

VICTOR HARBOR ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, 'Beside the Seaside'

Interview with John Rose on 25th November 2015

Interviewer: Joan Sandford

You were born here.

JR: Yeah I was born here, at Hindmarsh Valley, where we lived at Hindmarsh Valley, and went to school there at the old school opposite the Hall, which is there now. Then we moved from there up to a place called Corrumbene which was owned by Grandfather. When we got there and to farm that.

Grandfather's name was?

JR: Henry Boucher Welch.

Your Mum's Dad was it?

JR: Yeah. He built that place in 1904 and they came down from Port Pirie. They came out in the ship Belmont, from England in 1853 and he was only a tacker then of course.

What part of England did they come from?

JR: Somewhere, south part of England I think. I just don't know exactly where it was. That would all be in a book which my sister wrote, Emily's Journal.

And what is your sister's name?

JR: Pat. Patricia Rose she was but she married Tom Roberts, the horseman, he was a police sergeant and a Commissioner's Aide at one time.

Did he paint?

JR: No, no, a different Tom Roberts. He was just called Robbie. He worked with horses and he used to teach kids with the horses. I reckon horses are good cray bait but he had **me** interested in it, the way he used to relate how to treat a horse. He was good.

Anyway we came back to Corrumbene.

Grandfather built that you said?

JR: Yes grandfather built that in 1904 and that place was built for £978.0.0 I think in those days. It was all freestone which came from Goolwa. Two loads a day with a horse and dray for 5/- a load. The bloke used to bring one first thing in the morning and then go back and load up and bring that in the afternoon and then go home, load it up and bring that one back the next morning; two loads a day for 5/- a load.

How long did it take to build?

JR: Around two years I think it was. Fairly big place and Nangawooka was built at the same time pretty well and I don't know what sort of stone. It had a fair bit of brick in it I think but whether it had some limestone as well I don't know. Wurrildee was the next one on from Lincoln Park. That was my uncle's place, Herbert Welch, which was Grandpa's son.

They were good old days; we had the farm there, 218 acres altogether in Corumbene. We milked cows and had a lot of lucerne I put in; used to reap lucerne seed.

Does that take a special harvester for lucerne seed?

JR: My Uncle Tom Rose, he came from the Finniss and he had a header and I went up there with a tractor and steel wheels on the header and I drove that back from The Finniss and then I had to patch up all the holes in it because lucerne seed is fairly fine.

It still reapt (sic) off the same as wheat?

JR: Yes it still reapt the lucerne. That was good. Then I got an irrigation plant and used to irrigate it as well. That was really good for the cattle and baled a lot of it, baled about five cuts and then let it go until about February – March for seed. I ended up with quite a bit of seed and I used to sell that to Hodges. That was good.

It would have been good value.

JR: Then I planted another ninety acres of lucerne seed and I had about nine different seeds I think; turnips and clovers and rye grasses and lucerne and everything else and I think every seed came up!

2 ½ ounces of turnip to the acre and you couldn't put your finger down between the plants, they were so thick. Sheep loved it, cattle loved it, it was really good.

You didn't grow them for human use, they were for feed?

JR: Yes. Just feed for cattle.

They don't do that now do they?

JR: No I don't think so. That was good and then we just carried on with milking and I bought myself a new tractor because the old one we had started to wear out – it was a Chamberlain 9G – because it had high gears. Then I took up hay-baling contracting, front end loader work and all that sort of thing.

With this tractor?

JR: Yes.

Was that on rubber tyres? It wasn't on a track?

JR: Yes, the first one we had was on steel tracks. It was steel wheels, the old W12 International; that lasted for years. The first tractor Dad had was an old Fordson, a real old Fordson. Gosh it was old.

I remember those, we had one.

JR: Gosh it was a hard thing to drive around, no power steering or anything like that in those days and no cabins! Yeah we had mixed farming more or less, we had a few sheep as well.

Did you sell milk, you said you had cattle, did you sell the milk?

JR: Yeah we had milking cows, Friesian and Friesian- Jersey cross.

How many of those did you milk at a time?

JR: Up to forty.

By hand?

JR: Yeah by hand for a start then we got a machine and put that in the shed. That was in 1945 before we got a machine and I think the machine was in for about a fortnight, if that, and Dad came home one night, one Saturday, he'd been to football at Port Elliot and came home. We had a fellow working with us, Arch Attrill, and his brothers used to come past and pick him up on Saturday nights to go to the pictures some times. I heard this hooter going and I yelled out to Arch, I said, "Oh your brothers are down."

"No," he said, " they're not coming tonight."

