DAVID RUTHERFORD 24 AUGUST 2018

AT his home at Rutherford Rd Miallo

DAVID #2

D David Burdell, mother's maiden name, Rutherford. Born Mossman district hospital 4th of 5th 1938
P So your family's been here for a long time
D Great grandfather [*George Lewis Rutherford*] came to Miallo from Port Douglas originally, settled up near the Miallo intersection on a property he had there, and then he acquired a big parcel of land on the northern bank of Saltwater Creek and southern bank of Whyanbeel Creek which was several hundred acres. [*this was Jack Thompson's farm over the road from Maranos. "I lost all that country to a double bed' said DBR at DSHS 3.9.18*] That eventually finished up with the Andrews family because great grandfather's daughter married C A S Andrews and he finished up farming the property so that property is now owned by the Andrews family. The property here at Rutherford Rd acquired by my grandfather in 1901 in a ballot. (*he had to pick a piece of paper out of a hat and he fished around till he found one with the corner turned down that was meant for somebody else*] It adjoins the other property across the creek. Granddad's eldest son Barty had the farm next door and, on the corner of that property is where the Miallo state school was established. Granddad was on the committee pressing for that school. Family, children from here, the farm was called *Woodside* by granddad and dad and his sister had to go to Mossman for their education which was a 7 mile trip, mostly on horseback into Mossman. Aunty Grace used to stay in town with friends apparently. Unfortunately dad lost his mother [*Harriet*] when he was only 9 months of age and he was reared by what I call the house gin, she was happy to be called the house gin. Granny Rosie we called her, she was a full-blooded aboriginal. She eventually married a Kanaka, South Sea islander and lived here on the farm. In her older age dad gave her and her next husband free accommodation in our cane barracks. Then she went walkabout and finished up settling up in Mt Carbine. But she was always Granny Rosie to us. Rosie Hippy was her married name at that time and she married Paddy Julian and became Rosie Julian. She was a lovely old stick and we were very fond of her
She wasn't a local aboriginal. She came from up the Tableland, sort of Mt Carbine way is where she came from original from the tribe. I don't know how she came to granddad, but she used to tell the story of feeding dad with a bottle in a dress as a little fellah, when he was still a baby. He was then looked after by one of his mother's surviving sisters who was also married to a Rutherford and lived on the other farm that was owned by great grandfather. Two of the sons started farming on the bigger property and Aunt Ollie did a fair bit of rearing of dad apparently. Dad's mother was, they were both Butler girls. Their maiden name was Butler and they came from the Cardwell area, Upper Murray at Cardwell
Two sisters married two brothers.

Great grandfather,G L as I call him, he was a chemist, he came to Australia with five of his brothers and settled in various parts, mostly in north Queensland, well Ravenswood outside Charters Towers originally. G L married a Crees girl [*Julia*] in Ravenswood and they followed the gold mine explorations throughout north Queensland. He went as a chemist still, he was everything, chemist, doctor, undertaker, did all those duties, even in Cooktown, he was in Cooktown for a time and he registered there as a soft drink producer. Apparently chemists in that era or apothecaries as they were called, were soft drink manufacturers as well. He came

from Cooktown to Port Douglas where he had his business there in Port Douglas. He started to move out, and moved of course here to the Miallo area. They came by boat from Port Douglas, up Saltwater Creek, up to a place that was known in the early days as Rutherfords Landing and that's where grandfather W B, he started coming across. He was born in Port Douglas, he came across to, sorry he was born in Ravenswood, W B. some of the later ones were born in Port Douglas. W B was going to follow in his father's footsteps and he used to come across to Saltwater Creek in his sailing skiff, an 18 footer, and walk overland to a property called Akaroa where there were Jesuit priests and they started educating him into becoming a chemist also. [*Akaroa is up Tati Rd*, *now owned by Maranos*] But then he got the urge to become a farmer and won this block here, 55B, in a ballot and settled on it and cleared it for sugar cane production. G L had lobbied to have what was called in those days the Saltwater area included in the Mossman Mill production area, he had a bit of opposition to it. Mossman wasn't interested in Saltwater because they could see the expenses in building tramlines and what not. But anyway he endured and eventually this area became part of the Mossman Mill. This property as early properties were, was mortgaged to the government to raise the funding to build the Mossman Mill.

W B [*William Bartley Rutherford*] cleared this property, most of it, he didn't clear all of it, he cleared what was called scrublands which was actually rainforest land. Forest land is a black soil. Forest land wouldn't grow sugar cane in the early days because it was susceptible to cane grub attack whereas scrublands or rainforest land adjacent to the creeks and rivers was rich enough to grow crops without a need of artificial fertiliser. It wasn't till later years that farmers started using superphosphate initially because a lot of the scrub lands in the tropics are highly acid and they need some neutralising to grow a decent sort of crop.

[forest black soil was only viable in 1960s when it was treated for grub control]

P How big was the property

D 94 acres and a 5 acre road lease. So it's 99 acres altogether.

P And this one's called

D Woodside

P And the other one's called

D Rosebrook or Braeburn, it was changed to Braeburn.

P Why was it changed

D Andrews took over. C A S Andrews was a surveyor and he did a lot of the surveying in the Mossman district. One of G L's other sons Stewart was also a surveyor, and he did some of the surveying around here but he was the youngest son of G L's and he did most of his surveying in the Cairns region.

G L had two families, and it seems to be a thing with Rutherfords, we seem to marry twice for some reason. G L's first wife was a Crees and she died and is buried in Melbourne in the Boorandarra in Melbourne. I found her gravesite when I was in Melbourne a couple of years ago

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which was a great thrill to find and she's buried down there, he remarried and had a family of four girls the second time. His first family ah I just can't remember how many there were in that first family, there was only the one girl and the rest were boys in that first family. Then W B's wife as I say was a Butler and they had a daughter and two boys and dad was the youngest of that first family, then W B remarried Lillian Gulliver so he became related to the Gulliver family. Gullivers are involved with Townsville. The suburb of Gulliver was named after what I call my grandma Gulliver's father. They had a daughter and two sons in the second family. And then Townsville is also related on the Burdell side, mum's family, they had property which is now called, a suburb of Townsville called Burdell on the northern side of Townsville.

P So it’s a big family
D Yeah, it's a very involved family with north Queensland. We’ve spread out. Out Chillagoe way, a lot around Townsville and a lot around well, even our generation the brother’s in Karumba, the sister’s in Daintree and I’m here in Miallo.
P Why do you think they came here
D it was in the stage of developing and Port Douglas was quite a busy era, G L came when it was in its early infancy and he could see potential in farming this land having come initially from Ireland. Even though it's a Scottish name, they came from Scotland to Ireland in the early days. They went to Ireland to become flax growers, they became basically farmers but G L’s father was a doctor, father-in-law was a doctor in Ballybay in Ireland and Ballybay in Ireland is not a bay at all, it’s slap bang in the middle of Ireland nowhere near water except for some lakes. There’s a lake district in the middle of Ireland, north west of Dublin. I've been there, found some of the family graves in Cahaans Presbyterian church in Ireland. That was exciting as well to find that. But because of the famine that decimated the people in Ireland, even when I went there, the staple Irish food is pratie, potato. I was invited home to a family, brother and sister on a farm first time I went to Ireland and lunch was a pratie. That was a cooked potato. That was the lunch. That’s what happened to them in the early days when the blight hit the potato crops they died like flies apparently. A lot of people left Ireland and move either to American or to Australia. Some of the family moved to America and some came to Australia. But it was quite strange that the five brothers became pharmacists and came to Australia. One brother went back to Ireland and settled there, died there. The youngest who had a name called Matthew Macaulay Rutherford. A very, not a strange name but it always fascinated me. Matthew Macauley flows so well. It's a name I’m very fond of. He had a big family of children. I’m in touch with his descendants still in Ireland and in England. I've met them and correspond with them. Basically a Xmas letter, exchange. It’s quite interesting. That’s really why they came here to start farming and from there it grew. G L was always involved in government. He was a J P and he sat on the bench in Port Douglas and that’s another thing that gave me a thrill when we had the centenary, some of the court books were on display and to see his signature on some of the judgements he made as a J P in Port Douglas, was quite a thrill to see his signature there. Granddad W B he was also a J P and G L served on the first Divisional Board of the Douglas Shire. W B served as a councillor on the Douglas Shire and when he left here he went to Redlynch in Cairns and he was elected to the Mulgrave Shire and did a stint on the Mulgrave Shire, granddad. Dad stood for council a couple of times but was never successful. His cousin Slo Andrews, or Onslow Rutherford Andrews went on to become shire chairman for quite a long period. I stood for council and did two terms as councillor. One of G Ls brothers was Mayor of Charters Towers from the 1870s, to 1888 I think it was. We’ve had a family involvement in local government throughout the country actually. It was interesting. And you get into it because you’re concerned for your community. You want to give back to what the community’s given you. That’s why you stand for council.
P Did you enjoy your time
D Yes I did. It was an interesting time. It was development
16.35
of Port Douglas, I always say we had three options with development of Port Douglas as a council. It was leave it alone which couldn’t happen because the place was growing, cut it up into shoeboxes for houses or do what we did. And what we did was the best thing that could’ve happened to Port Douglas and that was develop it. I know we hurt a lot of people but it was what Port Douglas needed. It didn’t need a big residential, it needed tourism development for the betterment of the shire. We had infrastructure constructed that our local community couldn’t have afforded at the time. To have established sewage, we had

sewage running down the street in Port Douglas at one stage, it was frightening to see what was happening. To see the development that occurred and the conditions we put on developers supplying infrastructure, it made one hell of a difference to the outcome for the Port Douglas

P When were you there.

D 1982 to '88. It was the Mirage, it was the big development of Port Douglas and also the Bloomfield Track which became a controversial, I was still there then and that was another thing that, it was a pet thing of the old families. We wanted a through road, we saw the difference it made to Mossman when the Cook highway was built. The Cook highway was opened in the 1930s, prior to that everything came into Port Douglas by ship and it became a dead end, Mossman did, because there was nowhere, people would drive to Mossman and they'd have to turn around and go back again to Cairns, and by building the coastal road through to Cooktown which was the aim of the community for all those years, wasn't the best thing that happened to Douglas but it happened, to open up the Douglas Shire and tourism far more because people could then drive through and see something different. And it's a scenic road as well. Compared to the Cook Highway, it's not as scenic as the Cook Highway the Bloomfield Track, but it's a different environment anyhow. Half of it is rainforest, half of it is open forest whereas the Cook Highway you've got such vistas looking out to sea, the islands and things that even when I was young, I remember going down we'd often see whales breaching off the coast as we climbed White Cliffs and I think that'll happen again as the whale numbers breed up. People will start seeing that happen again, whales breaching. It was wonderful to watch and to see

P So you think Bloomfield should be paved

D Yep yep. The problem has happened is the population environment has changed from my era to today's era of people, the green lobby have got too much influence on what happens to the country and they don't make any commitment financially to the country. The average person is the one that spends the money. We still need development. I was involved in politics for quite a number of years as well. I saw that when we were in the State electorate of Barron River we progressed. We are now in the State electorate of Cook, which is the whole of Cape York and Cape York is bigger than Victoria in land mass. No government of any inkling wants the electorate of Cook because it needs development. It needs money spent on it. They want to spend it in the south-east corner, they don't want to spend it in northern Australia. I feel they should be spending money because we're stuck out here on a peninsula open to invasion by several hundred million people above us that could walk in and take us over and we wouldn't know about it until the next day.

