

The Skeleton

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUSTRALIND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
(INC.)

Affiliated with WA Genealogical Society (Inc.)



Forrest Homestead 1849

Photo courtesy of the Bunbury Historical Society

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

www.australindfhs.org

THE AUSTRALIND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Library and Research Centre

Situated at: Australind Library Complex,
off Paris Road, Australind WA 6233

All correspondence to:
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PO Box A279
Australind WA 6233

Phone: (08) 9796 1050

Email: alindfhs@iinet.net.au

Website: www.australindfhs.org

Annual Subscriptions: 1 Jan - 31 Dec

Single Membership \$35
Joint Membership \$45

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	Carol Sims	9724 1178
	Kate Bullock	9725 9445
	Jayne Denham	9797 1629
	Avalon Donovan	9797 0198

LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesday 10 am - 5 pm
Wednesday 10 am - 5 pm
Thursday 10 am - 5 pm
Saturdays by appointment - no extra charge

Non-member charges

Use of library \$5 per session

A researcher is available to conduct
research on behalf of the Society

Contact Mr Alan Reynolds via the Library on
9796 1050 or email: alindfhs@iinet.net.au

Research

Initial Fee \$10 for 2 hrs
Additional \$ 5 per hr
Photocopying and Postage extra



Your Contributions . . .

Please email articles for the next newsletter to the Australind website with
'Newsletter' in the Subject line or leave in the tray at the Family History
Library: alindfhs@iinet.net.au

Deadline for the receipt of articles for next edition of the *Skeleton*.

15th May 2015



Disclaimer

The Society does not hold itself responsible for statements or opinions expressed by authors of papers published in this newsletter. The accuracy of offers, services or goods appearing here cannot be vouched for by the Society. The Editorial Team reserves the right to condense and edit articles to meet the approved size limits of our newsletter.

Message from the Editorial Team

Hello everyone

Welcome back to another year of researching.

This is our first newsletter for 2015 and the E-Team has been busy compiling its contents. Funnily enough, the main story - "Forrest's Koombana Flour Mill" caught the eye of one of our librarians here, who brought it to our attention. The story seemed to want to be told! William Forrest was just as important to the advancement of the colony, as his famous son, John. We hope you find it as interesting as we did.

We would still like more stories from you, to include in future *Skeletons*. Having your personal stories contained in the newsletter, makes a good read for everyone!

We would like to thank Irma for all the work she has done over the years as part of The E-Team. Irma is now taking a step back to spend more time on her many other projects.

Also thanks again Marg for helping us with this edition.

The E-Team
Anne, Jayne & Marg

DATES for your DIARY

AFHS AGM - to be held on 2nd May 2015 at 9.30am.

WA Affiliated FHS Conference - to be held at Australind - 4th & 5th September 2015.

Sausage Sizzle will be at the new Treendale Bunnings, date to be advised.

Committee meetings: Last Friday of the month. 10am. AFHS Library.

On request we can arrange appointments for researchers to come into the Library on Saturdays (between 10am and 2pm).

WAGS Library open Mon 9:30 - 20:00
Wed-Fri 9:30 - 14:30 Sat 13:00 - 17:00
www.wags.org.au

TIP: Don't forget to bring along your USB thumb drive to save files from your web research.

AFHS SERVICES

Library Visit

Affiliated Societies - no charge (show membership card)
Non members - \$5 per visit

Membership

1 Jan 2015 – 31 Dec 2015.

Computer Use

Internet Access -includes Ancestry.com + Find My Past
RootsIreland and many more.

All users	\$2 per hr
Printouts	30c each
Burn CDs	\$1 each

Micro Film/Fiche Readers/ Pro Scan

All users	\$2 per hr
Printouts	30c each

Photocopying

A4 B&W single	20c	Double-sided	30c
A4 Colour single	30c	Double-sided	50c
A3 B&W single	30c	Double-sided	60c

Ring Binding

Up to 50 sheets	\$2
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Laminating

Please ask at desk

President's Report

Hello to fellow members and researchers

Welcome to the March *Skeleton* put out by the hard-working newsletter team, who I know would like input from you, the readers, with your human-interest stories. There has been a positive response from readers to the newsletter team. Well done everyone!