I said, "Then what's that hooter going?" I walked out the back and I saw a big ball of flames coming up from the shed, it had caught alight. It burnt everything, the whole lot, everything in it, the truck. There must have been a short in the truck that Dad drove in that night and we tore down there and of course we had no water. The only water we had was in the cow trough and that was useless. We tore around and grabbed the new machine that was in the shed and we pulled all that out and threw it out in the yard and we milked by hand the next morning but we milked with the machine the next night!

It didn't take you long to put it back together!

JR: Too right! It didn't take us long to put that back.

You soon found the benefit of the machine.

JR: Yes, yes.

So you reckon that was a short in the truck engine?

JR: Yeah a short in the system somewhere; burnt everything. We had a fairly big shed and big horse mangers and saddles and horse buggy, winnowers and all those sort of things.

What a loss.

JR: Burnt everything. Yeah, anyway we got over that and had to rebuild a little bit.

This is when you were a boy?

JR: 1945 I was eighteen or thereabouts; yes, eighteen. Joined the Air Force in 1945; the Japs heard I'd joined up so they stopped the War! (laughter)

They got scared. So you didn't go overseas?

JR: No, no, I wasn't old enough then. Anyway we just kept on farming and then all the people in the Valley, the Virgins they had always had their horse and buggy, and you'd hear the clip-clop going down the road as the Virgins went into town. Mr Jolley and the Schultzes next door; down to Browns. There

were Browns, Schultzes, the Jolleys, the Roses and they were just about the school. That was all the class for the whole school more or less and the Smarts, Cleverleys.

A small community there.

JR: That's right, yeah. We all walked to school. The Browns used to walk nearly three or four miles I suppose, yeah from right below the Hindmarsh Valley reservoir.

That's a fair walk for a young kid isn't it?

JR: Yes, yes it was. Hot days still going. Then in Victor of course we just about knew everybody in Victor Harbor. Bell's Stores and all the rest were still there of course. Mr Nott was next door and the picture theatre.

What did Mr Nott; what shop was Mr Nott's?

JR: He was next door to the picture theatre.

But what sort of shop?

JR: It was like a delicatessen. Michelmores, they were a grocery store. Prime's Café and then all sorts; I forget half of them. Yeah.

It was a pretty busy little place wasn't it?

JR: Yes it was.

Especially in summer.

JR: It was nice and quiet. We all went to the Primary School which is now Woolies. Yes. That was quite a big yard there for the Primary School.

It would have been, yes.

JR: Then the Congregation Church, next door to the church was the High School. My sister started there.

The old Cong church.

JR: Yeah, the old Cong church at the roundabout there. Then Mr Campbell was a teacher; he was the Headmaster. Then they built the school where it is now. Of course, when I went in there that was already built.

OK. You went to the one that is there now.

JR: Mr Haese was the Headmaster then.

What was his name?

JR: Haese, Mr Haese, yes. That was quite a nice school, quite good. Half a dozen teachers.

What year did you go to?

JR: Intermediate.

That was quite a good education then.

JR: Then I left and went into the Post Office then.

Did you?

JR: Telephonist there and used to look after the night team (?) and deliver mail through the day on a pushbike.

You were a postie?

JR: Gosh! Telegrams Oh! Peggy McGee used to be --- indistinct), "John, there's another telegram for the Bay!" So off to the Bay and deliver that. "Here's another one for the Bay!"

They wouldn't all come at once!

JR: It was good.

Was that all by Morse Code?

JR: Yeah a lot of Morse Code then, yes. I still can't think of the bloke that used to be in there. He'd be serving somebody at the counter and then he'd burst out laughing and he'd say, "That was a good one!" and it would be something coming over the Morse Code.

He heard it and understood?

JR: Yes. I still know all the Morse code.

You know it too do you?

JR: Yes, yes; I know all the letters.

You learnt that in the Air Force?

JR: Yes, yes. I was at Mt Breckan for ATC, Air Training Corp and we learnt Morse Code there and all the rest of it, never ever forgot it. It's handy, if you're out in a boat somewhere and you know Morse Code and you've got radio silence and you've got a light you can send Morse Code, but not too many can read it.

Well that would be a problem.

JR: That's right, yeah.

Do you have a boat still?

JR: No, no. My son-in-law has a boat and we go out when the weather's nice.

You wouldn't be going out today.

JR: No, too windy.

Not a nice day at all.

JR: Victor was a quiet little town; we used to call it the cemetery with lights! A bit different today, it's livened up a lot.

It got to be God's waiting room after that.

JR: On New Year's Day there was always a thing on New Year's Day over on Granite Island. There'd be thousands of people come down to watch all the sports, swimming sports and the greasy pole and all that sort of thing. They had this pole and it was all greased and it had a barrel on it; you'd sit on the barrel and you had to glide out to the end of it and take the feather out of the end without falling off.

Did you do it?