21.51

It's a big coastline. It's open. I've driven it through the middle. I've been round by sea and I've flown over it and yeah, it's an expanse. I've got families up in Cape York on both sides now. It's just open and you see how open it is, the first time I went round in 1969 I think it was, 1970, went round to Weipa by sea and it was, every creek that we passed going up the coast, there'd always be a tinny in the mouth of that creek. There's people up there that you didn't even know about, living off the land and the sea and you could live off the land and the sea in that country because there's so much wildlife and fishing and stuff that you could live off it, it's fantastic. You read stories today of Cedar Bay, and as a young bloke dad would take us up to Cedar Bay and Hope Island, we'd camp at Christmas time. I remember an old hermit at Cedar Bar, Cedar Bay Bill he was called, Bill Evans, and he had his own still where he made his own pineapple wine, he'd share it with us (*laughs*) when I went up there at Christmas time. But we'd live off the land, wild pigs and dare I say cassowaries and pigeons and fish and turtle. Yeah. It was a great life and a great experience for a young person.

P Where did the wild pigs come from, were they indigenous

D Yeah. A lot of thought, believed that they came from, they called them Captain Cookers, whether they were on the Endeavour and bred from there, they could well have done. I don't know. I know the old pearl and trochus luggers always had a pig on deck, they carried one or two pigs on deck, that was their fresh meat when they needed it. They fed them on trochus shell meat. Divers would take trochus shell on board, they'd boil it up and keep the pigs well fed. On the old luggers there was always one or two pigs running around the deck. Wild pigs become tamer than the tame pig for some reason. We had them here. We caught them as little suckers and brought them home. One we called Percy after a police sergeant at Mossman (*laughs*). He used to go pig shooting with us. (*laughs*) He thought he was a dog. Dad eventually butchered him. Mum cooked it up, put it on the table. My brother who was 6 years older than me looked at it and said Mum it's just like eating my brother. Nobody ate it. Mum had to give it all away (*laughs*) That was the end of Percy.

P So they probably were introduced

D Probably were but they may have come down, when you read some of the stuff I've got here about aboriginal settlement in Cape York and you see what's happened, north of the Daintree River a lot of the timber species there are the same as what's grown in New Guinea. Doesn't grow south of the Daintree River. Daintree River seems to be a barrier to a lot of flora and fauna. When you look at charts of Torres Strait it's not far from the top end of Queensland across to New Guinea. We've probably been joined there at some stage and maybe that's what happened, we've been part of that. I know that some of the timber species that are in Australia north of the Daintree River are unique to north of the Daintree River and New Guinea, so we've had some assimilation. We could've probably had the same affiliation with flora and fauna.

P And maybe pigs came from there

D Yeah, could've done.

P: Going back to the council, what do you think was your best achievement there

D I'm proud of both, the Port Douglas development we did and the fact we had, we put a better water supply into Port Douglas, we sewered Port Douglas and also the Bloomfield Track was another thing that had been wished for by so many of the early generation. They needed, they wanted to see the road through after seeing what the Cook Highway to opening up the Shire, they realised that the Bloomfield Track was going to do the same thing and I think it has done the same thing. It's opened up tourism dramatically. You see at this time of year the number of people heading for Cape York, or heading for The Tip as they call it from throughout Australia. It's always been the aim of a lot of Australians to see the extremities of the country, the northern part, the southern part, the east and the west. I've done it and a lot of other people have done it. So it's interesting.

P But they don't stop in Mossman much do they

D No no they don't. I tell you what, Mossman Gorge development has been a big improvement to Mossman. It's made a big difference. It needs to be exploited more somehow, I don't know how but (*pause*) where do we go from there?

To go back to the Cook Highway again, Dad and his brother Barty they started in 1927 I think they had a boat built in Cairns, [*by Ogilvie*] the vessel was called The Miallo and it carried 8 ton of cargo. And dad and Barty they travelled from Saltwater Creek, it was their main home port, they went to Port Douglas and they carted between Cape Tribulation and Cairns calling into Port Douglas on the trip each way. They did 3 trips a week to Cairns and that's how they started the Rutherford Brothers Store in Miallo because they were bringing goods so that they went to Cummins and Campbells, Burns Philip, they were the big wholesalers in Cairns of that era. And they carted various types of cargo. There were a lot of smaller boats working at that time on that trip and I know dad always said they did 3 trips a week to Cairns in The Miallo and they came up Saltwater Creek with the groceries for the Rutherford Bros

Store. I think it was built about 1930 the Rutherford Bros store. It was built after the butchers' shop had been established up there. They worked in conjunction. I can remember the butter coming to the store from the Daintree Butter factory. It was big blocks of butter that they'd cut pieces off and weigh it and people would buy the butter that way. It wasn't little plastic bags or anything in those days, it was in a bit of greaseproof paper, that's how you bought it.
30.37
And everything was kept on ice, there was no such things as refrigerators it was just ice and the Daintree Butter Factory supplied the ice and Mossman Butchering Company in town supplied ice. What they carried in the store was just the basic groceries plus fuel, plus later on became batteries for peoples' vehicles as they needed batteries, I remember that happening. No fresh meats or anything, well the butchers shop was next door. In those days we ate a lot of salt beef basically. I know when I grew up we only had ice and the butcher would deliver once a week. He would come with a basket and he'd also bring the bread and he'd drive down to our place here and then he would walk over the creek to Aunt Millie's place, the log bridge across the creek and take her meat and bread over to her. We also had the shops in town of course but we didn't need them as much in those early days because dad and Barty had the store up here at Miallo. And then general groceries, so a trip to town became quite an event in the early days but then it changed, particularly the war time changed things dramatically as a lot of people left, joined the forces. Dad's brother Barty actually he went off to the war and never came back. He did other things until after the war and he actually was a skipper of the Sydney Showboat during the war He was a mechanic and worked out of Willis Island and Bougainville and those places mostly.
P Going back to the store, so why was there a butcher's shop here
D Again because there was quite a community and we were feeding down as far as Rocky Point as well on the Daintree Road. And at that time we had several butchers shops in the district and several slaughter yards. Beef was slaughtered in that era as well, dad became involved with the cattle industry, beef industry. Daintree itself was mostly dairy farms, dad had acquired land on the upper end of Stewarts Creek and had beef cattle. He and Tom Mackay (*pron mac eye*) were involved together in a property over, on the other side of Daintree river and they had cattle fattening over there as well. There was a slaughter yard at Daintree, Frank Fischer had a slaughter yard. Mossman Butchering company had another slaughter yard opposite the ferry turn off, where today's ferry road goes off, opposite that there was a slaughter yard there. Mossman had a slaughter yard and it supplied the Mossman butchers shop. We only had the one butchers shop in Mossman, it was a butcher, bakers and ice works, Mossman Butchering Company and they supplied out here to Miallo. There was a lot of cattle around in those days as well. Most of the farms always had a couple of head of cattle, either a milking cow or beef cows so beef came from a lot of those places and I know that dad and Tom Mackay had cattle over the other side of the Daintree river. The cattle from there had to be swum across the mouth of the Daintree river, I remember swimming cattle with dad across the mouth of the Daintree river at low tide. You'd wait for low tide and then swim the cattle, you had to be careful they were swimming. You'd be in a flatty, a small boat, don't call them dinghies in those days, they were flatties, and you had to keep the cattle swimming otherwise they'd blow themselves up with air and they'd float and if they float, they'd float out to sea if you weren't careful.
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so you had to make sure they kept swimming to get across the river. But that was quite an experience swimming a mob of cattle, you'd take them along the beach and then swim them over the mouth of the river.

Crocs were shot in those days (*laughs*) there were no, if you saw a croc he got shot. He respected the human being. Now he doesn't. He's too sure of himself now. Yeah.

P When do you think the butchers shop here opened

D I think in 1920s that opened

P Were there a lot of people living here then

D There were. There a lot of small farms especially in Whyanbeel there were a lot of small farms up there, people, they grew cane, most of them cut and grew it themselves, they harvested it themselves, a hell of a lot of small farms. The tramline was extended right up into the top end of Whyanbeel and the mill at that time had a contractor who would assemble the cane from Syndicate Road, Syndicate Line and Whyanbeel Line and Bamboo Line. Bill Frost was the one I remember. Freddy Bell in Mossman was the last fireman that worked for Freddy [*means Frosty*] on that job. He would assemble the rakes of cane, the full rakes near the Miallo school and the bigger locos like the old steam loco called Miallo, she would come out and pick up that rake and take it into the mill. Frosty as we called him, Bill Frost had a very small steam loco, he'd assemble this cane during the day, that was his contract to assemble the rakes of cane from all the little properties up Whyanbeel and around Syndicate and around Bamboo.

I know one of the pranks we used to do with Frosty because it was a little loco and any gradients we'd get a bit of grease out of the axle boxes of the cane trucks and smear it on the rails. And Frosty would come along with the little loco, and she'd be working pretty hard pulling a fair rake of cane and hit these greasy spots and the wheels would spin, it was quite a thing with young people of that time, the prank we did. It was pretty harmless. As soon as he started to spin, he'd drop some sand anyhow out of his sand box and that could give him traction again on the rails. But it was interesting to hear the spinning of the wheels on the greasy rails. Until I did it one night on the Miallo link which ran at that time through the farm and I remember I'd greased a section up on our line and at 9 o'clock at night I could see lights everywhere. Apparently a derailment up there. And I thought it was me that had caused the derailment (*laughs)* but it wasn't me at all. They'd had a derailment at the set of points. But it cured me of putting grease on the rails, always remember that

P What's a rake

D It's all the wagons tied together, a full complement.

P But they didn't have wagons like we have now with the steel sides

D No they were wooden deck, wooden stanchions on them in holders that weren't fixed, that could come out and you finished up with a flat deck if you needed it. And you needed the flat deck to carry your portable rails because we used portable rails in the in-field for the hand cutters. Part of their contract was that they laid the rails down through the fields, as they cut the cane. And they needed a flat deck wagon to do that. To establish what we called the tram and a tram was 18, mostly it was 18 rows of cane in the tram. So in the middle of that, 9 rows either side, 3 rows into a bundle, that's how you worked your tram as you called it, octain for the hand cutters. I've written a fair bit about that in one of those, I've written a story about the growing of cane in my era. It's changed dramatically today to what it was in my time, there's a lot less mechanical work done today than there was done in my era and before that was mainly horses. I started with horses as a lad on the farm. And it grew to machines. I started off driving for dad on a steel wheel tractor and from that we went to rubber tyred tractors.

P Which era do you think was the best

D I keep saying I had the best generation, I still believe that. I think my generation had the best generation. Didn't have it as tough as mum and dad because they went through the Depression. I had good times and I worked hard but life was good and I enjoyed it. I think we're over-governed to hell today, by today's society. A lot of freedoms that I had we don't

have any more and I think people of today miss out a lot in life by restrictions placed on them by society

P What sort of freedoms do you miss

D There's so much. Fishing. Shooting. How you handle food. How you handle people. There's so many variables there now days. Things just got done in my time and to hell with the consequences basically. You got through it and did it and it all happened. But today you've got to have, oh Workplace Health and safety is a good instance. I trained as a Workplace Health and Safety officer, one of my roles later in life. We needed some sort of control but it's gone too far the other way, it's, to put it plainly, bloody ridiculous some of the safety issues today that's expected. I still believe that the basis of it is that you are responsible for your safety but now, it's still there in the Act that you are responsible but there's so much, it's just an overkill all round, it's beyond belief. It's an on-cost to whatever's being done. It's a terrible burden cost-wise to society.

