

Cathy & Dennis Verri

20 March 2018 at their home in Watson Close Mossman

CATHY #1 – intro

CATHY #1

Carolina Angelina Verri. My family, I was born in Mossman, my mother was born in Port Douglas in the hospital over there but my father came from San Lupo (?) in Italy when he was 14. He was born in 1919. His family came to Mossman and purchased a cane farm and started farming.

P Where did he live

C They had farms gee, Dennis do you know

D Whyanbeel

C And Cassowary. Also

D He built the house and lived there at South Mossman where Johnny Verri's MAS is,

C He built that house, Dad and his brother, they were older then. His family also had, didn't they have a farm near Joe's bridge there

D No that was, they bought that after, they bought that off McDowell

C So it was between, actually Ramona might know better than me

P What was the family name

C D'Addona. Vincenzo D'Addona and his brothers Don and Ugo. So Dad was cane cutting and working hard when he met Mum. Mum was a local girl, a Sciacca. Pipe Sciacca and Caterina Sciacca were both from Italy and they eloped when Grandma was 13 and had to get special permission from the Pope to get married. They came to Australia and Mum was born here but conceived in Italy. Grandfather's brothers, Ralphie Sciacca and what were their names, I think it was Ralphie that had Diane Cilento's place there at Karnak and grandfather's farm was right next door and Dad met Mum when she was 12 and said he was going to marry her. She said You're drunk, they were at a party. When she was 15 they got married. And then she, Dad was called up to go to war. He was, her father was, what did they call it

D Interned

C and Dad was sent to Brisbane. She went to Brisbane so she was close to him there and then he was sent to New Guinea. So that's a little part of the family

P You've been here a long time

C All my life (*laughs*) I was born on 11th March 1958 but I have, my older siblings. My sister Nancy, she's 12 years older than me and my brother Joe who is 9 years older than me, Joe D'addona and my sister Ramona is 6 years older than me. We were all born in Mossman. We all went to school here. Started off, we went to the Cassowary school. That was a beautiful life, living in the valley where we had a farm closer, right to the bottom of the valley. Then Dad built a new home, lovely house and beautiful lifestyle, very fortunate. Beautiful parents, lovely life.

The school was amazing. We started early. There was only 3 in my class because they needed numbers to keep the school open. It was struggling to stay open. So there was Glenn Fasano, Russell Equinox and myself. We used to ride 6 kms to school and then back home every afternoon. A whole group of us used to be riding together and drop off along the way. Meet up in the mornings. It was a lovely life. It closed down sadly with only 11 kids. From Grade 6, I went to St Augustine's in Mossman. Catholic school

It was very different and like at a small school everyone played together girls and boys and it was always marbles and rounders and all those old games. Whereas it seems to be so

segregated in the bigger, different school where girls with the girls and boys with the boys and all the religion stuff was a big change, even though we had religion classes and that sort of thing but we had beautiful schooling. School was a high school. At the Cassowary school every Xmas the poinciana trees would come out in full bloom and we'd decorate our breakup concert, we had the most amazing breakup concerts. The whole stage would be, we'd go over to Vico's to pick from their poinciana trees and decorate the stage and we'd have amazing pantomimes and concerts every year. Yeah and that sort of thing just fell by the wayside. But then again at St Augustines we had the cinderellas, that made up for it a little bit

P Where did the Cassowary school go

C You might remember Dennis. They pulled, they even filled up, there used to be two big ditches before the school, two big ditches in the road with a pipe running through it

D No pipe used to be just ditches

C But drains on the other side, the pipe went through the railway line on Vico's side. One year with the floods, the Padovans, they had twin girls and there was a huge flood and she tried to go to the other side to her husband Richard Padovan, Allison Maxwell she was, and she got dragged through the pipes with her babies in her arms to the other side through this big drain, remember that Dennis

D Remember it clear as a bell

C Such an amazing scary thing that they all survived this.

P When was that

C What flood was that Dennis, I was only a little girl, I just remember, the twins

D That'd be 50 now. Might be 55.

C Yes, Padovan sisters they are, his sisters. And they filled up those two big ditches and levelled the road off and they ended up taking the school away and everything.

P Here comes a car. Just stop for a tick.

7.58

VERRI #2

C You know where that building went

D No. I know the old schoolhouse went down Mossman Street

C The school house

D Yeah, you know where the CWA hall is in town, well the headmaster's house used to be just over the fence there on the school side, the CWA Hall, that's where the headmaster's house used to be. For the Mossman school, not the Cassowary School.

C Pam's asking where did that building go. Where did they live

D It might've got pulled down

C There was the Strubers and

D I don't know where they lived

C Who was the other teacher, he married a Andrews girl

D my father went to that school, Louie, my Dad would've been, how old now 94, 93, he reckoned there were people going to school before him there.

P Dennis let's talk about you, when did your family

D Dad was born in Port Douglas. His parents came from up the north of Italy and mum, she was a Boyd.

C A local girl

D And she's how old, she died about 25 years ago, nearly 30 years ago. We lived down at (*outside voice*)

P We'll just stop for a tick.

1.40

VERRI #3

P Your family Dennis

D Lived at Cassowary till, Dad had a farm there from his father, him and his brother Georgie. And we moved to Ingles Street on the corner there in that red brick place when I was about 3 I think, I was 3 year old when we moved to there, lived there till we got married in '82.

P So Dad gave up the farm

D No, he stayed there, then me and my brother took it on, then I, we bought a cattle farm at Cow Bay and I took the cattle farm and my brother stayed on with the cane farm.

P tell us about that Cow Bay farm

D Bought it in 1978. Off George Quaid and I should've bought the other land that was there too. But anyway. Then they subdivided it. It was all dirt road then. It used to take me, to go from my farm to the turn off at Hintons, it would take me as long to go from there to there, which wouldn't be 2k I don't think, than it took me to go to the ferry. It was just mud. Unbelievable.

C And ruts. Used to go out on the motorbike sometimes and oh my gosh.

D I've actually even come sometimes when the ferry used to close at 6 o'clock and get as far as a tree or a landslide and walk with my clothes in a plastic bag to the farm and then I've even rode and led horses back to that first set of yards there at Wally Morrow's and the truck'd bring cattle in and we'd walk them over the hill to my place. And didn't see a car from the time we left till the time we got there. That's how many there was, wasn't many people there.

The ferry was, that was the second ferry. George Quaid had the first ferry, he used to still take people over, that was there for taking log trucks across because George Quaid and his father had a sawmill just out South Mossman here. When you see that house up on the hill of Ottones, they bought that, that was George Quaid's father's place, that was all Quaid's sawmill from there right to the highway, was all Quaid's sawmill land.

Then George Quaid went into real estate and that got subdivided. Anyway at Cow Bay when the subdivision came, we said Well I'm not going to be able to buy the property next door or behind me so, the Queensland government called tenders to put a hotel at Cow Bay because there was a lot of sly grogging going on over there in them days.

C We had the land already because we were going to do a service station on the main road, you and I

D we were going to, really it was an investment

C Yeah

D so we applied with Cathy's sister and brother in law

C My sister Nancy and her partner Rod Berry

D We responded to that tender. And we won it. We had so much against but we had so much for, also. They had two petitions going over there, one for the pub and one against the pub. That is true, we had to go to court in Brisbane. Brian Searle took us to court in Cairns and he had no idea of the history of the area. No idea. At that time we had the ferry contract.

C That was Nancy, Rod, Dennis and I. the four of us. And we built that ferry

D We built a new ferry. We took it over from Anthony Fapani's contract.

