in the paddock to graze. When the paddocks were sandy, they could pick up some sand with their feed which would accumulate in the gut and this could become fatal. A good dose of burg oil could shift the blockage.

To keep team numbers up, sometimes outside horses had to be brought in. Sir Sydney Kidman had cattle stations in Central Australia plus 1 at Kapunda where he used to have horse sales. On one occasion our mallee farmers went to Kapunda and bought 6 unbroken horses. The first day they were home they caught one, handled it a bit and put it in the middle of the team, this was repeated the next day and by Saturday all six horses were in the team.



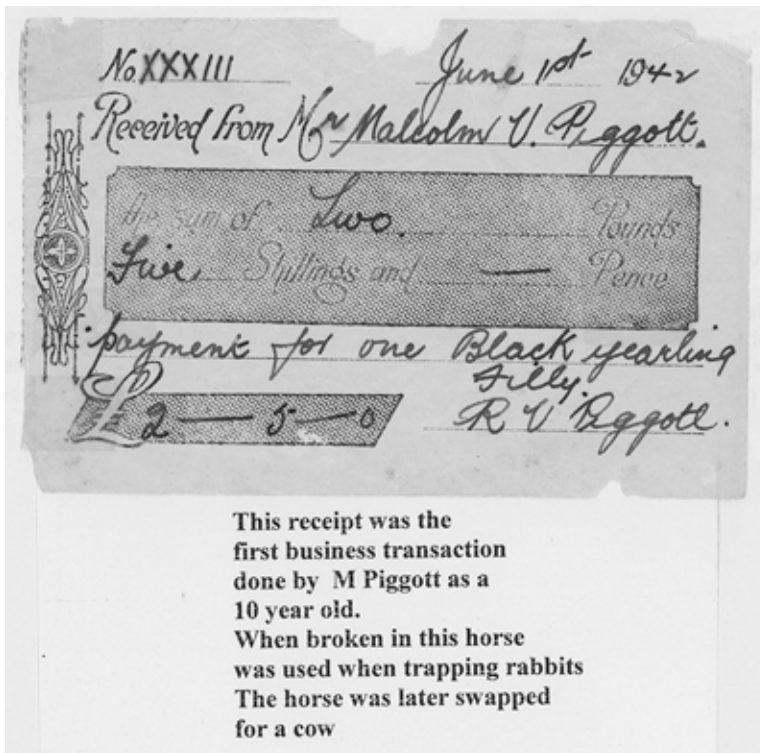
**HORSE TEAM READY FOR WORK IN 1930'S
NOTE THE THICKNESS OF THE STRAW ON THE SHED
WHICH COULD BE TAKEN OFF FOR HORSE FEED IN TIMES OF DROUGHT.**

There was a yard to the east for the stables for the horses and a manger for feed. Access was provided by a central walkway with stalls at one end. A chaff cutter elevator ran into one end of the shed and another compartment was used for cocky chaff.

A large stack of sheaved hay was between the stables and cow shed. This was built on a layer of big stones to keep the bottom hay dry. The hay was cut with a binder then put into stooks to cure before stacking. If stacked too soon before properly dry, it could ignite spontaneously. The sheaves were cut into chaff with a chaff cutter driven by belt attached to the engine of a stationary 1926 car engine. As small children, Doreen and Robert decided to 'fix' this engine, and it never went again. The belt also drove the elevator which took the chaff from the cutter into the chaff shed.

When Gullickson's had their clearing sale and left Moorlands in about 1942, Father bought a pen of 5 unbroken yearling horses for £2 5s each (\$5.50 in today's currency)

To control lice in sheep after shearing, the sheep were put into a plunge dip which was 2 metres deep, 4m long and ½ m wide. The sheep would run or be pushed into the race and into the water where they were dunked twice. There would be a decoy at the end to lead them out. An arsenic dip proved to be most efficient.



One particular year, after shearing, the dip had been cleaned out and covered down with iron but one of the young horses walked on the iron, fell in and died attempting to get out. With help from neighbours, it took all day to get the horse. The dip was behind the pigsty where the current sheep shed now stands.

Another of these yearling horses had been hand reared and was very quiet. I bought it from Father and after leaving school used it in a trolley for trapping rabbits.

I later swapped this horse for a cow from Cyril Stock and still have the receipt(see left)

BLACKSMITH SHOP

The blacksmith shop was southwest of the shearing shed and contained the forge, a drill and anvil. The sides were made of tar drums. The anvil was bought from ND Smyth who was Rob's Grandfather whose property joined our back fence.

One day after the forge had been used to repair machinery the fire was not completely put out. Sometime later I went past the blacksmith shop with a bucket of milk for the calves in a nearby paddock and noticed the fire had re-kindled. Because there was no water near by the bucket of milk was used to extinguish the blaze. I don't remember if the calves were fed or not that day.

PIGSTY

The first pigsty was where the present sheep shed now stands. This was made of pine posts standing in the ground, touching on the sides with a rail on each side at the top to stabilize the fence.

A well was dug 25m in front of the pigsty in the hope of getting good stock water. Fresh water had been used to make digging easier, when water was eventually struck the men tasted it mud and all and thought it was good. Later when the mud had settled and more water had soaked into the well (diluting the fresh water), the ladies tried it and said it was terrible.

ELECTRICITY FOR THE BUILDINGS

Before electricity was installed, lighting was mostly by kero lamps and candles. The main lamp was an Aladdin and the mantle of ash had to be handled very carefully. If the wick was turned up too high it would soot up and smoke the glass chimney and also clog the mantle.

Imagine cooking over a hot wood stove in summer, no fan or air conditioning. A cast iron fountain on the stove provided hot water and homemade jam and preserves simmered on the stove, always in summer. On some very hot days the fire was allowed to go out.



HINGED IRON

All clothes were ironed using a set of 3 irons which were heated on the wood stove. The set of irons had one detachable handle which was changed as the irons cooled. These were known as Mrs Potts irons. A cloth was kept handy to wipe the bottom of the iron should smoke from the mallee stump fire put black on the bottom.

Another type of iron had a hinged lid under the handle, coals from the stove were placed inside the iron with tongs, periodically the iron had to be taken outside and swung too and fro, to freshen up the live coals and create more heat. The swinging action removed the ash and more coals were added to the iron as required.



**CONSTRUCTION OF
THE LIGHT TOWER**

A 12-volt wind light was first installed for lights only and later it was upgraded to 32 volt. Power generated by the wind generator was stored in a bank of car batteries. 2x 6-volt batteries provided 12-volt power and 5x 6-volt + 1 2-volt battery provided 32-volt power. Some electrical appliances could be used with this, if the batteries were charged!

Wind generators had their own problems. At one stage the blade came off and the dent was on the roof of the house for many years. Both the shearing and the milking machine engines had generators on them but when the 240-volt power was connected in 1963 the tower was no longer needed. A large steel wheel was put on top of this tower to climb up and spot fires.

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

I have seen many changes to transport over the years.

A metal road ran from Moorlands to Coomandook, known as the Dukes Highway. Before it was sealed it was graded periodically. When dry the white dust restricted visibility and when wet the road was white mud.

About 1938 this road was upgraded, using rubble from our pit in paddock 2. We used our royalty payment for the rubble to build a track that went from the north-east corner of paddock 1, through bushes to where the original stables were in paddock 3, then continued on across paddock 5 & 7. This track was later discarded in favour of the current one, but the gutter is still visible across these paddocks. About 2/3rds of the track had a light coating of royalty rubble before the money ran out.

Then in the 1950's many of the stone heaps on our property were sold for 3-pence a ton and crushed at Coronation Park. This was used to bituminize the road. Father took a holiday with these proceeds.

Lou Casanova had the contract to do this work. His descendants now live south of Ki Ki on the Coonalpyn road. Mr Fabian was also in the work gang and their families lived in tents and followed the work. While at Moorlands these children went to the local school at the same time as Merle and Doreen. Years later two of Mr Fabian's sons ran a dairy on Kilsby's swamp north of Taillem Bend.

FARM TRANSPORT

Originally the bridge crossing the River Murray at Murray Bridge carried both road and rail traffic. My grandfather was on his way from Wistow to visit the Moorlands property with his horse and buggy. While crossing this bridge, a wheel of the buggy got jammed in the train line and broke the buggy axle. They had to get a blacksmith as there was no gas or arc welders, just heat from the forge, hammer and anvil to make repairs.

The first vehicle I heard of on the farm was a one-ton Model T Ford which cost £180. It was the same price to buy it assembled or as parts and you put it together yourself.



**FATHERS MODEL T FORD COSTING HIM £180 – BEING LOADED WITH HAY
ALONG WITH THE HORSE DRAWN CART BEHIND.**

ROAD TRANSPORT

Murray Bridge had the first stock market in the district, a good place to take your sheep and lambs. The road was not too good and the real test for the Model T was the Monteith hill. The sand was often not negotiable, and a detour had to be made via the swamp road. The Model T had some features other vehicles of the day did not have eg automatic transmission.

Our next vehicle was a 1927 Dodge one-ton truck. Mum, Dad and babies rode in the front while the rest of us sat on the back on a bag of chaff with a rug over us. One of the features of this truck was the kangaroo clutch. Beware when you started off!

Then we had a second hand 1938 Dodge ute. Father's speed with this vehicle was 30 mph. A wooden crate was made for this ute to cart pigs, calves and sheep in. Many a time I used this vehicle during my courting days.

My parents had a Holden which I was allowed to borrow if they didn't need it. However, there were occasions when I had to spend time fixing lights or brakes on the old Dodge ute to go out on Saturday night or for a weekend jaunt. Several Holden models have followed.

I also remember a 4 wheeled trolley was purchased. It had shafts if pulled by one horse, a pole for heavier loads with 2 horses. A hitch was made to hook behind the Dodge so we could treble the load capacity of the vehicle.

In those days the registration number plate could be transferred from one vehicle to the next following the owner instead of as it is nowadays. SA57729 was a number you could always remember. This number plate was not in use the last time I checked with the Register of Motor Vehicles. In fact, it has just recently been found in one of the farm sheds and Lynton now has it as part of his old vehicle memorabilia.



**FATHER'S BLACK FX HOLDEN
CIRCA 1956 ON THE
WELLINGTON PUNT.
I believe this FX Holden was the
first model made in about 1954**

Beverley and I started with a ute, but when our family came along, we changed to a Holden Station wagon. We had 3 of these over the years. In those days, baby restraints were not needed. A sleeping baby would be put in the back in a bassinette and as they got older baby capsules were used. Seat belts were not compulsory for anyone.

Our road was the main highway to Melbourne, so there was a lot of traffic on it. Nearby was the 'Moorlands Corner' which was a big sweeping bend and one had to be careful when negotiating this. There were 12 people killed here over a short period of time. It was later changed to a

T-junction and a new Melbourne highway was built to follow the train line from Taillem Bend to Coomandook. This made our road much quieter and the bend much safer.



We only had one car accident during our married life. This was at the notorious Moorlands corner in 1968. Beverley was going to the Moorlands shop when a chap from the southeast and known for his speed, came around this sweeping bend, lost control and broadsided for 90 feet before hitting our car which has nearly stopped off the road to the left.

Beverley escaped with a nasty gash on her head requiring several stitches and 2 swollen knees from hitting the dashboard. The other fellow suffered more leg and hip injuries.

It was fortunate there were no children in our car. Roslyn as a 3-year-old was a flower girl at a cousins wedding at Gumeracha the next day.

Another 2 accidents on this stretch of road was firstly a semi-trailer load of cattle travelling from a stock market in Bordertown travelling towards Adelaide. The driver lost control at Coronation Park, just before this bend. Live cattle were walked and yarded at Illoura, while I had the job of taking dead ones to the boiling down works in Murray Bridge.

The other was with 4 semi-trailers. The first one was carrying a load of glass when he lost control on a bend, blocking the highway. 3 others following close behind didn't have a chance. As far as I can remember there was only 1 serious injury.

Now with the double lane freeway, the Heysen tunnel has made a huge difference on the time it takes to travel to Adelaide. We walked through the Heysen tunnel the day it was first opened.

DIVIDING THE PROPERTY

When the Wilmshurst children left school, rather than trying to incorporate them into the partnership it was decided to split the property. They were still able to work both places together as required. When the properties were divided both halves had the same valuation.

The northern portion was slightly larger because there was an unmade, unfenced road coming from Coronation Park in the north and another road from the Pinnaroo Road near where the District Council of Peake and the Meningie Council join.

These roads joined in paddock 18 before continuing south. This gave Fathers portion a few more acres, 1,300 acres in total. Some stone heaps were put on survey pegs which would be the only identification left.

The property division was chosen by the spinning of a coin. The northern home portion was named "ILLOURA" an aboriginal name meaning "Happy Home" or "Pleasant Place". The Wilmshurst's southern portion was named "GIRRAWEE". This means "Place of Flowers".

When my Father and Alf Wilmshurst went to the bank to dissolve the partnership the manager said "What! Have you had an argument?" They replied "No! We want to get in before there is one". The Manager said it was the first time he had people in wanting to split a partnership before having an argument.



BEVERLEY'S GARDEN AT THE FARM

FARMING AT ILLOURA

LIME

Building lime was burnt on the property made by heating limestone which had been cracked to about 2½ inches in size. A steel grate separated the stone from the mallee wood fire which was underneath. A kiln was dug east of Wilmshurst's first house.

For many hours a fire using mallee sticks would be stoked up under the steel grid with the cracked stone above. When cool it would be bagged into wheat bags still looking like stones. To prepare for building, a bag full would be tipped in a tub of water overnight causing a chemical reaction that would heat the water. Next morning it would have cooled down and stirring the burnt stones would make them disintegrate. This was then called slack lime. 32 shovels full of sand would be put in a ring and the slack lime liquid would be bucketed into and mixed with a muck rake or shovel. This mixture could be stock piled and re-worked when working on a big job.

Later lime was purchased from Barry's Tailem Bend Lime Kiln, managed by Keith Lambshed.

MARKET DAY

Goldsborough Mort had a market day in Tailem Bend on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. It started with sundries about 10.30 am. Sundries could consist of fowls, tools, oats and anything you wanted to sell. One chap used to bring up sawn gum posts from Western Flat on his International truck which he drove at about 25 mph. It rattled as though a big end bearing was gone and you could hear him coming from a mile away.

Pigs and calves were penned in large numbers from bobby calves to vealers, sucker pigs to old boars. Dairy and Beef Cattle, stores and fats were sold in a selling ring with a post in the middle. There was a person in the ring to move the stock around so the buyers could have a good look at them. Buyers were seated on one side and sellers on the other. When sold it was a job to brand the cattle according to the buyer. Angus cattle from Mc Farlane's were a bit excitable and frequently chased the brander around the centre post or out of the pen.

In the early days cull dairy cattle used to be walked from Jervois, the mob growing in size along the way. At the ferry there was a yard on either side of the river and cattle were brought over on the ferry in one load, then walked to the sale yards half a km away.

When dairy cattle were first tested for Tuberculosis at Jervois, those tested positive were branded with a big yellow arrow down the back and trucked out by the train load.

Sheep and lamb sales concluded the market. Prices were often regarded to be as good as Adelaide and most of the stock sold in the market were trucked out by rail.

OFF SHEARS SALE

Besides the monthly market there was an annual off shears sale where larger lines of sheep were sold. These were usually walked to Tailem Bend, 2 or 3 Farmers would go together to drive these sheep starting the day before, yarding them overnight closer to the sale yards so there would be time to draft them before the sale.

A flock ram sale was held after the sheep sale, usually this sale was quite good. One year Father took 20 rams to the sale but because it was a dry season he thought he may not sell them all. Buyers from the South-East bought many of the ewes in the sale and then wanted rams. Father went home and returned with another 20 rams which were all sold above the expected price.

CWA

The second Tuesday of the month was a big day for Taillem Bend. As well as being market day, it was also Country Women's Association day. Many farmers wives would attend the CWA meeting and learn handicraft while the husbands were at the sale.

It was also shopping day . Bill Slocombe owned the shoe shop alongside Eudunda Farmers (now Foodland), where you could buy new shoes or have your old leather boots repaired. Bill came to Australia as a Barwell boy, believed to be orphan children from England following WW1. He started with nothing and built up a good business

Len Bolton's Hardware Store in Taillem Bend was regarded by many as better shopping than going to Adelaide. If he did not have something, he would get it in at a good price. Lance Manning managed the Chemist shop where the Shell truck park is today.

STOCK WATER

Because the underground water was salty, alternatives had to be found. About this time the government put in a stock water scheme from Elwomple. A rock fault which starts near Cooke Plains and runs north to the Marne Jabuk Range separates water that is suitable for stock to the west from salty water to the east. Where the highway crosses the rock fault the eastern side is about 25 ft. higher than the west. From this point the eastern side has very salty water which gradually becomes less salty the further east you go. The western side has fairly shallow water, suitable for stock use only through to the river.

The first reticulated water scheme for Moorlands was a 20ft. deep well about 30 metres south of the highway close to this rock fault. The water tower was about 200 metres to the east on higher ground. Water was pumped to the tank on the tower by a windmill with an engine back up. The pipe went to Moorlands then south to Crouch's. At times in hot weather, insufficient water reached the end of the line. It had been known that people at the end of the line would turn off other people's taps so water would get through. The original water tower was demolished by the army for training during the early stages of World War 2. It was pushed to the west into the well and some of it can still be seen near Elwomple.

The second water scheme was built about 1941 with concrete lined cast iron pipes joined together with molten lead. This water was pumped from a depression south-west of the original well. There are many of these depressions in the area and they are believed to be caused by caves collapsing. An 8ft. deep T shaped trench about 40 metres by 20 metres was dug in what is now Robert Zadow's paddock. Water from here was pumped into the two new water towers. This was used until the Keith pipeline was laid.

CHURCH

Church was held in the hall on Sunday mornings and Sunday School was held in the Supper room at the back of the hall. Sunday School Anniversary was a great event when each child received a book as a prize for good work or good attendance.

Before motor transport the Minister would come from Taillem Bend by horse, lead a service Saturday night, stay overnight with different farmers then onto Cooke Plains for the Sunday morning service, Wellington for the afternoon service and Taillem Bend at night. With motor transport and reduced preaching places all services can now be held on Sunday.