P So you had fun growing up

D I did. I did a lot of things. With horses, cattle and I rode a horse to school even though the school at Miallo is only a mile away, I rode a horse to school. I rode a pushbike, I got my first pushbike in latter years at school. Didn't have one during the war years because you couldn't have rubber. Rubber was high priority during the war years. I remember one boy he used to ride from half way to Mossman to Miallo school and his father made his bike, he had a piece of garden hose that he'd shoved a piece of lawyer cane up through it and he'd tied that to the wheel of his bicycle and that's what Joe rode to school on. This hard wheeled bicycle. The reason we didn't have bicycles was because of the rubber. And so we rode a horse to school

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and let the horse go in the paddock at school and catch him after school and ride him home again.

P Did you always have the same horse

D No I rode a few different horses because Dad had the cattle property at Daintree so we had horses changing all the time. I remember one of the ones I used to ride was called Bonza, he was an ex race horse. He had a backbone that was about 3 inches high above his ribs. I rode him bareback, he was quite a horse to ride, old Bonza. He shied on me one day and chucked me off the side because I was riding bareback and I hit the tramline. But I survived it. And another horse dad had he was called Buck and he would buck if an adult got on him. He was a sporting horse, a good figure of 8 horse. I rode him for years to school no trouble at all. Buck and I were good friends. Went away to boarding school. I came home from boarding school and dad said No-one's ridden Buck for a while, you better ride him. So I got Buck, put the saddle on him, bridle, threw me leg over and dad said 7 bucks later I went into orbit. I was telling my doctor about it recently and he said Did you go to hospital and I said No. I came to, dad sat me up and took me over home and I laid down on the bed and woke up the next day. So I probably had concussion but that didn't matter, it was something you got over. It just happened and you did it. Same with the little accidents you had during life. I never had a stitch in my body till I was well and truly an adult. I've got scars all over me legs and hands where I've had wounds over the years. You didn't go to hospital unless you were really serious. That was life in those days. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the creek here at the back of the house, even though in dad's era it did have crocodiles in it. I swam it for a good mile either way but I wouldn't swim it now, a mile either way, I know there's crocs there. In my younger days there was no crocs there. There were crocs in dad's day but they got shot out but they're coming back. I believe there's 3 above the Daintree road bridge on Saltwater creek. Now at this time of year I've got no problem with it, you can see the water's clear but

in flood time there's no way in the world you can get me close to floodwaters. You wouldn't know where the hell they were.

P Is that Saltwater Creek there

D This is Saltwater creek here. It's fresh water, tidal above the Daintree road bridge. It's tidal, big tides will fill back up here but it will run back up fresh water. It's called Saltwater creek, I don't know why. Down on the bottom corner of the property is Whyanbeel Creek junction with Saltwater. Saltwater is a longer creek than Whyanbeel. Saltwater comes from the higher area in the range behind and flows a lot faster than Whyanbeel. You used to be able to stand in the junction of the two creeks, and the two different temperatures. Always Whyanbeel creek was more susceptible to crocodiles than Saltwater because Saltwater here is a lot colder and crocs don't like cold water. That's what I always thought and they used to go up Whyanbeel more so than come up Saltwater. But dad had a dog knocked off a log crossing the creek just down here when he was young, so there've been crocs up here in the old days

P Is Whyanbeel Creek fresh

S Yes it's fresh too. But Saltwater is salt or brackish below the bridge on the Daintree Road. That's the only salt water, the rest of it is fresh water it flows

P Interesting why it's called Saltwater

D Yes it is, the district was called Saltwater originally as well when they settled here before the Miallo name came in

P Where's the Miallo name from

D Miallo was Wild Country because it was scrub country it was full of lawyer canes, very dense rainforest. It was the aboriginal name of Wild Country, Miallo.

P Doesn't it mean pig in Italian

D they say that but it came about, it's an aboriginal name same as Whyanbeel is an aboriginal name. Whyanbeel, it's been said Canoe and it's been said Axe for Whyanbeel

P Who named them, adopted the name

D There was a local tribe here that dad grew up with that lived on the creeks. He spent a lot of time with them. Actually he had a tribal name, I wish I'd written it down. I never wrote it down. I've heard it but I don't remember what it was, I never took much notice as a young person what his tribal name was. Because he was reared by Granny Rosie, the house gin, on the farm, he became involved with the local, in the 1920s after World War One and the flu epidemic hit Australia, most of the Saltwater aboriginals died out because they'd been associated with the white people that much in the Miallo area by that time and it hit them pretty hard. Even the Kanakas that were here, South Sea islanders, a lot of them died. I know that there's three buried on this farm. 3 Kanakas. I know where they are too. One day somebody might find them. Dad always said they were buried deep, good 6 foot down, so don't worry about it. We farmed over the top of them when we finished up developing the farm but I always found I had to, I didn't have to, but I raised my hat and said G'day to them as I drove over them each time because if I didn't, I'd break something for sure. (*laughs*)

P Are you going to mark them one day

D Well they're marked because of the soil that came out of the grave when they were dug. The clay soil underneath is, it came up in the, the land is worked with a machine it'll show up as yellow clay in the black soil.

P Did you know their names

D No. But I know they were Kanakas. I didn't know them. They were buried well before my time.

P Where did the Saltwater aboriginals live

D I don't really know. I know that dad said they lived on the creeks here, on the sandbanks and what not, on the creeks, they lived off the fish. There were a lot of fish in the

rivers in those days. This creek here, Saltwater now, is full of sand. It's changed dramatically even in my time. Snags that I used to dive off of when I was a kid into the water are now under the sand. The sand has built up in the creeks that much and whether that's because of the changes in, I know the flooding in the creeks now is different today from what it was when I was young because most farms had stock, either horses or cattle, and they kept the rainforest and the creek banks open so when it flooded, water flowed through that rainforest. Whereas now that rainforest has built up and it inhibits the flow of water so the creeks break out into the cane fields a lot more now and flood the cane fields a lot more than they ever used to. And I think that's because of the fact that the rainforest on the creek banks has become more dense, and the water can't flow as freely as it used to through.

P So some of those aboriginals would've lived on the farms, did they

D Yeah, they did. We had them here when I was young. They were still under the Act. Paddy Julian as I said, Rosie married the second time. Dad got him his clearance from the Act so he was able to get a pension

P Just stop for a tic (*his phone message goes off*)

53.54

DAVID #3

P We were just talking about being cleared from under the Act, what's that mean

D It was the Aboriginal and Torres Strait, Aboriginal act that put most of the black people under the control of the government basically. For them to work for you or anything, you had to pay them, or give them sustenance and you paid some money into their bank account that was managed by the local police station. They were very restricted in what they could do, they weren't allowed into hotels that sort of thing, even though they would get grog occasionally. Some of them it was their downfall, the actual alcohol side. Sly groggers would supply them. Paddy and Rosie got their clearance which then gave them access to old age pension because they became natural citizens. It made their lifestyle a lot easier for them.

P What did you have to go through

D We employed aboriginals on the farm over the years, the last bloke we had was George Bamboo was his name. Old Georgie used to live in the barracks and ride his bicycle back to the Gorge mission in Mossman at weekends. They weren't allowed to work in the cane fields but George used to do a lot of the weeding around the homestead and the cow paddocks as we had and he was allowed to do that sort of work on the farm.

P Why weren't they allowed to work in the cane fields

D Because the cane fields were controlled by the A W U and workers in the cane fields had to be union members. Cane cutters were the same. They could sign up before they could sign on as a contractor. They had to join the Australian Workers Union. The sugar industry was strongly controlled by the A W U. Amenities for cane cutters and those sort of things had to be policed by inspectors. You had to supply accommodation, bedding which was a spring mattress type stretcher with a hessian mattress cover and you supplied, even though they were contractors, they were working on a contract basis you had to supply their eating utensils, their cooking utensils, hot and cold water, water bags, cane knives, files all had to be supplied by the grower to the cane cutter contractors. And the cane cutter wage was based on an income that they, because it was seasonal it was based on a payment per ton of cane which would give them an equivalent of a 12 month type salary, so therefore cane cutting rates were fairly high compared to ordinary wages. They worked on, as I say, per ton of cane they were paid so much per ton of cane, contract cane cutters but the grower had to supply all these extras as well.

P So just going back to the Act again what did they have to do to be cleared from under the Act

D There had to be an appeal made by a European I guess, by an Australian had to make an appeal to the authorities to have them exempted from the Act and you had to state a case of why you thought they should be. Upright citizen all that sort of thing. They weren't going to cause problems in society, yeah all those things had to be stated to get them their clearance. Pretty onerous type thing really when you think back on it. At that time you didn't take a lot of notice of it, it was there, for them to be married under State law and that, it was completely different for them than what we had to go through as individuals.

4.59

(*pause*)

P You've got this lovely photo of the store, the Rutherford Store in Miallo, do you know who built it

D Old man Scomozzon, Bruno Scomozzon's dad did the plastering on it. I don't know who built it, but I know Bruno Scomozzon's dad was the plasterer that did the plastering over the concrete walls. There's a concrete floor, concrete walls, big sliding door at the back, glass frontage, a fuel, petrol bowser at the side of the building which was a hand pump type thing. Underground tank. I wouldn't mind betting the underground tank is still there underground. To my knowledge it was never removed. It could've been. Behind that was a tin shed that had the high um flooring in it where 44 gallon, or 200 litre in today's terminology, fuel drums were unloaded and rolled along for supply to people as they needed fuel. In those days there was a lot of power kerosene used in tractors, as tractors in 1930s were mostly power kerosene used in the motors. You'd start, those old kerosene engines, you'd start them on petrol, warm them up for about 5 minutes, then you'd switch the petrol off and open the power kerosene valve and they'd be fed on power kerosene.

Power kerosene. Which is basically what jet fuel today is. Jet fuel that they used in the jet aeroplanes is very similar to the power kerosene that we used on the tractors.

P Must've gone fast then

D (*laughs*) They get very hot. The exhaust on those old tractors used to get red hot. You could light a cigarette on the exhaust of the tractors because it was that hot. Far hotter than the diesel motor of today. [*dog starts*]

P And this building is still there

D It's still there, it's been converted to a house. It was built right beside the tram line because when dad and Barty would come in with the Miallo, the boat, they'd unload the stuff off the Miallo onto a cane wagon and push it up from Saltwater Creek up to Miallo to unload the goods into the building, that was how it was done originally and that's why it was built right beside the tram line because it was convenient. Dad's brother Barty had the house next door to it.

P Did they push by hand

D Mostly yeah, push it by hand or sometimes they'd get a horse and pull the wagon with a horse as well. We used the horses a lot at that time because we were using draught horses in the field and they were harnessed to pull the cane wagons into and out of the paddock for the cane cutters as well, the horses. [*dog stops*]

P How far was that

D Probably a mile or a mile and a half probably. The old Saltwater Creek bridge on the Mossman Daintree road is, they carted the material for the building of that bridge in the Miallo and that's where the Miallo used to unload and that's where the first bridge was built. They carted all the cement and steel, because it was a concrete sub structure built on site actually. The piles were concrete, they were made on site by the builder at that time and original Saltwater Creek bridge was brought in by dad and Barty in the Miallo, material for it.