Our Christmas function was held on 9th December in the Mulgara building next to the Library. This building provides the space required for catering to the increasing member numbers to AFHS. Guests can chatter and mingle much easier, creating a warm and friendly atmosphere. Thanks to everyone who attended and also thanks to everyone with the food. It was very successful.

The next Affiliated Family History Societies' Conference will be held at AFHS on the 4th and 5th September 2015. Plans are now being put in place and an agenda will be sent to all members once completed. The Library may be looking for assistance for the event, we will let you know.

Kate, one of our valuable librarians, has begun a cross-reference index file system on local historical farms and properties together with the owner's names. She has also recorded relevant information and where it can be found - e.g. the title of library books. Wonderful work Kate!

The Dardanup Shire is running a "Naming of the City" competition for the future East of Eaton city. We have entered, hoping to win some cash for the Society!

This year's Sausage Sizzle will be held at the new Bunnings store in Treendale later in the year. We will notify you of the date.

Please enjoy the cooler months ahead as Autumn is the best time of the year I think. Whether you are researching or just looking for a friendly face do join us for a cuppa as we enjoy your company.

Enjoy reading *The Skeleton*.

Kind regards
Chris Shaw

~NEW WEBSITE~

We now subscribe to **RootsIreland**, so come along into the library and search for your Irish ancestors online.



~ WE NEED WWI STORIES FROM YOU ~

As this year is the 100th anniversary of Gallipoli we would be interested to have your stories on family members who served in Gallipoli or other WA divisions in WWI for inclusion in the next edition of *The Skeleton*. Please get them to us as early as you possibly can.

LIBRARY – LATEST ACQUISITIONS

Many thanks to the generous people who have donated books to the Library.

The Kulin Shire Chronicles of the 20th Century	Stan Gervis
A Family Affair - Hertfordshire Hummerstones	Ruth Verlander
Fifty Years of Little Theatre	Dawn Murray
Swan River Mania - A Colonial History of WA	G Russo & H Schmitt
Changes They've Seen - Bayswater 1827-1997	Catherine May
Pash's Odyssey - WA from Hartog Plate to America's Cup	

**** WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS ****

637	Carole King	Australind
638	Dorothy Savage	Bunbury
639	Helen Brown	Bunbury
640	Maureen Tame	Australind
641	David Best	Harvey
642	Pamela Best	Harvey
643	Wenda Prichard	Bunbury
644	Wendy Cheesewright	Capel
645	Lawrence Smyth	Boyanup
646	Christine Smyth	Boyanup
647	Jacqui Bowman	Capel
648	Peter J Rose	Bunbury

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Surname	Place	State/County	Country	Period	Member No.
GRIFFITHS	Coventry	WAR	ENGLAND	1800+	637
WILSON	Lasenby	KID	IRELAND	1800+	637
CARTER	Lasenby	KID	IRELAND	1800+	637
GOLDRING	Portslade	SSX	ENGLAND	1850+	637

If you would like to contact any of our new members, please ring the AFHS Library on 9796 1050

You know you're getting old when you stoop to tie your shoes and wonder
what else you can do while you're down there.

FORREST'S KOOMBANA FLOUR MILL

William Forrest (1819-1899) was an early settler of the Australind colony, arriving here in 1842. He was the father of the well-known Sir John Forrest (1847-1918), the first Premier of Western Australia (1891-1901). What is less known of William are the many contributions he made to the colony, one being the establishment of the Koombana Flour Mill. This mill played a very important role in the local economy, with farms from the surrounding areas supplying the wheat for flour-milling. William's efforts in building several mills in the district are outlined in the following account, including the connection with the Properjohn family, who arrived in Australind in 1841.