EUDUNDA FARMERS

This supermarket chain started as a co-operative store at Eudunda and expanded to many other larger towns in South Australia. The grocery order could be handed to the assistant in the morning and boxes of groceries were ready to pick up at night. If you were late collecting the groceries they would be put outside for you in the street when the shop was shut. They sold groceries, drapery, and some hardware was stocked, but larger items such as rain water tanks could be ordered in.

The local store had a raised office in the centre with tight wires to each counter, if the item was purchased for cash the assistant would put the money in a cup attached to the wire. The cup would be propelled along the wire by a rubber band activated by pulling a lever. The office girl would check the docket and return the change in the same cup. Groceries were stacked on shelves behind the counter (no self-service in those days). Members of the co-op had their own docket book and ours was number 405. The docket books were on shelves surrounding the centre office. Accounts were posted monthly and a substantial bonus was paid annually to members.

THE LOCAL SHOP

The Moorlands Store and Post Office was the centre of the community. Everyone called in to collect their mail as there were no letter boxes outside. The daily paper, The Advertiser, was available for those who had a regular order. Bread came 3 days a week as ordered, originally sent out from Tailem Bend Bakery in jute wheat bags, but in later years bread was transported in tea chests. This way the loaves kept their shape better. Mishandling of the jute bags meant some loaves of bread made odd shaped sandwiches.

One story was told of a storekeeper in a nearby town. At his farewell evening from the district he confessed that someone came to his shop and bought a 70 lb bag of sugar. At the time it was not entered into the customer's monthly account. Because he couldn't remember who bought it, he charged all customers to their account. All paid except one person who queried it.

Most of the frequently used groceries were on the shelves, perishables were stored in the cellar. A fuel agency supplied oil and fuel in 44 gallon drums.

The local shop also operated the Telephone Exchange for the district on restricted hours.

Outside of those hours an opening fee could be charged, providing the postmaster was at home. Party lines where more than one house shared a line were in place. Each house had its own code ring, ours being 1 long and 2 shorts but there was nothing to prevent other households listening in on your conversation, only honesty. One person was believed to have been listening in on the party line when their turkeys were heard gobbling in the background. Everyone knew who owned the turkeys! Caught out!!!

DR. TO
W. W. MACZKOWIACK
 GENERAL STORE & POST OFFICE
 MOORLANDS
 -The Store of Service-

STATEMENT
 Month Ending

M. 21 6, T. Piggott
Moorlands
 6/1/1961

1 lb butter	4 11 1/2
1 tin Lard	3 6 2
7 lbs potatoes	3 6
1 tin milk	5 8 2
4 lbs preserve cover	2 4
7 lbs potatoes	3 6
1 Petrol	10 0
1 pkt white bread	2 5 1/2
3 drinks	1 10 1/2
2 lbs cig papers	8
1 tin ^{fruit} orange marmalade	9 7
1 tin ^{fruit} salmon	4 7 1/2
1 luncheon beef	3 8 1/2
1 pkt Vita Buds	2 5 1/2
1 tin salivital	4 6 1/2
1 lb butter	4 11 1/2
1 small sausage	2 6 1/2
37	9 4
W. W. MACZKOWIACK Thank You for Your Custom	3 10 10 1/2



MOORLANDS POST OFFICE & SHOP 1947
Our local Doctor consulted in the end room of the shop
on his way to Coonalpyn each week.

GRAIN STACKS

At the railway siding activity grew at harvest time. Three bushel jute bags were stacked carefully in heaps within elevator distance from the railway tracks. When carted to the siding each bag was weighed and branded.

At Moorlands there was no weighbridge for weighing the trucks.

In the early days lumpers used to walk up the stacks carrying bags on their backs, later elevators were used and so the lumpers only had to stack the bags so the stack was neat and did not fall over, this was quite a work of art.



**GRAIN STACKS AT MOORLANDS
RAILWAY STATION - CIRCA 1950**

A 3 bushel bag of barley weighed 150 pound (15 to the ton) and a bag of wheat 180 pound (12 to the ton). Loading a wagon was often done by using a horse to work a Perkins bag loader. A common way to load early motor trucks was to get a stick 18 inches long with a person each end and upending the bag over it on to the truck. Morrie Graetz and I carted 11 loads of 55 bags on the old Ford truck from the back paddock of Miatke's to the grain stacks one day. We were fortunate not to have to wait at the stacks at all that day.

Later we purchased an elevator to load the bags, some trucks had hydraulic G-Well bag loaders fitted .

The main grain stacks were surrounded with galvanised iron in an endeavour to keep mice out.

MY AUBURN AUNTS

My maiden Aunts Min and Una were both school teachers, and had a small Austin A7 car which was past its best. They had bought a little Ford car which had to be picked up from Geelong in Victoria. Min had always been the driver but for some reason she was unable to go. Una arranged for my Mother, who did not have a driver's licence, to go as company. The night before leaving for Geelong they realized Una's lack of driving experience and asked me to go with them as well. At the age of 16, I had just obtained my licence and was able to drive most of the way home as well as giving Una some driving lessons. Una was of the opinion she would be given driving lessons when she picked up the car. This all proved to be a little embarrassing. Just as well I was there.

WAGES

Over a period of years instead of paying me wages my Father, with consultation, would buy much needed machinery for the farm in my name which included:

- Austin 2 ton truck for £1296 in 1954
- 20 row Sun Combine for £405 in 1955
- Fordson Tractor for £1551 in 1961
- Holden Station Sedan £2371 in 1967
- Fiat Tractor for £3446 in 1969

The early 1950's were good seasons. My brother Robert and I did cropping on 2 properties - Miatke's and Ortloff's, as well as at Illoura. The price for grain and rams was also good and the money went back into the farm.

As money was available and the sheep were requiring specialist attention, the paddocks were progressively being sub divided. Laneways simplified stock handling; super phosphate was liberally applied. Improved pasture of lucerne, medic and grasses thrived and in several years pasture hay was cut. Response to fertilizer was spectacular.

Experimental silage was cut in paddock 17. It was a failure due to lack of experience .



CUTTING FOR HAY AND SILAGE

THE FARMER FINDS A WIFE AND HIS FAMILY GROWS

In the 1950's each little town between Moorlands, Cooke Plains and Coonalpyn had their own football and netball teams and we knew each player.

In my early 20's I had a friend at Cooke Plains, Colin Gordon, who was a netball umpire and we used to go to sport together of a Saturday – he to umpire and I took a particular interest in one of the Cooke Plains netballers, Beverley Billingsley.

This friend Colin worked for Bill Irvine at Cooke Plains and he would take Bill's Corriedale sheep to country shows. It so happened one time, there was room on his truck to take some of my Dorset Horns to show at Strathalbyn. This young netballer who I had my eye on was at the show with her parents. Somehow, I found enough courage to ask her to come back to Cooke Plains with me in the truck.



**BEVERLEY BILLINGSLEY,
SECOND FROM THE RIGHT**

This truck was a forward controller with the engine in the middle, which meant it only had 2 seats. So, she had to sit on my knee. Very romantic for a first date. That was well thought out by me and I'm sure her father would not have approved.

Over the next 4 years our friendship developed but not without complications. Firstly, she had another young fellow in tow (David). I thought he might be a problem, but no she sorted him out and I won.

After we had been seeing each other for 12 months, her family moved to Murray Bridge. That made things more difficult. No mobile phones, text messages, emails and we didn't use the landline phones very often. So, letter writing was the next best thing. Postage stamps were 1½pence or 2c in today's language.

Beverley's Dad wasn't the easiest person to get along with. He was a returned soldier after serving in New Guinea during WW2. As with many returned soldiers he suffered from depression. We always had to get permission to go places together and sometimes an answer would not be given until the last minute which made it hard to plan ahead. We were somewhat restricted, and in those days, we would never have disobeyed our parents.

I didn't own a car, so if my parents needed theirs, I would have to make sure the old Dodge farm ute had its lights and brakes working.

My marriage proposal was not as romantic as current days. I simply asked if she would be prepared to live in a tent with me. Her answer was 'Yes'. I thought if she said yes it would mean she wanted me not worldly assets.



The romance lasted and on the 15th September 1956 we were married in the Cooke Plains Methodist Church. This was the year of the highest recorded flood on the River Murray. It rose to record levels and flooded the plains from Lake Alexandrina to the Cooke Plains railway line. It looked as though flood waters may surround the Church. But the railway prevented this from happening and no boats were needed.

After the ceremony, the wedding reception was held in the Cooke Plains Soldiers Memorial Hall with 120 family and friends. Following the reception was the usual send off with old tins tied to the back of the car which rattled all the way along and "Just Married" plastered across the back windscreen. I believe the Best Man, my brother Ross may have been responsible.

So we came back to Illoura, where we cleaned up the car and left the mess at the front gate.



Our honeymoon was at Clifton Hotel at Victor Harbor, for 1 week only as my parents needed the car to attend another family wedding the following Saturday. The Clifton Hotel was where the Woolworths car park now stands.

Our little 2-bedroom home on the farm at Illoura was about 500m from the main house. Not far from where the Wilmshurst's house was many years before. It had a lean-to bathroom and laundry and the toilet was down the backyard.

FLOODS

About 1937 there was a very heavy rain making a lake behind the shearing shed in paddock 12—14. It was possible to swim a horse across this lake and it was here that Doreen learnt to swim.

In 1956 each of the Eastern States of Australia had received a lot of rain. Each of the rivers coming this way were in flood and they flowed into the River Murray creating the biggest flood in Australian recorded history. Banks protecting low lying irrigation areas all gave way, dairy cattle were agisted out to higher ground and milking sheds hurriedly erected.

That year at the Adelaide Show, there was a machinery stand with a backend loader on display which could be fitted on the tractor hydraulics. We bought it from the show but a farmer from Gurra Gurra in the Riverland had seen it and thought it would be ideal for building levee banks around his property. Because it was the only one available, we offered to loan it to him so I took it up to his property on our Austin truck with my new wife as passenger.

We had no trouble getting to Loxton but as roads were closed from there on, we had to cross the river on a special trainline at Paringa Bridge. This was the only access North and South of the river. We then put this loader on a small boat at Berri and went back upstream to Gurra Gurra, which had been cut off by the flood. A big tiger snake was swimming alongside our little boat. It has been said that as the 1956 flood receded, tiger snakes were caught on higher ground. One local resident claimed he shot 180 in one day.

We had to come home through Morgan and Barossa Valley because roads closer to the river were closed.

Now 66 years later, history is repeating itself...

2022 FLOOD

In the spring of 2022, the eastern states had a lot of rain. Flood waters came down the Darling and Murrumbidgee Rivers into the River Murray. This caused flooding all along the Murray. Levee banks gave way, and most towns close to the river were badly affected. Businesses, private homes, caravan parks, dairy flats were flooded. Roads had feet of water washing over them.

We were fortunate that the area from Murray Bridge to the Murray Mouth were relatively safe. The barrages at Goolwa were opened which let the water out to the sea.

FATHER RETIRES

The farm was running well and Father was looking to retire. A house block overlooking the river in Tailem Bend was spoken of. When talking with the bank manager about plans he said "If you go for a holiday where would you go? "Not Tailem Bend" he thought. At that time Victor Harbor houses were cheaper than Murray Bridge, so a house was bought at Sturt Street, Victor Harbor in 1958.

During the latter part of Father's farming days, he had a very special brown kelpie dog called "Chips". One day a group of elderly men were bragging about how good their sheep dogs were and what they could do. My Father, not to be beaten, said "my dog was so good working with sheep that he could put a "blowfly in a bottle", his friend remarked "how does he manage to put the cork in??"

We lived in our small cottage for two years and then moved into the main homestead in 1960, after my parents retired to Victor Harbor.

Gradually I took over management of the farm and the Illoura Dorset Horn and Poll Dorset Studs from my Father. He was always interested in what was happening and would come back from Victor Harbor on a regular basis, bringing friends to see the farm of which he was very proud.

Sometime later a workman's cottage was built on the farm. Most of the timber was purchased from the contractors who were demolishing the Victor Harbor hotel. To raise the floorboards of the old hotel they would put a garden sprinkler on it overnight making it easier to pull out the nails.

In 1980 my brother Robert sold his Moorlands property and moved to Esperance WA.

That same year younger brother Ross sold his Sherlock block and moved to Western Flat in the South East. This was partly because of the distance to travel for school buses at Sherlock while the Western Flat home had the school bus pass right by the door.



OUR DOG CHIPS



KERRILEE WITH RUSTY

OUR FAMILY

Allan was born in early 1958 and Lynton in 1959. Leanne in 1961, Roslyn in 1963 and in 1969 we had Kerrilee.



MALCOLM WITH ALLAN



LYNTON & ALLAN



LEANNE, LYNTON & ALLAN



ALLAN, LEANNE & LYNTON



LYNTON, ALLAN WITH ROSLYN, LEANNE



LYNTON, ALLAN, LEANNE & ROSLYN



KERRILEE

Each of our children have been asked to contribute to my book by writing a page of their memories of growing up....



**SOME MORE RECENT PHOTOS OF
OUR FAMILY BEFORE THE GREAT
GRANDCHILDREN ARRIVED**



**MALCOLM AWARDED LIFE MEMBER OF THE
AUSTRALIAN STUDD SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION**

ALLAN'S MEMORIES

Having 4 siblings ensured there was always someone to go exploring with, they were good times. We also had 6 cousins who lived on the neighbouring farm 1.5 km away that we could walk to and have someone else to play with.

There was always plenty of chores to do around the farm - Chooks to feed, eggs to collect, ducklings to feed and clean out their ponds. Up to about 100 ducks at one stage which were processed on farm and then sold to friends and neighbours. There was always firewood to split and rabbits to trap – we were paid 1c/ounce of rabbit meat . In later years I would often go spotlighting with the .22 rifle on the motor bike.

There was a vegetable garden outside the back door, near the bamboo. Each child had their own plot, growing radishes and carrots and melons from seeds.

One of my favourite jobs was to run out into the paddock with the dog to bring in the lambing ewes. These were settled around the wood heap to keep an eye on them overnight. We all learnt to drive at a young age, and Mum tells the story of the time she saw the truck coming in from the paddock with me kneeling on the seat and steering the truck. Dad had put it in first gear with just enough throttle for the truck to get home, (I couldn't reach the pedals), and I turned the key off when I got back to the yard.

I finished school at Coomandook in 1973, and because there was no opportunity to do Year 12 at CAS, I spent 1974 at Victor Harbor High School living with Grandpa. I met some great people enjoyed sports day and playing sport, and was elected President of the SRC. My Grandfather allowed me the use of his Datsun 180B and the school gave us Wednesdays off to study – I didn't quite get the marks I should have, but I did learn how to surf.

I didn't get accepted to my first choice of becoming a physical education teacher, so it was a choice of being a maths teacher or going to Roseworthy Ag College. Fortunately, I chose RAC where we lived on college, played football for the pink panthers, and I made many lifelong friends.

The year I finished RAC, Lynton decided he was going to go building, so I decided to try a year of farming, share farming with Uncle Ross and shearing. I had a good year, and I went for a working holiday to New Zealand and then swapped my Vauxhall Viva for a Subaru sports car. The good year encouraged me to continue with the farming. I was playing football for Border Downs Football Club, tennis for Moorlands and often catching up with Roseworthy mates on the weekend.

Sue and I were married in 1983 and we moved into the workman's cottage on the farm, which soon became a very cosy home. Chelsea was born in 1990, and Kaitlin in 1993.



ALLAN AND SUE

When Mum and Dad moved to Tailem Bend in 1994, we did some renovations on the farm homestead and settled in there for the next 30 years. We often had overseas trainees working on the farm which was a great experience for us and the children. We've had a very fortunate life with our businesses which allowed us some overseas family holidays. The girls both did well at school and have both married great blokes and are now providing wonderful grandchildren for us to spoil at every opportunity.

In recent years I have become more involved with agri-politics. I have worked with some amazing people and had many fantastic opportunities, including President of Sheep Producers Australia which gave me the chance to travel overseas to advocate on behalf of Australian sheep producers. I am currently serving on several committees, including the Boards of Livestock SA and the Royal Agricultural & Horticultural Society.



**CHELSEA AND COLIN
WITH SEAN & FINN**



**KAITLIN AND TOMMY
WITH MALAKHI**

LYNTON'S MEMORIES

My mother tells the story of how as a young pre-schooler whilst playing near the workshop, I was attracted to my reflection in an open bucket of black sump oil which I curiously looked into – my hand slipped off the side of the bucket and I went in head and shoulders. It was fortunate that the workman was near to drag me out and took me to the house dripping with oil.

As a youngster I remember Blue Hills on the radio, and walking the 1km from the school bus every afternoon after school (most of the time we got a ride down in the morning). TV was restricted to 1 hour/day when we got home from school, which meant we had plenty of time to do jobs and play with others.

My favourite shows were Rin Tin Tin and the Lone Ranger, and we would often play cowboys and Indians. The bamboos in the back yard were good for making bows and arrows and I remember we sewed up an Indian outfit from old jute grain bags.

Once the trees had been knocked over at the Block, as kids we would walk miles picking stumps and throwing them over the 3 tonne Austin tipper truck. Then walked miles burning sticks and stumps that had been wake raked up into rows.

When the swimming pool and tennis courts were built on the farm they were listed as 5 year projects, and they took most of that time. I remember using the Zephyr ute to cart stones in to help build the swimming pool and McArdle's built the tennis court.

LYNTON'S MEMORIES continued...

I remember skiing behind the farm machinery on bags that were tied to the seeder. We always came in filthy from rolling around in the dirt, but Mum always took it in her stride. In later years we used an upside-down car bonnet tied behind the ute.

While at Coomandook Area School, I enjoyed Ag Science, Sport, Woodwork (making a china cabinet which mum still has in their house in Taillem Bend) but the 3 R's were not some of my strong points. Some of us students were on first names with "Basher" – a yard stick; "Bruiser" – a ruler and Ralf – the cane and we could choose which one we were disciplined with. These were finally broken into small pieces by the students and put in the fire wood box for which we all received the "yard stick". To this day I still have the greatest respect for these teachers.

One teacher suggested that a rubber stamp be made for my school report wording "Has the ability but doesn't apply himself".