P Terrific building, it looks art deco but I suppose it was built in the 30s
D Hard to recognise it now as a house. I never really studied it since, but you drive past it, that's where the old shop was. Still there. A very solid building.
P And that pole is a telegraph pole
D Telegraph pole
P And the school's in the background
D School Principal's residence.
P Tell us about the school, that's not the same building you sent to
D That one is. Double that one that mum had. [*Mrs Galway was the first teacher, his mum Ethel was the second then Val McCracken. Oscar Bell was teacher when DBR left Now has 160 pupils]* Twice the size when I went there. During the war years we only used one classroom. We were down to about 15 kids during the war when I started. Halfway between the store and the school on the left hand side was where the post office was, the post office and telephone exchange. [*over the road from school]* It was a manual exchange and our number down here on the farm in the old house was Miallo 7, was the number I can still remember, that was our phone number, just 7, Miallo 7. And the shop was Miallo 14, that was the telephone number for the old store.
P Who was 1
D Don't know who was 1, never really took any notice (*laughs)*
P So that's not there any more, the post office.
D The house is still there, but it was a house and the post office was in the house and our papers from Mossman were also delivered to the post office. Mrs Lloyd was actually the one I can remember who was the main person at the telephone exchange then Nash's took it over after Mrs Lloyd retired. Our mail came three times a week. That was brought out to Miallo. Our papers came every day to the Miallo post office and the telephone exchange was a manual exchange where Mrs Lloyd had to plug you through. When my kids were born that was still a manual exchange and you had to wake, whoever was on, I had to wake Warren Nash up to tell him I needed the hospital when my wife was expecting a baby. Had to wake somebody up in the middle of the night if you needed an urgent ambulance or notification to the hospital that you were coming with a pregnant woman. (*laughs)*
Miallo got electricity about 1960, yeah about 1960. We didn't get it here on the farm until 1963 and it was 1962 that I built this house and I wired it for electricity when I built it because I could see the lights at Miallo and I thought we're going to get it before long. But I grew up with kerosene lights and wood stoves and I say to people barbeques still don't turn me on because I spent my youth cutting firewood, chopping firewood. Mum and dad would go to Miallo school, they were very friendly with the principal and his wife they had 4 daughters and Mrs G would say to me as soon as we arrived up there, David would you go and get me some chips please. And I'd go down to their wood heap and cut some chips and take them up to Mrs G. Mrs Gallogly. [*pron: gal oh gly*] Yeah, it was quite an experience. Kerosene lights. I believe that everyone in the country is entitled to electricity and I feel for the people north of the river with hindrances that have been put on them with lack of electricity. I think that one of the reasons that I've worn glasses since I was 17 is that I had to study under kerosene light. It just wasn't fair.
P So you went to this school, talking about studying, until what grade
D I started off in the prep, I was about 4 when I started school because they needed numbers to keep it open during the war, that would've been 1942 that I started and I stayed there till grade 7. In those days we had Prep 1, Prep 2, in the first half of the year and then 3 and 4 in the second half of the year and into grade 1, so that was 7, 8 years I spent at Miallo school. I finished school after Scholarship I was only 13 which was quite young really for that era. Most kids were older than me at school. Then I went away to boarding school when I

was still only 13. I started boarding school in Charters Towers. You had to go away because there was no high school in Mossman. The only accommodation secondary schools were catholic schools in Cairns or Townsville but we all went to Charters Towers because mum had gone to Blackheath College in Charters Towers and she taught at Blackheath College in Charters Towers so it became a family thing. There's 3 of us, the brother is 6 years older than me and my sister is 8 years younger than me. I'm the disadvantaged one that they talk about, the middle born. But Mum lost two babies after me. Both died the day they were born. They were what was termed in that era Blue Babies. Which was the blood problem that they had, O negative situation. And Laurie, they were all geared up for Laurie to be born to do an immediate blood transfusion but she survived and she's still going today. But there were 2 girls between myself and Laurie my sister. Mum lost both of them, they lived and are buried in Mossman cemetery and mum's ashes are buried with them now.

P That's sad. So off you went to boarding school

D Off we went to boarding school in Charters Towers

P Did you know anyone there

D Not when I went there. My brother went there prior to Scholarship. He left during the war years, he left Miallo and went to Thornburgh College which is now called Blackthorn. It was a boys and girls school then but we had Thornburgh and Blackheath, Blackheath was the girls school, Thornburgh was the boys school. We were taught together but we were separated by a mile and a half I suppose between colleges, accommodation wise. And anyway I went there and I was, as I say, 6 years after my brother. My brother went through to senior at Thornburgh and the time I got there he'd been a prefect. The ones he'd hammered as a prefect were the ones that were my seniors when I got there and I had a pretty rough time initially. I didn't want to go there in the first place, I wanted to be a motor mechanic, apprenticeship but anyway I got sent off to Charters Towers. I always remember one letter I got from my dad when I was there, it cost me one and ten pence. Postage at that time was tuppence. Cost me one and ten pence because he hadn't put a stamp on it so I had to pay a penalty for it. I opened it up and all he did was he threaten me with a reformatory and everything else if I didn't start behaving myself. (*laughs*) Anyway, I spent two years at Thornburgh, that was enough for me, I came back home. As I said earlier, mum came to Miallo as a school teacher. She was a Townsville girl, went to training college in Brisbane. She taught throughout north Queensland, a fair bit around Proserpine. She opened a school at Yalbaroo which is now closed unfortunately

P How do you spell that

D Y A L B A R O O

South of Proserpine it is, Proserpine and Mackay

P She came up as a teacher

D She came here as a teacher. She boarded with grandad and grandma here on the farm. That's how she met dad. She went away, she went back to Charters Towers and taught at Blackheath College for a while where she'd been to school before she went away to teachers training school (*his phone rings*) they got married

P Want to stop

D Yeah.

19.06

<u>DAVID #4</u>

P So mum married dad. where did they get married

D they got married in the Methodist church in Townsville and came up here on the coastal steamer that used to travel from Brisbane up the coast to Cairns. And then from Cairns up to Port Douglas and then from Port Douglas out here to Miallo. 1930 I think it was that they got married, round about then anyway. You travelled in that era by coastal steamer and that's how you travelled between Townsville and Cairns and Brisbane or wherever. Even earlier times the family it's surprising how much travel they did by sea. I know Grandfather W B he travelled to Cooktown for a sports thing, he'd go to Cooktown just for a sports weekend. He was a bit of an athlete apparently and he liked to say he was, but he wasn't much of an athlete when I knew him but he could've been when he was younger. Even G L great grandfather, his wife as I said is buried in Melbourne. She had a brother that was down in Melbourne and when she was down there she took ill and died in Melbourne and is buried in Melbourne. It seemed to be no effort to them to travel by sea in those times. It was funny with dad, all the years that dad spent on small boats, he never ever got seasick but put him on a big ship he reckoned he got sea sick straight away. On a big ship he couldn't handle it (*laughs*) but on a small boat he could be on the roughest of seas and it didn't worry him.

P What was mum's name

D Ethel Grace Burdell. And I was lucky being the middle child that I only copped the two names whereas the brother and the sister both had three Christian names and I only got the two, that was bad enough especially with a long name Rutherford to write at the end of it. I was always very envious of an Italian family that lived at Miallo Louis Re, (*pron ree*] R E, I used to be very envious of old Louis, such a short name. and I had to write this big name Rutherford all the time. I wouldn't change it.

P When did they name Rutherford Road

D it was opened about 19, it was surveyed, in the original surveys it was there, a surveyed road. But council named it, it never got named until about 19 (*pause*) 60s I'd say, sometime in the 60s. it was, we used to drive through this farm and the next door farm originally going up, we'd go out past the store is the way we drove out when we drove out. You see in front of the store was still a dirt road in those times and the road to Mossman was still a dirt road and up until probably 1950 before we got bitumen out this way. Electricity as I said didn't come till the 1960s to Miallo. We never got it here till '63. Rutherford Road would have been named, in the late 50s in that era the Council built it and I've been trying to get them to rebuild it ever since. It's badly in need of rebuilding. But the 6 years I spent as a councillor I didn't look after myself. I should have done. Everyone says councillors look after themselves. But I didn't. I was more concerned with the shire than my own backyard. I'm sorry now. (*laughs*)

P So when mum and dad first came to settle here, your grandfather was still here and your grandmother

D Yeah, initially yes. Then granddad decided that he went into partners with a chap on the next door farm and they bought a property in Redlynch in Cairns which was another cane farm and they went down there to live and mum and dad built the other house, or the house over there that's still there now. That was their home that they built in the 1930s. they initially lived in the cane barracks when they first got married then they built the house over there, carted timber from the Daintree saw mill, the saw mill beside the Daintree butter factory in Daintree and that house over there, it's all interior timbers are all red cedar which is basically a cabinet timber but all the walls and ceilings in that house are red cedar which is a very valuable timber in this day and age, and it's a well-constructed house. It was finished just before the 1934 cyclone that house and it stood the 1934 cyclone. (*pause*)

P So what did they do for fun, what did they do in their spare time

D They spent a lot of time travelling in the boats. The Miallo was still dad's, and Barty still had the Miallo. They'd travel to Daintree for functions, dances. The Daintree butter factory had a fairly big floor inside the Daintree butter factory and they'd have socials and dances there. They'd have picnics down the Daintree River, across to Port Douglas and involved with the Port Douglas community of that era. Then mum was, got herself very involved with the CWA. She even had a branch out here at Miallo at one stage. She spent her whole life involved with the Mossman CWA because her mother was a founding member of the CWA in Townsville, so it was a generation carry on basically. Grandma Burdell in Townsville had even a branch out at the old family property in Townsville, was on the northern side of the Bohle [*pron: Bowly*] River and grandma had a little building built on the banks of the Bohle River which was the CWA for the Bohle, Bohle branch of Townsville CWA.
P How do you spell Bowly
D B O H L E.
P Glad I asked you that (*both laugh*) Did they go to church
D There was no church here but the house was used as a Sunday School same as the Burdell house in Townsville was used as a Sunday school, church situation. They had travelling preachers
Laurie been?
Marie (wife) Yes
D The old home was used as a Sunday school. In those days the preachers would come out and visit the families. That's something that's been lost in society in this day and age. You don't have that same response but you had regular visits from preachers in those times. They'd come out and see the family, see how things were going.
P Anglican
D Methodist. Funny enough the old store was sold to the Catholic church. It became a community church for a while after the shop closed. People that dad employed to look after the shop were actually the daughters of the teacher at Miallo school in that era It was the Gallogly, Bill Gallogly and Henrietta Gallogly, they had 4 daughters and one of the daughters Gladdy was the principal that managed the store for many years. Towards the end dad leased it off to Charlie Galway he was the, and Mrs Buchanan was another one that worked, ran the store for a while for him. And then he decided it wasn't needed any more and sold it to the Catholic church [*1950 then to di Palma. They rent it out*] and it became the Catholic church and used by other denominations as well as a meeting place for Sunday schools and so forth. So it became quite popular among the different religions. It was good to see this was the breaking down era of the church hierarchy I believe. Originally you didn't associate with the Catholic, Protestant that was the way of society at that time but now it's more open which is good to see.
P Do you think there was a lot of competition with Jack & Newell, is that why they closed
D It was a changing era and as I say I think the war had a lot to do with it. Families changed, access to Mossman became a lot easier. My last year at Miallo school we had one day a week where we went to Rural School which was the Mossman school. We'd do woodworking classes and that sort of thing. That was part of your Grade 7 education and I used to ride a pushbike into Mossman over a corrugated dirt road. That was how I went to school in Mossman, 7 miles from here to Mossman and I'd ride a pushbike in. It was the same as a young bloke until I got my drivers licence I used to ride a pushbike to town if I wanted to go out, if I wanted to go out on the weekend, or go to the movies in town I used to ride a pushbike to town. You see a bloke on a bitumen road today going to town and he's a damn nuisance on a pushbike. (*laughs*) there wasn't much traffic in those days and even when we went to town, Mum and dad had a utility