C Was that the fourth ferry

D The council, that was, the first ferry George Quaid's, it just floated down, used to sit for many years, now it's rusted out. You could always see it when you went across the river, it used to be just a rusted out wreck, downstream from the ferry that's there now, sitting on

the corner of the first bend, sitting on a mud bank and it just sunk there rotting away and rusted away. It was there for many many years.

C And the second ferry

D And the council ferry was driven by Arthur Shenton was the first bloke I remember driving it. And it was a ferry that had to back out, reverse out, turn around and then head across the river. And a lot of times with the current and the tides, you'd end up a couple of hundred metres both sides of where it lands because by the time you turned around and went across. And I think it was every Wednesday afternoon, the ferry used to do a trip to the Daintree township, for what reason I, used to take something up to Daintree township with the ferry years ago from there. And then, the road over the river, when I first went over there, I can remember going over there with my father, he had an old Landrover, it was a 1958 model, I still remember his numberplate NJN 858, that was his numberplate on the Landrover and we all used to sit in the back of the Landrover, hot. And then a lot of times we used to even split logs to get over some of the drains. It used to take us a good part of the day to get sometimes to Thorntons Beach, where that café is, just up from there, we used to camp there, then we used to go on to Ray Hancock's. Where Noahs creek is, the bridge there, all back this side, back to the bouncing stones, that was all cleared land, right to Noah's creek. Ray Hancock had that, cattle there. Never cleared the other side. Ray Hancock owned all that.

C When you say we, love, is that you

D Dad and Ron

C did Judy used to go, your sister

D No no, but sometimes, Joe Tollentini, other kids would come. And

P You say that wasn't the original road

D That's not the original road over the Alexandra Range. Some parts of it all are but not all. It was above that road, above. If you actually have a good look when you come along that straight, before you turn to go up the range, you look straight up, you'll see beside there, you could see the regrowth is not as thick, that's where the road used to go, then it turned, there's a driveway, where you make that sharp turn back to the wide side of the road, there's a driveway, that used to be, up top of there is where the original road was. Follow the top of that mountain along and if you go there now, there's still a burnt out timber truck where the driveway is half way up the range. It's only 50 metres. Pull up on the wide part there and walk back, you'll see it there, it's an old, I think it's a Fodon, I'm not too sure. Norm Bure (sp?) was driving it. We came when it was burning, the tyres were still smoking

P What was wrong with it

D Caught fire, burnt out.

C Overheaded

D Something electrical. Just burnt out, it's still there to this day. Hope they never ever shift it out. Hope they never throw it away. It's still there to this day. Go and have a look. Do you ever go over there

P When was that do you think

D That would've been '59, '60 something like that. Still there. There used to be an old bulldozer at Cape Tribulation right on the beach. It fell off a barge going to Cooktown. Somehow they dragged it back onto the beach. It just rotted out there. Council got rid of it, disposed of that, because I think it was probably dangerous. But before when you used to, they used to call that from where the bouncing stones were, if anybody remembers, up to Ray Hancock's it was all rocks, they used to call it Sump Buster flat, there used to be a sign on the side of the road because of all the rocks sticking out. It exactly fits its name now with those mongrel rocks in the speed bumps. But there used to be a sign there Sump Buster Flat

P Why did you go up there so often

D My Dad was very friendly with the Masons

C He had a boat built, was that boat about that time

D Dad built a boat back in the 60s, he used to take that to Myall Creek, oh into Noahs too yes of course, Noahs, Baileys, Coopers, he used to go into all those creeks.

C He just loved crabbing and fishing. A whole heap of his mates they used to do that.

D I used to go up, stay at Pat Masons. Where that sky crane thing is, Dr Spooner bought it off Pat Mason. When we were kids, they used to have a big tarp spread out on the ground, we used to put all the seed and sawdust and mix it all up, then put it in tins, we used to walk round, we used to be as black from charcoal. Seeding it for cattle.

C for grass

D that's how all that grass, we spread all that when we were kids. And then there was Pat Mason

10.31

and then between those two creeks originally that creek they call, where Myall Creek is, the next one back, they've changed its name. Is it Oliver Creek now? It used to be called White's Creek, it's original name was White's creek. And that shed on the bank there, they call it Mango House, we built that in 1969, and then down on the mouth of the river

C Who's we

D Warren Jenkins, Cec O'Rourke, me, Lanco

C builders

D We built that in 1969 and we carried a lot of the materials from there down to the beach, from the road to the beach because it was too boggy to get down.

C You started your building apprenticeship when you were 15 with Warren Jenkins

D 14. And there's another house right down on the mouth of the creek, PK owns it now, the bloke that had the PK jungle lodge before this mob and we built that for people by the name of Culley, and we did that tree house they call the Mango House at the same time. Up there where Camelot is, in the back of there, that belonged to I think Masons, there was cattle yards there and we put the roof over that also,

All cleared land. The one in the middle wasn't, where the Jungle Lodge, that got cleared when Camelot, but that was all cleared, Masons was all cleared, Pat Mason's was all cleared. Pat Mason at the top then I think it was Ron Mason, or the Masons Shipping mob had that one, then Andy Mason got where his grandson is. I remember Andy very well, Andy and his wife. Then that boundary from those two properties is dead in the middle from White's Creek well Oliver Creek, that side there was Andy Mason, that side there was Pat Mason

C Hutchys, all that over there, was all cleared

D When I say was the first, second road over the range, it definitely was. Hutchisons Creek that's 1,2,3,4 5 crossings that I know of that's been over Hutchisons Creek. Upstream. Up near the sawmill. There was a sawmill on Hutchisons Creek. John White would've told you that. That belonged to ah Ernie Wooley's father in law, he's a Mason and Dudley Kingston and that's where all the timber came from for my father's house here in Mossman. And the barge used to go, they used to call it Niggers Landing the barge used to come in to

C The photos at the pub have got all that

P Let's go back to the pub, so you were going to build a service station

C We had plans drawn up

D I built that in 1982

C No she's talking about the pub area

D We never got plans done for the service station

C We had a rough draft of shops and

D We never ever got any approvals

C Then the thing of the pub came through so we decided to go that way with the pub because we were on the main road, we were in a perfect position

D There was a service station built in 1982 on the way to the beach. I built that for Matt Lock, a two storey place. After that, I built, there was a few houses, I built the motel in two sections. Johnny Lancaster and I built the Café by the Sea then down the beach, Then the Chinaman's, (*laughs*) I don't know what they call it now, is it the boardwalk café on the way, after the ice cream factory, the Wilderness lodge there, the Boardwalk Café, it's got an old phone booth outside. I built that for Richard Wang. His mother owned Wang computers. We couldn't believe they came in a stretch limo. (*laughs*) One day she was there 20 minutes, turned around and went. (*laughs*)

C She was financing her son so had to come over and have a look

P Where did she live

D China. She sent money for Richard to fly to Sydney and meet her there, then they flew up. Richard was too awake, he left 4 or 5 days before and he hitch-hiked down, then he flew up for 20 minutes they were there. About 4 or 5 days later Richard turns up (*laughs*)

P Why did he go that far, build over there

D I don't know, he used to live on a bowl of rice a week, they were unbelievable those fellows. Didn't have enough strength to crank the engine. Every time he cranked the engine his feet would come off the ground, I'll never forget that. Peter and I just to watch him crank the engine, it was so funny (*laughs*)

C Back to the pub, Pam wants to know more about the pub

P When did you start the pub, '82 was it

D No, started the pub on 1st July '92 and I think it was nearly exactly 9 months later we opened the doors, same as a baby

C 1st April

D No it might have been 13th. I saw it in there, that book that William's [*their son*] got. We carted everything up there ourselves. Did the lot, packed our own dirt.

P Built it out of besser block

D Yeah and then there's a lot of timber features inside

P Hasn't it got the longest bar

D It has. Well can you find that bar there William. I don't know how many metres it is. It's long, it's bloody long.