My final year at CAS was in 1974 and I was President of the SRC. The major project at the school that year was to build the swimming pool and there were many fund-raising events and working bees to get the job finished.

Spotlighting for rabbits and foxes was a common occurrence, sometimes shooting up to 100 rabbits/night on ours and neighbouring farms. Often Steve Duckworth would join us. One night Steve pulled the trigger on the gun inside when I had assured him it was empty, it put a neat hole in the kitchen ceiling. Mum did not find out about that for years.

I had 2 years of farming where I had a half share of a 3 bag barley crop 2 years in a row. I supplemented my income with shearing at Patterson's, Reichstein's, Ifoulds and John Whites. The shearing round went from just north of Moorlands to east of Coomandook. At John Whites we were shearing very wrinkly merinos and John taught me how to stretch the necks of a wrinkly merino to shear and he then added them to my tally.

Cropping at the Block we used a 6 gear Chamberlain tractor and a 20 row Horward Bagshaw combine which is 3.6m wide (12 feet). It took 3 x 18-hour days to work up a 300 acre paddock. We would then work it back, we would harrow, we would seed, we would stone roll. There were stones that would not fit underneath a Chamberlain tractor so we would then grab a 10 lb hammer and hit the stone by hand to make them smaller. They said it was character building, but I had enough character, so I decided to go building with Malcolm Ferguson on Kangaroo Island.

I bought my first 750 TX Yamaha road bike at age 16. The following day my father had John Schwerdt take out a life insurance policy for me (which I later cashed out for some wise investments. Dad said he got me to 16, so I was paying for the funeral.

At 16 years of age, I remember hitchhiking home from Adelaide and was picked up at Glen Osmond by 4 aboriginal men. They were absolute gentlemen, and we laughed a lot. One got out and put me in the middle of the back seat, so I was surrounded. They had a large quantity of Southwark long necks that went round and around the car – including the driver.

I helped Uncle Robert shift machinery to Esperance WA (without a license). On one trip we got to the other side of Ceduna, with me driving the truck and police asked to see his logbook. Uncle Rob says you don't need a logbook for farming machinery. So the policeman turned to me and asked to see my license. "I do not have a truck license with me" and I told the policeman my name was Allan Piggott DOB 11/03/58

My mother had to produce Allan's license at the TB police station the next day – the only illegal thing my mother has done in her life.

While in the west I stayed on to help cousins Ian build a house and Barry and Judith renovate theirs. I managed to get myself electrocuted and owe my life to Judith who was a trained nurse.

Left WA and headed to Alice Springs, travelled with a mate. We'd been in town one day and the first job offered was night fill at Coles. Met 2 lovely girls and 4 of us shared a house that same week. Within 3 days of arriving I was holding down 3 jobs. We met a guy who owned the Ross River Holiday resort, so I headed out to give him a hand building and renovating for about 12 hours a day. Staff were not back from Alice Springs late in the day so we'd take a nail-bag off and don an apron to cook a BBQ for 40. Still no staff back from Alice Springs, so took the apron off to step behind the bar.

Then back to Alice Spring to help build the biggest Woolworths in the southern Hemisphere along with a 33 specialty shops in a mall with carpark. I was the leading hand for that project with Hansen & Yuncken.

After Alice, I travelled with friends to the top of the Cape via Birdsville. Hoping to get a job in Cairns, but after 2 hours in Cairns decided we didn't like. Was in Mackay to get a tank of petrol and stayed the year and found plenty of work. Cabinet Maker, truck driver, bitumen roads. Played footy for North Mackay.

Back to SA to set up my own building company for 35 years. Proud father of 3 beautiful girls who are the light of my life. Bonnie was born in 1992, Carley in 1996 and Kirsty in 1999. Built my dream house on 7 riverfront acres on the river at Murrayview Estate and more recently have added accommodation cabins to capitalise on the extra need for accommodation for Motorsport events at The Bend, and trade gangs working there or at the Solar Farm.

Following in my parents footsteps, I was awarded the "Citizen of the Year" in Tailem Bend in 2019 for Community Service to the Town.



LYNTON WITH DAUGHTERS CARLEY, KIRSTY AND BONNIE



LYNTON'S DREAM HOME ON THE RIVER

LEANNE'S MEMORIES

Growing up with 4 siblings on a farm meant there was always someone to play with and always something to do. Living in the era before a lot of technology, and for many years without a television, much of our fun was self created. Playing cards in the evening was a favourite pass time. Mum and Dad taught us the usual Snap, Switch and Coon Can, but as we progressed, Dad taught us Bridge and 500 which required a bit more strategy and strictly no table talk! Mum often had a large jigsaw on the go as well, set up on a wooden board on the kitchen table so it could easily be moved at meal times. Each of us would get involved in sorting colours and edge pieces, and adding pieces to the puzzle.

During a mouse plague I remember hunting for mice by putting a hose down a hole, turning the tap on, and watching to see which other nearby hole the poor wet mice would emerge from. They were promptly disposed of by Allan and Lynton with a cricket bat or similar weapon. Once when lifting sheets of corrugated iron in search of mice we found a nest of little snakes, most likely Browns, which we treated with a little more respect.

We used to catch a bus to school which was 25 km away. With our house being on a hill we could see the bus coming about 200 metres before it reached our stop. I remember many mornings Mum speeding down our 1 km long driveway in a cloud of dust with the bus approaching our stop. If we missed the bus Mum would have to chase it down, where we would get on to the taunts of fellow students.

Sports day was a big event at Coomandook Area School, and Mum and Dad both encouraged us in our sporting endeavours. I remember dad made a high jump for us so we could practise at home. The frame was made of square steel piping, the incremental rungs were nails welded to the pipe, and the bar was a piece of bamboo cut from the bamboo patch behind the kitchen. Mum would provide an old mattress so we could practise our Fosbury Flop technique without sustaining too much injury.

Mum was a keen tennis player and we all grew up playing country tennis on a Saturday. All ages played in the one local team, so you would often find yourself as a teenager playing against someone old enough to be your grandmother. Those crafty old players could position the ball so well that as youngsters we were kept running from one side of the court to the other while they barely moved their feet.

Sunday we would all go to the Methodist church at Cooke Plains. Mum was a very good seamstress and every year my sisters and I would have a new dress made for Sunday School Anniversary.

Years later when my two sisters and I married, mum demonstrated her sewing skills even more by making each of our wedding dresses and 7 bridesmaid dresses.

Dad was also quite creative, and at Christmas time he would work on mysterious projects in the shed. When we would ask what he was doing, his reply would always be that he was making a 'Wigwam for a Gooses Bridal'. On Christmas morning that would turn out to be a newly painted bike or some other surprise he had been working on.

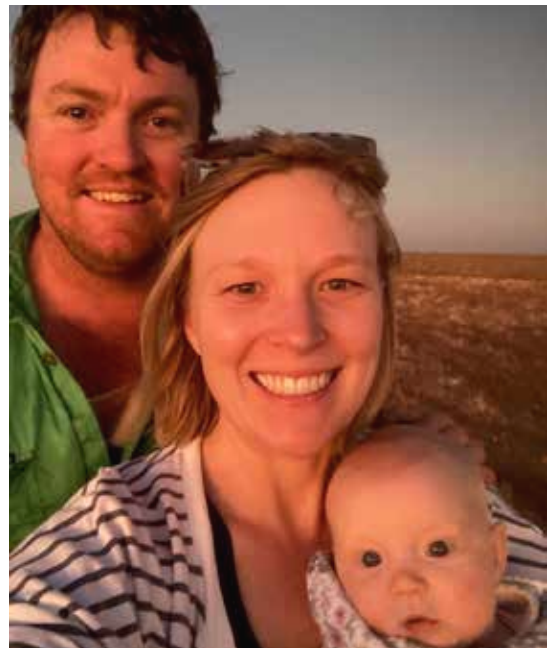
Dad had a very effective disciplining technique when we were young. He kept the newspaper next to his chair at the head of the table, and all he needed to do to get us to behave was to reach for the paper and begin to roll it up. I never remember being on the receiving end of that paper but it was a very effective tool.

After finishing school I deferred my nursing training and studied for two years at a bible college in Sydney. At 18, I was a relatively inexperienced driver but Allan still entrusted his Vauxhall Viva to me to use while he flew to New Zealand from Sydney for a holiday. I remember having to stop on a steep hill at a red light, but each time I attempted a hill

start the little car would roll back. Eventually the drivers from the car behind got out and held the car so I could take off without running back into them.

After returning to Adelaide I completed my nursing training at the Royal Adelaide hospital then married my husband when I graduated in January 1984. Rod and I had many adventures together, converting a shearing shed into our first home in the Adelaide Hills, travelling and camping around Australia, rafting the Franklin river, and eventually moving to Tasmania to live. Ben was 1 when we moved and our two daughters Hanna and Emma were born while we lived there . We had 60 acres on the side of beautiful Mt Roland where we had a few sheep and cattle as well as a goat, milking cow and dogs. Life was very busy building our house, raising children, hobby farming, and both working part time.

In 2005 we decided to return to the Adelaide hills with our 3 children. We bought a cottage on 2 acres at Littlehampton which has benefited from several extensions and facelifts. Our children now have wonderful partners, their own homes, and we now also have two precious granddaughters. Since retiring, Rod and I have enjoyed gardening, travelling to the remotest parts of Australia, and spending precious time with our beautiful grandchildren. We have been truly blessed.



**BEN AND PIPPA
WITH CHARLOTTE**



HANNA WITH JOE



LEANNE AND RODNEY



**EMMA AND MATT
WITH MAYA**

ROSLYN'S MEMORIES

I have many random memories of my childhood growing up on the farm, and the following are not necessarily in timeline order....

- cracking the ice on the sheep troughs on the way down the track to the school bus in the mornings
- on the way up the track after school, Allan jumping the fence on to the hay bale. I thought any thing he could do, I could do too but my legs were not quite long enough!
- one of our cars called "Lizzie", a green Holden HR station wagon. She had to be parked facing down a hill so we could roll start her
- driving the Fiat tractor to work up paddock 8B
- the red heifer in Paddock 8B that I could walk out in the paddock to her and even sit on her, she was so tame. One day I went out and she was gone
- "Polly", the tame sheep would follow me everywhere
- Mum and Dad giving us each a watch as we started High School
- a semi trailer pile up down at the Moorlands corner and Mum taking Thermos's and sandwiches down to the clean up team
- dead sheep being towed behind a motor bike to the back paddock 'cemetery'
- the portable cow bale on wheels that could be moved around the paddocks so we could milk the cows

Checking mobs of sheep was a regular task and I remember when accompanying Dad he would find a patch of three corner jacks. So we'd stop and place a star dropper in the spot so he could go back and dig them up later. We would use a sponge or our thongs to pick up the prickles left by the plants.

Adelaide Show time was a highlight every year. I would help to tame the sheep before we took them down to the Show. On one occasion I was allowed to practice my makeup skills on one of the ewes, using sheep raddle crayons. She looked beautiful!

We often stayed at the home of Ms Greig, who lived not far from the showgrounds. I remember the sheets on the beds were tucked in so tight you could hardly get in. Trips to Adelaide were a once-a-year event and a real treat, as the drive was much longer in those days.

At school my, favourite teacher Mrs Marg Wakefield was a keen overseas traveller. She setup the library so we could "Travel to India". We lined up at the door ready with the passport and traveller's cheques we had made in preparation for the trip. She had many souvenirs she had bought on her travels for us to see. Maybe that's where my interest in overseas travel was first sparked?

Sports Day was a serious affair. Children from the same family were not necessarily placed in the same house team and Mum wore all the team colours and make sure to barrack for all her childrens' teams. Sports Day was something we practiced seriously for, and we all sat in our house area on the day to cheer on our team. I was in the same sports house as Allan – "Yalturru" and we both did well in the running & jumping competitions.

I remember having tennis lessons and later playing for the Moorlands team. One day I'd been dropped down to the Moorlands courts on a Saturday and I not needed in the team. So rather than hang around I decided to walk home. Halfway home, I was getting a bit tired and noticed Ron Weeks with his vehicle and bee hives out in the paddock. I started to walk towards him to ask if I could have a ride home, as I got closer I noticed him waving his arms frantically at me. I didn't understand that he wanted me to stay away as he had just smoked the bees and they had left their hives and were flying around. Unfortunately I was too close and I got stung by multiple bees when I got home, we pulled at least 100 stings out of my legs, arms and face

Trampolining was a lunchtime elective at school, run by Dawn Kuchel. Barry Wilden was the instigator of trampolining at Coomandook Area School. As time went by they formed the Warrendi Trampoline Club. To start with I practiced mainly at school, and then the Coach moved practice to her home where I attended by taking the school bus each afternoon. I then went on to compete at interstate and national competitions, so I was practising multiple times a week and eventually had my own trampoline and frame at home to practice on. I competed in many state competitions. At my first comp I won the U12 trophy beating the favourite. My daughter Jessica would later win the same trophy so both Mum and daughters' names are on that trophy.

I was fortunate to compete in the Australian team in Australia, New Zealand (TransTasman) and in Japan. At these competitions I won a number of gold, silver and bronze medals. I remember that a Fundraising Bike Ride from Coomandook to Moorlands was held to help cover the costs of our trip to Japan. Mum and Dad also supported me in various ways to raise money for the trip.



ROSLYN WITH DAVID



**JASON AND JESSICA
WITH TYSON, ORLANDO AND XAVIER**

ROSLYN'S MEMORIES continued...

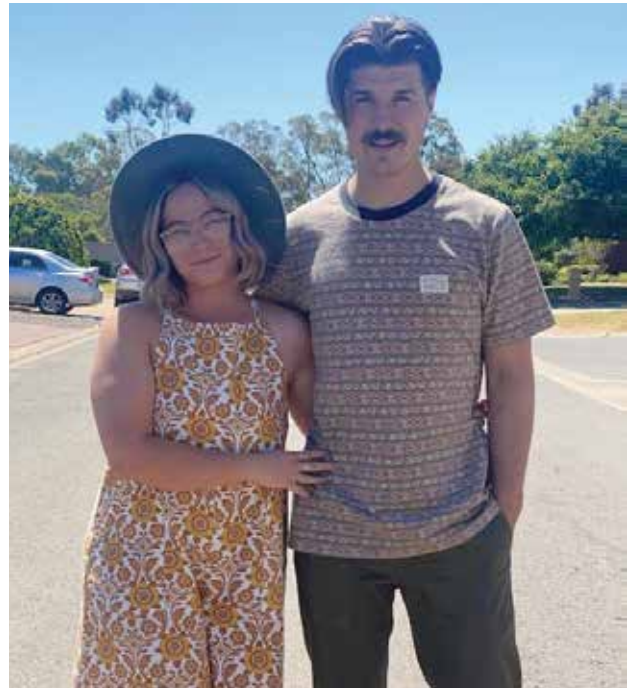
School was not my thing, and I could not wait to leave. In my final year at school I did 2 weeks of work experience at Eudunda Farmers in Tailem Bend, after which I was offered a position there. I finished the year doing 2 days a week at school and 3 days at Eudunda Farmers. When the school finished I started there full time. Later I worked at the chemist in Tailem Bend until our first child was born. I also worked part time later at the Pharmacy and also at Karoonda Pharmacy.

I married David Schulz in 1986 and moved in to one of the original stone houses in Moorlands. Dawn moved to QLD so I started coaching trampolining at the Moorlands home.

I was convinced that house was haunted and very glad to then move out to David's family farm "Tattendi Merino Stud" when his parents retired. Our 3 children Jason, Jessica and Hayden were born and grew up on the farm.

Early in married life I started a screen printing business. David encouraged me to head into Murray Bridge to drum up some business. My first printing job was for Bridge Bowl and it involved 5 colours which I had never done before. With David's help we managed to work out a way to print multi coloured jobs from then on. The business grew from a home based studio and then we setup a Print Studio in Tailem Bend when our children moved to school at Unity College in Murray Bridge.

After 20 years of being self-employed, I was asked to teach swimming to children with disabilities in the heated swimming pool in Murray Bridge. I really enjoyed that. I then found a job in the Disability Unit at Murray Bridge High School and I have worked there in a number of roles for the last 14 years.



HAYDEN AND CAITLYN



**JESSICA ABOVE AND
LEFT PLAYING FOR SANFL CENTRAL
DISTRICTS WOMENS LEAGUE**

KERRILEE'S MEMORIES

I am the youngest of the five children of Malcolm and Beverley. Even from a young age, helping around the farm was expected, collecting eggs, drafting sheep, picking wool and feeding animals. I recall I was about 4, everyone else was at school, I went with Dad to the back paddock to help bring back a header. Dad put the ute into first gear, by kneeling on my legs I could just see between the dashboard and steering wheel, and he told me to head home. The track had the perfect ruts so I couldn't steer wrong if I tried. When I got to the farm yard, I pulled up in front of the shed and turned the key off and hopped out. Job done!

As kids we were all involved in local sport which would be a whole day affair. Netball and football would play the same opposition team so we all went together, the girls played netball early in the morning and then had to stay for the day to watch the boys play football. Tennis would mean the juniors play first then wait until Mum had finished playing seniors before heading home.

The house was about a mile from the main road, we would get dropped off at the roadside each morning to catch the school bus but most afternoons we would have to walk that mile home. Over time Dad allowed us to take the Torana to the gate which was great not having to walk. I recall one afternoon walking home with both sisters when we came across a large brown snake making its way across the road. I think that was the fastest run home we ever did.

I recall at about 12 years of age, I wanted to help Allan in the shed and found him in the bottom grain shed moving grain from a lower bin into the storage bin by the auger. The auger needed to be raised higher and I was convinced I was strong enough to help. Unfortunately I wasn't and when I pulled the pin out to wind the handle, I lost grip and it repeatedly hit me in the face breaking my front teeth. I recall being scooped up by Allan and he running with me to the house for Mum to take me to the Doctors.

I left home after completing year 11 at Coomandook Area School to studied at Prides Business College in Adelaide where I stayed working in clerical and Secretarial roles. I met my husband David at the age of 17 and we were married when I turned 19. We have two children Jamie and Eric. Jamie and her husband Jake live in Melbourne and Eric and his wife Kayla live in Adelaide.