11.10
and quite often we'd find the Scomozzon family out on the road walking to school or something and mum and dad would always stop and give them a lift into town. In those times you could carry people in the back of vehicles without seatbelts. None of us had seatbelts. I didn't have seatbelts until my kids were well on the way. I know that we had, in those times, I carried my kids in the back of a Toyota quite often on excursions and even across to Karumba, no seat belts, sitting in the back of a Toyota tray back
A ute. It's illegal to do that now days. That's a change in life.
P At east they don't get thrown out I suppose. (*both laugh*) When do you think the store closed, when was it sold to the Catholic church
D Probably in, I went away in, '52, '53, it'd be in, late 1940s when the store closed, in 1948, '49 would've been the closure.
P It's a shame isn't it.
D it is in a sense.
P what about the phone exchange did that go on for longer
D Yeah that carried well into the 60s the phone exchange until they built the automatic exchange. It was after the, '64, would've been the late 60s, 1960s the telephone exchange closed and the post office and we had to change to a post office box in Mossman for our mail and we still have Mossman, we don't even have a mail delivery out here to Miallo. In my growing up years we had a butcher and a baker that would home deliver. Jack & Newell expanded during the war, they helped a lot of people out during the Depression actually, a lot of the farmers got themselves into debt. JACK & NEWELL took over those properties but left the people on them. They owned them because they owed JACK & NEWELL that much money and they started a delivery, initally they'd send a person out on horseback to take the orders from people in the country. They provided a service that was unbelievable in this day and age. And later on when we got the telephones happening, they would ring up one day a week and mum would give them her order and on Thursdays I think it was, delivery day, a truck would come out with our groceries and deliver to the front door of the house. So we had meat, bread, and ice delivered, groceries delivered once a week, our paper was delivered to Miallo. Later on we had a situation where the paper was delivered to the boundary of the property but now we don't have any paper delivery. I don't even bother with the paper any more, which is a change in society that's happening. Out of my 5 kids not one of them buys the newspaper. It's quite strange to think that I grew up with a daily paper, or mostly the North Queensland Register was the one that we got more so than a daily paper. NQ Register was reference to Mossman district, we had a correspondent in Mossman, Mrs Landy used to write the Mossman Notes. And mum being a Townsville person she had an affinity with the NQ Register, which came out of Townsville. I believe our Cairns Post now comes out of Townsville anyhow, so it's no longer the Cairns Post, it's part of the Townsville situation. It's not even printed in Cairns any more, it's printed in Townsville.
P so you didn't have to go anywhere, everything was here
D It all happened, those things all gone now. Got to go to Mossman or go to Cairns. So we've gone backwards in a sense
P Those properties that JACK & NEWELL took over, was that Syndicate road, was that why it was called Syndicate
D No. I don't know why Syndicate got its name I couldn't tell you. It was never mentioned in the family.
Could be something to do with the early tram line, that's the only thing I can think of. It was the Syndicate Line, we had the Whyanbeel Line, Bamboo line, and the Syndicate Line, whether that's how it got its name, could well have been, because it went right around nearly back to Mossman the Syndicate tram line It. Used to go right round to O'Donohues

which is the foot of the range coming over from Mossman. But that cane came right back around to Miallo, Whyanbeel came down from Miallo, Bamboo came this way to Miallo. It was all assembled there by Frosty then it was taken in into Mossman by the other bigger locos. Quite often after school I'd, two of the drivers would let me jump on the old Miallo as it came down our line, because at that time the tram line went past the store, down through Barty's farm and through this farm and down through Coulthards farm. It's now been pulled up and goes down the Daintree Road. Quite often after school at Miallo I'd jump on the loco because they'd stop at Miallo, Saltwater Creek and pump water from the creek, with their steam engine, to fill the boilers on the loco. And would let me get on the loco, except for one cranky driver, he'd never let us on the, never carry passengers. But Broody Boobank he'd let me on. And there was another driver too

P Broobank, is that his name

D Broody (*pause*) Brookbank I think it was, Brookbank. Anyway I got to ride in the loco over the Saltwater Creek bridge which was the end of the line and then coming back up with the full rake on, they would slow down at our road crossing and I could jump off the engine while they were still pulling uphill, it's an uphill grade from Saltwater Creek bridge up to Miallo in those days. They'd slow down enough but keep moving, let me jump off and walk home, walk the half mile home from up the road.

P And when you came home from school, did you have jobs to do

D Yeah. I learnt to drive tractors when I was about 9 years of age I think it was I started driving the tractors and I'd help dad planting. I would cut plants. My first job was to cut the tops off the cane at that time and put it onto a slide, which was a, we call them a slide, what the hell do they call them now days, which was two timber runners with a deck on it and it was pulled by a horse. That was a slide, they use them in the snow country, what the hell do they call them

P sled

D Yeah, a sled I suppose we called them a slide. You'd load the cane tops onto that, tie it down, get the horse to pull the slide home, unload it into what was the stables which is a shed for the horses. In that shed was a chaff cutter driven by a little single cylinder engine and you'd chop the cane tops up through this machine into what we called chop-chop, actually the cane tops cut up into small pieces. And you mixed that with molasses and a bit of grain and fed your draught horses. That was my first job on the farm. From that I went to working the draught horses on the inter-rows of the cane after it got bigger. I've got a photo of the first horse I had to work. Prince was his name. I used to use him for scuffle between the rows to keep the weeds down. That was one of my early jobs.

P scuffle

D scuffle, yeah. And dad would,

21.17

at planting time I was taught to drive the tractor which was an old steel wheel tractor with a kerosene engine that you had to crank with a crank handle to start, and I'd drive that and dad would drop the cane setts into the planter behind. He would grab a handful of plants in each hand and then drop them down the shoot so when they hit the ground they were basically just touching one another and that's how you planted a paddock of cane. In the early days they walked up and down the rows by hand and dropped the sticks. This was an improvement. From that we went to cutter planters, which would cut, you fed the full stick into the machine and the stick was cut into setts about a foot long and dropped down the shoot, was the one that dad started. He had to grab these plants by hand and dropped them down the shoot and they were covered as they hit the ground and a small amount of fertiliser was dropped beside it for future nutrition. And Laurie my sister would have to be in

the big box of cane setts and she used to push the setts down so dad could grab them easily at the back of the box.

P When did you do that, all year

D Planting time was any time from May through to end of August was the planting time. And then the scuffling of the cane was mostly, any time between probably September through to the rain started, depends if they were early. Sometimes storms, December was generally the finish of your farm life working because the wet season would start then and it would be only maintenance of the equipment for December January February. March things would start to dry up, there was always weeds to spray or something like that, March, April. May was usually the first break, the rains had ceased and farm work started early in May,

P Do you think the weather has changed now

D Yeah but I think it's seasonal, cyclic rather than seasonal. Cyclic. Cycles change and I know that the last couple of years our rainfall is not what it normally is. Where, here at Miallo we're normally about 20 inches of rain a year more than Mossman or south of Mossman. South of Mossman gets a lot less than us. Mossman gets about 20 inches less than us. We're in a super wet belt here. Our average used to be 120 inches of rain a year. We're not seem to be getting that at the moment, last couple of years but then as I say even when I was young it seemed to be seasons went in about 7 year cycles from my memory. But cycles change. I keep saying I remember some of the time I was farming there was one year wet weather came in early. I don't know what's going to happen if that sort of thing happens again with the cane harvesters. I remember we had cane cutters and we were practically floating the cane out of the paddock to the headlands and loading it into the cane wagons and pulling it out to send it to the mill. That was still early in the year. It was September October probably. It was a hell of a lot of water around that year. And another year even later when we first started in mechanical harvesting I had to leave 500 ton of cane behind that year because the wet came in early and the machines couldn't work. I don't know what's going to happen with today's machines. But then again the working of the ground is different today to what it was in those times. In those times we, the inter-rows were made into fine tilth between. Nowadays they harvest the cane, leave the trash blanket on the ground which is good and don't work the inter row, the ground doesn't get worked nearly as much as it used to in my time.

P Did you say fine tilth

D T I L T H

P What's that mean

D Fine grain.

P So where did mechanical harvesting start

D probably in the 1960s was when they first started, initially they started off trying to harvest cane with what they called whole stick harvesters. Young George Quaid got very involved. First of all they brought in front end loaders. Quaid, young George and his dad had the farm half way to Port Douglas and they did a lot of work developing the front-end loader which was a fitting that went on the tractor and it's quite common this day and age but it was very uncommon that time. By putting that two, um very similar to a fork lift type things on the front-end loader, those runners could run under the bundles of cane left by the cane cutters and they could pick up probably half a ton of cane in one grabful. They picked it up with the front-end loader, loaded it onto the cane wagons and then pick up another one until they got the two and a half ton which was the requirement on those old cane wagons. Two and a half ton. Put more than two and a half ton on and you'd get fined for overloading because they weren't designed to carry more than two and a half ton. So there was a penalty associated with it

P Did the mill own them

D Yeah. With sugar cane, I think it's still the same, the cane in the field was owned by the farmer until it went onto a cane wagon on the cane line. You lost ownership of that product when it was put on the cane line. It became the property of the mill. And we were paid by the weight of that cane, multiplied by the percentage of sugar that was in the cane which they called the CCS, Common Cane Sugar. Which varies anything between 11 and 7, you get down to 7 it's dumped because they can't produce sugar out of it under 7 CCS. And probably 13, 14 was some of the higher figures percentage wise of Commercial Cane Sugar, CCS. Is what they could get out of the stalk.
29.11
(*pause*)
P So you get the front-end loader and then what happened.
D Then Quaid got very involved with cane harvesters. A lot of, some of the Crees family were involved in trying to build a harvester that could cut whole stick cane. We went through a major problem after the war when production went up, fertiliser started being used more to grow cane, so production was increased and the ability of finding people to cut cane became a very big problem and this is when a lot of migration happened, a lot of Italians came out particularly and they became the cane cutters of the industry. A lot of refugees from the war as well, after the war, they came out and became cane cutters and that sort of boosted our supply of cane cutters because of the increased production that was happening. What was your question
P The development of the mechanical harvester
D Oh yeah. As I say Quaid worked on it and various types of whole stick harvesters but nothing was really successful. There was one called the JNL Harvester was one that was taken right throughout north Queensland and trialled in various places. It cut about 7 rows I think it was of cane, cut one row at a time but put it into a bundle which was 7 rows of cane into one bundle which could be picked up by the front end loader or grab type loader but it wasn't successful. The cane still had to be burnt. It wasn't until they developed Massey Harris was one of the early ones, they brought in the chopper harvester. The chopper harvester was able to handle cane whether it was lodged on the ground or standing upright but the whole stick harvesters could only handle cane that was upright.
They ran into problems as soon as there was any lodging of the cane which is the falling down of the stalk onto the ground, sometimes it would root onto the ground and became very difficult. The chopper harvester of today can still pick that cane up off the ground and put it through the choppers and chop it up into billets and by doing that they could handle the cane. They've still got the problem with the chopper harvester that they've got bacteria coming in on the end of the setts and if it's not processed within 24 hours, that bacteria starts to make the sugar break down within the stalk. Recovery in the mill is quite difficult. So the chopper harvester was a big improvement but still has limitations. My thoughts have been for the last 20 odd years some where some time some one's going to invent a harvester that will push the cane through a set of jaws that crush it and squeeze out juice at the end. If they do that, they could be competitive with the sugar beet industry. You see in the United Kingdom where a beet factory is in the middle of the UK and they can cart sugar beet from one end of the UK to the other and push it through that same factory. Whereas here we got to have a so many factories within a reasonable distance of the field to handle it. But if they can start producing juice out of a machine even if they lose 20% of the juice I think it could still be economical if there was a decent price for sugar. But we've now got a society that's anti sugar, so it makes you wonder what the future's going to be. But I think that would be the next advance in harvesting. Would be a harvester that produces juice rather than cane setts. Then they could transport juice in tankers a lot easier than they can transport stalks.