P 52 feet

D You know it by the end of the day when you finish

C We actually tried to get Guinness Book of Records to do a challenge thing. We just couldn't get it to happen.

D Wasn't the longest. The piece out in the back bar is longer than that again.

C Longest one piece single bar in Australia we said, but we wanted to be challenged on it but it never happened.

D We set up boards along a big long log that was at my farm, set them up all straight, went through, took a face cut with the chain saw, then just took 2 inch slabs all the way through the log. When I took it from the farm to the hotel, that culvert at Hintons across McLeans Creek there. I used to have a rack over the top of my truck, it was way out there, way out there, anyhow I had all these pieces of timber, it was a dirt road, I went down to the bridge like that, and that was it, I couldn't move.

C got stuck, the timber

D When I got down there, going down was alright because I lifted the hoist and then I was buggered, couldn't go

P How did you get out

D We got the old crane

C old leaping Lena which was the first

D I've still got it, it was the first crane that came to Mossman in 1940 something, it's still over the river there

C That was uncle Johnny's crane

D First crane that ever came to Mossman. same age as Peter Verri is, whatever that is, in the 40s it was anyway. I've still got that over the river there. I used to ...all the trucks, everything with that crane. I had to get the crane in the front to hold it up and the loader at the back to hold it up so I could drive the truck out of the gulley with these big long boards over the top

P What sort of wood is it

D Pencil cedar

P And how did you treat it

D well it's not structural timber, we didn't have to treat it. We did spray it. There's no, it's not structural timber, varnished it.

C Sometimes there'd be, we found bore holes in the timberwork that we've done over the years

P Ah a picture

D That's in the log form.

C Miley Law helped you

D I helped Miley you mean (*laughs*)

C Every bar, every area had a different timber. And we got a little write up about the timber in each area that we had, the bottle shop, the from bar,

D All the tables everything, that log had been at least 30 years Miley knew of sitting on the other side of the creek, we dragged that up. That log was big enough to get most of the tables out of that one log

P Fallen down for 30 years

D It'd been down and you could see the blemish where there was some rot but we left it all there because everyone said it looked good leaving those.

C Miley knew where a lot of those things were because he said about when the timber was there it was just too hard to get up in those days, whereas we had the machinery to pull it up

D That road, even that road at Hutchisons Creek now, that never used to be the road, it used to follow Hutchisons Creek, that's where the road used to be, that was put in when Quaid subdivided that. That road was never there, no. it used to follow that there, then the base of those hills

20.44

and come out at Johnny Nicholas's there.

P Who would've put that in

D Council. Most of that road was timber tracks. The gazetted road to Cow Bay is through my property. That's not the gazetted road. Goes through the corner on Silkwood Road yeah, that road's still there too where they used to walk the cattle up.

Cow Bay was named for the cattle. It was all cleared down to the beach, there's still an old set of yards up there, where they used to drive the cattle then they'd walk them over, do you know where the lookout is there, on top of Alexandra Range, they used to walk them up there, then down to Cape Kimberley, along the beach, swim the Daintree at low tide, put them in the yards at Wonga and send them off. That's where cattle used to go.

C Why up Alexandra Range

D that's the only way

C Was there a track up to the lookout

D Still there to this day, my cattle have gone up over there, I've had to go looking for them

P It used to be called Baileys Creek didn't it

D It's still Bailey's Creek really

Ç That's another area isn't it

Will (son William) Bailey's Creek is back more, you've got Alexandra, the point

D Called Alexandra Bay

W talking about Bailey's creek school

D that's all Bailey's Creek, everybody called it Bailey's Creek

W Hutchisons turns into Bailey's Creek

D Runs into Bailey's that's right. The block where the pub is on and the block where the aerodrome is, was 2 miles long and 1 mile wide and owned by Tom Plath and the sawmill was down on the banks of Hutchison's creek which runs down into Baileys

C Louie always said that the name Cow Bay came from the cows that were left roaming around. They loved being on the beach, apparently they liked walking on the sand or something. Whenever the boats went past there were always cows on the beach and that's how. Not so much for the dugongs when you hear the stories of the dugongs. Louis insisted, that's Dennis's Dad, it was cattle on the beach

D You know years ago in the war time they put

23.10

there was, Port Douglas they used to call it Billy Goat Hill ay. There was goats on that hill. They put them on Snapper Island and on Cape Tribulation. I remember going in a boat past Cape Tribulation with Dad. There used to be a big old stinker, he'd stand up there that's going back '61, '62.

P Why did they do that

D If a boat went down that was for survival for the troops. And I think they were put in other places up the coast too. The only 3 places, I know they were at Port Douglas, definitely saw them on Snapper Island because there is water on Snapper Island, there is just a little soak but it's always got water there. And then on Cape Tribulation.

P They must have come and taken them off Snapper Island did they

D No. They got shot out, people going down there, no they didn't come and take them away, no.

P Tell us more about the pub, did it make a profit

D Worked well for us because we worked, that is a true story. That pub would work if you worked. We've had people come in there as managers, we've had people come in there as leasees, and the only way it worked was when we went back and picked it up. Is that true Cathy

C Yeah we worked there with Nancy and Rod, Dennis and I, and we lived in the house with the kids, the kids were only little, 3 and 5. They went to the first school that started over there, didn't they darling.

D William went to school at the pub, some of the things he learnt there (*laughs*)

C Then Nancy and Rod ran the ferry while we ran the pub

D I built the pub

C You built and ran the pub, that's right, and you helped with the ferry as well.

D I used to drive the ferry on Sunday nights, and any other night they couldn't get somebody. I'd drive the ferry. I used to do all the rollers

C The first few years it was really hard going because we weren't publicans and we had so much to learn. Even how to do cool pops (?) that sort of thing. We were totally out of our depth. We had some really good managers to come and help us like Randall and Dee and as ratbagish was Randall was

D Colourful you can say (*laughs*)

C Colourful personalities and they matched the people that were over there. They taught us basically we had to learn from scratch. We went and did courses. We had to do our basic training, alcohol, beverage, kitchen, food handling course and that. We thought we needed chefs in the beginning but we realised we just needed a good cook because a lot of the chefs, it just wasn't warranted over there. Even building the pub was such a mammoth task, when Dennis was building it, we were washed out doing all the footings weren't we love. We had all the footings dug out, how did that happen

D We got 11 inches of rain one night in August, never heard of it. I was digging drains to drain trenches like footings, digging drains to drain the drains

C I was still helping Ramona at R and C Fabrics. Dennis was feeding men, working all day

D They lived with me at the farm

C All the contractors were all coming down the farm, staying there

D cooking for them

C Dennis was cooking for them, I don't know how he did it

When the units were built enough, I came over, I lived in the shed with the kids, but I used to come over and help him with the cooking and all that sort of stuff at the pub

D One day the licensing inspector turned up to inspect the building as it was being built. He said to me You're doing it tough. We were also, he knew we were spending money. He said How would you like a licence now that you can sell takeaway alcohol before the pub gets open because there was nowhere, and it'll give you a cash flow. Well I jumped at that, but boy oh boy it was a lot of extra work. Well you get the carport of the house locked up and I'll sign you the licence. And then we stocked the carport and we were selling grog out of it before we opened the pub.