Koombana Roller Flour Mill 1878
Photo courtesy of the State Library of WA

William Forrest came to the Australind settlement on the *Trusty* in 1842 with his wife, Margaret Guthrie Hill from Stonehaven in Scotland. They came as servants to Dr John Ferguson, but William later returned to his trade as a millwright and engineer after the Australind settlement scheme failed. He proved himself to be a capable young man as he had already built many of the first bridges in the district. In 1846, William leased land on the edge of Leschenault Estuary and constructed a wind-powered mill and a small timber home. This area is still known as 'Mill Point' today.

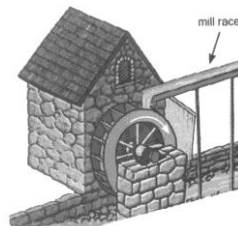


This article is from the *Perth Gazette* reporting on the windmill on 2 August 1850:-

"He first attempted a windmill, and after extraordinary labour, during its erection, he finished it. However, doomed to disappointment, he found the mill would not work as well as he could wish, excepting when the wind blew from one particular point. He therefore cleared and topped the trees around it for a considerable distance, and even then, it did not answer his purpose. He afterwards took it down and built a fresh one near the mouth of the Preston, one mile from the first site. Although the second mill has proved a great convenience to all around, he found that he caused so much disappointment to his customers, whilst he was waiting for wind, and they for his flour that he came to the resolution of erecting a water mill."

William decided to abandon the windmill as it had become unsafe and failed due to intermittent wind and flooding. In 1849, he purchased land next to the Preston and Ferguson Rivers. Here he built a homestead and showed considerable ingenuity by engineering another mill, this time operated by water power. First he built a timber dam and then erected an elevated mill race leading to the mill wheel. By March 1851, the Leschenault Water Mill was in operation. F K Crowley best describes this in his book *“Forrest 1847-1918, Volume 1”*:-

“He first of all built a small rock dam across the Preston River near the junction of the Ferguson River; the dam wasn't too high to prevent the river from flowing. Then, by an interlocking series of small wooden troughs and clay water-ways, with miniature floodgates at regular intervals, he drew running water from the side of the dam, carried it over the Ferguson River on an elevated bridge, then across a U-bend in the Preston to rejoin it further downstream, after turning an overshot wheel. There he put up a two-storied wooden building measuring a hundred feet by forty feet.”