P Were those harvesters that we see developed here or did they come from somewhere else

D The JNL was developed overseas initially, the Yanks, Americans get the terminology correct, they developed a lot of early machines but they were typical American style thing, big or better and they used bulldozers and all sorts of things to harvest their cane. They used to push it up into windrows and then pick it up with loaders. Then they had to build laundries on part of their factory which became as big as their factory to wash this cane before they could put it through the sugar milling train. They had a lot of extra expense. But they started building these harvesters.

The chopper harvester was developed in Australia as far as I know. Massey Harris were some of the early ones. Canovan was another one that was called at the time. Canovan had a situation where they didn't have an elevator, they had a thrower that threw the cut off stalks up the shoot into the bin behind. That was quite different. I always remember, I have some photos somewhere of the JNL harvester on the brother's farm at the time. The chopper harvester it certainly opened up the industry and sculpted the demise of the cane cutter. Now the factories actually have trouble handing full stalk cane. They can't crush full stalk cane now like they used to be able to do only. Factories are designed for the billets which are about a foot long. (*pause)*

P Did you say you've retired from farming

D Mmm

P So what's happened with the farm

D I've leased it off. 20 odd years ago I've leased it off. I'm 25 years married [*to Marie now and previously 25 years to Yvonne*], probably 28, close to 30 years ago I leased the farm off when I changed direction. I worked for the council, you see on that piece of paper, for about 10 years then I drove buses for another 10 years. But I still live on the farm. The farm is now in the family trust name so my kids get it when I die.

P Will they work it

D I don't think so. It's their home, I was just reading a letter the other day looking for stuff for you, I found a letter from the youngest son, not begging me but asking me not to sell this farm. I sold the other farm I had and that became my pension because the government won't give me a pension, got too much money they reckon, own too much land. Turn this farm into a family trust for the kids so that they can sort it out, a family trust last 80 years and what I've done now is I'm leasing it so I don't have to pay any expenses. I still live here on it, I pay for my water and services but the lessees pay for the rates on the land. House maintenance and that is my cost. And it's an environment where I've grown up, I've lived all my life and it's where I love living. On the bank of a creek like this, it's nice.

P So have you had the one lessee all this time

D Yeah. Next door neighbours. It's worked out quite good we've been neighbours for a couple of generations so it makes a difference

P Is that the Coulthards

D Yeah

P Is that unusual for a cane farmers to lease all his land

D No it's all happening now. It was unusual at that time but I had the situation where I had to pay out a marriage. I didn't have the money. You never have any money when you're farming. The only way I've ever seen wealthy farmers was when they sold their farm in my lifetime. I bought this off dad. I had to pay my dad to buy it which I didn't mind even though I worked for nothing basically but part of that became a lower price when I bought the farm. (*pause*) Lost it again

P So do your children live round here

D No. Closest is Townsville.

P So they don't have much of an affiliation with the property
D Still a close family. My ex-wife and I still, we get on alright together now but she's started a business on her own which, when things were tight and of course sugar prices, the downs are a lot longer than the ups and we're right in the middle of a down at the moment. I had to change my income from the lessees because of the fact that it's just not economical to grow sugar cane at this point in time. I don't know how the hell they're surviving. My situation then, I'd done alright up until now but the lessees came to me this year early in the piece and said we just can't afford this, David. I got figures. I got onto the sugar industry in Brisbane to see the figures of a fair size tonnage farm. This farm was two and a half thousand ton. When they did the expansion of the sugar industry in the 1960s it was deemed that a seven hundred and fifty ton farm was a liveable area. And I know when I finished farming 20 years ago that two and a half thousand ton wasn't a liveable area any longer. I was going backwards. That was what happened to my marriage. I was stressed out of my brain. The kids were at the stage of needing university, income for university courses and that sort of thing and I just couldn't see getting my head above water. I was losing ground. I bought another farm. One year I had a very good year. It was good and then bingo, it all started to go bad again. I still believe that's what happened to my marriage. It destroyed it. The tension of worrying about going broke so I leased it off, paid out a marriage, changed direction and went and worked for the council as the By-law Safety Training Officer. When I left after, I started off initially as a contractor then I was employed as an employee, supplied with a vehicle because I supplied my own vehicle initially as a contractor and then after the 10 years, I left the council and went and worked for the bus company. I tried to get several jobs. I know the council employed 3 people to do the job that I did on my own after I left (*laughs*) but they wouldn't give me an increase in salary, but anyway that's by the by. But I went driving coaches. I tried to get jobs in north Queensland, I've got a file about 2 inches thick of applications. I was 48 at the time and nobody wanted to employ an old man of 48 any more and that's what I keep telling my kids. Just be careful in your late 40s early 50s, employment people just don't want to employ you once you're over 50. It's still there I think that stigma on employees, I don't know why, but anyway. I was pretty grateful to Des Whiteley of FNQ Buses for accepting me. I walked up to the gate one day and said Any chance of a job. And he gave me a job. It was only a part time job but it was enough to make me get out of bed of a morning which you need when you've been through a pretty traumatic experience in life. You need a reason to get out of bed. Set you in a routine. I've always said I feel for young people of today that don't start work as a young person. They lose that routine thing of getting out of bed to go somewhere, to do something. Routine is very important to anybody in life. You must have a routine. If you don't have a routine you may as well give up on life altogether.
P What happened to FNQ Buses
D They're still here
43.31
but they sold out, it was bought by another company. They're still called FNQ Buses
P Who bought it
D Somebody from Victoria. I don't know. They're still running. Des and Deirdre Whitely had a really good job but I saw Des starting to stress too that's what happened to him, he finished up stressing. But it was quite an experience because I'd driven trucks and machinery all my life. I did some excursions down as far as Sarina, taking coaches down there taking kids from different schools around the north on excursions. Mossman High School kids down to Townsville to go to university and the jail and we took them to the army camp, it was quite an experience actually I quite enjoyed it.
P Talking about the army, have you got any stories about the war here

D Well yeah had the bomb experience
P Oh yes tell us about that
D It happened [*on 31st July 1942, the same week Townsville was bombed*] in the morning possibly half past four, 5 o'clock in the morning. I was woken up because of the blast of the bomb, probably about a miles' distance from here where the bomb was dropped, a mile as the crow files. It's across 2 creeks but it's just over there where it happened. But dad said he was awake. He heard the plane, it had a different beat to it. We were used to planes flying over because of the Coral Sea battle, planes from the Tableland, Mareeba, were quite regular over the top of us. They would fly out when the Coral Sea battle was occurring. Quite a few crash landed around the place. One actually landed near the Saltwater Creek bridge on the Daintree Road it was on the farm over there, and dad and Frank Coulthard next door rolled the plane back onto its wheels. It was upside down but intact. The two old steel wheel kerosene engine tractors, they tipped her over back onto her wheels. The Air Force stripped her down, took the wings off and towed the fuselage back down the Cook Highway to Cairns to Cairns Airport [*had to show identity cards at both toll gates on Cook Highway*]
P What about the pilot
D They weren't hurt at all, they got out of it quite comfortably.
Another one crashed off Rocky Point, it's still out there in the ocean. Ben Cropp took the motor off it, picked the motor up, we all knew it was there but Ben had to do what Ben does best and retrieve it and left it sitting on the foreshore in Port Douglas. I don't know what happened to it eventually but the engine was separated from the aircraft. The aircraft can be seen in the water from the shore at Rocky Point at certain times of the year when the tide's right, the sun's right, it's still there. The crew off that came ashore as well, they survived
P They weren't Japanese
D No no, they were… But a lot of planes during the war there was planes over us all the time. You'd hear them go out before daylight. Coming back you could see them coming back, some of them you could just about look through, that many holes in them, flying sideways, the plane wouldn't be flying straight, it was skewed because it had been damaged out in the Coral Sea.
Mossman town itself, because of the big army camp at Cairns which was the last staging post for the Australian Army before they went to New Guinea, it was a massive camp where the big resort is on the northern beaches of Cairns, there was a massive army camp there. Where they've just developed another subdivision now is where the bayonet practice section was [*Pam coughs*] for the soldiers. They I remember the big straw bags hanging up on guillotines and the soldiers charging these for bayonet practice and now it's a residential place
P [*cough*s] is that the Argentea place
D I don't know what they call it, other side of Deep Creek. And what's the big resort, gold course
P Paradise Palms [*coughs*]
D That's where the army camp was, massive camp. A lot of those soldiers would come up to Mossman for rest and recreation. A lot of American soldiers came to Mossman too. I wasn't involved in that but I know a lot of Mossman friends, as they would leave Mossman they'd empty their pockets out with all their money and they'd throw it out and the kids of Mossman would pick this money up and it became quite a thing with them, I never got involved, I was never in Mossman to see that happen (*laughs*)
P Did they stay at the Exchange hotel, I heard that they did
D There would've been at the Exchange hotel. You had five pubs in Mossman in that era. You had the Queens which was where the Centenary building is now, the Mossman

Hotel, the Royal Hotel, the Exchange Hotel and the Post Office hotel. You had five hotels at that stage. The Queens was accommodation, similar in size to the Exchange. Mossman Hotel didn't have much accommodation, it had a little bit, it was a low set hotel, the Mossman hotel. The Royal had some accommodation too but it wasn't a big amount and the Post Office Hotel similarly was small accommodation upstairs but the Exchange and the Queens were the two major accommodation hotels in Mossman.