W photos of it here

C As we say it was hard going and the design of the hotel

D That's the first keg that got wheeled into the cold room and William sitting on it. He was only little. I wheeled him in on the first keg

P And here he is now

C The challenge of building the pub, though, people wouldn't realise, because it was a dirt road, the road we have to travel on and they sat in their Brisbane offices telling us it had to be fully air-conditioned, running 24/7

D It was a design and construct type thing. People say why did you build it so big. In the tender it said a lounge bistro bar of so many square metres, a hotel bar of so many square metres, a kitchen of so many square metres. We had to build the building to accommodate the size of those requirements. And with that amount of size gave you an amount of seatings, and the amount of seatings gives you how many toilets. All that comes into it. We had to supply our own electricity, water

C Another thing we have to say is all this was on projected figures of the whole area becoming a township which was all squashed

D The council came in

C We've got a picture of Bjelke there sitting in our lounge, it was in his day

D He was retired, he called in

C He called in. everything changed just as we started, the whole Labor came in and everything changed. The Greens got stronger and stronger, they wanted to close the place. It was a totally different scenario. The whole township was planned. We had seen the plans from the council. There was a police station, catholic church, a shopping area

30.15

D The church had their block over there

C They were all going to do this but it all got knocked on the head because it wasn't going to be allowed. The Greens didn't want it to happen.

D The part that really hurt us was that there was no compensation. We could've if we had the money but we didn't have the money to go ahead and push for compensation. Otherwise the Queensland government owed us compensation bill. We did it in good faith and they shifted the goal posts after we finished the hotel. People don't understand the story.

C What we went through, Dennis basically had a breakdown. That's why we ended up putting managers in and leaving and coming back to Mossman because the hardships that were placed on us. It was just ridiculous you know. Fully running generators 24/7, the lounge had to be air-conditioned. The public bar didn't have to be air-conditioned. There were all these stipulations. We could never put pokies in there because there were all these glitch in the motors

D They said they couldn't monitor it. That was only from the, that wasn't a true story really. They monitored all the phone lines, all poker machines through the phone lines. The phone lines were never ever down. They could've, it was all wired for poker machines and everything but anyway

C We never did it. And we didn't feel it was right for the people over there anyhow because they didn't have the income. There was enough people doing it hard without having to put that sort of thing onto families as well and it would've, even though we probably would've made a lot of money.

D Everything came in, the smoking laws, the drink driving was dropped from .07 to .05, it was, the price of alcohol went up, it just got that way that, people can't afford to drink in the hotels

C It's really hard. The thing is though, again I'm going back to the, whole place was built on the numbers of population growing and becoming a township. It was supposed to become a township. They had promised power, I keep going back to this all the time, they had been promised power. A lot of people say it should never happen. Everyone's to their own

D I totally agree, if they say we shouldn't have power, don't give us power, but at least put the meters on the wall, come and read the meters. We'll pay that and whatever else, we should be totally, we should be reimbursed for. Why should we pay any more than town because, take fuel, they've got a government equalisation scheme that people pay the same fuel in Torres Straits as they do, they could do a lot of things by doing that. putting the meters on the wall.

P What would they measure

D How much power you're using

P From your genny

D That would give a figure, and then whatever's cost after that

C You can't say generator power is clean power. It's dirty. There's fuel. There was acid from batteries. They should've put the power lines down when they put the phone lines down, underground. It would've been clean and protected from cyclones and storms and things.

D No power lines go over the range Cathy. It's all distributed, the phone lines are distributed through the subdivision. The actual phone is beamed into the, at home they're beamed into the Telstra yard and then it's reticulated from there.

C they should've done it underground like the phone

D pretty easy to put the power in there

C the numbers weren't there to sustain it. You do have to learn how to run a place like that and when it went downhill, we sold the pub in 2009, November. 2009 we sold the pub.

We had it for 21 years, and the thing is, we went back for 12 months to build it up because we knew we had to do something

D And we did build it up, it was going really good

C And this is what happened throughout the whole time. We used to keep going back. We even had a couple of leasees that skipped through the night and left the place. We had receivers in there. All sorts of things happened to the place. But each time we'd go back and build it all up again. Because with the right management, we knew it could be done. We always had rapport with the locals

D We got on good with the locals

C Our New Year Eves used to be massive.

D First New Years Eve there were over 700 people there

C We used to have beautiful big Melbourne Cup functions, we used to have Mothers Day functions. People used to come over with the coaches

W Tourist buses

C We used to have the tourist buses calling in. but that last 12 months we didn't have the coaches, the managers previously had lost all that for us, they never came back. But we did build it up and

D Cathy had some problems, I said No, she couldn't cover the area any more. It's either you take it to another level if it's possible or advertise it for our money and sell it. We did it, we got our money and we drove out. When we left that pub it was fully stocked. It had you couldn't put another bottle in the fridge let alone a carton. But the next bloke that bought it off us, he just ran the whole stock out. How silly that man was. I knew

W He thought he was going to be everyone's mate and employing everyone

D When I saw he ran the stock out I knew he was going broke.

P What was his name

D Peter Magnessen

C The thing is, we also, we told each one, even managers, everyone that come in, if you can't work with your staff, you can't expect your staff to do something that you won't do yourself. Like clean toilets, scrub walls. He said No way, I pay staff to do that sort of thing for me. So basically you have to be able to do everything with your

W When we took it over, I was in there every night of that week apart from Saturday and Sunday

D William put a big input into that,

W Last thing you do every night was mop, clean the toilets, mop the floors, restock the bar

C You had to work hard. It was all hard work.

D when I built it, I made it all with ease too so you could go in there and hose the toilets out. It was not a big deal

P So you designed it Dennis

D Along with Alan Edwards, he was a bloke in Cairns, not an architect, he was a draughtsman, between the two of us. Then I went round, then we

C It all had to be approved

D Took all the steps, how to do the roof and designed the roof with the Foxwood manager. We got the trusses built.

P And you did lunch and dinner, breakfast as well

D Everything. Breakfast yeah.

P How many units

D That was another thing, we should've had more units. Six units, should've had more units, that would've been another big help because any place like that you should be able to accommodate a Coaster bus, say a 20 seater bus. Because when a tender comes up for you,

you can't, you have to try and fit them some there, some over the road, we were lucky in the first part there in the off season, they did all the bitumen road and we had all the Main Roads blokes there, didn't we, the Roadtek mob ay, they stayed, they had the pub booked out.

P When did they do the road

C !2 months after we opened our doors, they sealed the road

P About '94

D something like that

P What about that airstrip, what happened with that

D Well (*pause*) who, Quaid sold it to, Quaid built the airstrip.

C It wasn't an airstrip, it was a rice field. We've got photos of that being a rice field.

The photos at the pub I thought I had copies of them

D John White used to live over there. You know where the airstrip is, the start of the airstrip, the remnants of the house is still there, if you walk over there, there was 2 houses. I think that was originally the school, John would be able to tell you. I can remember those two houses there and he lived in one. But after that I can remember Ray Hancock living there and right down on the beach at Baileys Creek, Arthur Shenton had a lease there. You used to go down to the end of the airstrip then go by boat and go down to there.

C We've got photos of the airstrip being rice fields. That would be even before White's day. You said Quaid made it into a rice fields

D Are they here, the rice fields

40.25

P You're hooked up. We'll have a look in a tick

C Quaid made the airstrip

P Which Quaid

D George Quaid junior

C When he did the subdivision

D Opened it in 1982, started it in about 1980, the subdivision. They bought all those blocks. This is another thing. They say that they acquired that, the story is they acquired those blocks by improper means or foul means through Russ Hinze. They did not. They fairly bought every title off those original owners.

P Who were they

D there was quite a few. There was Ron Pocock, Plaths, Warren Nash

C they would've been big lots

D The portions

C Big portions. Cattle portions

D There's a lot of the old owners there, trying to think. They didn't buy any off Johnny Nicholas, he kept his. Nash bought Mason.