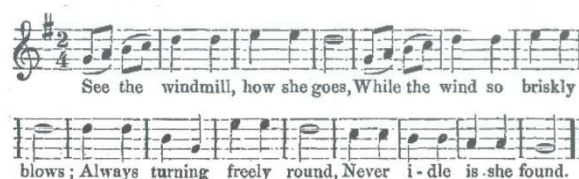


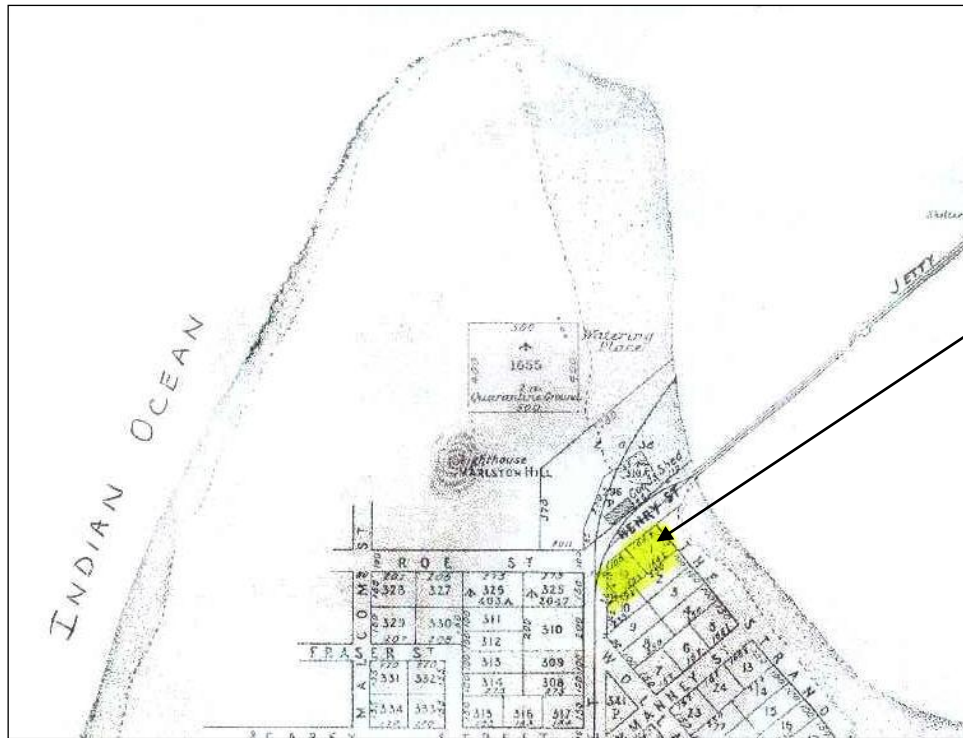
The water-powered mill was a great success and supplied the colony with its own flour considerably cheaper than what was being purchased from South Australia. Importing large consignments of SA flour caused a great deal of dissatisfaction in Western Australia. The SA farmers could undercut WA's prices because they used modern machinery and careful farming methods. Also their costs of transporting grain to the Bunbury Port were lower. For example, in 1856, H Yelverton, a timber miller at Quindalup in the Vasse district, was successful in his tender to export timber to South Australia and found it profitable to back-load with flour.

William and Margaret Forrest had ten children, their first, Mary, dying in Scotland prior to their leaving. Once again tragedy struck the family in 1861, when their son Augustus, aged 14 months drowned in the mill race on the property.

Unfortunately, there was another disaster in September 1867, when lightning caused the water-mill to be destroyed by fire. There was no insurance on the place. Luckily the new turbine water wheel was saved as the mill was operated by steam engine at this time. In all, William lost £3,000 in damages and over 3,600 bushels of wheat and flour. However with strong determination, he began making preparations to erect two new mills - one to replace the Leschenault Water Mill which had been destroyed, and another to be a 'steam mill' in Bunbury. The water-mill re-opened for business in 1868.

It was at this time William would have purchased land from the Properjohn family - Lots 12 and 12A on the corner of Henry Street and The Strand (near the Bunbury Harbour) - for the purpose of building the Koombana Flour Mill. It was sound business sense for him to establish a mill close to the jetty. It meant the locally-produced flour could now be exported by sea.





**Lots 12 & 12A,
Henry Street &
The Strand,
Bunbury
(near Bunbury
Harbour)**

Old Bunbury map of the 1870s

William and his son Robert opened the Koombana Flour Mill in 1878. However, William soon passed the running of the mill to Robert - it was a birthday present to him!

This article is from the *Sunday Times* dated 7 March 1909:-

"The mill is equipped with what is known as a 31/2 bag plant, steam, being derived from a Hoskins boiler, the first made by that now celebrated maker in the State, and a 12h.p. engine supplies the necessary power. Five pairs of rolls are erected, three Ganz and two by Schumacher, the colonial make being the latest additions. Three wheat cleaners and the centrifugal where the flour is finally separated in its pure state, complete the principal part of the plant which is arranged with the utmost compactness."