KERRILEE AND DAVID



JAMIE AND JAKE



ERIC AND KAYLA

HOLIDAYS WHILE ON THE FARM

QUEENSLAND

We had very few holidays in early married life, two of which come to mind. One was a trip to Queensland in 1957. My sister Merle had completed her midwifery course at Ipswich hospital and was due to come home.

We bought a new farm ute . In those days new motors on vehicles needed to be driven at low speed for 'X' amount of miles to run them in. We had a very slow trip of 40 mile per hour for a lot of that trip.



KANGAROO ISLAND

The other was to take the family to Kangaroo Island, travelling across on the "MV Troubridge". These were days when children could run down over the sand hills on the island and watch the seals playing on beaches. When it was time to come home, I put the family on the DC3 plane and as it took off, I think every rivet rattled. I just hoped my family would get back safely to Parafield. I bought the car back on the boat.

In the late 60's because of stock health problems, one of us needed to be on the farm at all times. Sometimes we would take turnabout and spend a few days with the children at Victor Harbor with my parents.



HOLIDAY TO KANGAROO ISLAND

FAMILY REUNION

Back in about 1993-94, a few of our Piggott relatives wanted to put together a record of the descendants of my great grandparents Richard and Eliza Piggott.

Representatives from each branch of the family were elected to organise their history. Beverley and Kerrilee were given the job of putting this book together.

The Reunion along with the Launch of the book was held at Morchard in September 1995, near where Richard and Eliza were buried.

One branch of this family tree were the Nancarrows. David was a school teacher at Mallacoota in Victoria. We had an invitation to go over and visit him and got to know him quite well. We followed the Murray River Highway to Wodonga, over the Great Dividing Range to Omeo, then down to Mallacoota. We spent the weekend with David, but during the school week we decided to catch up with a couple of contacts we had in Canberra – namely John Lipset and Paul Dan who I referred to before.

The map we had showed a good metal road through the National Park which cut off quite a few kilometres, so we took it. Our little Sigma car went very well, but the road deteriorated the further we went. Logs had been placed in some creek crossing. No other vehicle had used this track for a very long time.

One good thing when travelling through here was the sound of bell birds. Their whistling was beautiful, and I had never heard anything like it before.

Eventually we came across a logging camp and thought we had better enquire as to where we were. Nobody wanted to talk to us as Beverley and I probably looked like a couple of greenies and the car with it's pack rack on top would be no help. Eventually we found a chap who would talk. Mr Gale said they'd had a lot of trouble with greenies putting sand in the oil of their machinery and they thought I might have been one of them. He did not know how anyone could get through on the road we had just travelled. Each day they would travel to work from the northern side of the National Park and we'd come in from the south. Had we broken down, we could have been there for a long time. After we had established our identities, we were best of friends. This chap mentioned he had recently been wood chopping at the Adelaide Show. When I told him that I spent time in the sheep pavilion next door, showing our sheep, all was good between us .

LIVESTOCK

MILKING COWS

Cows were originally milked by hand, many children learnt to milk selected cows at an early age, usually before they were old enough to go to school. To earn money before Christmas we were paid a penny for every cow milked. My Father preferred Jersey cows saying if you had equal amount of feed in 3 troughs a Shorthorn cow would clean out her trough, the Friesian would eat all hers then go and eat what the Jersey had left.

The cow shed had 3 bales with a trough in front to feed oats and chaff to the cow while she was being milked. Some cows had a habit of kicking, knocking the bucket of milk flying or putting her foot in the bucket not to mention what happened to the poor milker. The offending cows would have their leg tied back with a rope. Some cows would also swish flies and the milker with their tail, for comfort this was also secured because not all tails were clean and dry. An eclipse milking machine was installed in the late 1940's making milking easier and quicker.

Some people may not know how a cream separator works. The milk is put in a vat on top, the outflow is controlled by a float under the tap, this prevents an oversupply or too much milk for the machine to handle. The controlled flow of milk enters a bell-shaped bowl containing about 20 tin patties revolving at high speed. The centrifugal force forcing the milk solids to the outside and up the edge of the bowl. The cream being lighter is separated and rises to the top. The skim milk comes out of the bottom spout into 4-gallon buckets for the pigs and calves. As a small child I can remember getting straws from the hayshed and drinking milk straight from the separator. The cream comes out of the upper spout into the cream can.

Originally the separator was turned by hand at 60 revs per minute and through the gears reached a high speed. The handle had a bell on it as a guide to the correct speed. The simple bell had a ball bearing in it which at slow speed would ding. At the correct speed the centrifugal force keeps the ball bearing out, hence no ring.

The cow shed was kept clean and white by painting it with whitewash which was made up by mixing slack lime with skim milk. To help make it stick, a little fresh cow manure could be mixed with it and then painted on the walls. Water for washing the bales was in short supply so buckets full were splashed on the floor and swept out with a broom then rinsed with another bucket of clean water. These calves were a day old when we brought them home from the dairy and had to bucket feed them. They are approximately 2 years old in this photo.



DAIRY CATTLE

SHEEP

Prime lambs did well on the property. It was handy occasionally to have a black sheep on the farm to monitor the mineral content of the pasture. Mineral deficiencies such as copper, showed up in the colour of wool, particularly black which turned to grey.

The progeny of black sheep was given to us as children. One year my black ewe produced a particularly good lamb and Father negotiated with the buyer to put through a sales transaction of 1 sheep for £1. The rest of the line made 18 shillings each.

Lambs were trucked by rail for slaughter. When lambs were to be sent away, rail trucks had to be ordered and left at Moorlands railway siding. These lambs were walked from Illoura to the siding. On 2 occasions, when taking these lambs on what was the old Melbourne Highway the first Tuesday in November, a car came along just as the Melbourne Cup was being broadcast on radio. So, to give the lambs a spell we listened to the running of the Cup

Stock Agents used to assess when prime lambs were ready for market, usually in the springtime. Farmers were asked to yard their lambs on a particular day. Father would calculate the lamb's value by holding a lamb on the Fairbanks scales, deduct the holder's weight and then add the skin value. On one occasion he had his lambs yarded ready for the buyer including valuation, but they disagreed on their value, so the buyer left. Shortly afterwards another buyer called in unannounced. After inspecting the lambs, he was prepared to pay Father's price. Later that day the first buyer returned prepared to pay the higher price because he had an order to fill and was prepared to pay the higher price.

Merino ewes were good mothers but during the 1944 drought, stock numbers had to be reduced. All sheep on the farm except the Dorset Horns were disposed of. Several breeds of terminal sires were tried, and the Dorset Horn seemed to fit the management and district best. There was difficulty in securing suitable sires, so a small stud was started in 1938 by purchasing 15 cast for age ewes, supposedly in lamb. It was discovered however; they had just had lambs weaned from them. Because other local properties were having the same problem with sires the stud gradually expanded. With selective breeding the stud went along very well.



Our first on-property ram sale was held in 1956 and continues on the farm today.



MALCOLM WITH DORSET HORN RAM – JUNE 1966

SHOWING SHEEP

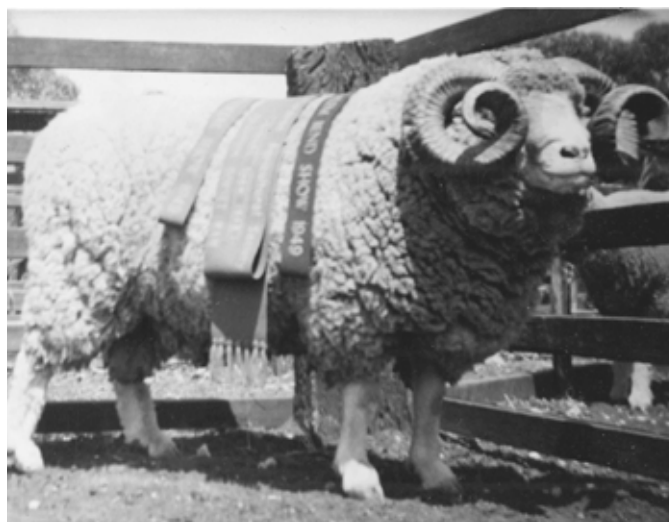
The Illoura Dorset Horn stud was founded in 1938 and in 1949 was our first showing of sheep at our local Tailem Bend show, this was the beginning of many years of showing.

We became well known throughout Australia taking major prizes in Adelaide and Melbourne Royal Shows. Sheep were sold in most states of Australia, as well as Kuwait and Mexico

In 1961 the Royal Adelaide show had a novice ewe class which we entered in and won. This meant our ewe was automatically put in the open class. This ewe went on to win Champion Ewe. The following year we achieved Reserve Champion Ewe at the Melbourne Royal Show.

In the early days of showing sheep there were many woolly classes. Before a show we would spend many hours combing grass seeds out of wool and trimming to give sheep that rounded appearance. A lot of this work would be done at night after the children were in bed. Also shorn classes were trimmed to take out shearer's uneven shearing. In later years with the White Suffolks there was no Woolly classes and trimming sheep was banned which made it much easier.

At one stage we were the third most successful Dorset Horn exhibitor in Australia and on one occasion at a major south east country show, I received 9 firsts and 5 seconds out of 10 classes. This was very pleasing as there were several exhibitors. At that time Dorset Horn sheep were the most strongly contested classes in the Royal Shows in Australia. Illoura had proved to be the third top stud in Australia resulting in good competition for stud and flock sheep sales both locally and interstate.



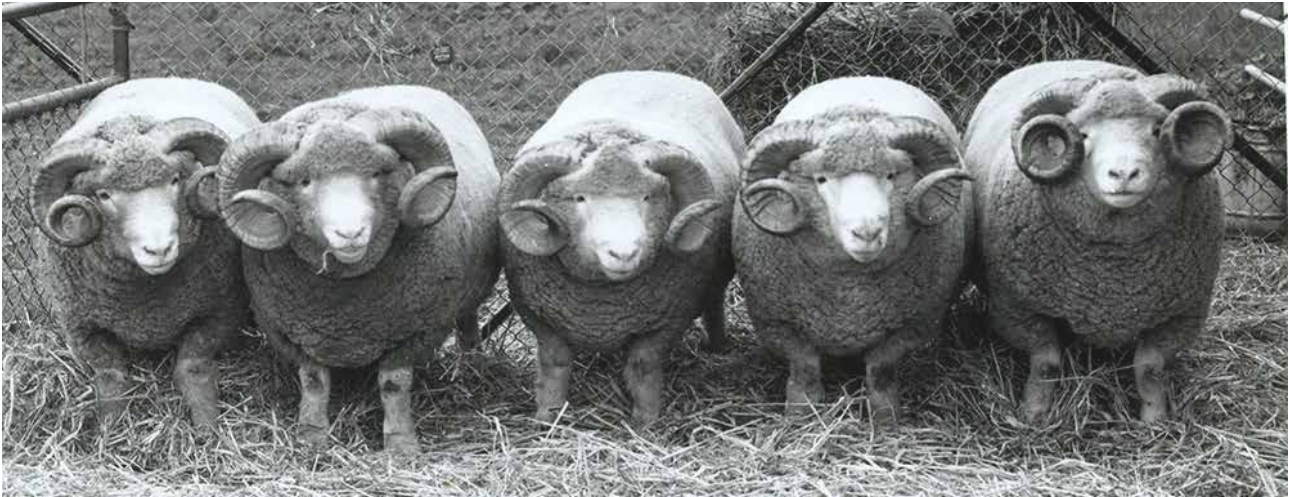
**FIRST CHAMPION RAM
AT TAILEM BEND SHOW 1949**



**CHAMPION DORSET HORN EWE
ADELAIDE SHOW 1959**



**RESERVE CHAMPION DORSET HORN EWE
MELBOURNE SHOW 1960**



BEST GROUP, ADELAIDE SHOW 1963

Because our sheep were doing so well, other stud breeders agisted stock on our property including Polwarths and Corriedales.

1963 PRE-SHOW JOURNALIST TOUR



The Adelaide Show Committee organised a pre-show tour to visit show exhibitor properties.



POLL DORSETS

A Poll Dorset stud was founded in 1964 as it was thought that a sheep without horns would be an advantage. Over the years Poll Dorset's took the place of the horned sheep at Illoura.

These became popular until the White Suffolk breed was established.



ADELAIDE SHOW POLL DORSET RAM 1988

Just as a matter of interest the Algerian Government had sponsored 2 consultants to come to Australia and learn how we could farm here in such low rainfall. They were staying with us at the time of one of our trips to Hay, so we took them along for the experience. They mentioned to us that back in Algeria camels used to clean up all the saffron thistles and so were not a problem for them.



OUR ALGERIAN FRIENDS

WHITE SUFFOLKS

Over a number of years, a White Suffolk stud was formed. Some prime lamb breeders were changing to black faced Suffolk sheep because they were believed to be hardier under harsh conditions than Poll Dorset sheep. The Suffolks reportedly had less lambing difficulties with maiden ewes and had less wool on the face and legs which meant less grass seed problems.

Other prime lamb breeders were changing from black faced Suffolks to Dorset because wool and skin buyers paid less for Suffolk fleeces due to the black points. Shearing shed contamination with black fibres was also a consideration.

It became obvious to me that a 'White' Suffolk had to be a winner.

In 1984 the University of NSW had an article in the paper about a new breed they were trialling crossing mostly Suffolks with Poll Dorset to produce a White Suffolk sheep. They were looking for people to assist in tagging lambs at lambing time. Because of our interest we went to the Hay Research Station for the next 2 years to help with this project.

In 1985 Professor Euan Roberts from the University of NSW was seeking shareholders for the new White Suffolk flock, known as Prime Lamb Genetics (PLG). Illoura, trading as RV Piggott & Son purchased a share and also became a foundation member of the Australian White Suffolk Association. This was the beginning of White Suffolks for us, our Flock Number being No 15. The first year we picked out 50 Poll Dorset ewes with the least wool on face and legs and mated them to our PLG ram.



**CHAMPION WHITE SUFFOLK RAM
- SYDNEY ROYAL SHOW 2000**

From these ewes, the rams were sold at our on-property ram sale the following year. Feedback from at least 3 of our ram buyers was that by changing from Dorset to White Suffolks they had reduced lambing difficulties by 90%. White Suffolk popularity in our low rainfall country has been tremendous.

White Suffolks fast became the most used Prime Lamb Sires in Australia. We gradually dispersed our Dorset Horn and Poll Dorset studs and now have only White Suffolks.



White Suffolk \$26,000 record



TOP FIGURES: Shown with the \$26,000 world record price White Suffolk ram lamb are the breeders, Allan and Sue Piggott, Illoura, Moorlands; buyers Anthony and Sue Ferguson, Anna Villa, Weetulta, and Steve, Ros and Greg Funke, Bundara Downs, Bordertown; and Elders auctioneer Tom Penna (left).

How they sold

- **White Suffolks:** 45 offered, 35 sold to \$26,000 av \$5700
- **Poll Dorsets:** 17 offered, six sold to \$7500 av \$4167
- **Suffolk:** 1 offered and sold at \$2500
- **Overall:** 63 offered, 42 sold, av \$5405

By **RICHARD JAMES**

A SENSATIONAL burst of rapid-fire bidding resulted in a world record price for a White Suffolk ram lamb at the Elite Ram Sale at Wayville showground.

The ram, first prizewinner in the Adelaide Royal's hotly-contested ram lamb class, was knocked down, after a lowly start, for \$26,000 to Steve and Ros Funke, Bundara Downs, Bordertown, and the Ferguson family's Anna Villa stud, Weetulta.

They had to fend off a spirited bid to secure the ram from another syndicate of losing bidders - Lachlan Day, Day's Whiteface, Bordertown, and Rob and Sally Keen, Whitemore, Tasmania.

The winning bid was made on behalf of the buyers by Elders agent Roger Daniell.

Vendor Allan Piggott, Illoura, Moorlands, was quite calm throughout proceedings

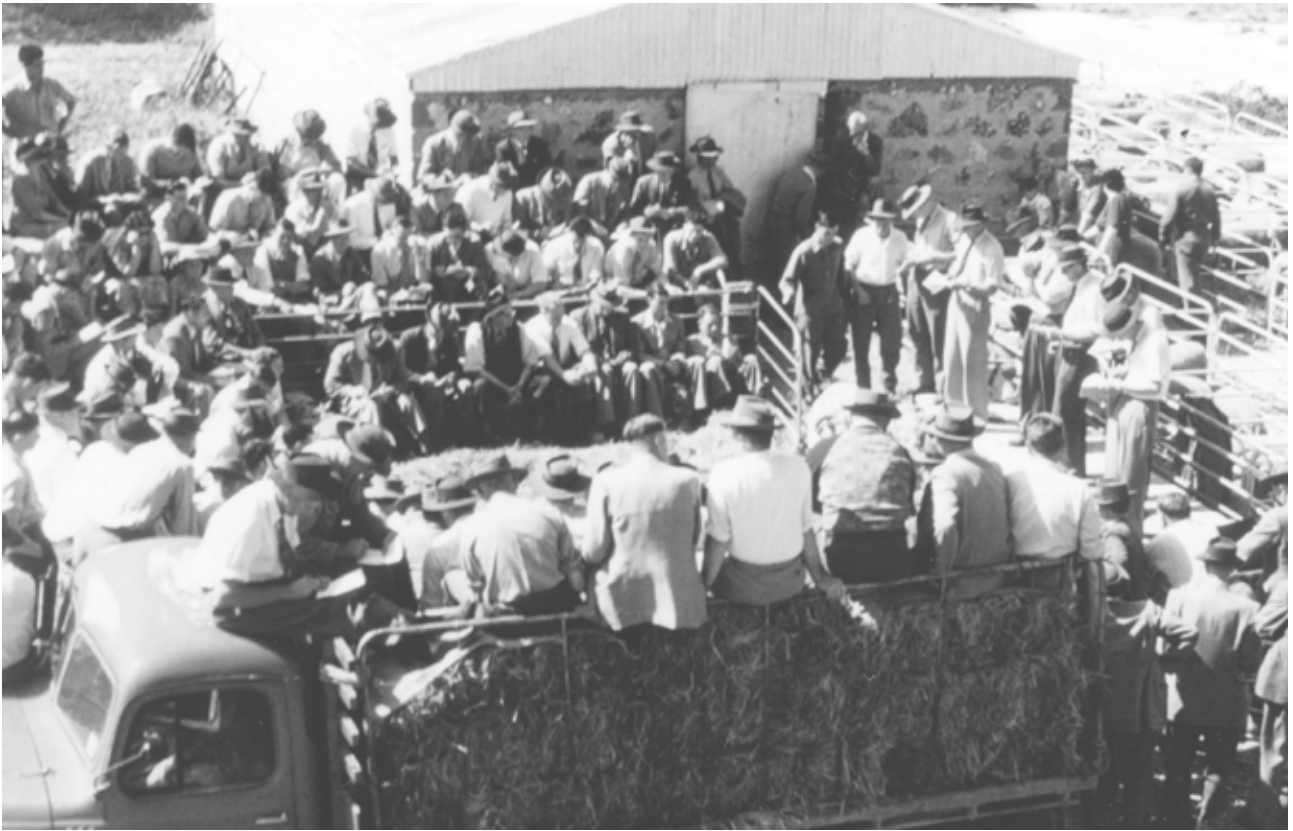
In 2009 our first prize White Suffolk Ram Lamb at Adelaide Royal Show went on to sell for \$26,000 as a 5 month old at the Elite Ram Sale that year.