C Who were the people that

D See even down the Cow Bay area. Reynolds had a block, Andreassen had blocks, they're the fathers of them people, of these ones here now. I used to have all original portions on a map over the river but I can't lay me hands on it.

C Did you (*Pam coughs*) when the subdivision happened, who owned that land, was it an American fellow

D No he was a Dane, they called him The Dane

C So he had all that land before Quaid didn't he

D No. Him and Quaid. Quaid was only the front man he was the real estate man. The Dane was the one with the money. Down my way, there was, my block belonged to Joe Woods, he had two blocks there. Hans Smidt, he had the next block after me, that's down my way. Plaths owned that other, the aerodrome block. Now the aerodrome was built by

Quaids and, before they subdivided they did run cattle there for a lot of years. They used to have stations like Starke, Southedge, Brooklynne, Green Hills at Cooktown and they used to bring the store cattle down and fatten them in the Daintree. They even owned land in Cape Kimberley there where Tommy McKay, he owned that block of land there, he had a big lot of land there. They bought that as well. They didn't buy

44.06

Jacky Brennan and they didn't buy Wally Morrow that's the ones back before there. They didn't buy them but before that they did the subdivision in the 70s, they did up Forest Creek Road where there's Ronald Road, George Road, that was the first subdivision they did up Forest Creek, the Dane and Quaid and that's when they did that. Those original blocks of land there were, before Quaid owned them I think, Osborne might've had one and Schultz might've had one, I'm, they did have them over there, I'm pretty sure they had them blocks before Quaid had them.

C That subdivision at Cow Bay, they were 5, 10 15 acre blocks

D Only two and a half acre.

C Some of them were five

D Some of them were bigger yeah where the, yeah

C and a lot of people believed that George Quaid wrecked the area by doing the subdivision

D No way. He saved the area

C We even, Maree said I believe that he saved that area. If that had not been subdivided by George, the sugar, Mossman Mill would've gone and turned that all into cane fields.

D People are seeing as it is now. They didn't remember it was all cleared. When you left Hutchisons all there, as soon as you came the range, all that aerodrome all that was cleared, go across the Hutchison, one square mile of Pococks was all cleared, all the John Nicholas's was all cleared, then there was a bit of scrub then you got to where the oil palms were, all cleared all down to Coopers Creek, up to Turpentine Road that was all cleared, then across there where Berwick was all cleared, Mrs Bates's block that belonged to Pocock too

C Cleared first by timber, was it

D Probably, no, Ron Pocock he was a known, cleared some and then grassed it and fattened cattle

C They had the timber industry, the logging was happening way before that

D A long time before that yeah

C Would that made it easier to put the cattle in

D A lot of people did their own clearing, yeah. They had clearings. I can remember where would you say, when you cross Hutchisons Creek bridge, that's where you cross it now but before you didn't, you used to go up from the bridge, where the swimming hole is, that used to be a crossing, when you used to go through there and come out the end of that grass land where Pocock cleared it, he cleared it and then you leave it for 12 months. He threw pumpkin seeds. I remember there was hundreds of acres of pumpkins there, hundreds of acres

C Did the cattle eat it

D They would do. Then when he burnt it all out he planted grass see, hundreds of acres of pumpkins

P Did he sell them

D No he only had it as a coverage to stop rubbish coming back. He used it as a ground cover

C Legume

D Hundreds of acres of pumpkins (pause)

P How long did you have the ferry for
D five years, '90 to '95
P And you built a new one
D Yes
C We went to 20
D Council had a 6 car, they converted it from a motor to a cable ferry. It was six cars.
And then Anthony Fapani put in um
C Was it 12
D He might have had 14, 12 or 14 I'm not too sure. We put in 18. Then Col Andreassen put in a 21 after us. And Norris's put in a 27 after him. We had it for one contract, Andreassen had it for 2 contracts and then Norris had it after that. That's right.
P Is it a money spinner
D Yes.
C Made good money
D But then again there's a lot of work
C It paid the hotel. It helped us with our hotel
D Helped us a lot. Didn't pay it but it helped us a lot. But again it's a lot of work
C It's a hard job it's a thankless job
D After midnight. We'd change ropes, lots of work
C Diving in when the ropes are broken in the water. Rod and Nancy were there with the big floods and it came to the second top step or something
D No they weren't in that flood. That was Andreassen a year after we got out. It didn't come, it didn't get up to, that year it was up to the ceiling of the shop. There used to be a shop, do you remember the shop
C The Big Croc café.
D It was up to the ceiling there ay that flood that time
P You were gone by then
D that was the next year after we got out. '96
C Nancy said thank goodness I'm not there. Nancy had a in the flood
D Big flood that one
C They couldn't stay at the pub because she was so, it was so dark and she's claustrophobic and she can't stand absolute darkness so they chose to look after the ferry for the fact that least there was a bit of light around.
It used to get dark. We had some stories about the pub at night and, all the lights going off, and the security, the exit lights were the only lights. Running out with a torch when you heard something.
D The exits lights were the emergency lighting when the power went out. Every building's got it.
50.32
commercial building got it. What happens if the light goes out they're battery operated they get charged, the battery gets charged when the power's going through so when you switch the power off
C that was the only light we had. Everything's pitch black
P What time did you close
D Sometimes 2 o'clock. We had a licence from 7 in the morning till 2 at night, next morning. I seen some hours on me feet I can tell you. I think there's, 9,600. Anyhow
P Did you ever have any bad trouble there
D No. nothing we couldn't handle
C the thing is we had to be police and everything.

D One thing we did used to do, if we had a function we'd ring the police and tell them we were having it

C We had to do that, because you wanted them to be on standby just in case.

D They were in Mossman, a long way. Even so, on New Years Eve, we've heard it's going to be a big night. We're going to be really busy in Port Douglas. We had about 700 people there. At least

C Oh my gosh. And then we used to have that fantastic, they still do it, the bikies that come over and have their big fund raiser. Oh god we used to have big crowds then. At one stage we must've had 200 bikies. Those big fundraisers. They were amazing. They were always good, they looked after each other.

D We always hosted the Anzac parade

P How many people live over there

D Nobody would know. It's always been a question. Nobody ever had a total

C they reckoned there used to be about 350

D I'll tell you a little story. The police went over looking for half a dozen blokes. They said to Brian Sullivan the bloke that did a runner one night on us. Do you know these blokes, he said no I don't. the police said I think you're not telling us the truth. They would be patrons of yours. He said I tell you what, come round here where they play pool. Everybody used to put their names up for pool. There was Bugsy, there was Tonto, not one name on there was actually (*laughs*)

C A name

D He said, you said to find him (*laughs*) it's the best I can do. That was really funny. Seem some funny times at the pub, really funny times.

C Some scary times too. I'll never forget it was new to me too, as a Mum with my young kids, it's sad sometimes to see parents drinking and the kids hungry, I'd have them at home, the manager's house as there and the unit's right next door, the kids went to school with them

D She's a child minding centre

C You'd be feeding them chips or something and the parents weren't wanting to go home and that sort of thing

D one bloke he used to have an aeroplane, his daughter she used to come home, would wait there until he flew at night. She'd be at the house, then that little girl Kina she'd be there, all them kids ay

P Was it used a lot that airstrip

D Yeah it did get a lot of use. We used to have people, half a dozen planes would come and spend a weekend at the pub.

C That was a good number for that pub too

D They were the people who had money too. I'll tell you who else had money. The bikies. One mob came, they put \$1000 on the bar, let us know when you want some more. You know, there was a crowd.

P So why did he put that airstrip in

D I don't know what the real truth is, the reason he put that in. That's right, he was going to make a airpark there. Like, they wanted to do an airpark where people could fly their aeroplane. There was some approvals but after all, everything just got too hard for them poor buggers. All the impositions on them, it wasn't never worth them to do it. It's a shame, that was all part of their overall plan. They had a good idea

C It was all part of this township that was supposed to evolve that never happened.