JR: I never went on it but the Dents from Goolwa and Port Elliot, they were excellent swimmers and they'd put on a big show. This Dent used to be all dressed up in tails and hat and he'd be pushed in to the sea, then you'd see this hat come up. You'd wonder, where is he, and he'd come up underneath the wharf somehow and he'd swim over and get his hat. That was good. It was a great time over there.

They don't do anything like that now do they?

JR: No, and the baths, they were half way across the Causeway and I learnt to swim there. The Rumbelows used to run that and had all the little places where you could undress, showers and that was really good. That was really nice there, no sharks or anything else and they had probably sleepers all the way around it with gaps in it and little fish could get in there alright. That was nice there and Mr Rumbelow had a little shop there and I can remember buying those bush biscuits. They were twice the size you can buy them today and they were a penny each.

Did they have a crink in the edge and you'd bite off the crinkly edge?

JR: Yeah. That's right, that was good. The show over at the Island was really good and people used to come from far and wide to go to that. That was nice. Quite a good day.

There'd be a lot of holiday people here wouldn't it?

JR: Yeah, lot of visitors there then.

A lot of farmers used to come here as soon as harvest was over.

JR: That's right, yes. My Uncle Tom used to have a place at The Finniss and I'd go up there in the school holidays and help cart the hay and of course it was all done with a binder.

You had to stook it first.

JR: And all the stooks, put them in the stooks and he had two dogs, Karma and Pompey and they'd be running around the stooks of hay after the mice. One dog would start a dance around and if he was lifting his legs really high around the stook you'd know there was a snake in there. There were lots of little diamond snakes we used to get and Jean, his daughter, she was a lot older than us and she'd be

stacking the hay on the tractor and trailer. She yelled out one day, "I don't want this!" she said as she threw the sheaf over with a snake hanging out.

I think we'd better explain what a sheaf is and what a stook is.

JR: A stook of hay, well the binders used to make the sheaves of hay; my sister Pam and I did a lot of contracting and she drove the tractor and I was on the binder and we used to go around binding hay for different ones.

Then it all got packed up in to little.

JR: Then it all got stacked up in stooks to dry.

Seven or eight sheaves together.

JR: A sheaf of hay, would probably be handled eleven or twelve times during. You'd pick it up off the ground and stook it, you'd have to pick it up to load it and then.

It got quite heavy.

JR: You'd throw it up on to the stack and it would have to be stacked and you'd have to take it off and re-stack it on to go through the chaff-cutter and then you'd got to pick it up and put it in the manger for the cows and then you'd get the shovel and shovel it out after they'd got rid of it.

You used to chaff all your hay?

JR: Yes, yes.

We used to build a haystack.

JR: I'd build a haystack, I used to like building the haystacks with rounded ends. Kleinigs up here, they had, chaff merchants, and they had huge stacks, you know where all those homes are there now?

Yes.

JR: That was all haystacks in there right up to the corner garage. Hundreds and hundreds of tons of hay they had in there.

Would that be bagged up for sale?

JR: Yeah. All done. Harold Kleinig used to chuck it into the thing and it was a big number five chaff-cutter, twin bag screwer, Aub and I would be up the top bagging it and that would be got onto the trucks and delivered. 2/6 a bag for a 70 lb bag of chaff.

Wow. Did those bags get tied or did you sew them up?

JR: We sewed them up.

You sewed them?

JR: Yeah, chaff bags fairly high, and they also had a mill there. A wood mill and used to cut timber and there was a Vacuum Oil Co depot there, garage and fuel and drums of fuel and stuff and a garage. That was quite a big area there and of course it's all knocked down now and gone. I must see Ric one day and see if he has any photos of it. It would be good because the haystacks were wonderful there.

ER: (Esme Rose, John's wife now speaking) His Dad used to grow tobacco up there too.

JR: Yeah Dad grew tobacco, yeah.

Did he grow it for sale?

JR: The plants were grown at Mt Compass and he put a paddock in there and we used to go down there and pick the leaves, I can remember, and tying it up in a hand as they called it. You'd have so many leaves of tobacco and you'd wrap another one around and poke it in. That went down to a place in Victor, I can't think of the name of the street now. Williams had a big shed and it used to go down there and it'd be hanging up in that shed for months, drying, and then it would go to town and then it would be cured and treated. Dad said it would take probably twelve months or up to two years for that to be in to cigarettes and tobacco.

Did it smell nice or is it after it's cured?

JR: Yeah, it was good. Different to the tobacco today, there's none in Australia at all, none in New Zealand but it's in the factory today and you can smoke it tomorrow. It's all injected with rubbish and stuff and that's why it's killer stuff today. In those days it was totally different; it would take so long to cure and none of this rubbish stuff pumped into it.

Was it a fairly big leaf?