Koombana Roller Flour Mill (1878-1929)

Photo courtesy State Library of WA

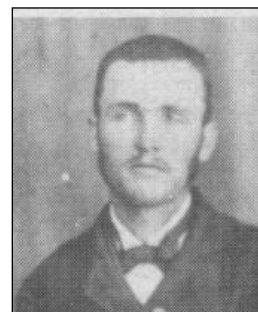


Robert Forrest (1854-1924)

The mill installed modern rollers and it was the first mill in WA to have this new machinery. The Forrests always kept up with the latest type of technology and updated machinery in the mill on a regular basis. The person who became responsible for the smooth running of the machinery was Ted Properjohn who had joined the business as a sixteen-year-old in 1883. He was able to install new machinery by working from the manufacturers' instruction sheet. Ted continued to operate and maintain the mill, while Robert Forrest managed the business-side of affairs. This relationship between the two men was to last for the rest of their lives.

Ted Properjohn was the grandson of Charles Properjohn who arrived in Australind on the *Parkfield* in 1841 with his wife Elizabeth, son Charles Daniel (Ted's father), and daughter Hannah. Charles Properjohn was the original owner of Lots 12 & 12A, which became the site of the Forrest's Koombana Flour Mill.

William Forrest died aged 80 in 1899. He and his wife had overcome many hardships along the way whilst establishing their flour milling enterprises in the new colony where they had settled all those years ago.



Charles Edward 'Ted' Properjohn
(1867-1942)

Most of the wheat milled at Bunbury came from the Dardanup, Preston, Collie, Brunswick and Harvey district and was conveyed by drays and wagons into Bunbury.



Bullock Dray (www.ninlun.wordpress)

A passage from the *"Early Days Journal"* (Volume 8, Part 1) is an amusing description of these times:-

"In the early days, most farmers brought their wheat to the mill by horse or bullock wagon and it was quite the event of the day when a team was driven along the main street of Bunbury. Two farmers named Ramsay and Piggot had fine bullock teams and both men were renowned for their handling of the bullocks, their loud voices and the louder cracking of their whips. One old resident of Bunbury remembered an occasion when a circus visited the town and Piggot's bullocks caught their first sight of an elephant. The team bolted down Victoria Street, ending halfway up the lighthouse hill with the load spilled along the road. It is known that Piggot chased the team, but no one recorded what he said about the elephants, the circus and the team itself!"

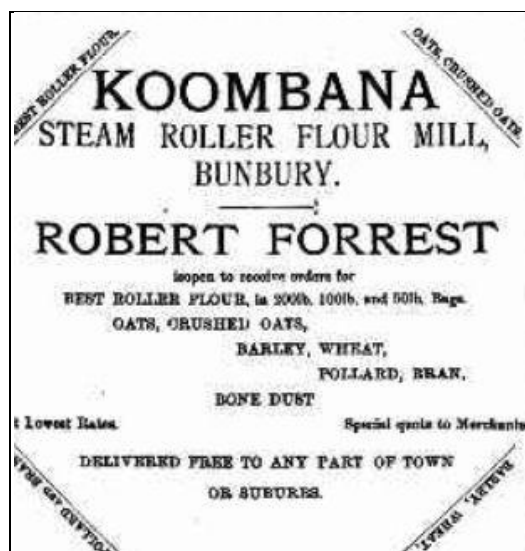
There were many aspects to running a milling business - the purchase of wheat, the milling, and the sale and export of flour. The Koombana Flour Mill also crushed wheat for the smaller farmers at a charge of 1 shilling a bushel, and if requested, the fee was taken in the form of flour produced from the transaction.

Also from the “*Early Days Journal*” mentioned above, the following shows how business was conducted:-

The farmers who grew enough wheat for their own needs would camp in Bunbury for two or three days waiting their turn for their wheat to be milled. Robert Forrest dealt with the farmers on the basis of cash, credit or barter. He supplied those who wanted credit with fertilizer, and took the value of it from the crop of the following season. If a crop failed, he would allow further credit, and it was said he never refused credit to an honest farmer.

Thomas Hayward was the storekeeper in Bunbury during this time and also did a great deal to foster the farming industry in the district. Forrest and Hayward continued to provide this service until the Agricultural Bank opened in Bunbury in 1922.”