We had been showing sheep for most of the last 60 years and continued to win several awards with the White Suffolks at Adelaide Royal Show plus Champion Ram at Sydney Royal Show in 2000.

Around this time there were some US Suffolk genetics imported from America and unknown to the importer some of these sheep were carriers of a genetic disorder called 'Spider Syndrome'. The syndrome caused deformities in newborn lambs.

We never had the problem but had to be very careful to not introduce any possible Spider carriers into the Illoura White Suffolk stud. The decision was made to register a separate stud so we could carefully introduce US genetics to test them before we introduced them in to the Illoura stud. We registered this stud as Malverley (Flock 55), a combination of our names.



THE SALE RING 1958



THE SALE RING 1990's



NOTE THE SUITS & TIES AT AN EARLY SALE DAY



ILLOURA FLOCK RAM SALE 1958



ILLOURA FLOCK RAM SALE 1988



**DISPLAY AT OUR 1984 FLOCK RAM SALE,
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF STUD BREEDING**



ILLOURA FLOCK RAM SALE 2018

SUCCESSSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

As recorded by my wife Beverley

- Committee member Country Youth Crusade, Tepko
- Life member of ASBBS (Australian Society of British Breed Sheep)
- President of the Adelaide Region of Australian Poll Dorset Association
- Foundation member of the Australian White Suffolk Association
- Judged sheep at Adelaide and Melbourne Show and many Country Shows
- Member on the State Lamb Committee
- Finalist in the Commonwealth Development Bank Ibis award for 1990
- Involved in local CFS for 20 years - our 3 ton Austin truck was awarded first prize in the medium sized vehicle display for " Best fitted out fire unit"
- Local preacher
- On Cancer Council Murray Bridge (later Cancer Care)
- President of the Prostate Cancer Committee, Murray Bridge
- Councillor on Peake District Council

LANDCARE

Conservation and Landcare have been a lifelong interest and its practical application on the farm resulted in being selected as a State finalist in the Commonwealth Development Bank 'Ibis Award' in 1990.

One of my great passions was to see trees doing well on the farm. Eucalyptus Porosa was one of the best for shade and shelter for stock and they grew well.



EUCALYPTUS POROSA "SWAMP MALLEE" ON THE FLAT IN Paddock 16



Mallee Eucalypts do tend to eventually decline or die of age.
**THESE PHOTOS TAKEN IN THE SAME PLACE IN Paddock 23B
– 1958 ON LEFT, 1991 ON RIGHT**



EUCALYPTUS PLANTED INTO ROCK PILES

To get new trees growing I would propagate from seed and when big enough to plant out, I would dig a hole through a stone heap down to the soil and plant my seedlings. I used a 20L sheep drench container fitted with a standard tap and placed it full of water on stone heap close to the tree with tap dripping. The container would empty in a few days and needed to be refilled. Some patches were started this way.



LUCERNE TREES (TAGASASTE)

Between Keith and Naracoorte there was a lot of young lucerne trees along the roadside, some of these we dug up and transplanted on the sandy rise in paddock 14 which had been fenced off.



A PHOTO OF 3 YEAR OLD TREES DOING WELL OUT AT THE SHERLOCK BLOCK

My son Allan continued to follow my example by planting trees on the farm to replace those that were dying out. The Trees for Life program was used to propagate tree species endemic to the area, such as the Eucalyptus Porosa. The tree planter shared by members of the local Landcare group made planting much easier.



TREE PLANTER & SEEDLINGS



MY SISTER MERLE WITH CHELSEA, PROPAGATING OUR TREES FOR LIFE



CHALLENGES AT ILLOURA

RABBITS

As time went by, the glory of the early successes soon started to fade in many ways.

The good balanced pasture disappeared, and animal health became a real problem.

As a small boy I remember getting my finger caught in a rabbit trap and I still have the scar 80 years later.

Rabbits were a major problem in the 1949's so our 1300 acres were trapped using 100 rabbit traps shifting them twice a week. It took 6 weeks to cover the farm and by then they would be back just as thick so the round would be repeated. While grey was the dominant colour about 1 per cent were coloured. Yellow was the most dominant of the coloured ones but there were occasional black and white ones.

The patch of pines in pad 22A was fenced with netting to try and control them, and it took 6 weeks to get the last rabbit. They would climb trees to eat the bark for nourishment. At first they were caught in wire netting traps then they started digging out so had to be caught in steel traps. Eventually the trees were pulled out to control sand drift and keep the rabbits out.

At one stage there were 5 rabbit buyers operating from Taillem Bend each having their own freezers. Bodley's were the biggest with 3 trucks on the road picking up the night's catch.

A rail or piece of wire would be strung between 2 trees near the road, these were to put the pairs of rabbits on and they would be covered with a Hessian screen to keep the flies off. The rabbit buyer would leave the money under a stone or some other hiding place if you couldn't wait.

We had a real blitz on rabbits around 1950, putting wire netting on most of the boundary fence. A bulldozer was brought in to remove trees from burrows. The biggest patches were in paddock 14 where the lucerne trees now stand and along Maczkowiack's fence at the northern end of paddock 1, 3, 5 & 9.



ONES NIGHT'S CATCH ON ILLOURA

Rabbit skins were quite profitable, and we used a U shaped wire frame to stretch the rabbit skins which were then hung on nails driven into the shearing shed rafters. The carcasses could be boiled up for the pigs. Once in 1949 I trapped 99 pairs of rabbits and received £4-19s-11p.

1 penny less than £5 (\$7.50 in today's money)

FOXES

Foxes were sometimes caught in rabbit traps pulling the pegs out of the ground. These had to be tracked to retrieve the trap. Fox skins would be pegged out on the shearing shed floor or on doors. On one occasion Father sent some skins away and a rabbit skin made 5 pence more than the sheep skin.

SNAILS

Snails were uninvited visitors to the farm. Apparently, they came from overseas to York Peninsula on a grain boat. Farmers knew the damage they could cause by clogging up sieves etc. on harvesting machines. This was reported to the powers that be, but nothing was done.

As they were spreading over our farm 2 methods were used to control them.

- A chain between 2 tractors was used to shake the snails on the ground exposing them to the heat which killed them.
- Pulling a heavy roller just inside road fence to crush them.

MICE

Mice on occasions were a very destructive pest, particularly when in plague proportions.

A mouse plague in 1993 was a challenge. We knew there were a lot of mice under a sheep feeder, so we surrounded the feeder with sheets of iron, then shifted the feeder. We managed to kill over 900 mice that day.



SNAILS ON POST



MICE WREAKED HAVOC IN THE HAY SHED



SUPERPHOSPHATE

I became very interested in finding out more, seeking advice from the Department of Agriculture and Animal Health Consultants as well as the Fertilizer companies.

During the 1965 Adelaide Show, Fertilizer Sales had a promotional stand where I spent some time visiting them to tell them that superphosphate was not doing the job it used to. Their marketing manager Hal Bannister, who suggested we buy 6 different minerals to put in trials. We did this in Paddock 6. Up and back with a 20 row combine on the west side of the paddock.

The combine box was cleaned out after each element, then what was left of the 6 elements were mixed and sown across the end. At harvest time, nothing showed up. The following year, the entire paddock was covered with geranium except where the strip of mixed elements was sown. This had some stunted clover which indicated to me that more than one element was involved.

Before working at Fertilizer Sales, Hal Bannister was the Agricultural Editor for the weekly newspaper "The Chronicle". He led an agricultural tour of NZ where he saw the value of farm management consultants and following this visit, Murray Keane came from New Zealand to Mt Gambier. My continual visits to the show stand was not doing their business any good, so Hal asked if a consultant could call in to our farm and take a look.

Murray Keane called in for 2 hours one Saturday afternoon and wrote a lengthy report criticising the management of the farm and if employed would solve our problems. His suggestions were doubling fertiliser rate not reducing them as I had done. He suggested using zinc which I had already tried and said he would work with the various branches of the Department of Ag which I had also been doing for many years. His fee was to be no charge for the first year, half fee for the second year and full fee for the third year (which was double the normal fee). My father wrote a letter to Murray Keane about this accusation of not managing the farm well, but never received a reply.

Peter Bennett, an Ag Science teacher in Adelaide, was involved with a TV program exposing several controversial topics including Fertiliser and he recommended 2 books to me: "Biology of Trace Elements" by Carl Shutte of Capetown University "Fertiliser Application" by Andre Voisane from Holland.

Reading these was like opening a can of worms. They pointed out how Australian farmers had been highly indoctrinated but poorly educated. So, I continued my research which raised a lot of questions.

Due to limited finances before World War 2, fertiliser application was limited even though earlier responses were spectacular. An old Smith single spinner super spreader was used for top dressing. Because this spreader put far more fertiliser straight behind than it did out the sides, the pasture growth indicated that where the fertilizer had dropped, the pasture grew better. We could clearly see the difference.

Agricultural Advisers and printed Agricultural articles promoted the heavy application of phosphate. To build up your phosphate bank in the soil we were told it was as good as money in the bank. Up until then our experience supported this belief so to promote this process the soil was only worked shallow. Prior to this the whole farm had a total of 486 pounds of superphosphate per acre.

To try and isolate the cause, I shut some rams in the sheep shed in 4 different pens. Two pens had different rations grown away from the farm the other two had feed grown on the farm. In a few days those with feed grown away from the farm were doing well while the others were having the above problems.

To stop algae in their drinking water a handful of building lime (Calcium Oxide) was put in the water and within 2 days these rams were as good as the others. The calcium oxide gave enough free calcium to counter the low levels in the grain.

The stock lime that was being used was tested. It was registered under the stock medicines act and sold by Adelaide Wallaroo Fertilisers. It was produced from crushed marble screenings from Kapunda and even though its calcium content was high, its neutralizing value was nil. Dust from the local stone crusher proved to be quite satisfactory though.

Don Mackie was the local Vet and very helpful but could see over a period of time, the problems were far deeper. In an effort to reduce mastitis, he checked 400 breeding ewes and selected those he thought most likely to develop mastitis. At that stage my brother Robert had bought the farm over the road and these suspect ewes were relocated there. The next lambing season, the ewes on my farm still developed mastitis, while the suspect ewes that had been moved to Robert's were free of the disease. This proved to me that Illoura farm was the problem.

Don Mackie stirred up the Department of Ag. and found that different departments were not communicating with each other and to try and sort out the problem, a meeting was organised.

About 30 farmers from Karoonda to Coonalpyn were having the same problem with mastitis, so a meeting was arranged in our shearing shed with Allan Beare, the senior soils officer for the Department of Ag. in SA. Some of his staff and Gill Williams the local Agronomist also attended. The 30 farmers were people who had purchased their fertiliser for their crop and whatever was left over was spread on the little paddocks near the house to make them the best paddocks on the farm. After a few years these paddocks were the worst. One farmer, Bill Irvine, had been farming at Rapid Bay where it was the practice to apply 1 bag of super to the acre so he carried on doing this after moving to Cooke Plains. Early responses were terrific, the same as we had experience. But after a few years his crops deteriorated from 9 bags to the acre to 2 bags to the acre which was unprofitable. Where he was share-farming locally was still good though. He eventually sold out and moved interstate.

We were using Cresco Fertilizer and it was manufactured by Grace Brothers of America who also owned the Florida Phosphate Mine. Their phosphate rock contained a total of 4.5% fluoride. When blended with Nauru and Christmas Island phosphates it was supposed to reduce the fluoride to between 0.9 and 1.5% fluoride. We were never told that fluoride was highly toxic. But then things started to go wrong on our farm. We were beginning to see numerous animal health problems, crop yields declined as well as the quality and quantity of grain and pasture.



During the 1967 drought yearling ram lambs were a real problem as they had been hand-fed grain with 1% stock lime as recommended. Later this was doubled to 2% but this didn't prevent rams from developing hollow backs and starry eyes where they would watch you without turning their heads as though it was painful to do so. Next they would get down, couldn't get up and would eventually die.

Thinking that fluoride may have been a problem, we took soil from paddock 14 and had it analysed by Amdel. (Australian Mineral Development Laboratories). The results showed 100 ppm of fluoride and 1 ppm of molybdenum. Molybdenum is an essential element while the book "Biology of Trace Elements" claimed fluoride is the greatest inhibitor of enzymes known to man. When enquiring about fluoride it was said to be in the form of calcium fluoride and therefore tied up.

When I asked what happened to calcium fluoride when your soils become more acid, nobody had an answer for me.

Here are a few other things I noticed happening around the farm.

Overhead telephone lines frequently caused problems, so Telecom buried them deep with a ripper. The following year paddock 5 was sown with oats for sheep feed. The narrow strip where the ripper went grew oats that were far superior (seeright). Their roots obviously were able to avoid the toxic surface soil. I had a Shearer heavy duty twin disc plough for clearing new ground and by ploughing the home block as deep as possible and NOT applying phosphate fertilizer for several years, we helped solve our problems of mineral imbalances in the soil.



HEALTHY GROWTH WHERE THE SOIL WAS RIPPED



WEB WORMS

The drought in 1967 brought the problems to a head. In the lucerne Heliethus caterpillar caused havoc and crows and starlings came in big mobs and helped control the grubs. Due to soil that was tending toward acid, web worms spread webs over everything and stripped leaves off the plants. Aphids also caused damage. Red legged earth mite sucked the sap out of the plants.

That year, when the crop in paddock 17A was emerging, another type of grub came in from the east. As they started moving across the paddock, they were wiping out the crop. The local Agronomist had not seen them before so samples were sent off for identification. Last we heard they were an unknown species and were being bred on in Adelaide.

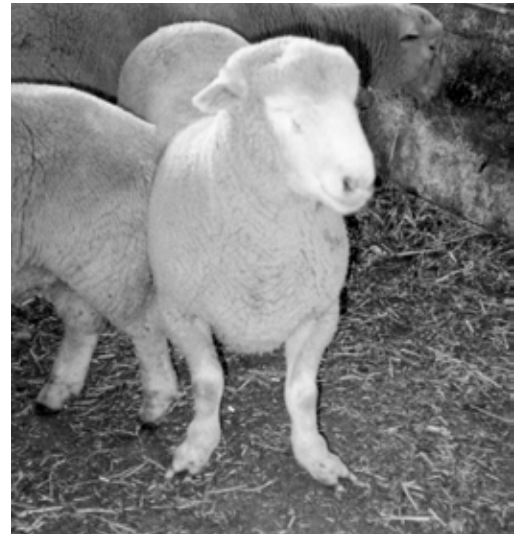
Another interesting fact we found, was that the Turkeys that were being fattened in the sheep shed, were flying to the top of the cement wall where it had been pointed up with lime mortar and they were pecking at the calcium which was lacking in their diet.

SHEEP HEALTH

Sheep health became our greatest challenge. Ewes were individually mated to selected rams that had been fitted with a crayon harness with the colour being changed every 17 days. In this way mating progress was closely monitored. Many of the ewes were aborting after about 6 weeks of pregnancy and then returning to the ram, resulting in an extended lambing. Many of the ewes had difficulty lambing with a dry birth and had to be helped. Ewes were checked every 4 hours day and night to get as many live lambs as possible. Every ewe was checked for mastitis when she lambed and about 1/3 were being infected. Every lamb had iodine put on it's naval as soon as possible after birth to try and reduce an infectious arthritis.

At about 8 months of age a few of the quickest growing ram lambs developed bowed front legs sometimes known as bulldog front. This was not seen in ewes, but we have kept a skeleton of a young ewe where the bone in the bottom jaw had twisted so the teeth did not meet the pad. This was a deformity that was never seen in rams.

The wool on the breeding ewes had changed from true downs type to what looked more like Border Leicester. Because of a secondary crimp this wool also had a shine about it looking more like silk. Some of the ewes had prolapses.



More ewes were getting arthritis, developing calcification around the joints in the front legs. The actual joint seemed to wear out like a bearing without oil. About 30 ewes per year were culled for this and more younger sheep were being infected. Live and dead sheep were taken to the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science in Adelaide with no conclusive results.

Scrub was being cleared on "The Block" - Section 47 about 8 miles to the northeast. The stock grazing on this property had no problems, but this block had not had much superphosphate.



**A SMALL PATCH OF SOURSOBS WAS
SPRAYED AND STEMLESS THISTLES THEN
PREDOMINATED**

WEEDS

Control of weeds has been a constant battle on 3 sides: Horehound—Saffron thistles and Salvation Jane and later Caltrop showed up on the farm. (This was first noticed in Taillem Bend saleyards). Persistence with a hoe kept major weeds under control. Spraying may have to be used more in the future, but it doesn't always have the desired effect. For example, a firebreak was sprayed around the haystack controlling the grass but resulting in three cornered jacks thriving where there was no competition.

Another problem weed was Silver Grass (Sand Fescue) this has been a major problem on sandy soil, smothering crop and pasture and infesting sheep, the seed had a very sharp prickle and would work its way into the sheep. Leanne, a nurse, spent time lancing the abscesses caused by these prickles.

Many farmers found their lambs were not doing well so took them to the vet and found that belly wool was full of this silver grass.