JR: They'd be up to two feet long some of them. Yeah, average about eighteen inches. Wide, about eight or nine inches wide some of them. Yes but then tobacco blight came in and of course we had no sprays in those days and that was the end of tobacco; we didn't grow it any more.

Did you pick it every year; did it regrow.

JR: No, we had to replant.

So it was only an annual?

JR: We didn't plant it anyway. I think we only had it for probably three years and that was it, we didn't grow it any more. Then we grew spuds a bit. People used to come in and plant spuds and peas on shares and those sorts of things. A lot of Italians used to come in and plant peas. Gordon Rowley, he used to come down and put the spuds in. Weinerts.

They did it for selling?

JR: Yeah, yeah. Used to put in about fifty acres of spuds a year. I put in fifteen acres of pumpkins one year. Carted it all down to Soldiers' Producers down at Adelaide in a ton truck. Gosh, backwards and forwards every day hauling jolly pumpkins.

You only did that once?

JR: Yeah didn't want to do it again.

You would have got a lot of pumpkins but I suppose they weren't worth a lot.

JR: Trombones we had a lot of.

The long-necked ones?

JR: Yeah. We had about an inch of rain or perhaps a bit more; Art Dix used to live up the top of Cut Hill and he rang up one morning and he said, "Cut all the trombones."

I said, "What for?"

And he said, "They'll split after that rain; I'll come down now and help you." So he came down and some of them were split already; just the influx of so much water. We cut them all and then I had to get rid of them. One of them weighed ninety odd pounds and I took that down to Sedunary's Bakery and they took it for pies and pasties. I gave it to them.

They would have been good.

JR: Yes, that was.

Made a lot of pies and pasties.

JR: Oh gosh yes, I reckon. They were quite nice, a bit like a pumpkin but not as firm as pumpkin.

A bit squishy.

JR: Yeah, but they were quite nice, I didn't mind 'em.

So how long did you stay out there on the farm?

JR: We sold that in 1966 and I was getting up at three o'clock in the morning to milk the cows so I could go to work with the tractor, front-end loader work. We sold out and came in here and bought around the corner here and the brother-in-law wanted to sell his house so he could get a Service Home through the War so we bought it. Two blocks, we had three blocks altogether, the house and a block each side of the house so we bought that from my mother. Then we added on to the house and my son Geoff wanted to build so we sold him the block on the top side, that's where the A-frame one is so that got rid of that and I had that with fruit trees. Then I did a lot of fox-shooting at one time and I used to bring the carcasses home sometimes and I'd put them all around the fruit trees. We had a good fruit orchard there.

Was that as a fertiliser was it?

JR: Yeah. Yeah it was quite good, blood and bone manure.

A bit smelly?

JR: No, once they were buried.

Oh you buried them?

JR: Yes, yes; you'd have to bury them.

Of course you'd have to or it would have been smelly.

JR: Yeah that's right! That was quite good fun with the shooting bit; I used to like that and the fox skins were worth quite a bit.

Were they?

JR: Yeah.

On your notes it said something about you were a pilot. Did you fly at all?

JR: Oh yeah. My sister had a pilot's licence; she won a flying scholarship, Advertiser Flying Scholarship in 1949 or '50.

This is the sister who wrote the book?

JR: Yes. She went for a run in a Tiger Moth and Reg Ellis was the pilot, the instructor, everybody went and she was one of the ten selected to learn to fly. She went back again and she had another flight in an aeroplane, that would be great, so away she went and she won it! Ended up with a pilot's licence and she flew it two or three times down here.

I was pretty jealous about that, I'd like to get one too so I made an application and they put me through the sight test and was found to be totally colour blind. They said, "No go!" You had to watch the lights at the airports. Then in 1964 or 5, radio became mandatory and we didn't have to worry about eyesight, the colour vision.

Then they said that if the radio goes bung, what do we do? I said, "If there's a nice steady light it's safe to land. If there's a blinking light, I can always see a blinking light, that means danger, don't go! We worked that out but I never had to use it because the radio was always good.

Yeah, I did a bit of flying and bought an aircraft.

Did you fly from up there locally? The one out there from Middleton?

JR: No, I had my own airstrip here.

You had your own airstrip?

JR: Yes, on where McCracken is now.

Really?

JR: Yeah, it'd be a bit awkward getting off there now.

You'd have to dodge a few houses!

JR: You'd want a helicopter now. I had a plane for about twelve years I suppose.

Did you have that for fun?

JR: More or less. I did a lot of fish spotting and a bit of mustering up the north on stations. I did a lot for the State Emergency Services. Fire Watch and that sort of thing. That was good; I used to like that, search work; that was good.

So if a boat was out somewhere in trouble you could go out and find it?

JR: They rang up here one night; it was four o'clock, winter.