It wasn't until 1888 that the railway was constructed between Boyanup and the port and used to transport grains. The railway ran through Wittenoom Street to Stephen Street, down Victoria and Stirling Streets; then crossed Stirling Street to Vasse Road (now known as Spencer Street). It then turned in a southerly direction out of town to Picton, Dardanup and Boyanup. Once the railway between Perth and Bunbury opened in 1893, Robert Forrest was able to draw wheat for his mill from a wider area and could also export some of his flour through the port of Fremantle.



Advert - Southern Times October 1893

During WWI the mill worked at full capacity in order to supply the flour urgently needed in Great Britain for the war effort. Due to the increase in work-load, the decision was made in 1915 to scrap the mill's steam plant and obtain power instead from the Town Council's electricity system.

Robert Forrest was continually striving to improve his flour and this was shown when it won first prize at the 1899 Coolgardie Exhibition and again at the British Empire Exhibition in 1924.

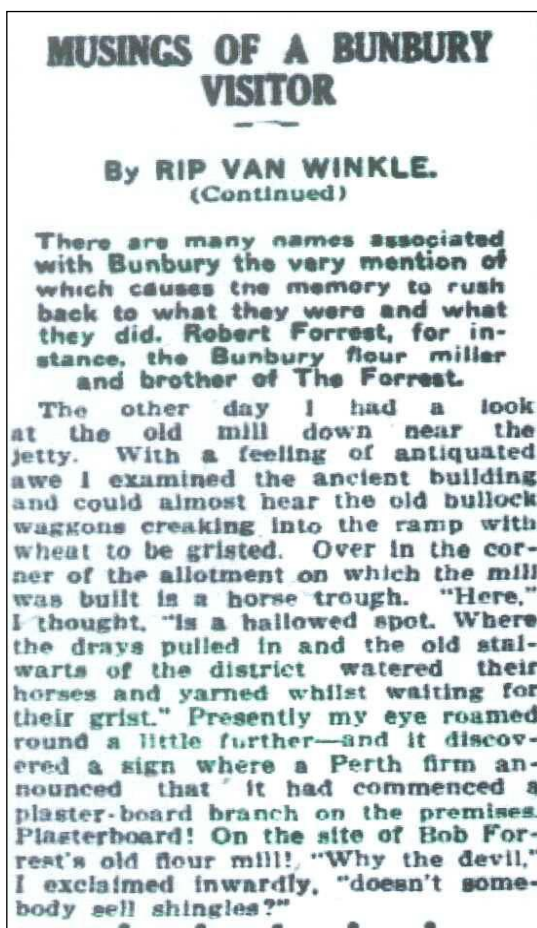
Koombana Flour - The Union Bakery, Bunbury, exhibited at the Bridgetown show a sample of loaves baked from this flour. The district housewives pride themselves on bread making, which is always one of the best contested classes at the Autumn Show, and the samples shown were judged equal to, if not better than, the bread baked from the best flours obtainable.

The Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express 19 November 1919.

When Robert Forrest died in November 1924, the mill continued operating for another five years under the management of Ted Properjohn's son, Allen.

Ted Properjohn died in 1942 having achieved a local reputation for his mechanical ability and inventiveness.

After more than fifty years in operation, the Koombana Flour Mill closed down in 1929. It had been superseded by the flour mills established in towns along the Great Southern Railway, which were equipped with more modern machinery, well-served by other spreading inland railways, and located in the heart of the thriving wheat belt



Sunday Times 6 December 1936

The Mill Clock



"The clock by which the hands at the Koombana Mill take their time is probably the oldest in work in Bunbury. When it was given to the late Mr William Forrest (Mr R Forrest's father) by a Yankee whaling captain in about 1864, it was by no means a new clock. The timepiece, which is an ordinary octagonal one-day American clock, has been going practically ever since in the mill, and has not had a penny expended on it in repairs or cleaning.