P What were the impositions

D When it came to do it, they had so many things put on them like restrictions from council, so many things put on them. Conditions. So many conditions put on them. Like people are going to build to build in Port Douglas, they're given all the conditions

C Like even the roof of the pub had to be painted green. That was a law. All these little things that are in the building code. More strict with air traffic I guess. No power poles up there so

D Probably was noise and everything

C Could've been noise. I don't know

P Is it still used

D No, it's overgrown now.

C Fully overgrown. William you need to take it away darl

D Reeds bought it after George. I think it was Reeds ended up buying that place. I don't remember another person between them.

P People don't use it any more.

D No, they don't even mow it now. Not even mowed. You couldn't land a plane there. You could land a helicopter but not a plane there. It's overgrown, it's still nice and flat if somebody mowed it. It wouldn't take a real lot to get it going

C Who owns it now. Does Prue still own it

D No some people, they're German

C Prue Reed she was doing horse riding

D they sold it to, these people they wanted to do something too but it all got the too-hard basket so they just bailed out. They had land in Lakeland. Now these people own the crocodile farm, snake farm in Mareeba up there somewhere. I don't know their name. They still own it now

C Sadly, I feel sorry even for people that are over there now. A lot of people that we, locals, have moved over this way because as you get older, it's hard over there without power.

D Power, for your security, your health, your comfort, it's a way of life now to have electricity.

C It's just really sad that the place, you know it's sort of gone backwards and basically that's what the Greens want, they want to protect it, keep it, let it go back as natural as possible. I believe that everyone is a bit of a Greenie, even if you buy and build over there. Everyone loves the place, no one really wants to destroy the place. Everyone's looking for their own little haven. I feel that's what George allowed everyone to have. Have their own little haven. You weren't close to your neighbour unless you built on your boundary and they built close to you, it was just a matter of

D I would've liked to seen George be Premier of Queensland if not the prime minister of Australia. When he was in the Shire everybody had a job.

C He was actually chairman at our wedding, he was a good mate of my Dad's

D He was also Douglas Shire chairman. I don't know if he did one or two stints as chairman of the shire. That would've been back in the 60s [chairman 1964-1967, councillor (father?) 1946-1961]

C He was a very clever man

D Fair man, very fair

C His sons have gone on to do big businesses in Cairns

P Did he own the picture show

C No

P When it came to the new place, Pinjarra

D Phil Lunn owned that

P He owned the old one

D That's the one, yeah
 P but when it moved up
 C that was Plemenuk
 P He was the manager
 D No he owned it, Plemenuk owned it [*Pam doesn't think so*]
 C Dennis used to do the film thing
 D I've worked in there. Projector. I didn't wind them. I used to do the projectors. I learned to do it, had a go yeah
 C There was a thing about the picture theatre but no one contacted you did they
 P I wrote a little book about it
 C Did you
 P But no one told me about you
 C There were probably lots of other kids in it
 D Plemenuk wasn't the first one that, Plemunuk didn't have it at first

1.00.15

Train had it and then Plemunuk bought it off Train. They used to call Train Choo-choo, that was his name. He owned the picture theatre then Plemenuk bought it and I think you are right, they did buy it because Rossi Cavallaro had, that's where the real estate, Quaid's also bought Phil Lunn's here where, next to the police station, what's the name of that building

C used to be the electrical stuff, next door to the National Bank.

D Then the National Bank belonged to Sammy Cavallaro, I built the National Bank. Then George Quaid bought the next building from Reece and Fox.

C He did own the picture theatre after Plemenuk

D He did. That's where Rossi Cavallaro

P No one knows when it finished

D Could've been in the 80s

C When all the videos came in

P It was about '82 but no one remembers the last show

C Dennis you know when Joey's father died, Joey Sciacca

D That was in the 70s Cathy

C It was going strong

D Plemenuk owned that, that was the night that Mary Poppins was on. Sciacca's band played there that night

C Did you know about that. Yeah. It was so sad

D I was there, were you in the picture theatre that night when he dropped on the stage

C Joe was Dennis's best mate. His son. What was his name, Sciacca when Johnny Sciacca passed away, that was Joey's father

D He was playing A Spoon Full of Sugar, that was the name of that song.

C Uncle Sam used to play the guitar, Sam Brischetto

D That was the name of the song he was playing when

C And he never played any more, he had a breakdown.

Alfie Sciacca still went on and played the drums with Graeme Cockburn's band.

We've trailed off the pub a little bit. We used to have great bands at the pub I tell you. All sorts of entertainment over there. What's the hypnotist fellow

D Rodrigo, we had him twice

C That was good, the locals loved it.

D We were only allowed to have 90 people in there, how could you keep them out, you couldn't, they were packed in there

C I reckon 150 or more

D And when he came back the next year he brought an entertainer with him. Holy hell he was good. He gave us about three intervals. He took the door take and we took the bar take, didn't we. Jeez it was busy, I mean it was busy

P Did you ever run out of beer

D We never ever run out of beer. We stocked it to the

C the other ones, we heard people complaining about the other one. Managers and things.

D You've got to have it stocked. See the suppliers, what happens with the suppliers they bring different brands of things on special round about every month, every three weeks to a month. You've got to have enough stock for those next three weeks before it comes on special again otherwise you can't maintain a proper price. One week you'd be up, up and down. That's why I say it's too dear to drink in the pub. Go over there with a wheelbarrow full of, won't work. When we sold it, it was stocked to the limit. When they bought it.

C They bought it at the beginning of Dan Murphy's

D That was a bit of an argument in the sale of the pub too

C that would have really hurt. Things like that affect so much. I think the No smoking was one of the biggest effects of the pub because the locals, one would always be smoking, they would have to sit away from the bar

D It was a lot to do with the social killer. I used to say boy it made cleaning up a lot quicker. All them ashtrays, remember them piled up on the bar, gawd knows what you found in them.

C The ones on the ground, we used to have the spit one or the ash one, on my gosh, they were disgusting.

D When Peter Magnessen bought it off us, he had a top criminal lawyer doing the conveyancing and one clause said you had to limit your stock to 45,000. I said to the hotel broker what's this clause here. He said You'll never have 45,000 stock in that pub as long as your backside points to the ground. Who's going to do the stocktaking. He said I am. I said Well I'm going to be there. He said You've got to be there. That's right. Always on a Friday getting close to closedown time, we were nearly crying, we just wanted to get back to our new house. He said where do you start, at lunchtime. I said up the generator shed. He said What's up the generator shed. I said Three ton of gas and 10,000 litres of diesel. You should've seen the colour drain out of his face. If he could've called me some names he would've. But I just lived for that minute. He was buggered. There was 75,000 stock.

C Because the fuel used to cost us a month, 90 grand. No 90 grand a year fuel was costing us.

D then we got a new generator

C mixed with the gas, that was one area

D Then what happened, they lifted the excise off the diesel, remember that time the diesel really came down in price. It was probably cheaper to go back straight on diesel than have that gas input

C Because then gas started going up. But running those things 24/7 it was such a big drain on the whole thing. A killer

D when we first started, I was running that generator, stopping it at night and starting in the morning and I used to dip the diesel tank, write down how much we used. We took one of my beasts up to Barns Knob and had it cut into meat, brought it back to the pub, had to run this freezer, run the generator round the clock for a couple of days to get this meat very hard. Dipped it next morning, same amount of fuel. Something wrong here. Next day I dipped it, used less fuel. I thought I haven't been drinking. The next night I shut it off and then when I started the next day and dipped it, gone back to the heavy amount. So I run it round the clock, used less fuel,

C then we worked it out it was best to keep it all running

D You know when fridges start and stop, don't use any power, when you shut it off at midnight they all lose temperature. When you start it in the morning everything's demanding power instead of going into a cycle and burning fuel. It wouldn't cycle until it got cool in the afternoon and we'd go and turn it off. So we were doing the wrong thing. You think you're saving by not running it. Didn't take long, Crocodylus running all night, everybody running all night. Just let them go now. Put in them quiet packs, let them run. It's cheaper. There's no way in the world solar would ever work in a pub like that. Too much woodwork

W The new Tesla system

D When they first came out they wouldn't

C Not in our day, it wouldn't now

D It was a big era of our life that pub and the barge that's for sure.