P Tell us about this bomb

D Yeah, well anyway, it went off and woke me up. Dad had been awake he'd heard it all happen and I raced out the front, dad was out the front and I can remember the plane, it dropped five bombs apparently that night, most of them in the Daintree area. And mum's nephew was a prisoner of war in Singapore and they were told there that they'd wiped Cairns off the map that night. And dad always said that where those bombs were dropped it was all in relation to Barron River in Cairns, thinking that the Daintree river was the Barron River. There were a couple of bushfires around that night, some of the hills were burning. It was a common practice in those times, a lot of the hills in the district would burn, the growers would burn back on them. Anyway that bomb went off. The brother slept through it, he didn't hear it. My sister wasn't born at that stage (*laughs*) and he flew over the top of our house over there. I wanted dad to have a shot at it with a 303 because dad was in the Volunteer Defence force [*Corps*], VDC, and he had his own 303 rifle. I wanted dad to have a shot of him because he was very clear going over the top of our place. Anyway he didn't, and he flew back to sea. [*flew over David after he dropped the bomb]* But he dropped five bombs that night. Most of them were north of the Daintree river. There was that one over there. We went round the next day, the Zulu [*Zullo*] family, an Italian family, were living in that house. It was corrugated walls on it, probably nearly a metre high stumps it stood on, the house. Out the back of it was a chook house and all the chooks were dead in the chook house. The bomb had been dropped in the cane field probably a couple of chain away from the house and there was a big crater in the ground and the house was just like a colander, the corrugated iron had holes everywhere where the bomb fragments had gone through the wall. In the bed where the mother and father slept, the double bed, because it was a cold night she was cuddled up a bit closer to the husband and where she normally slept there was a 12 inch splinter of the bomb stuck in the mattress, would have gone clean through her if she'd been in her normal position in the bed. And the baby in the cot, had still a bit of scalp left on the end of the cot but by that time, the next day when we got there, the baby had been taken to hospital. Millie is still alive, she lives in Brisbane, Millie Zullo, I think she's still alive, she was last I heard. She never ever grew any hair on her head where she was scalped. It was that close. Took a half inch piece on the hair line, on the top of her head, left it on the end of the cot. I still remember seeing it on the end of the cot with the hair and it was Millie's. She came to school, went to school at Miallo later on, and then married life I think finished up in Brisbane the last I heard. She never grew any hair where it happened. The chooks in the chook house, they were all dead. The concussion had killed all them. The cane field had burnt, because the explosion had caused the cane fire and burnt the field of cane. As I say it was probably a mile as the crow flies from here where the bomb was dropped. Mum at that time, she always had a bag packed in case something like that happened and we were bombed. She was ready to head down to the creek. We had a slit trench over the back of the shed over there that dad had dug in the early stages of the war. But we didn't even go to that that night. I remember standing out the front of the house with dad. Same at Miallo school, we had slit trenches there when I was going to school that the parents had dug for us to go to if we had any problems. We were buzzed one day but I think it was a friendly plane that buzzed us at school. We didn't race off to the thing anyhow

but I can still remember this low-level plane coming over us at school at Miallo. I think it might be someone from the Tableland, Mareeba strip looking at us.
Quite a few planes came down around the district. Another one in Mossman at Noli's farm I think it was, on the north side of Mossman, that one they were able to fly off again apparently. And then they found another one on top of the mountain a few years ago that was lost during the war. But I remember the one over at, McDonald looked at that before dad and Frank tipped it back on its wheels again. Crawled all over it, saw it and (*laughs*) It was quite an experience.
P Did you think another plane was going to come and bomb you after that first one
D Never really thought about it, no. but what dad had done, because he had cattle, he took 70 head of cattle out to the headwaters of the Daintree river which was way behind the mountain over here and he left them out there. So if we had have been invaded that was his intention to take us out to the Bulley [*pron: buh ley*] country as it was called B U L L E Y and that was where the headwaters of the Daintree river. After the war to bring those cattle back out again, he had a hell of a job. He had to go and catch them and throw them and lead them out with rings through their noses to bring them out from the Daintree headwaters again. He had crocodile troubles after the war. That was dad's intention to take us out there and he took these cattle out there to let them breed up in case we needed them for food.
P How would you have got there
D On horse from upper Daintree
P What was slit trench
D They called them slit trench, a groove dug in the ground about 5 foot deep probably 5 foot deep. And generally they were a couple of directions in case there was, and the dirt that was dug out of that hole was then mounded on either side of the trench and you had a sloping entrance into it so you ran into this slit trench.
No cover over it, just loose dirt on top, on the side. The idea was that if there was a bomb, if you were down there, the shrapnel would go over the top of you. Unless they dropped it in the trench with you. Similar sort of thing that they had during World War One in the fields in France. They were in the trenches a lot of them. That's what they did. The idea of it was to protect you from shrapnel more so than anything. We had heaps of souvenir bits of the bomb at home but in 1946 when my sister was born, Mrs Gallogly from up at the school came down to clean the house out for mum before she came home from hospital, all these bits of bomb, they were only a nuisance so she threw them all out. (*laughs*) So we never finished up with any souvenir bomb bits. We had a heap of them initially but anyway we lost them all. All they were were bits of jagged metal anyway but very intense pieces of metal. That was our bomb experience.
P Did people leave town
D Oh yes, they left north Queensland. Mum took us down to, we actually left for a stage, they told us to evacuate. A lot of people evacuated. Miallo school finished up with only about 15 kids going to Miallo school at one stage. We went up to a friends' place just outside of Mareeba, between Biboohra and Mareeba. We went up there. Bill started school at Biboohra school, had to walk down the road to Biboohra, probably a mile, bit better, to school. I spent the time on the farm. Kelly, Toby Kelly and his wife were the ones who were friends of dad's and we went up there to stay with them. Mum took us down to Cairns for my 5th birthday I think it was. We sat on the esplanade. We took the train down from Mareeba to Cairns. We went down the esplanade and sat on the esplanade and looked at the view from there and mum met somebody she knew quite well who was quite concerned that she was still in north Queensland. "Everyone's leaving Ethel, head south, get on the train and go south." This was when the Brisbane line came into vogue, Australia was going to be defended at Brisbane, we were expendable, that was it. There weren't enough of us up

here to worry about. Mum put us back on the train, I hadn't been on the Kuranda train until two years ago since I was 5. Anyway went back up to Mareeba. Mum said "If I'm going to die, I'm going to die in my own bed at home". So we came back to Woodside. We were only away about a month I think in Biboohra. But people left the north like you wouldn't believe. You could've bought Cairns for a song, the whole of the city. People just walked out and left their houses, headed south, thought it was coming. And that was sort of the bomb here and the Coral Sea battle, Low Island was shelled from a submarine and all sorts of things.
It got very close. Townsville was bombed and you didn't hear about these things. We heard about Darwin being bombed but when I did the tour around Australia, Marie and I in the caravan, it went right down the west coast of Western Australia, they were bombed and strafed, you never heard about it, there would've been too much panic in Australia. It got very close, very close

P I've never heard about Low Isles being bombed

D Shelled by a submarine

P Did they find the shell

D I think so. It's reported in their log anyhow. There was some talk afterwards there was actually a submarine sunk somewhere off Low Island but whether that happened or not I don't' know. The reef passages were all mined. They had mines and we had a lot of trouble with mines after the war with them breaking loose and floating free. Coming ashore on the shores around the place. Snapper island, a couple at Snapper and I remember seeing one out at Batt Reef after the war, it had come up, must've dragged anchor or something but it was sitting up above the water. A friend of dad's wanted to have a shot at it to see what happened

P You've think it'd be too shallow for a submarine around Low Isle

D It's almost 18 fathoms it's a fair bit of water, 15, 18 fathoms. Cape Kimberley was used by the navy as a firing range. They used to fire from out at sea into Cape Kimberley. It was quite evident there for a long time afterwards. You could see where the shells hit the shore and bought down earthworks and stuff. Snapper island also had a coast watch mob sitting on top of the island. After the war I remember going up to the top of the island and a tree there had a ladder, a wooden ladder, up it and little platform to observe shipping and that going past it was stationed.
Snapper had been used by Doyle as a lime kiln in the early days and he had a kiln on the beach with a tramline running out to the reef in front on the southern side and he burnt the coral and sold the lime from there to the mill because it's part of their processing of sugar, they need lime and he had set up a lime kiln over there at Snapper island. Snapper had been used as a source of lime for a time and we used to quite often camp over there at Christmas time, go for holidays, I even did it with my kids once. We spent a couple of weeks over on Snapper island camping.

P Nothing there that would hurt you

D No.

P No jellyfish

D Didn't worry us in those times. I never worried about jellyfish really, never even thought about them, I did a lot of swimming as a young person chasing crayfish and fish, spearing. I don't know what happened, where the jelly fish bred up. I think they must've bred up because it was Christmas time when we'd go away, it was Christmas break we'd go for these camping trips. Dad's take us up the coast as far as Hope island and Cedar Bay, we'd go into Cedar Bay and Noahs Creek, Coopers Creek, there were no people there then in those times. We'd take the launches in there and set up camp on the beach and go out to the reef, catch some fish or catch a turtle or go pig hunting behind the camp and catch a pig, shoot a pig. Or cassowary. Young cassowaries are alright to eat, the big ones are too tough.

People are horrified when I say that now days but we lived off the land basically what we did, Torres Strait pigeons. Wasn't for the sake of killing them, we used it as food.
P This has been terrific
D Has it (*laughs*) I know it's all there, I've tried over the years to put some of it down on paper. I know it's important. As I say I did mum and was so disappointed when I lost it all. She was just a wealth of knowledge. She knew so much about different families. Mum being a school teacher, I think was a lot of it, she had that sort of a brain that absorbed it. I wish she'd sat down and written a book. She always talked about it. She had to do it long hand.
P Do you know anything about any old families and old homesteads up here.
D Not a lot. You asked about Richmond and Cedars
1.07
The Cedars as far as I know were owned by in my era the Noli family, there were two brothers and I know that they made a killing during the war because when the mill produced, as mill mud which it does today still, used by the farmers as a fertiliser back on the fields. What happened during the war time was because there was a shortage of labour etc Nolis got themselves a tip truck and they carted the filter mud from the sugar mill which was just round the corner, over basically from them Mossman river and their farm finished up about 2 foot deep with filter mud all over it so they were able to grow cane cheaply for a number of years afterwards because the soil was that rich with filter mud applied during the war.
Richmond I don't know much about. I know R D Rex himself and his brother Neville and there was another brother overseas somewhere, managing some island. Apart from that I don't know a lot about their history.
Johnston family of Mossman Gorge, there a couple of families there
Pringles family that Vicos have got now at south Mossman. Jim Pringle, he was a big upright man. I can remember these people but I don't know a hell of a lot about them
R D Rex was only a little fellow. His son Neville was taller than R D even.
P What about the Coulthards, do you know about them
D I grew up with the Coulthards, it was quite a family. Frank Coulthard was a survivor of World War One and they came back, what happened there, went into partnership. There was Jack Phemister, Frank Coulthard, Charlie Cox and there was another one. Anyway they went all into partnership and bought that farm over there and Jack Phemister got out of the partnership, sold out and he went into partners with my granddad W B and went down to Redlynch. Charlie Cox died. He was married to, who later became Mrs McDonald, married Sandy McDonald later after her husband died. That was another family. She had a son to Charlie Cox and she had 3 sons and a daughter to Sandy McDonald.
Frank Coulthard married Bessie Sorensen and they had two daughters and four sons. And Coulthard, Cox and Phemister were World War One veterans and it was part of their rehabilitation type thing after World War One, they set them up on farms. In the Depression years started and there was a big controversy out at Mowbray now with the Diggers Bridge at Mowbray. That was built as part of a repatriation thing for returned servicemen from World War 1. That's how it got the name Diggers Bridge. it was built by WW I Diggers
P Do you know when
D No, not really. That was the main road to Cairns when we started in the 1930s. I remember during the 1940s we'd go to Cairns to Redlynch and we'd catch the White Car as it was called from Mossman to Cairns and you'd go that way, it was the only road through to Cairns. You'd went down through Mowbray across Spring Creek out onto Trezise Road and out onto the highway to Cairns. Mowbray bridge was built by Tom Booth who later settled at Daintree and Tom was a builder by trade. He built Stan Andrews' house over the creek from here and went to Daintree himself and bought a lot of grazing blocks on Daintree, Tom

Booth. And in those times, the road to Cairns, we'd go into Port Douglas and we'd have to go down to Craiglie and into Port Douglas that was the road into Port Douglas up until the 1960s. From the roundabout in wasn't built until the 1960s sometime. (*pause)*

P What was the Coulthards farm called

D Sarona it finished up being called. It's still Sarona. It had another name prior to that, it's in those notes there somewhere, I've written down what it was. [*Thornton Lakes*] I've written down the names of farms in the district. Akaroa was one I told you about earlier up Tati Road where the Jesuit monks made their settlement. Cowe family was, Suitor family had the property over there, I've put down a lot of those names that I could remember. John Anich's farm up off Syndicate road is called Akaroa, not Akaroa, is called, it's the same as the cemetery in Melbourne, Boorandarra. That's how it got its name because it was a Crees's property before Anich's had it. It got its name because I think it's Archie Crees is buried in Booandarra cemetery along with my great grandmother who was a Crees and Archie's daughter I think, it's in a big plot.