Four am?

JR: Four o'clock in the afternoon and they said there was a boat in trouble twelve miles out from the Murray Mouth and could I go and get a position on it.

I said, "Oh yes, but I'm not going to stay up long because it will get dark pretty quickly." I went out there and I got to the Murray Mouth and I went out a fair way and couldn't see any lights or anything, nothing so I turned around and came home. Where it went or what it was I still don't know. I wasn't going to stay out until dark.

No, you might have been in the drink too.

JR: That's right. Anyway I had a lot of fun with it.

What sort of plane did you have?

JR: An Aero Commander; quite a good little plane, nice and strong. That was quite good.

Did your children learn to fly at all?

JR: No, Geoff used to come with me now and again. I had a job down in the south east with dozer work and he came with me. I'd just take-off and give him the wheel and he was just a natural. He liked it. It was good fun.

I used to take Bill Morish up to the station, Mt Eba, now and again. I'd run a little, Esme's brother, Doug, he had Bon Bon Station.

What is Doug's surname?

JR: Doug Bligh, he was from Mt Barker. He had Bon Bon Station and I used to go up there and do a bit of mustering.

Is that way up north?

JR: You know where Glendambo is, it was nowhere near there. (laughter) Glendambo's about fifty miles this side of the station and Bon Bon was next to it, 883 square miles. That's from here to Adelaide long and from here to The Finniss wide. A fair bit of country.

Really? That's huge isn't it?

ER: The ladies at the Golf Club used to curse him because on Wednesday he'd fly over because he knew I was playing golf and he had the hooter on the plane and he'd toot the hooter as he went over the golf course. They'd just be going to putt and he'd toot. Oh where did that come from?!

JR: Then when I had the baling contracting all the family helped. I cut a lot of silage as well. I still think of this! I had a big heap of silage down the river sheds.

We'd probably better explain what silage is? Young people that learn.

JR: You'd cut the green stuff, put it in a big heap.

Like chaff?

JR: Yeah, green hay stuff, then run over it and I got bogged in the top of it because I had the forage harvester behind the tractor and the bin behind that with about six tons of stuff in it and I got stuck on the top. So I had to get the big old W9 I think it was and an old International with a seat out the back and a bit awkward to sit in and I got Esme on to the W9 put chains on it and I said, "You'll have to give us a tow."

Her foot was only just reaching the clutch, and she's sitting on the end and she's out here with one of the kids.

Pregnant?

I don't know who the hell it was either Jenny, Geoff or Dianne, one of the three. She had her foot on the clutch and she was bouncing backward and forward and the seat's going up and down and Esme's going up and down. Of course it wasn't really very far but she said that the air was blue. (laughter) Eventually we got out. I still laugh at that one.

She helped a lot with the hay; Geoff too. I had the two balers, Geoff'd get on one and I'd get on the other one, Esme would be on the rakes. Dianne had a go too and Jenny. They all pitched in and it was really good and when something went wrong with Geoff's baler he'd get on mine and I'd get onto his and fix the problem. He and I went up to the airport when Tony Peters had it I think then and they put it in with a crop, oats. A fair area and we went up there I think it was around about 4.00 am and we finished around 10.00 pm and we did a lot, about 10,000 bales I think we had done, a bit over ten and that all got carted up to Noarlunga to the abattoirs for feeding cattle and stuff.

Somebody set alight to it I think about a fortnight after it was taken up there. Dean Squires happened to be on the truck that carted the hay. He was helping on the thing and we didn't know him then of course but Geoff ended up by marrying his daughter. Strange, yes. We're pretty good mates now still.

I can still remember Esme on the rake. She was up on, I can't think of his name, oh Phil Scheid's place up on the hills at the back. It was pretty windy and Esme had the rake. I drove up to the back of the rake, about a foot off the rake, and of course she's raking before it blew away. Do you remember that Esme?

ER: What?

JR: Up at Phil Scheid's when you were on the rake?

ER: Yes.

JR: About a foot off the baler and she was scared to look behind!

ER: I had two little kids there and they were playing around and without any food or water. I'd just gone out with a message and I got stuck out there. All part of life!

That's what you had to do wasn't it?

ER: Yes.

What was the name of the person because the translator will want to know how to translate? Scheid?

ER: Scheid.

JR: Yeah, Phil Scheid.

How do you spell it?

JR: S-h-i-e-d or something.

ER: S-c-h-e-i-d.

JR: One of the girls, she worked down in the Council Chambers for a while, the girl. Yeah.

ER: The Schultz boys used to get up to a lot of escapades like trying to launch a hang-glider off the hills up there. They used to make rockets and all sorts of things. Today they'd be in awful trouble.

You used to have a lot more freedom didn't you?