P And then you were talking about R & C Fabric

C Ramona and I opened that in '81. August '81. Ramona had worked for Jack and Newells prior (*Dennis leaves*) for over 10 years and then she, actually 15 years in Jack & Newells and I had been working since I was 15 at Marsh's, Graeme and Jean Marsh's drapery and mens wear. At the same time Jack & Newells decided to close their fabric department, their haberdashery and fabric part and Jean and Graeme Marsh decided to close their, concentrate on the menswear and close the drapery on their side. So Ramona and I thought we've both been working with drapery and fabrics. We've been brought up with sewers, my aunty, my mother

1.10.33

my grandmother amazing sewers. They could just cut out, they made most of the family's wedding frocks and deb frocks and bridesmaids frocks, every time we went out to a dance, they were the good old days, the old time dances. We'd have a new dress because our family was full of seamstresses. They'd cut without patterns. We were always the belle of the balls we were, all of us. We were surrounded by sewers so we thought why not. Pat Andersen had a hardware, he'd broken away from the hardware side of Jack & Newells and opened his own little store there where we were and that's where we stayed 31 years. In that one spot. We opened that shop up. Dad welded all these bars off the walls where we threaded the fabrics on originally. It was just beautiful. All the fabrics hung down in rows. First of all we thought How were ever going to fill this shop. Over the years slowly crept on. Funny how sewing trans, how it moves through the times. We were doing basic home sewing even with kids stuff, we had patterns in the shop we'd do a little display up. They'd come in, they'd want to make that. The town was full of sewers. Then it turned to knitwit and stretch sewing and we'd have classes on stretch sewing. Everyone was buying the knits and making T shirts and doing all those classes. Then it gradually turned to patchwork and so the trend changed. Sadly as the trend changed to patchwork it seems to be dressmaking died out. Because we used to do big home sewers fashion parades for the Leukaemia Foundation. We decided we wanted to do, there was, what was her name, Lyn Heath I think her name was, who was a leukaemia entrant and she used to come and talk to Ramona and I in the shop and she was looking for people to join her committee and fundraise. We said we could really work this together if we have fund raisers with big fashion parades, home sewers fashion parades and as a fund raiser for leukaemia. It was good for us as sewers, as our business, we used to have Martin & Savage doesn't exist anymore in Australia, big sewing companies, Luke Mangan (?) they're still around, and Sullivans are still around, but Martin & Savage were the main ones. They'd send us made-up frocks out of their fabrics. We'd have the fabrics in the shop, we'd buy the fabric for sale, and the patterns that corresponded with the outfits, they'd supply the outfits. And we'd have that as a fashion parade. And also we'd have those big fashion

parades for our local people. We had childrens' wear, race wear, evening wear, and day wear. We had four sections. In childrens wear we used to have over 100 entrants. It was just amazing and Evening wear we used to have something like 50 or 60 people. And Oriel Wilde helped us run one of our biggest first fashion parade. She was so pedantic. We always still talk about it how she drew these beautiful calico ladies to hang in the shire hall and we had it was like a wine, hors d'oeuvres and wine night with the fashion parade, that was one of our very first ones. And Oriel, we had to do these hors d'oeuvres and Oriel insisted, we could believe it, they all had to be 1 and a half by 2 inches. Everything was beautifully laid out. So pedantic. And someone that came, one of the local papers said this is something you'd see in Melbourne or Sydney, fancy coming to Mossman for something like this. Oriel was amazing she had the greatest ideas, she was on our committee. She was full of ideas and she, I can say everyone, it was such a win win thing. The Leukaemia foundation, Lynn with her fund raising, Oriel with her ideas and R & C Fabrics with our fabrics and our sewing. It was just amazing. Like I say, gradually people stopped sewing. It got harder and harder. We did do this for almost 10 years. It was just amazing. The shire hall and then I think our last one might've been in the Indoor Sports Centre. Couldn't have been, it was somewhere. For leukaemia. Anyhow we went to quilting, patchworking, sewing, everything changes, people, patchwork was another whole ballgame again.

And Ramona, gosh you couldn't ask for a better partner, she was just so good, helping. My brother Joe still says we're joined at the hip. Two sisters married two brothers so that even makes it more, our kids, our families, everything was done so close together. But our husbands said we had a hobby job, not a business but we basically lived and breathed sewing. In that shop too, Mum was our saviour, she'd come and open up for us. We had our children. I was at work the day before I went into hospital both times. Mum was always there to back us up. Dad had died earlier in our lives and even when he was alive he'd say Why do you spend so much time at the shop. Why don't you spend more time with me? Oh gosh we need to be there for Dad. When Dad passed on it gave her a purpose. She'd open the shop every day for us. In the later years, things just got too hard and we were tired and we couldn't sell the shop. We tried, but like I say sewing was just totally petering out except for the patchwork side of it and even that got hard, there were so many patchwork shops around. What really ruined that was online buying. People buying on the internet, fabrics from America, we just couldn't compete. They could buy exactly what they wanted, order it, it was just, it was really hard to do that. So basically online buying, our health. I had to, I wasn't the best and I had to have some more surgery. Mum was getting on. It was a family business that we just decided that we'd had our time, had enough.

P You just closed the doors

C We closed the doors. It was so hard doing the close down sale. We had friends coming in helping us package things up. Eventually just now with Mum going into Aged Care which is, how many years now since we've closed, we closed in 2012. And with Mum going into Aged Care, we had so much stored in her house, finally we just got rid of the last bits. We've both got so much in our sewing rooms that we shouldn't have. We gave it away and took it to shops and said Here have it. Took it to the church ladies, rolls and rolls of fabric, I still stuff they're cutting up. That was a real era, it changed.

Dennis you know when Pat Andersen opened his hardware store, was it from Jack & Newell still, what was it. When Ramona and I opened

D He used to be the manager at Jack & Newell

C It was Jack & Newell hardware. And he decided to open his own shop and we took over his shop.

1.20.07

R & C Fabrics opened in his shop. Yes it did.

P Put this back on again so I can hear what you're saying (*mic attached*)

D Pat Andersen used to work for Jack & Newells and then

C He was their manager of the hardware store

D He was in the hardware store and they put him into drapery (*laughs*) He said I'm not here to do, so he started his own store. And that was in that shop where Cathy is, was before you, he was in there before you

C That's what I said, we took over his store. When he closed his doors, we moved in.

D Then from there the Canegrowers bought him out and he worked in the old store down the end of Mill St across the road from the hotel and then Canegrowers bought Jack & Newells out and they made Pat Andersen the manager of the whole store, back in that building, that's how that worked.

C But R & C Fabrics had that little piece originally where we took over. That's where we started

D It was called Andersens Agencies. If you wanted something, he'd have it there next morning. He carried the odd bits of drills and tools and that but as far as stock of, it was called Andersens Agencies and he'd have it there on the carrier the next morning.