When works become choked with flour-dust one of the employees merely blows a drought of hot air from a steam pipe into them and the clock resumes its ticking for another good period. It may be added that it has been minus the glass face which originally covered its dial for many years".

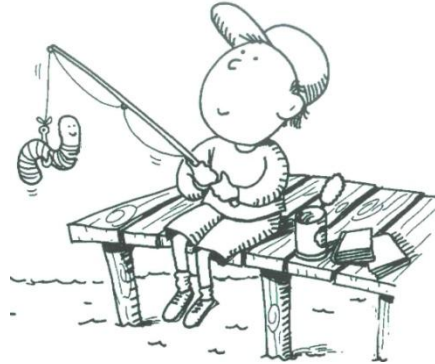
Bunbury Herald, 4th December 1909.

FISHING ON THE OLD JETTY IN KOOMBANA BAY

by Ray Repacholi

Let me describe a day's fishing through the eyes of a lad of seven or eight, spending a day fishing with his friends on the old jetty or over at the estuary. Fishing was one of our favourite pastimes and the fish were in abundance.

The length of the original harbour jetty (1600 yards) contributed to the variety of fish that one could catch. Bait of course was most important, so a tin of leg worms, a handful of prawns and a big mullet allowed us to select what we wanted to catch. It was a long walk from town so an early start had to be made.



At the wharf we passed the old jetty shop, avoiding the temptation to spend a penny (if we had one) on a lolly or two to sustain us. The best spot for poddy whiting was in the sandy shallows at the start of the jetty. A double hook rig with a legworm was sure to land a doubleheader of poddy or silver whiting (great eating) that could easily be seen from our perch on the jetty.

On the right-hand side at the bend in the jetty near the blacksmith's shop there were sheds which provided bike-racks for the wharfies and workshops nearby. The pilot and harbour master also launched their service boat from a derrick located in this area.

Adjacent to this area was a set of stairs down to the public platform built close to the water. Here was the best spot to catch skipjack or tailor, so a bigger hook with a prawn or a bit of mullet was best. A little further along on the left-hand side was a small shed with a ladder giving access to the lower level where we caught gardie or tailor. This was a good spot in the evening with the gardies attracted to one of the jetty lamps throwing its light over this area. As we proceeded further out, we could throw out a line beneath the jetty where the first toilets were located down a set of stairs. The toilets were enclosed platforms provided for the waterside workers and which emptied straight into the water. No sanitary regulations in those days! Possibly, this may have attracted the large tailor and skipjack that frequented this area.

A favoured spot in some areas under the jetty were the railway-points platforms located below the rail lines. The rail man used a pull-handle connected to the points to change the line when needed, and the platform offered enough room for fishermen to dangle a line in a previous hard-to-reach spot. But one had to be wary, if the points were activated and you happened to be sitting a little close, you could cop a crushed finger!

Another great spot to be found on a hot summer's day was at the 'End'. The fisherman had a choice of going for kingies, shark, herring or tailor. Many of the locals would have a big cord line out on the off-chance of that big one. The 'End' was always a popular spot with the older fraternity and a 'possie' was often hard to find.

The wharf was always a busy and interesting place for us as young lads - the hustle and bustle of the wharfies loading timber and wheat from the rail trucks, the dust clouds from the phosphate rock as it was lifted from the ship's hold and emptied into the waiting rail wagons,

the shunting steam engines, the whirr of the electric cranes and the hiss of the steam-powered shipboard derricks, all added to the busy clamour that was a working wharf in those days. This is also where the wheat was being loaded onto the ships, and this operation created a lot of wheat dust, which in turn caused a burley cloud - a great attraction to herring.

The excitement when we were invited by a crewmember to board a freighter and look down into the vast hold or visit the ship's engine-room, was a highlight of our day. The crewmembers could often be persuaded to offer us a tin of fruit or my favourite - tinned frankfurters - to be shared and consumed with delight in some quiet spot. Our requests for foreign stamps were another reward to add to our collections.