JR: The Schultzes lived next door and we were more or less family. Shirl and Geoff and Lyn and John. Geoff and I were pretty good mates, he was the same age as me. Lyn was the older one of the two.

It was a fairly windy day and we walked up to the top of the hills at the back of Jolley's and we had a bit of canvas and we said that we'll try this out. It was a parachute, and we got up there and had it all rigged up and Lyn said to Geoff, "You can try it out first. Rosey you're too light, you'd get blown away."

Geoff got harnessed up and hesaid, "Gee I don't know I think it's a bit windy."

Lin lifted up one side of the canvas and he said, "No it's not." He lifted up one side of the thing and away it went, down over the side of the gully and poor old Geoff and the canvas disappeared over the edge and Lin took off. Now, what am I going to do? Stay and wait for Geoff or follow Lin? I decided to see how Geoff is and he came back and he said, "Lin, the sod. Where is he?"

He'd gone!

JR: Yeah, he'd gone. Gone for a week I think before he got home.

He didn't get hurt?

JR: No it didn't hurt him; took a bit of skin off. I think the canvas is probably still there!

He didn't do it again?

JR: No he didn't do it again. We used to jump off the fowl-yard roof with Gran's umbrellas and that sort of thing! Pam and I. Pam was good with the tractor.

Is that your sister?

JR: Yes, Pam Crowhurst today. We had a lot of times together.

Did you say you just had the two sisters and yourself?

JR: Yes, yes; Pat and Pam and myself. We all went to the Valley school. They were good times.

I think I had four teachers; Mr Anderson for a start, then Mr Brinkley, Miss Hogan, Miss Francis. The teachers used to come and go. We'd go home and there was a huge fig tree just up from the school and when the figs were ripe, when on our way home, the Virgins, the Schultzes and the Jolleys and the Roses, we'd all be up the fig tree getting figs. Mr Anderson was a good bike-rider, professional bike-rider and he used to ride his bike from Victor out to there every day. We were up the fig tree this night and Bob Virgin yelled out, "Hey, quiet, here he comes!"

We looked and we all kept quiet and as he rode past he said, "And there he goes!" (laughter). He was a great bloke!

The little church there in the Valley had all these stone pines all around it with all the nuts and things and we used to get there and get all the monkey nuts and break them on the footpath leading into the church. Of course the footpath would be all black with all this stuff.

Is that little church still there?

JR: Yes all broken down now. The walls are still there but it's a shame really.

Is that the one you see as you're going up Cut Hill?

JR: Yeah, yes just before you turn to go to Hindmarsh Valley, because the road used to go past that in those days, the road turned off half way down the little pinch. Then they made the new road up on the top side.

Yeah it was a nice little church; we used to go there. Mr Manhire, he lived in where Neville Scott is now; where he's got the vineyard. Yeah he was there and he used to play, he was the preacher that's right and my mother used to play the organ. Yes, it was good.

Your old home, Corumbene, is that still standing?

JR: Yes, oh yes; Nigel Cranfield's there now. It's all been sold all around and the trotting track is right over the top of my lucerne patch.

Really?

JR: Yes. I used to irrigate that from the river, the Hindmarsh River. The Hindmarsh River was like a riparian boundary. Gordon Day used to be on the other side. Yeah, Corumbene is still standing. When did we have that earthquake? About 1956 I think somewhere around about that. That put a fairly big crack in the north side, on the south side, but apart from that it's still there.

Did you ever put the verandah around?

JR: No, no, no, it never got the verandah around it. Nowadays it's cost £70 for a post!

What did he say the quote was too high for it to put a verandah?

JR: £978 I think it was.

That was the whole house.

JR: The whole lot, yeah.

And the extra for the verandah?

JR: £70!

And he said that was too dear!

ER: John's mother told me when his birth was imminent; she went up to the hospital which was in Cornhill Road in those days. Up opposite Ross Robbie I think.

JR: That's right.

ER: The nurse or the matron said, "Who's the Doctor?" and she said, "I don't know, I haven't been to the doctor!" She was severely reprimanded because she hadn't been to the Doctor.

Were you the first child?

ER: The second.

She knew what was going on then.

JR: Yes. She said it was like shelling peas!

She didn't have time to go to the Doctor.

JR: Yes, some people have problems but she never had any problems which was good.

That's all been very, very interesting. I hear you still help with the triathlon too.

JR: Yes, next Sunday I'll be out at Sawpit Road; yeah I'll go and stand around and watch the bikes go round see that they go round the corner properly.

ER: You've been doing that since it started.

JR: Yes, I'll be doing that this Sunday.

It's been on for a while hasn't it?

JR: Yes, Sid does a good job there. It was bad luck about Geoff who died with that pushbike accident he had. Geoff Kruger.