P I want to ask you one more thing because I know we've got to stop soon. You said sisters married brothers, where did you meet each other

D Cathy chased me round for years

C (*laughs*) did not. We used to, Ramona and Ron when did they marry. That's sad I can't remember my sister's wedding date. I must've been about 16, so how old was that. Help me here darl. 16 in '58. I was about 16 so then Dennis was my partner for the wedding but we always knew each other because of Ramona and Ron and the family connection and I had another boyfriend and then we just started going out. I had a few other things that I was involved in and I won a couple of things and Dennis partnered me for a ball and it went from there basically. I actually had, once stage of the game I had got a job as air hostess, I always wanted to be air hostess with Qantas. I had the choice to go air hostessing, and Dennis had a choice to go coach driving around Australia. We had to make up our minds whether we were going to keep this relationship going or go our own way. We decided we'd just stay together. Like I say, 36 years today.

D 50 years carpentering.

C 50 years carpentry darling

D Even at the pub every day I did some carpentry. The whole time I was at the pub there was some carpentry I used to do, that's true

C Dennis and his mates, there was Dennis Verri, Joey Sciacca, Ronald Jack, it was you three, they had these big flash Monaro cars. I never thought Dennis would even look at me. I'm four years younger than Dennis. They were the boys in town. They went to Cairns for burgers and milkshakes with their girlfriends. They were the hoons of the town with their big flash cars. Somehow we ended up together and I knew I'd be safe forever.

D did you ever do the Mossman Centenary that time. Did you see that.

P No

D When they had the centenary in Mossman

C That was amazing

D that was the greatest time

P When was that

D '76

C '77 was the Cairns centenary

D You made all the hats for us. You haven't got the photos of that

C I have. I'll have to dig them out

D We got old Bert Crimmins's hearse going

- C Joey, Ronald and Dennis. Everyone was in period costume
 D That was a really good day
 C There was a ball and everything
 P Like to see those photos
 D I just turned 21, that was the year we were allowed to go in the pub and everything
 C That was a big time, that was
 D I remember we won the jackpot in the pub
 C How come I made your hats, I wasn't going out with you then when you were 21
 D We were going out. Remember the priest hats.
 C I know. I made it all. You were 28 when we got married, I was 24.
 D The albums, they're down there at the bottom of that thing
 C No they're upon top of William's cupboard
 D You should see those photos, old tractors, all the farmers dug out their old tractors. The Exchange veranda was full, wasn't it Cathy, Jack & Newells was full, the streets were full, so many people in the town.
 C It was really something. That was the day the Bally Hooley was coming through town
 D They had all the floats there. Every May Day they used to have floats in Mossman we used to have May Day sports up the Showground. They used to have the floats up the street. The Greasy Pig.
 C Like a big country fair, it wasn't like the Show because it wasn't Show Day
 D May Day sports,
 C Egg and spoon races all those different things
 D Horse events
 P Mossman's really changed
 C it's really changed. The kids don't see that sort of thing any more.
 D The town used to be full when the cane cutters were here. Full
 C The cane cutter days were just amazing.

1.27.02

I remember growing up with the cane cutters. I wanted the cane farm when I was young but my father being Italian of course everything goes to the boy, my brother Joe, Joe d'Adonna's got the farm. But I cut cane, I planted cane, I used to work in the holidays and all that sort of stuff. Until one day I said to Dad I really want some of this farm one day Dad. Cathy you know only the boys get the farm. Your husbands have to look after the girls, and so after that I decided I was going to be a lady then after that. Dennis's sister and um what's her name Wall, Kathleen Wall, Judy Rowell (*sp?*) and myself, three years in a row became Miss Far North Queensland in the Miss Australia quest. I won a trip to New Zealand and then I entered the, because it was the Cairns centenary anyone that had won a quest before, they wanted you to enter the Queen of Queens in Cairns, then I won that and so I won a trip with a Mrs Bradley who was my chaperone, to Italy with Alitalia for, we extended it, it was a flight over and a flight back to Rome but we extended it as a seven week around Europe and she went as my chaperone. My parents weren't sure but because the Bradleys were friendly with the Verris, Mum and Dad allowed me to go. I had my 18th birthday in Venice. (*laughs*) After that I'll never forget, I got off the plane, and Dennis came and picked me up, and he said I'll take you for a drive tomorrow on the motorbike up to Cape Tribulation. We went all the way up. He took me over the Cape Tribulation range. And said Is this as good as the Amalfi drive. Everyone was saying I had to do the Amalfi drive it was something spectacular. I said No that view was not as good as. This was a lot better than the Amalfi drive. Our drive to Cairns. I couldn't get over what people were going on about. We drove that trip to Cairns so often and think nothing of it. And everyone's raving about the Amalfi drive. Admittedly it's amazing, It's a big, steep but I thought our scenery. Dennis putting me on the motorbike and

taking me up there after I'd come back from Europe for seven weeks, yep that probably sealed our fate then. That's why I didn't go air hostessing and he didn't go coach driving. We stayed together forever. Very special.

D I'd like to know what can make Mossman better. All the young ones have left. All gone to the mines.

C William's got an idea (*laughs*)

W Turn sugar into backpacking farms. Easy. Music festivals.

D Oh William

W What do you think's turned Byron Bay around. Byron Bay was a no hope town. You're not cool unless you've been to Byron Bay

C I don't know if this is Mossman though. I think that's Port Douglas. I would like Mossman to turn into, you know how all these little country towns are turning to, cottage industry sort of thing, coffee shops

W Maleny

C like Maleny, country places to visit, each with a little something different. But I don't know how you get that country coffee shop feel in Mossman

W Produce

C We have beautiful markets on Saturday morning. Those markets are amazing, Pardon darl

W Promote it like a proper farmers market, different produce, or produce brought in from other places

C I don't know how you get the people here. Because people seem to go zoom through to Daintree,

D You're talking a lot of land

C I felt really sad, when they did the centre up at the Gorge, I do feel, we could still do it, I do feel instead of the buses just going from Port Douglas to there, they should've come into Mossman and on the Bally Hooley train and gone up. We had a ticketing office at the shire hall, it's still there. That's what they used to do. Why can't we bring that back? Even if we add it to what we have. I still think we need to, perhaps that could be a good part of

W Need the markets across the road as well

C they may as well because they're getting pretty big and tired

W If you want a younger generations view

Çmusic and that sort of thing too, I just don't know. Like I say, how do those little townships like Maleny become nice little coffee shops places. Kuranda, but that was, how do you do it.

D I talked to somebody, Marano's daughter, she said her mother-in-law's got a shop in Kuranda and if Skyrail and the train don't run, you might as well shut up. Somehow you've got to bring them to the place.

C this is what I believe. I believe the coaches instead of going straight to the Gorge should be going into the Bally Hooley pick up here, going by train up like that

D they should be given an hour to walk around

C that as well, because we've got all those places that are marked, the Historical Society did those things. No one seems to know about them, no one seems to use them, Judy from the library was using them, introducing people, that was great. We need to get the people into town to do it. Get the people into the shops. That sort of thing would be amazing. I just really feel for the town, I just feel it's dying. Ron Sorenson said he put in a heap of plans quite some time ago when they talked about fixing up the street. Gardens and all that sort of stuff to make it more of a village thing. But not a lot of it was taken on board. He said he put quite a lot of plans into the council, drawings and things. But our markets on Saturday mornings are great. They are lovely. I just wish we could build on that.

W Listening to dad, things that used to happen when he was a boy, like the picture theatre, wine and things like that

C time moves on, technology has taken over. People are looking into these darn things all the time. Even in classrooms we have problems

P Well thank you for much for chatting, it's been terrific

C It's been a long time, oh gosh

P I know we've gone a bit long and I want to have a look at your photos too, so thank you, it's been terrific

1.35.01

THE END