**SHEARING THE BELLY OF A SHEEP FULL
OF SILVER GRASS**



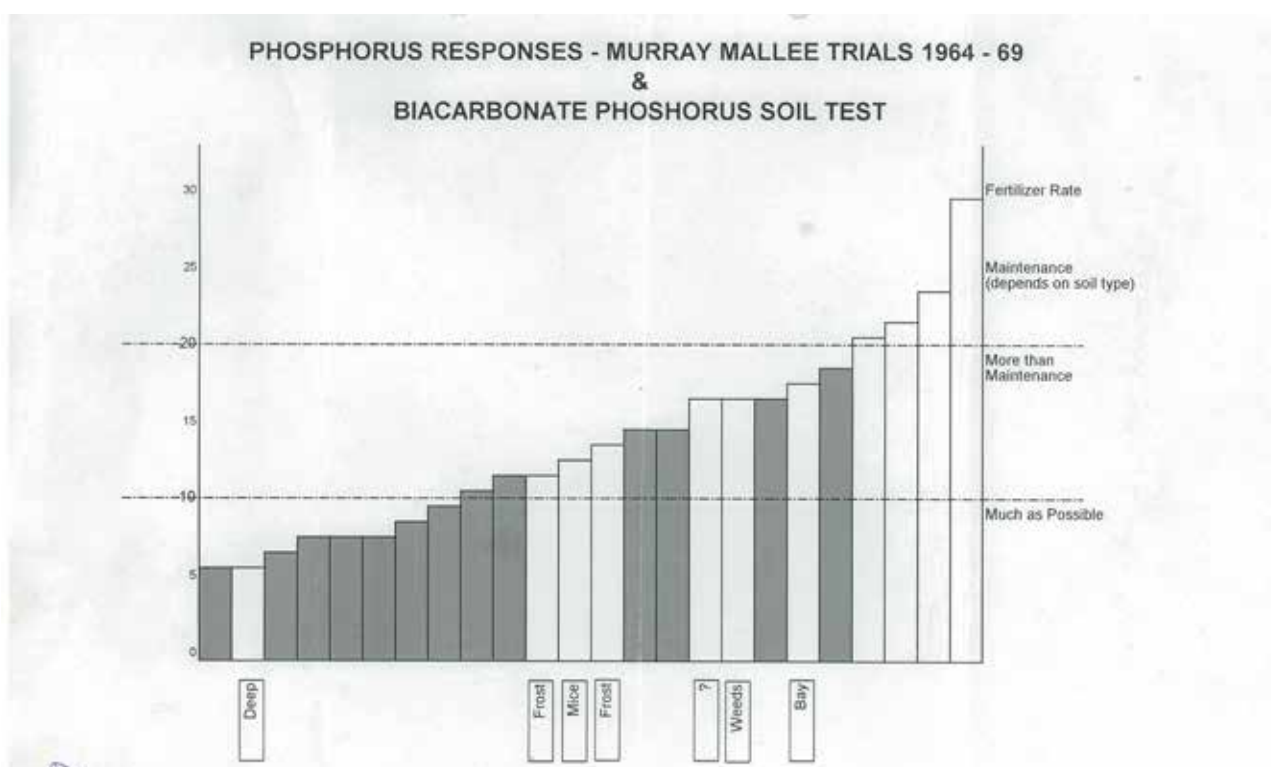
**ABCESSES CAUSED BY SILVER GRASS
PRICKLES**

The Department of Ag was a strong advocate for promoting superphosphate and anything else was strongly condemned. In particular a prescription product based on a soil analysis with a Dolomite carrier sold by Mineral Fertilisers. Also 'Wooltana', which was a product from the Glenelg Sewerage plant. Users of these products did not have the problems we were seeing with superphosphate.

The farmers that were present wanted all products to be tested to justify their criticism. Allan Beare quoted \$3,000 to conduct this trial which was too expensive for the Department. The local farmers offered to pay but he said they did not have the manpower. We offered to do the work provided we had a supervisor to see that the work was done properly. He insisted they could tell from analysis these products were of no value. Reluctantly it was agreed to put trials on our place because it was the only property that had long term paddock records.

As part of the Department of Ag trials, oats were planted on the flat in paddock 20A, halfway along the western boundary. When cultivated we noticed that where sheet limestone was a few inches under the ground the soil was reddish in colour and tending acid, but where the stone was fractured the soil was alkaline and a darker brown in colour. The trial was replicated with different rates of superphosphate. The plots with no fertiliser were the highest yielding and the more fertiliser that was applied the lower was the yield. Gill Williams supervised all proceedings.

Another trial was replicated by the Department of Ag, on a sand hill not far away in the corner of paddock 20B. They sowed half oats and half barley. Some plots had trace elements but there was to be one strip (not replicated) of Mineral Fertilisers. Because it was not replicated it was not officially part of the trial. First the Department of Ag. would not use Mineral Fertilisers product because it was not registered but I would not allow the trial to go ahead without it. It took 6 weeks to get this product registered so the trial could go ahead. Fertiliser Sales could have their products registered the same day. Gill Williams from Department of Ag. Murray Bridge helped reap the trials. Unfortunately, grain was omitted from one of the Mineral Fertiliser strips but the other was the most profitable in the trials. When Gill sent the results to Adelaide, he suggested that Mineral Fertilisers should be investigated further. Gill claimed that he was severely reprimanded for making this suggestion and that his job was to pass on the information that came from Head Office and not make suggestions! Allan Beare's recommendations from these trial sites was to apply 90 lb of superphosphate on future crops and 60 lb on the pasture even though it had a depressing effect.



Some weeks later I received a letter from the Department of Ag head office stating we had been using too much phosphorus fertilizer and quoted the booklet "Superphosphate for the Upper South East" by Kelvin Powrie. This was contrary to what Allan Beare had previously quoted.

The late Kelvin Powrie had done several years research on the subject. I immediately applied for a copy of this book and was told it was out of print. Sometime later a copy turned up in the post with no explanation. Kelvin did a lot of research work with minerals in the Keith Tintinara district and his work could be relied upon. A monument has been erected in his honour between Tintinara and Keith.

I wanted to find documentation to justify that the recommendation of 30 ppm was flawed.



Dr. Adrian Egan from Waite Institute became interested in the situation. He selected 100 mixed age ewes and split them into 4 equal lots that were run together during the week, but every Wednesday were split into their groups and drenched with different minerals. He would have lunch with us and was a wealth of knowledge. After 2 years those sheep that were given zinc could be drafted off by the change in their wool. The long open staple changed back to the short dense downs type wool. Those that had Manganese did not carry the excess fat that the others had.

Three young rams had developed this "bulldog front", so Adrian gave 2 of them a drench of mixed minerals and in a few weeks they had straightened up. Then the 3rd one was treated and that one also straightened up.



Adrian also had a replicated trace element fertiliser trial in paddock 21B with a pH of 5.8. He had a combination of 15 elements which he repeated leaving off a different element in each plot so if a plot was better or worse it was due to that element. Unfortunately, calcium was omitted as it was believed to be calcium soils, not realizing it was in an unavailable form. Zinc gave the greatest response, boron consistently gave a severe depressing effect, both phosphorous and potash gave a slight depressing effect. Our soils had changed from very deficient in phosphorous to slightly toxic.

Many thanks must go to Dr Egan who helped us get out of trouble by suggesting we plough deep to bring up fresh uncontaminated soil. This together with us withholding phosphate resulted in things starting to improve. Now the farm has gotten back to producing how it was in the 1950's.

Dr. Brian Cartwright from the soils division of the CSIRO in 1984 found that much of the grain grown in SA had far above the world's level of phosphorous. When farmers take their grain to the silo a sample is kept from each load of grain for future reference. Brian was able to get one year's sample and analyse them for phosphorus, zinc and copper and transpose the results on to his computer.

Our soil analysis was 28 ppm, almost up to the 30ppm recommended by the Department of Ag. which prompted me to wonder what the Department's figure had been based on. During 1964-1969 there were 24 fertiliser trials in the Murray Mallee between the Adelaide Hills and the Victorian Border and Loxton to Coonalpyn. Fertiliser rates of 0-10-20 units of actual phosphorous were used. Some of these trials also had 5 ppm of phosphorous which proved most cost effective but because it wasn't officially part of the trial it was not promoted. According to the official report some of the trials were conducted by Bruce Lobon, sales representative for Cresco Fertiliser.

Eleven of these trials were rejected for various reasons. Grass was in the control, making yields look good such as the one at Wanbi Research Station. Reg Hutchinson was an employee at the Station who was able to supply results. When grass reduced yield, the result was rejected. By using the Departments figures for a bi-carbonate phosphorous test up to 12 ppm, you could be confident of covering the cost of your fertiliser of 10 ppm of phosphorous. From 12-18 ppm there is less than 50% chance of covering your fertiliser costs but anything over that there is no profit.

Many fertiliser trials have been carried out throughout the state, those giving good responses were widely promoted, those that don't are not, 2 are worthy of comment:

1. At Mt. Bryan a trial of 3 fertiliser rates and 3 stocking rates were conducted. Results were not going to be reported before 3 years were up. After the first year the highest fertiliser rate and highest stocking rate was very profitable, and the results were published. At the end of the trial, when trying to get the final results I was told they were never written up. A local farmer claimed at the end of the trial it was the lowest fertiliser rate and lowest stocking rate that was most profitable over 3 years and felt that the RSPCA should have been contacted about the condition of some of the stock.
2. Barley research money (farmers money) was used to find out which barley varieties responded best to phosphate fertiliser. The 3 year trial sites were in the South East, Eyre Peninsula and the other at Peake. The Peake site was on soils of 6 ppm of available phosphorous which is very low. Apparently, some trends were showing up at the Peake site. Although farmers money was used to do the trials they were never presented with the results. Even the local Department of Ag. Agronomist was not permitted to see them. This may indicate that the result were not as expected.

Professor Alf Poulos was another scientist who I held in high regard. He had a PhD in Biochemistry from London University and had worked as a research scientist for over 30 years in Australia, England and Canada. He also qualified with a law degree from Adelaide University and graduate diploma in legal practice from Uni SA. He had a special interest in nutrition and a passion for healthy and nutritious food.

After speaking with him at length about our problems he wrote a book on the subject entitled "The Silent Threat". In his acknowledgments he states, "I would like to acknowledge the help and support of my wife and daughters, and I would also like to thank Malcolm Piggott for alerting me to the problem of fertilizers."

As a matter of interest, we were told that our soil generally needed zinc and copper as supplements, so which is the cheapest sulphates or oxides? Waite and CSIRO said it didn't matter.

Given all I have discovered over many years about Soil Health and its link to Animal Health, many questions arose that I have been asking myself and others. Here are a few items that I found very interesting.

We have seen what effect too much fertilizer has had on our sheep health and wondered if there is any evidence that Human Health has also been affected by the imbalance of minerals in the soils that grow our food.

Because there are about 70 minerals and vitamins essential for good health, they all need to be in the right ratio. In broad terms the problem is that our diet lacks many of the above.

Dr Ian Chapman – Lecturer at University of Adelaide Department of Medicine said “Poor nutrition has been implicated in the development of chronic diseases such as Osteoporosis, Cardiovascular disease, Diabetes and Cancer”. Dr Graham Lyons, a research worker at Waite Institute, highlighted the need for folic acid, selenium, Vitamin E and iodine in our diets (Advertiser 13/9/2004).

We know that Vitamin C is essential in reducing scurvy in humans. Likewise iodine is essential in controlling goitre.

Thankfully the Australian Medical Association (AMA) was finally convinced that Folate was necessary to reduce birth defects.

The book “Biology of Trace Elements” claims that Manganese reduces obesity in sheep and pigs. Question: “Why wouldn’t it do the same for humans?”

It used to be said that there was no selenium deficiency in South Australia until a Waitpinga grazier had trouble with ‘white muscle disease’ in lambs. The CSIRO, when checking out how widespread this was, found that farmers with worst selenium deficiency are those that applied most superphosphate. 11% Sulphur, a by-product of superphosphate, is an antagonist to Selenium.

John Lipsett, from CSIRO Canberra Soil Division, was at a conference in Wodonga where the speaker claimed that magnesium levels in wheat had dropped to 1/10th over a 50 year period at Rutherglen Research Station because of soil acidity. Vast areas of Australian soils have become more acidic in recent years.

A south-eastern cattle breeder claims he can tell the low levels of Magnesium in his pasture by the behaviour of his cattle.

Rates of soil acidification continues to increase in the most productive areas of South Australia.

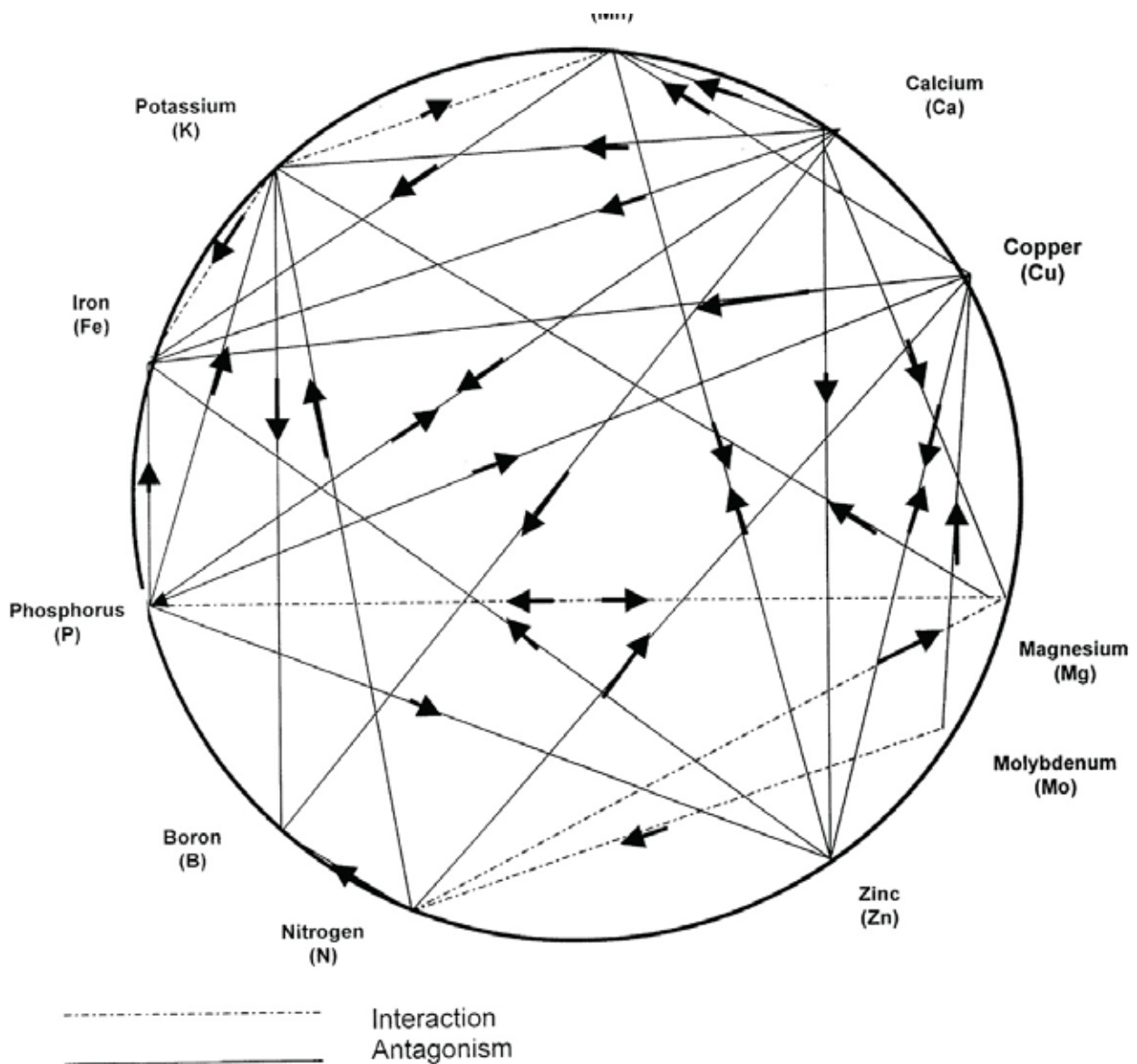
Regarding Mental Health, we are told domestic violence, anxiety and road rage are in epidemic proportions. Is it caused by an imbalance of nutrition in our diet?

Australia is in amid a melanoma epidemic with the instance doubling every 10 years or so we were told (7/1/95).

According to a World Health Organisation report “nine of the most common infectious diseases are now resistant to antibiotics”. Is it because diseases are more potent or because the human immune system has broken down?

Nobody ever said it was possible to overdo it and there was no talk of the chemical interaction between nutrients at that time. We were simply told that the more fertiliser you applied the more response you would get.

I then became aware of Mulder's Chart (Published 1953). It displays the various interactions that can occur between nutrients.



Solid Lines - Antagonism: Decreased availability to the plant of a nutrient due to the action of another. For example, high nitrogen levels can reduce the availability of boron, potash and copper; high phosphate levels can influence the uptake of iron, calcium, potash, copper and zinc; high potash levels can reduce the availability of magnesium. Thus, the application of high levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium can induce plant deficiencies of other essential elements.

Dotted Lines - Interaction: Increased availability to the plant of a nutrient due to the level of another nutrient. For example, increased nitrogen levels create a demand for more magnesium.

Further to the reports provided by Dr Egan and The Department of Ag, Farmers were given conflicting information on how scientific this soil analysis scheme was and the reliability of other companies soil testing services.

Researchers have claimed that some of these low buffering capacity soils in the Mallee will not hold anywhere near this 30ppm of available P in this extractable form irrespective how much was applied.

This side effect of trying to reach this so-called desired level can be devastating.

This discussion only touches the subject of soil fertility and soil analysis, but there is a large volume of information on research that unfortunately has been either poorly promoted or not written up.

A large percentage of farmers are applying two to three times the phosphorus to the soil that they are selling as produce.