What a wonderful day we would have. The long walk home usually along the track from the wharf between the water and the rail-yards, past the silo, the 'Skellie' (Skeleton) bridge to Arthur Street. We would arrive home hungry, dirty and weary, with fish to clean before tea. Our day's activities ensured a good night's sleep, believe me.

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~ PRECIOUS MEMORIES RESTORED ~



One of our members suggested you take your damaged photos to the local photographer to have them restored like the one above. What an amazing result! We hope this inspires you all to check your treasured old albums for any photos that are not in the best condition and have them restored too!

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One day, a little girl is sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly notices that her mother has several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head. She looks at her mother and inquisitively asks, "Why are some of your hairs white, mom?" Her mother replied, "Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white." The little girl thought about this revelation for a while, and then said, "Momma, how come "all" of grandma's hairs are white?"





The Flour Sack

by Colleen B Hubert

In that long ago time when things were saved,
When roads were gravelled and barrels were staved,
When worn-out clothing was used as rags,
And there were no plastic wrap or bags,
And the well and the pump were way out back,
A versatile item, was the flour sack.

Pillsbury's Best, Mother's and Gold Medal, too
Stamped their names proudly in purple and blue
The string sewn on top was pulled and kept;
The flour emptied and spills were swept.
The bag was folded and stored in a sack
That durable, practical flour sack.

Bleached and sewn, it was dutifully worn
As bibs, diapers, or kerchief adorned
It was made into skirts, blouses and slips
And mom braided rugs from one hundred strips
She made ruffled curtains for the house or shack,
From that humble but treasured flour sack!

As a strainer for milk or apple juice,
To wave men in, it was a very good use,
As a sling for a sprained wrist or a break,
To help mother roll up a jelly cake,
As a window shade or to stuff a crack,
We used a sturdy, common flour sack!

As dish towels, embroidered or not,
They covered up dough, helped pass pans so hot,
Tied up dishes for neighbours in need,
And for men out in the field to seed.
They dried dishes from pan, not rack
That absorbent, handy flour sack!

We polished and cleaned stove and table,
Scoured and scrubbed from cellar to gable,
We dusted the bureau and oak bed post,
Made costumes for October (a scary ghost)
And a parachute for a cat named Jack.
From that lowly, useful old flour sack!

So now my friends, when they ask you
As curious youngsters often do,
"Before plastic wrap, Elmer's Glue
And paper towels, what did you do?"
Tell them loudly and with pride don't lack,
"Grandmother had that wonderful flour sack!"

Do you know the meaning of *Koombana*?

"Koombana", first recorded by John Arrowsmith in 1838 as "Koombanah", is the Noongar name of a bay, now known as Koombana Bay, adjacent to Bunbury. The word "Koombana" has been defined as meaning bay ("ana") of spouting whales ("koomba"), and also meaning "calm and peaceful". (*Wikipedia*)

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WEB CORNER

*** Remember to visit our own AFHS Website administered by Chris Riley***
www.australindfhs.org

Last Name Meanings and Origins - Discover the meaning and history behind your last name: -
www.ancestry.com.au/learn/facts

Bunbury Old Timber Jetty WA - Check out Donald Pugh's interesting presentation on - youtube.com - Bunbury Old Timber Jetty WA.

National Archives of Australia - Many records including people's war records can be found at www.naa.gov.au/

Passenger Lists - Trace people coming into the country incoming passenger lists 1878-1960 - ancestry.co.uk and people leaving - outgoing passenger lists 1890-1960 on - Findmypast.co.uk

Anzac Heroes - Centenary of Gallipoli Project - Jeff Pierce is writing short stories which honour multiple brothers who served in the Great War 1914-1918 - www.anzacheroes.com.au.

Australian Battlefields of World War 1 - France - Home - www.anzacsinfrance.com/

What did the bag of flour say to the loaf of bread?

"I saw you yesterday!"

.....

What did the yeast say to the bag of flour?

"Come on, we knead to be serious!"