Was that recently?

JR: Yeah a couple of weeks ago.

Oh a couple of weeks ago?

JR: Yeah, hit a kangaroo on his way home on his pushbike.

And he died as a result?

JR: Yes that was bad.

Was he one of the triathlon?

JR: He was a teacher and my daughter was going with another fellow and the four of them used to go out and have lunch together and it was really good.

Very unusual accident wasn't it for a cyclist to hit a kangaroo?

JR: Yes.

Kangaroos are like that, they just jump out.

JR: They are. My son rides a lot and he said that down the Crow's Nest Road, he lives up in there, four kangaroos jumped across in front of him the other morning; going like one thing across the road.

And he was on a bike?

JR: Yeah.

You don't hear them.

JR: No. They reckon they are becoming extinct in the sixties and now they're taking over.

I don't think.

JR: Dianne drives the bus, the daughter, the Waitpinga bus. She goes out to Willow Creek and back around and she says she sees more kangaroos than stock, than cattle and sheep. She said there's more kangaroos. I used to do that run myself.

We had a fairly wet winter didn't we so there's probably plenty of feed?

JR: I've seen more kangaroos out there than cattle, you know. Up to hundreds in one paddock; especially around through Waitpinga, they're bad.

Well I don't know, I think we've just about covered anything.

JR: I could probably think of a lot later.

If you want to go on I'm happy if you can think of something else.

JR: No there's not much I don't think just that we've seen, in my time I suppose, I've seen the difference between bi-planes, the start of the aeroplanes more or less and the horse and buggy and the horses in ploughs and things like that right up to today with the fast jets and going to the jolly moon.

Little tiny telephones!

JR: Yeah, yeah. I wouldn't have a bar of those things

What about TV?

JR: Yeah that's right; all that sort of thing.

There's been so much change in your lifetime.

ER: John used to be a clown; he and Johnny Gordge. Do you know Johnny Gordge?

No I don't.

JR: And Dougie Jenkins!

ER: Every Christmas holidays the Youth Club would do a parade up the street and then they'd put on a display on The Crown lawns. These three would dress up as clowns. The kids used to love it and they'd march up the street and play around and act the goat.

JR: All the bowling people would be down there and they'd be staying at the Hotel, The Crown, and we'd run around with a big rug between us and they'd be throwin' all the coins down into the rug.

You'd collect money for.

JR: Some of them would come over and say, "Where do you hire the clowns from?" and they are our local boys! We used to do some stupid things; suffering for it now I suppose.

One thing people wouldn't know when we cut peas. Nowadays you have a harvester and sixty foot headers and they do about three hundred acres a day or more. Dad came in one morning, one night and he had the horses in the plough and he said, "I did a good day's work today; I ploughed five acres!"

Five acres with a three-furrow cockshut plough. Nowadays, with the peas, we used to have a reciprocating cutter that had bars running around the back of it and a bloke would walk behind the long bars and as the peas were cut it would roll up on these rolls and he'd put the roll out on the side and then he'd get another one and they looked like little haystacks.

We'd pick them up and take them down to the pea-ring. We'd put all the peas off the truck around in this ring and then one or two horses with a big wooden roller would roll around on these peas and squash all the peas out of the shells and then a couple of blokes would be walking behind with a pitchfork, just lifting the things to get the straw to the top. Peas that weren't broken put them to the top, then all the straw when it was empty would be thrown into mounds on each side, with an opening on each side.

(Obviously drawing a description of the last sentence). A thing like that and then it'd be open on that side and then a round bit on this side and that would be all the straw, like a big ring and open both ends so the truck could come in and out, or horses and the thing and then the roller would roll all these peas that were inside and then all the straw would be chucked on to these heaps and then the peas that were left on the ground were thrown into another big heap in the middle.

When that got a nice big heap in the middle, six feet high and probably ten feet across they'd bring the winnower in then and all those shells and all the dust and everything else would be thrown into the winnower and then Arch Attrill used to be there and he'd turn the machine around by hand (sound effects of turning machine) and all the

sieves would be shaking, all the peas would be coming out and we'd bag them all and the boys used to bet how many bags of peas would be in the heap. There might be twenty or twenty-five or eighteen or whatever.

Wheat-bag size?

JR: Yeah. Then Geoff Schultz and I used to be round and we'd dig holes through these big heaps of peas. They'd be ten feet high or fifteen feet high and probably twelve feet wide or fifteen feet wide, all the empty pea straw. We'd dig holes all through it, make tunnels all through it. We went in there one day and met a black snake so we never did it again! That's how the peas were done in those days. Then the bags would be sewn up and we sold them by the bag.

Would that be sold for stock feed?