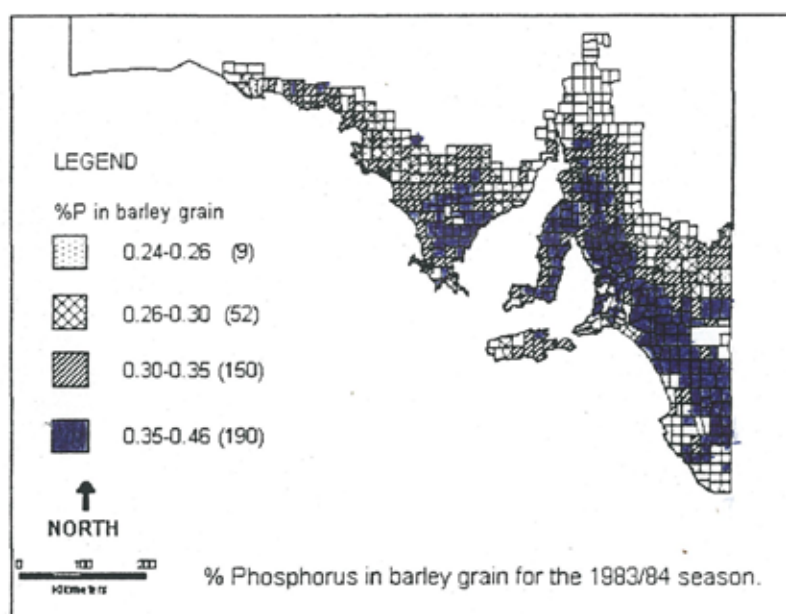
Barley Analysis

Samples of barley were taken from collections made by the South Australian Barley Board from receivals at silos. Several thousand samples were analysed by a method which gives data for all the important nutrient elements simultaneously. The results have been mapped on a computer as mean values for hundreds by Dr B Cartwright (CSIRO Soils).

Results of Phosphorus Analysis

The areas with the longest history of super applications are clearly defined by the darkest shading. It becomes a fair question to ask what a reasonable concentration of phosphorus in barley should be.

Is 0.35% P and more too high? Most of this barley goes for animal feed for which the recommended dietary concentration is 0.18-0.2% P. Where does 0.35% P in grain fit in relation to the P-response curve for yield? Perhaps we are looking at an indicator telling us that something else is limiting (perhaps nitrogen). Should we be seeing better yields in some districts for the investment made in phosphorus?



Spouncer, L. R., Cartwright, B. and Nable R.O. Nutrient Concentrations in Barley Grain from the 1983/84 season in South Australia and the 1989/90 season in South Australia and North-Western Victoria. Divisional Report 120. CSIRO, Div of Soils.

RETIREMENT YEARS

After 65 years in the mallee and at the age of retirement, I thought I'd like to live somewhere along the river. We started looking at houses and house blocks between Meningie and Mannum. We found a vacant block in Taillem Bend and decided it would suit us and the location was not far from any of the family.

It didn't look like a very choice block, but I felt it had potential. Along its boundary were dead gum trees, eaten out by borers and it was the site of an old quarry.

The view of the river was wonderful, lower levels of the block were a lagoon which has attracted bountiful birdlife. There was no access to water, so we installed rainwater tanks and were able to pump water from the river for the garden.

We purchased it in 1988 for \$32,000.



WHAT A VIEW!

As time and money became available, with Lynton's building expertise and me as labourer, our new retirement home was built.

A building company in Murray Bridge had accumulated numerous windows which had not been claimed. Lynton bought the lot at a reasonable price. The big bullet proof reflector glass windows across the front of the house were bought at a clearing sale at only a fraction of the price of new ones. We have often said 'the house was built around the windows'.



THE LAST BRICK IN PLACE



In 1994 Allan took over management of the farm and we moved into Taillem Bend. I went back to farm often, just like my Father had done years before. The time came when modern technology on the farm was beyond my understanding and manpower was plentiful.

We've had nearly 30 wonderful years here looking out over the River Murray, growing most of our own vegetables. Espaliered fruit trees provided a bounty of peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, apples, figs and grapes. Because this was such a stony block all the garden soil had to be carted in. Because we had plenty of water pumped straight form the river, everything flourished (we were not on the towns water supply)

I was responsible for the vegetable garden while Beverley had a lovely flower garden.

A lot of time was spent in those early years carting stone from the farm to build the garden beds.



PLUMS & GRAPES



GRAPES & PETUNIAS



STONE GARDEN BEDS FOR THE ROSES





2009 was the year of the drought when the lagoons along the Murray River, including the front of our place, dried up. Water Restrictions were also in force.

Our grandchildren used this lagoon as a playground and we had to find plenty of old work clothes for them to have a grand old time in the mud. They all needed to be hosed down before we allowed them into our bathroom.



While this area was drying up we grew a lot of pumpkins and melons. There was enough moisture in the ground for them to survive over the summer.

Crickets who buried themselves in the damp soil were a bit of a problem as they would eat out the centre of the watermelons.

During this time as water was receding from the lagoon, carp would get stranded in the shallow waters. I was able to get several with a speargun which I would then deposit beneath my fruit trees.



**FUN IN THE MUD
– CHRISTMAS 2009**



DIY FISH FERTILIZER



PUMPKINS GROWING ON THE 'DRY 'LAGOON

There are many and varied things to see from our kitchen window. The bird life is wonderful!

- Blue Wrens nest in our fernery and each morning they are waiting at the front door for their breakfast crumbs
- Migrating swallows are here by the hundreds at certain times of the year
- We have seen up to 50 pelicans camping on the lawn between the lagoon and the river
- About 4 – 7 swans hatch out each year in the reeds
- Migrating starlings, many thousands of them, are here for several weeks during the summer months. We don't know where they go during the day but just at dusk each day they hover over patches of reeds, then just drop into the reeds until daylight. Then they all disappear until nightfall
- White corellas are a real problem at certain times of the year, destroying any greenery they can find, whether it be a crop just sprouting or gum trees along the river or in the town.
- Turtles nest in the cliffs. We found a little one here many years ago and he was covered in ants as he tried to get back to the river. We rescued him and looked after him in an aquarium for several years

Then there are the vermin...!

- Carp which I mentioned earlier can be seen swimming below water level in the lagoon.
- Snakes are few, but one was caught up in the garden netting over the strawberry patch recently. He was very aggressively trying to get out when I noticed him just a few inches from where I was gardening.
- Foxes are plentiful. An inquisitive fox found his way through the open garage doors while we were both in the garden. The poor fox was terrified on seeing us and ran in to the main part of the house with me in hot pursuit. It raced around the lounge, jumping on furniture, up curtains then down the passage into the bathroom where these photos were taken. We opened the laundry door and a much-relieved fox was able to escape .



There are always lots of rivercraft.
Houseboats of all shapes and sizes.
Lots of jet skiers, rowing boats and sailing boats.

Paddles steamers, canoes and swimmers.

Another interesting floatie was a house being towed by 2 jet ski boats down the river. It had been built on a pontoon at Mannum and was being transported to Wellington. The new owners said it was easier to transport it this way than take it by road transport.

Must not forget our sunsets. They are beautiful right across the western sky with a wide variety of colours.

In 2009 I joined the local bowling club and played for several years. I gave it away thinking I could do something more productive with my time. I then became involved in voluntary work around the town.





REFLECTION OF SETTING SUN IN OUR WINDOWS





TAILEM BEND CEMETERY GATEWAY



TAILEM BEND CEMETERY COLUMBARIUM



Tailem Bend RSL Wall "LEST WE FORGET"

RSL members must be happy with the finished wall of the Memorial. Three years in the planning it is finally finished in time for Remembrance Day 11th November. Volunteers under the leadership of Malcolm Piggott have done a great job in enhancing our main street. "Well done guys"
Above: Malcolm Piggott puts final touches on the RSL Memorial Wall.



I became interested in building stone walls and my first attempt was at the entrance of the Taillem Bend Cemetery. Lynton was offered the job but didn't have the time.

This was followed by a wall each side of the cemetery gates.

I had the task of drawing up plans for most of the following projects, with the help of some volunteers. We built two columbarium's which have provision for 100 urns and any history that relatives may like to include.

Next came the RSL Remembrance Wall in the main street, opposite the Coorong Council office. If one looks closely at the word "LEST, you will notice the S is upside down! Only a much loved retired school teacher in the town pointed out this mistake to me.

The plan I had of building an entrance wall into the town had been rejected on 3 occasions by Council. They presented a plan that was too complicated for amateurs to tackle so I drew up a plan that was accepted. It included a steel cutout of an RX Locomotive placed on top of the wall. On the other side of the wall, has information boards promoting the district.

With help and after much negotiation, we were also given permission to build the UNEEK Animal Park on the edge of the railway station car park in town. Local artists and creatives helped to create mouldings and cut-outs of native birds and animals from the area. Each bird or animal was numbered 1-44 and an information board created to name them all.

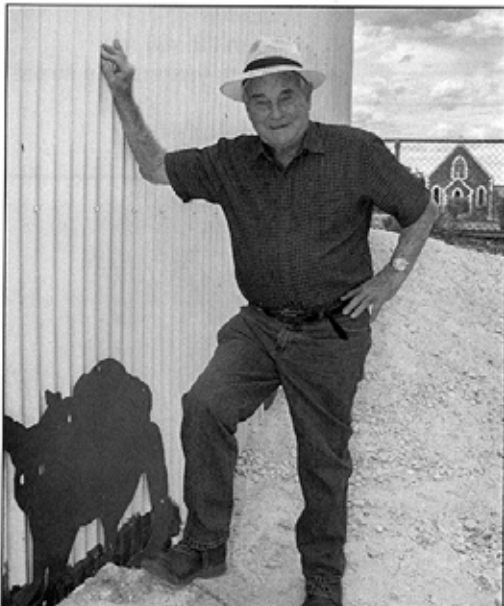
Many loads of stone were bought in from the farm to build stone walls.

These are just a few of about 25 smaller projects I was involved with around the town.



UNEK ANIMAL PARK

Malcolm Piggott of Tailem Bend, the Mastermind behind the project, gathered on a very hot day, for the unveiling of 'Tailem Uneek Animals' next to the old Railway Station, in the main street of Tailem Bend, Friday, November 10, 2017.





One of the Taillem Bend entrance walls Malcolm worked on

2012 KESAB Community Commendation Award Winner: Malcolm Piggott

**Location: Taillem Bend
Council: Coorong District**

A retired farmer and 81 years young, Malcolm Piggott is always busy helping others in his town. Malcolm has shown a long commitment to community projects.

Malcolm is the Progress Association's Special Projects Team Coordinator. One of his many special skills is a stonemason. He uses local limestone to beautify the town with limestone walls and memorials.

On a council form to be a council volunteer, it asked for qualifications. **"What qualifications can a broken down farmer put down?"** says Malcolm. **"I wrote 'putting hope' that I put things together and hope that it's alright."**

Once the town's community groups saw that Malcolm's handiwork had not fallen down, they asked him if he would work on other projects around the town.



Malcolm Piggott hard at work building a stonewall.

He has worked with groups and volunteers to create entrance walls to the town and the cemetery, build columbariums, information bays, a sundial and the Reflection Wall at the town's War Memorial.

By working with volunteers, he has been able to share his stonemason skills with them. Some people who have worked with Malcolm have been inspired to create their own stonewall at home.

In 2012 the Progress Association nominated Malcolm for a Community Commendation Award and didn't tell him. Malcolm says, **"It's an honour to win a KESAB award. I wasn't expecting it."**

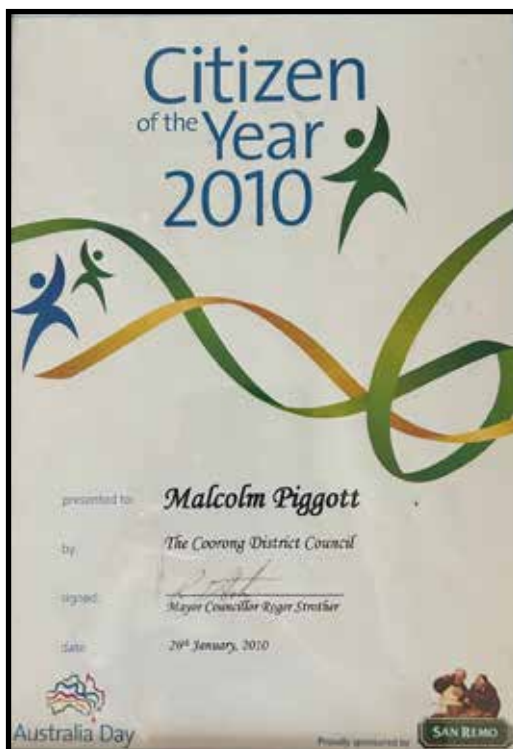
Malcolm is always planning his next project. He has a passion to encourage tourism and enhance the local environment for Taillem Bend residents. Malcolm hasn't announced his next project but is looking at wirework sculptures.

In 2010 and 2013 respectively we were each honoured to receive a “Citizen of the Year” award for voluntary work in and for the community.

Beverley had also kept herself busy during our retirement years leading the Tailem Bend Singers and being on the committee for Friends of Hospital, just to name a few. Beverley is also involved with the local patchwork and quilting group.



Citizen of the Year Awards



HOLIDAYS

1989 - WORLD SHEEP CONGRESS TASMANIA

The World Sheep Congress was held in Launceston, Tasmania. The White Suffolk Association decided this would be an ideal opportunity to launch the new breed. Being Foundation members, we decided to incorporate this trip with a week's holiday beforehand.

We were unable to collect our Conference invitation tickets until we got to Tasmania and then found the invite read "Formal Dress" and I hadn't taken a good suit. I believe the reason for the formal dress was because Princess Anne, who was visiting Tasmania at the time, was going to be at the dinner.

The next best thing for me was a visit to St Vinnies where we bought a 3-piece suit for \$6. The vest was a bit tight, so Beverley with her sewing expertise, split the vest down the centre back and put a 2" piece in to make it fit. It was only worn the once and I've never owned a 3-piece since.

The conference dinner was held at the Launceston Velodrome because there was no other place large enough to hold the event. The hot meals were prepared and individually served in Launceston then the local police escorted the food to the Velodrome some distance away. It was all very well organised, and the meals were still hot when served.

Our entertainer for the dinner was John Farnham who arrived by helicopter.

While sightseeing a couple of highlights were a boat trip on the Gordon River. The reflections were spectacular.



Also there were paddocks of opium poppies in full flower. These are grown for medicinal purposes and we were not even allowed to photograph them.

After retirement we did travel and saw a lot of Australia and New Zealand.

1992 – ALICE SPRINGS & DARWIN



1992 was our first camping holiday to Darwin. Our accommodation was the back of this 1984 Toyota Ute.

On our way through Coober Pedy we came across toilets at a campsite which read "4 U 2 P". It took us a while to work out what that meant!

In those days we were able to climb Ayer's Rock, which we did. We then explored several of the McDonnell Ranges gorges out west of Alice Springs.

While in Darwin we spent time with my nephew Geoff, who was an accountant with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, then headed out to Jabiru where Geoff's sister Jill was a teacher.

We were unable to travel through Aboriginal Land to Nhulunbuy, so another niece Debbie came to us in Jabiru instead.

1996 – QUEENSLAND

In 1996 we purchased a new Mitsubishi Triton twin cab ute which was good to camp in. We had the bed made up all the time and would step out to get dressed in the tent. This vehicle ran on gas as well as petrol and in some places our gas cost was 22.9c/L.

The first big trip we did in this ute was to Queensland, travelling through the cotton fields in NSW and seeing those huge stacks of cotton resembling haystacks.

We then followed up the Sunshine Coast where we stayed with friends in Emerald where Brian Kuchel was growing a lot of Sorghum. The Dawson river ran through his property, and it was a very picturesque spot.

We went through Cairns and on to Port Douglas and the Daintree. From here the top of Cape York still felt so far away so we decided to head for home instead.



1998 – DARWIN & WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In 1998 we took an 8-week holiday to Northern Territory and Western Australia. We left Tailm Bend on May 27 and returned on July 27 and travelled a distance of 15,450 kms.

On this trip we headed out to Kings Canyon and stayed in a camp site owned by Jim Cottrell. He was employing 30 people and had many bookings ahead with bus coaches and other travellers.

After a time, things didn't go so well for Jim, so he moved just south of Alice Springs to a place called Stuarts Well where he setup a roadhouse and caravan park. We spent time here and were invited into his home where he had a 'Singing Dingo' called Dinky.

Dinky was rescued from a baiting programme when a pup and he was taught to sing and play the piano.



Beverley actually played that piano with Dinky standing on the keys just like in the photo here. Dinky entertains thousands of visitors each year with his music. The higher the note one plays, the higher the pitch his howling. It has been said that when there is no audience he will wake up, stretch and then step on to the piano to play and sing to himself, waiting for the applause.

From Alice Springs we travelled on to Kununurra, seeing many white ant mounds of different shapes – some magnetic ones (running north to south), others short and dumpy. They were also different colours, depending on soil type. Many of the houses in Kununurra are steel framed because of the white ants.

We toured a rockmelon farm on the Ord River and saw heaps of discarded melons which looked good enough to eat, but not good enough to sell.

At Wyndham, locals said we must visit the lookout and view the beautiful sunset over the ocean. When we arrived we found a catering business setting up their hot food van for the first time. Because we were their first customers our meal was free.

We visited crocodile farms and did a boat trip on Lake Argyle which covers an area of 2,000 square kms and contains a volume of water equivalent to 54 Sydney Harbours. Out of Kununurra I did a flight over Lake Argyle and the Diamond mine. Beverley stayed back saying "If the plane crashed someone needed to bring the car home". Small planes were not for her.

Our next beauty spot were the Bungle Bungles, a large rock formation about 20 kms from the highway. The rocks would be over 100 feet high with crevices and walking trails running deep into the rock. Each had its own charm, such as the miniature Palm Valley and those with swimming holes with clear water which were very refreshing on a hot day.

We decided to attempt the Gibb River Road – a rough road with much corrugation. It was initially constructed as a road to transport cattle from surrounding stations to the ports at Derby and Wyndham. The gorges, waterfalls, camping areas and swimming holes along this road were spectacular.