Which is aboriginal name but it's not a local aboriginal name, it's a Victorian aboriginal name, Boorandarra.

P Have you heard about any of the massacres up here

D not so much, I know that granddad had a spear thrown at him, speared on a horse. Basically they got on fairly well together dad and grandad, with the blacks of the time. Somebody asked recently about the name Wonga, where did the name Wonga come from. Grandad always told me it was the name of an aboriginal who was speared by another tribe of aborigines and his name was Wonga and that's how Wonga Creek became Wonga district down there. But there were different…. Today any discussion on aboriginal races, they're all one tribe from Bloomfield to Cairns just about, but they weren't and I know from the old aboriginals that I knew as a young person, they would never sleep north of the Daintree river, there were too many bad things over there and old Georgie Bamboo who worked on the farm here for years, bad Quinkans as they called them and good Quinkans. we had good Quinkans here but you had to be careful of bad Quinkans. Thorntons Peak, heights of Alexandra is bad country as far as, there was supposed to be Big Woman over there that would take them and kill them. They didn't like it.

1.16

And some of the big wars, they used to have, fights between different tribes, dad would say one mob from Mossman would stand on one side of the heads and Saltwater ones would stand on the other bank of the Mossman river, southern bank and they'd rattle spears and stuff at one another and somebody would throw a spear and they had a big fight and away they'd go, do their own thing then, no one got hurt (*laughs*) but that was what they did. But they hated one another. They were tribal. They were controlled by their tribes but when you read about today's stuff it's the same as the stolen generation. The stolen generations were basically half castes or quarter castes who would normally in the tribal situation, be killed by the elders because they had white blood in them, they weren't black. People felt sorry for them and took them in and educated them and now, it's disturbing to hear the stuff that you hear today when you know the actual facts of the time. Those kids were survivors. If they hadn't have been taken by the white families they would have been put to death by the tribal situation.

A lot of aboriginals today say they didn't eat the white man but I remember talking to aboriginals that have eaten, especially after the Palmer River situation, they preferred the Chinaman because the white fellow was too salty. The Chinaman was alright but the white man was too salty to eat. They weren't that keen on the white man. But they did eat, they were cannibals. (*pause*)

But they were treated pretty harshly too by a lot of the white settlers, there's no doubt about that. And when you've been a farmer and a piece of ground, you have an affiliation and you can understand their thinking. This is where they grew up, this is their country and this is what I said before, my younger son he wrote to me about the farm when I was thinking about selling, that this is their home. They mightn't come here very often but they come here, it's still home. You have that affiliation with a piece of dirt. I said to my kids when I die you can burn me and chuck me out on the grass at Woodside. That'll do me. No need to bury me. That's my thing, this is where I belong. This is my country. I can understand the affiliation between the black and the white man with land. It's not a matter of owning it, it's you basically, it's part of you. Toiled on it, lived on it, done everything on it, it's part of you, so return you to it.

P When you were doing the negotiations for the Sheraton Mirage did you ever hear that was a burial ground for aboriginals

D Aboriginals didn't bury. They put you on a tree and let you rot. They didn't bury, it wasn't a custom of the aboriginals to bury their dead. But there are people buried in Port Douglas. Probably Kanakas more so because of the white people influence. The Sheraton was never a burial ground as such. Port Douglas blacks were pretty savage blacks compared to Mossman and Daintree, they had a reputation for being pretty savage.

P But there are none there now

D Well, yeah. A bit like Tasmania. I can remember the last black dying in Tasmania 30, 40 years ago and now there's blacks everywhere in Tasmania. Who is a black. I know when I was involved in politics we talked about trying to get the government to make a definition of who was an aboriginal. They wouldn't do it. That's what should have happened to Australia [*Pam coughs*] if that had have happened we could have then genuinely said a Sorry, but the ones that are agitating for the Sorry business, most of them are carrying white blood in them anyhow. What the hell. Where do you go from there. But there are burials in Port Douglas I know

P In the cemetery

D No in other places, there's an allotment on the left hand side going into Port Douglas that's got a couple of burials in it

P Is that the one that says the Old Port Douglas cemetery.

D Could have. [*Pam coughs*] I don't know. I don't take much notice. Port Douglas has changed that much I don't bother going to the place. I changed it so much (*laughs*) You think about Port Douglas, as I said earlier, could have been turned into shoeboxes which I'm referring to as house blocks, think what would've been like, that road into Port Douglas and all little houses all the way along, both sides of the road.

P how did you find dealing with Christopher Skase

(1.22)

D Well it was mostly Tony Mijo and Alan Twomey that had discussions with him. We got on alright with him. Things we asked for happened, were done. The duplication of the water supply. Recent times, before this council, I can't see this council surviving, myself. We weren't in a good position under control of Cairns, we should have been linked with Mareeba more so than Cairns but I can't see Douglas Shire surviving financially. it's gone downhill fast. It just can't happen. I don't know what the future's going to be that way. I know that even when I was on council we needed government grants to stay in front and expenses have gone through the roof. Salaries are a big thing within the system, managers and departmental managers and those things, vehicles. We don't have the machinery that we had before. We don't even own a grader any more I don't think in the Douglas Shire which is shocking. (*pause*) To be the best of a bad thing would be to be amalgamated with the Mareeba Shire. We have more rapport with Mareeba Shire than we'd ever have with

Cairns. They tried to put the Canegrowers organisation, lump it in with Cairns. Totally different. Everything that comes into the Douglas Shire does it on a set of wheels, we don't have an airport. We don't have any shipping. Everything does it on the back of a motor lorry, either comes in or goes out on a set of wheels. We don't have a railway line. Cairns has got all those sorts of things. So it's a totally different environment. Cairns and Gordonvale they've got a highway, we've got a goat track. They call it the Cook highway but it's a goat track. Somewhere in those notes I made a suggestion years ago to upgrade the Cook highway. And it could be done, when it was built initially in the 1930s it was hand hewn. And today, I've driven Europe from one end to the other. Through Italy. Probably drove over that bridge that fell down the other day [*Genoa*] and but that's roads and to drive there and to drive here in Australia and see the poor quality and I really feel now for the drivers that drive on the Cook highway with all that armour plate they've put on the seaward side of the road. When you're driving you've got a centre line to watch and the big coaches and that have got to watch the barrier on the outside as well, so they've got to keep that side of that line and that side of that barrier and get the vehicle around the corner. It's a marvellous job that they do to drive machinery. I can remember the Cook highway in the early days, I remember Martin's truck from Daintree, quite often I'd, Brian Martin one of Jimmy's sons and one corner, two vehicles couldn't pass. Semi-trailer coming north and we're going south in a motor car you'd have to stop and he'd stop and you'd drive past and let him come round the corner because he needed the extra road width. It was only narrow in those times. Lou Prince had the highway opened up in width to accommodate the trucks carting the sugar to Cairns when Port Douglas as a sugar lighter situation shut down. That killed Port Douglas wharf a fair bit when it lost the shipping into Port Douglas. The Cook highway is certainly a lot wider than it was. Some of those corners I remember, talking about that aeroplane before, some of the corners in the early days had dividers on the centre of the road, they had big massive posts on each end and a heap of stones in the middle to make sure you went round the corner properly on the outside to let the other bloke in.. A lot of people were frightened of the outside edge and they'd try and cut the corners. I remember there was a bloke in Mossman, he used to go round the corner on the inside, get round there before the other bloke came because he didn't like going on the outside around the corner. Driving was a new experience for a lot of people in that era. Bluey Hawthorn he was a mechanic and Bluey would go round the corner on the inside before somebody come. And that was all 60mph was the speed limit at that time, from Mossman to Cairns. (*laughs*) Miles. 100kph. You could do and now it's 80 on most of it. (*laughs*) A lot of it you can't do 80 even safely. Just the way it was and that's the way it is now.

P This has been great. I want to look at your photos. I think we should leave our little recorders on.

1.28

D Well there's the store

P Oh you've written a history of the family.

D This is Cape York aboriginals have a lot shorter stature than basic aboriginals.

That's Miallo state school in 1941. I started in 1942. Brother Bill is in it. W Gallogly and Dick Couthard that lives next door

P Was your brother Bill involved in the butter factory.

D No. after Thornburgh Bill went to Dad's property in Daintree. He started growing bananas and from bananas in those days you had to supply your own cases to take bananas to market. So he started sawing timber to pack the bananas in. From that he started Daintree saw mill. His own sawmill on dad's property at Daintree. Daintree in the early days had a saw mill in the township and the butter factory was built beside it. The butter factory was powered by the steam boilers from the saw mill. Daintree was first opened up by the

red cedar getters. They started cutting the red cedars and floating them down the Daintree river to the mouth and from there they'd load them on the ship. The ship ballast was dumped in the river and became a good fishing spot for today's society. The cedar logs were floated down the river. When they started the saw mill at the Daintree township, they floated them down the river again and winch them up out of the river to the saw mill. That's how this house over there was built with red cedar. It was quite popular at the time. It was a good timber to work. Soft timber, used a lot in boat building, small boats, flatties they were called, not dinghies, they had a flat bottom on them, a lot of the early flatties were built of red cedar. Easy timber to work. It's a very soft timber furniture wise, it polishes up nicely as a furniture timber but it bruises very easily too you've got to be careful of that as a furniture. (*pause*)
Barty came from the area outside Ballybay, Bartley Grove. It's used quite a bit in the family history. Great grandfather in Ireland was William Bartley Rutherford. My granddad was William Bartley, grandson of that fellow. His son carried Bartley. And Barty 's grandson now is a Bartley in Charters Towers.
Mum's grandparents. Mum's mother. Granny Gilmore and her husband were the first migrant ship into Bowen in 1863 they came into Bowen. They were stuck in the reef for several days and they had to throw everything overboard. They prayed and sang bloody hymns and floated free eventually. They lost everything. The people of Bowen put on the sports day for them. Granny's husband won a race and got enough money to buy his first horse and dray. They went to Townsville. Took them 3 weeks overland. Had to swim the Burdekin River with wagons. It was very high at the time. We do it in a couple of hours now. They settled on the edge of castle Hill in Townsville. Old Gilmore came to Cairns and worked on, with his horse teams, building Bowens Corner and the Kuranda Range. He's buried in the old Pioneer Cemetery in Cairns. She buried in Belgian Gardens in Townsville
This is mum's sisters here. Mum's brothers. A big family of them
Dad. Laurence Butler Rutherford.
Engagement – he was 24 when they got married.
Dad Laurence had a girl called Laurie. Laurie was used a couple of times in that era. One of the girl Andrews was Laurie Andrews
The old homestead at Bohle.
Film was practically unprocurable during the war. Didn't get a lot of photos taken, only special ones.
Barty, dad's brother in wedding photo. Mum's younger brother with the hair style.
Big shock for Marie to come to farming life
Yvonne my first wife came off a dairy farm in Beaudesert.
Phone rings

THE END

1.41.57