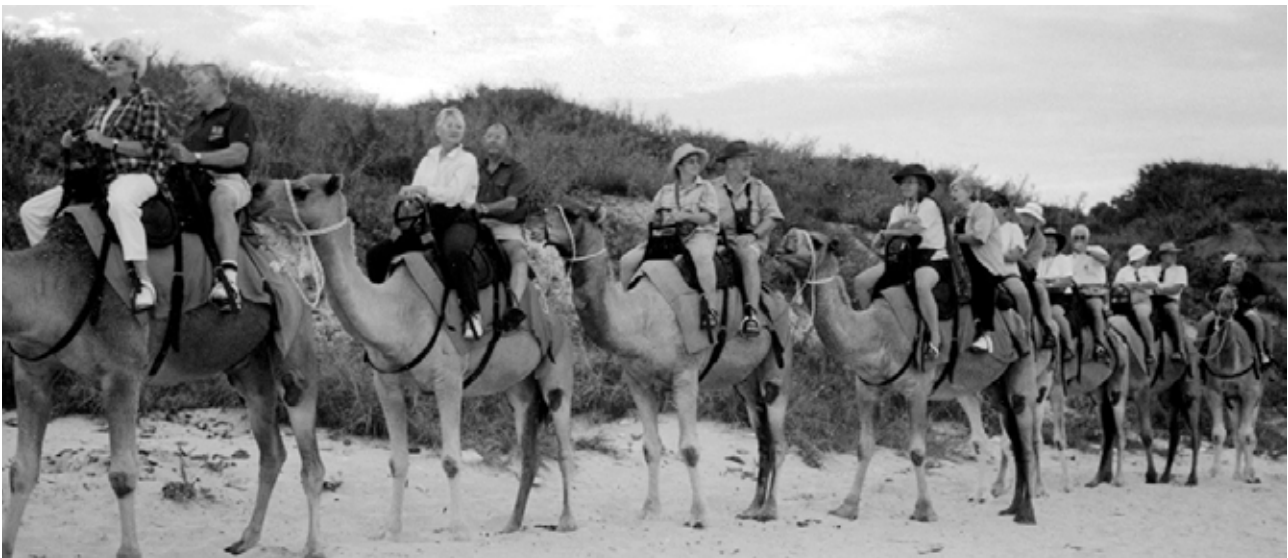
We were fortunate that we never had a flat tyre on all our travels. I think this was due to driving according to the road conditions.

We did meet up with one family who were stranded on this stretch of road with a broken trailer axle. They had experienced 3 flat tyres. They must have been expecting trouble as they had a generator and a bread maker with them. He was a policeman from Halls Creek, not so very far away and should have known the road conditions better.

When travelling in the north of Australia I would suggest being well prepared for midges – they can bite! The policeman’s wife gave me some antihistamine which I was very glad of .

There were no fuel stops along the Gibb River Road so we were glad to finally reach Derby for fuel.

At Cable Beach, just out of Derby, there was a camel train. What a way to make a living but the tourists seemed to be enjoying it. We didn’t try it.



Southwest of Derby we came across what is thought to be the longest stock water trough in the Southern Hemisphere.

After a couple of nights at Broome we headed south to Port Hedland where we saw up to 3km long trains carting iron ore from one of the mines out East into Port Hedland to be loaded for export.



At Dampier we saw stockpiled heaps of salt awaiting export.

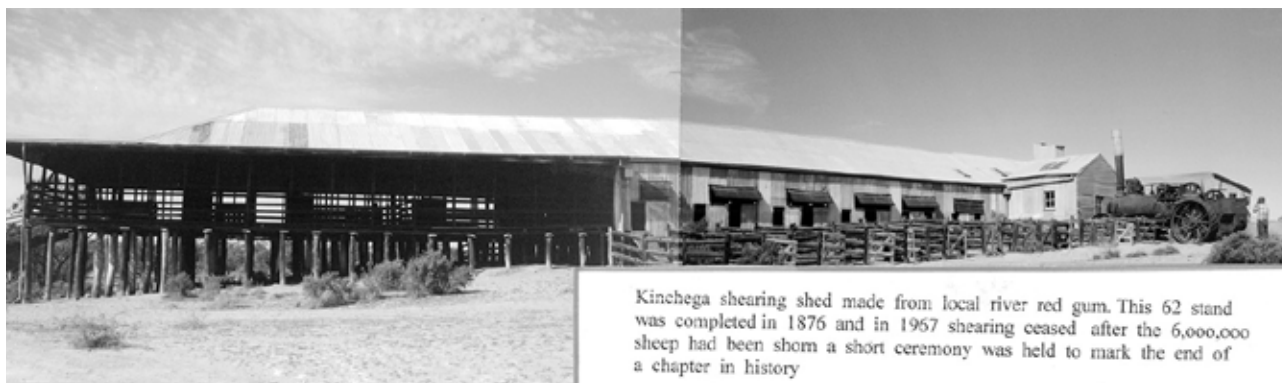
2000 – BIRDSVILLE TRACK TO QUEENSLAND

In 2000 cousins Ross & Marlene Schlein, accompanied us along the Birdsville track and on to Longreach, Carnarvon Gorge and on to the Glasshouse Mountains. There we parted company as we went on to spend time with Beverley's sister Rosalie and Malcolm in Jindalee, Brisbane.

2002 – QUEENSLAND

We travelled again to Queensland for our nephew Sean's wedding in Mackay. We took a different route this time following the Darling River.

At Kincheega, north of Pooncarie, we came across a 62-stand shearing shed which operated from 1876 to 1967, shearing 6,000,000 sheep. It was built on the banks of the Darling River and their wool was transported down the river on barges to Morgan before being loaded onto rail transport to Adelaide.



KINCHEGA SHEARING SHED

On to Wilcannia, where we camped on the Darling River and tied the tent up to a large gum tree. Next morning after an early start, & heading towards Burke, Beverley was driving with the sun in her eyes. As she pulled down the sun visor, there to her horror was this huge spider which we believe came off the gum tree. By her reaction, my first thought was heart attack! We stopped the car and now with spider caught, disposed of it and we were on our way.

In Bourke we noticed all the shop windows were covered with steel shutters to protect from vandalism. It was here we visited the grave site of Fred Hollows, the famous eye specialist.

Leaving the river, we headed to Charleville and then on to Mackay for the wedding. On our travels we met a damsel in distress. She had a late model Toyota ute which had a roo bar made of 4" chrome tubing. This didn't cover the radiator and unfortunately the kangaroo she hit smashed the radiator which was only about a foot off the ground.

While at the wedding, someone broke a small window on our vehicle and took a few things, including our video case with used videos in it. Fortunately, we had the video camera with us at the wedding, but we were sad to have lost those videos that could not be replaced. For example, footage of a platypus in the river and a joey just poking his head out of his mother's pouch and scratching his ear.

Heading southwards, I had the opportunity of riding on a sugar cane harvesting machine



THE HOUSE THAT ROD AND LEANNE BUILT NEAR SHEFFIELD

which gave me an insight into the sugar industry.

TASMANIA

Between 1988 and 2004, we had several holidays to Tasmania where Leanne and Rod had built their home on the slope of Mount Roland, a few miles from Sheffield.

Here they were able to channel fresh water from a nearby creek which was good enough to drink. It also gave them water for a beautiful garden.

On one of our earliest trips, we walked to the top of Mt Roland.

Over the course of our visits to Tasmania we were able to see much of the island as well as King Island. On King Island the abattoirs were right alongside the aerodrome which enabled processed meat to be loaded straight on the plane and flown to the mainland.

On King Island the Kelp industry was interesting to see – it was collected from the beach, dried and then exported to other countries. 8 ton of wet kelp produces only 1 ton when dried and is used in cooking and paint.

There are no foxes on King Island hence



CUTTING HAY IN THEIR TOP Paddock



X MARKS THE SPOT WHERE ROD AND LEANNE BUILT WITH MT ROLAND IN THE BACKGROUND

the geese, pheasants and turkeys can roam free.

2003 – SIMPSON DESERT

Leanne, Rod & family, along with friends of theirs from Tasmania, asked us to come along on their trip across the Simpson Desert. What a camping experience this was!

No toilets, just a sandhill and a shovel. No showers for about 3 days. This proved to be a challenge for 3 early teenage girls on the trip.

It took several attempts to cross over some

of the sandy ridges. A little help was needed from Rod's vehicle to get us up over "Big Red" near Birdsville.

Flies were abundant during the day and then at dusk, the mosquitoes took the night shift – they were terrible!

After good showers and replenishing our food supplies in Birdsville, we headed on to Mt Isa, then Lorne Hill where we spent several nights. It was a beautiful campsite on the river.

The next evening, we came across the Hells Gate camping spot and on the toilets a sign read "Switch off the light when you leave – lights attract insects – insects attract frogs – frogs attract snakes and the Flying Doctor is 4 hours away." This was an experience never to be forgotten.

A fisherman at Borroloola gave us some Barramundi. He had reached his quota from just this one big fish he had caught, so there was enough for us all to have a taste.

2006 - WESTERN AUSTRALIA

One of our trips took us to Esperance in WA to visit my brother Rob and his wife Joan. We then headed north towards Tom Price, travelling inland this time, through the mining town of Kalgoorlie, to Menzies, a town in disrepair. Then on to Meekathara, then Newman where we spoke to a truck driver travelling from Perth to Tom Price. He was carrying explosives and had just put \$1500 worth of diesel in his truck.

Wittenoom, known for its asbestos, was a real ghost town. Plenty of street signs but no houses. Here we saw a lot of Sturt Desert Peas flowering.



BIG RED, BIRDSVILLE



OUR CAMPING SETUP



We visited Marble Bar, at one time considered to be the hottest town in Australia. This changed when their thermometer was moved from the Caravan Park to the playground.

It was at Marble Bar that some locals recommended a trip out to the gorge a few kms north of town. As we neared the gorge, we were confronted with a fast flowing creek. After much discussion and seeing wet tracks on the other side, we decided to cross. We found out later that the wet wheel tracks were from a grader!

The further we went into this creek, the deeper the water was. Knowing this was the only way back was a bit scary. We did make it and when opening the car



doors, water gushed out.

Tom Price was a real mining town. We saw huge dump trucks carting out of the mine. From the lookout we could see explosives being set off.

Our last long camping trip prior to COVID in 2020, was the Strzelecki Track. One never knows who you might meet on a trip. While staying at Andamooka, a convoy of motorbikes from Tasmania were passing through, led by a White Suffolk breeder whom we knew well.

This trip took us to Brisbane, Cobalt Gorge and back through Bourke, Winton and Alice Springs.

We often thought a trip on the Ghan would be good, so in 2018 we did it. We flew to Darwin and came back via train. It was a very relaxing trip.

John McAuley, from New Zealand, judged the White Suffolk sheep at the Royal Adelaide Show in 1995 and we were given an invitation to visit him. John made 4,000 ton of silage yearly, because a lot of his land was in the high country. His fertilizer was spread by air and if the plane was not airborne by the time he reached the end of the runway, which was at the top of a mountain, there's only one way – "Down"!

Another farmer, whose property we visited, was Bruce Patterson who owns a lot of very

steep country. We drove for 1 1/2 hours in a 4x4 ute in bottom gear to get to the top paddocks. We couldn't see the surrounding towns as we were above the clouds. When stock are agisted out, the cost of agistment is based



on the increased weight of the animal – not on a weekly basis as we do.

As the years went by, and camping holidays were becoming more difficult, we became aware that easier accommodation was a must.

However, we did have some great times away with good friends Allen & Aileen Hewett.

One trip was a cruise to the Indonesian Islands. We flew to Perth, caught a bus to Fremantle and there boarded one of the Princess Cruise ships which took us on a 16 day tour of the islands stopping at Komodo Island, Makassar, Semarang and Bali. It was sad to see the poverty at some of these places – women sitting on a hard floor weaving mats by hand, then trying to sell them off cheaply to the tourists. Rubbish was everywhere along the streets.

At the wharf were many Indonesians with little 3-wheeler trikes (tuk-tuks) waiting to take passengers into town to shop. A bus took us out to the rice paddy fields in Bali, but we didn't see the real tourist side of town, mainly because of the cost and time didn't allow before catching the ship. It was also interesting to see how passengers on the ship spent their time.

Meals on board were good. There were several flash restaurants with well dressed and very polite Indonesian wait staff. Also plenty of entertainment and theatre, live shows, a gymnasium, casino, swimming pools and also shops to buy souvenirs at very inflated prices.

2013 – NEW ZEALAND

The four of us also did an 18-day tour of New Zealand in 2013. It was 2 years following the big 6.3 magnitude earthquake in Christchurch that killed 188 people. Many buildings were still in ruin and the devastation was still very raw in the minds of the New Zealanders. However, there were lots of beautiful things to see and do. Snow on the mountains on the South Island and quite dry and warm in the north. Fjords were spectacular as were the bubbling pools of sulphur. We crossed the South Island from West to East by train. The bus drivers on our tour were very informative. Meals and accommodation were all good. Some

days were very long with us rising at 6am, breakfast at 7am and on the bus by 8am for a day's sightseeing.

This was a much different trip to New Zealand than the one just the 2 of us did in 1995. That time we hired a car, camped out and visited sheep studs and organic farms.

2018 – RIVER MURRAY TRIP

In 2018 we did a River Murray trip on a fast pleasure boat "Spirit of Australia". It takes tourists from Goolwa to the SA/VIC border on a 5-day 4-night one way trip staying at towns along the way for meals and accommodation as well as any places of interest. We visited an apricot orchard and processing plant at Mypolonga, viewed wombats by night light. We enjoyed a BBQ and entertainment on the banks of the river, took a trip on a canoe into one of the small estuaries and saw a white kangaroo. There was also aboriginal art to be seen along the way.

Shell Hill was another point of interest. For many years, crushed shells from this spot were used for agricultural purposes and road construction.

At the border we boarded passenger buses operated by the same company, which took us home while the boat travelled back to Goolwa with a new load of tourists.

This pleasure boat will take 40 passengers but for some unknown reason there were only 7 of us. This was good as it gave us all valuable time talking with the Skipper, plus plenty of seats to choose from. This trip may have been cancelled but there was a full load of passengers at the border to come back.

LIFE CHANGES - COVID-19

Our holidays came to an end during 2020 when the deadly coronavirus quickly spread all over the world. It was very contagious, and many thousands of people were affected.

Holidays were out of bounds and all holiday venues were shut down, flights cancelled, schools closed, and many people lost their jobs as businesses closed. Any contact with people who had the virus, meant 14 days in isolation, distancing and wearing face masks in supermarkets was essential. It really put the country in chaos.

Now after 3 years, things are getting back to normal even though the virus is still ongoing. We may now have to live with it.

Perhaps the Virus has given us more spare time to work on my book – something that may not have got done otherwise.

It also put a stop to Tailern Bend Singers, a group of 20 people who have been performing to older folk in Nursing homes, hospitals and aged care homes for over 30 years. Beverley has been conducting this group for over 20 of these years, as well as finding music and putting it into groups of 20. We would perform about 25 concerts a year and practices were held weekly in our home. We have a collection of about 400 songs, mostly old songs and some from the Musicals such as Sound of Music, My Fair Lady, Mary Poppins, The King & I, The Seekers.

My only claim to fame was a solo which I did at a Tailern Bend Singers performance – the only solo I've ever done in public is printed below. Before singing this solo I told the next little story...

There is a story about a young sailor who went to the captain with a message. The sailor had a speech impediment and could only say "Pppplease Sssssir". Now the captain was busy but he knew that people who stutter can sing very well, so he told the young man to "come back in half an hour and sing your message". So half an hour later the sailor returned and sang the following song to the tune of Auld Lang Syne.

**"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never bought to mind.
The cook has fallen overboard
And is 20 miles behind."**



APPENDIX - PHOTO GALLERY

Just a few more photos we wanted to include...



MY FATHER



MY FATHER AND MOTHER IN LATER YEARS



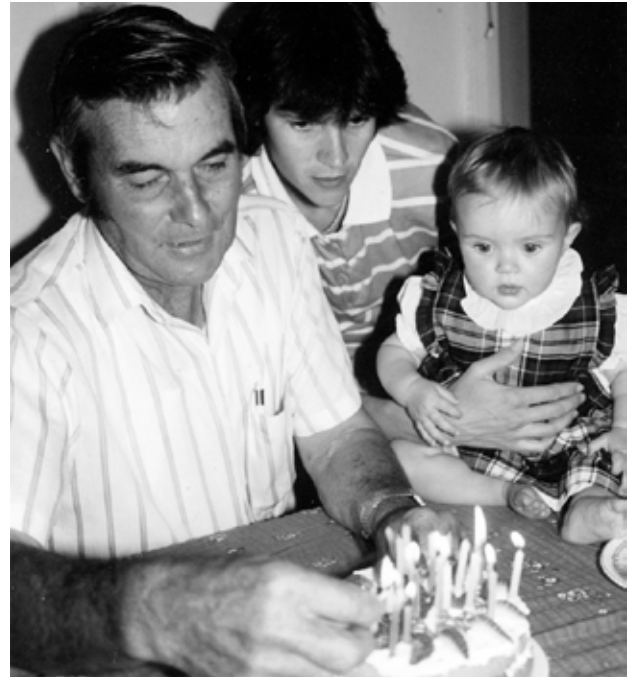
ME SUITED UP - 1969



MY 60TH BIRTHDAY



WITH BEN ON THE MOTORBIKE



**LEANNE & HANNA HELP
BLOW OUT THE CANDLES**



THE GRANDCHILDREN GATHERED FOR GRANDMA'S 60TH BIRTHDAY



**FOUR GENERATIONS
IN THE SCHULZ FAMILY
DAVID, TYSON & JASON SCHULZ WITH
GREAT GRANDPA MALCOLM**



90TH BIRTHDAY GREETINGS FROM STATE DIGNITARIES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my wife for her
Love, Patience, Devotion and Understanding.
For the many hours she spent finding photos and getting
information, then putting it all together in story form.

Thanks Sue, for the time she has spent typing, scanning
photos and re-arranging many parts of the script.
Hours of work, thank you Sue.

I would also like to thank each of our children who have
contributed their stories and given encouragement
as we have written this book.



the \mathbb{R}^n is a linear space over \mathbb{R} and \mathbb{C} and a vector space over \mathbb{R} and \mathbb{C} . The operations are defined as follows:

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