JR: Yeah we'd sell the peas – they'd probably split them and you'd buy them as split peas. And as stock food. Yes they'd be stock food as well. The old Ridley Stripper, I used to strip the barley and wheat with a Ridley Stripper, then had to put that through the winnower.

After the stripper, did you?

JR: Yeah, the old John Ridley Stripper.

It was a great invention wasn't it?

JR: Yeah, it had the wheels on it, the drawbar at the front there, had the comb in the front and the beaters would fill this big box at the back. Open the door at the back and out it would come and put it all through the winnower.

We had the wreck of one at home on the farm when I was a kid and I used to play around near it but it wasn't complete anymore. That was a great invention.

JR: Yes, oh yes. John Ridley.

That kept on going for a long while then the Ridley Stripper?

JR: Yes, yes.

That started up in the 1800s I reckon.

JR: Big changes in all machinery that we've had. The old stationary hay balers and little square bales. Now the young Jolley boys they put in Geoff's crop every year and they do it and cut it and everything else and they bale it. Either big squares or rounds; sometimes they come in and they put in these little square ones. All I did was the little squares. Two of us used to get a pitchfork and load it up on the load and then they got the thing to lift them up, the elevators. Now they've got this bale something or other they call it. It picks up these square bales and I've watched him do it up here at Geoff's and I don't know what happens inside because you can't see what's happening inside the machine but it picks up twenty-one of those bales come out as a big eight by four square bale.

Goodness me!

JR: And there are ten twines around it and they don't handle them any more. They just put them on a tractor and a fork and they just pick them up and load them.

What happens to the twine wrapped around them.

JR: Yes, all tied up, they get all tied up as they go through and it comes out the back like the big square bales. Absolutely amazing.

You'd have to have a forklift or something to lift them.

JR: Yes, oh yes. He's got a tractor and a forklift and they just pick them up and put them on the truck.

You wouldn't be doing it by hand any more.

JR: Oh no. No they don't touch them anymore.

They'd be easier to store than the rolls wouldn't they?

JR: All they do today is work the buttons with their thumbs or pull a lever and it's done. They're sitting in a tractor with all nice clean clothes and air-conditioned and a radio and God knows what.

And they have GPS signals so they can.

JR: That's right they've got the GPS.

And the tractor will go around without you; if you went to sleep it wouldn't matter!

JR: I've looked at Geoff's property at seeding. It's beaut to see it, the lines are so straight with the GPS and when the drill goes through, it might be two inches or less than that. They don't over-run any more. Right alongside the old. It goes up, I went to the Paskeville Field Days and they had, it might have been a Massey Ferguson tractor all loaded up with all this GPS stuff. Free-wheeling, he didn't touch the steering wheel, he just went up to the end of the paddock and turned around and it came back and he went backwards and forwards right down the end. "Now," he said, "we've got to stop and put it in reverse mode." So he put it in the reverse mode and it reversed. It went back and it came down exactly the same tracks as it left. Absolutely amazing!

It's a bit scary.

JR: What's more, if it's got a big machine on the back that's operating, before it turns, it switches that off, makes the turn and as soon as you start to line up again it starts. Then you go round the outsides after you've finished to do what you've missed.

So what is your son planting up there?

JR: He's Victor Harbor Excavations.

I meant on his property.

JR: He's got his own business, Victor Harbor Excavations, he's got a truck, a Case Skid Steer, like a bobcat and an excavator but he's got about fifty acres there and the young Jolley boys contract to put that in with crop and they do the whole lot. They do all the work.

What are they putting in? Oats?

JR: Yeah oats and mainly fodder. This year they put barley in and they've just finished reaping yesterday.

It's early isn't it?

JR: It was up that high – a beautiful crop they had there.

Very good.

JR: That was nice.

That's just for grain, barley isn't it?

JR: Yes. Cattle feed.

Straw I suppose.

JR: This was a special one; I don't know whether it was malt barley or what. I don't know what it was for really. I don't know whether it was malt, it didn't look like malt barley. Not that I know much about it anyway.

A good crop anyway.

Well I think we've just about covered a lot of ground today. I'm sure you'll think of something you wanted to say afterwards. Thank you very much for your time and I'll close down now. Oh you said about the nice lagoon.

JR: Yeah we had the lagoon which was Franklin Park we used to call it which is now Urimbirra. That was a nice big lagoon and I used to make canoes out of a sheet of iron, sheet of eight foot iron or nine foot iron and flatten it a little bit in the middle and fold it up at the ends and use a bit of bike tube or something or other. Fit it up with little bolts and bend it around and we used to have those on the lagoon. I had six or seven of them.

Any fish in there?

JR: No fish, we didn't worry about the fish but there were ducks and little dabchicks and spoonbills and swans would be there. Ducks, the water was only around two feet deep at the deepest part, two feet six but the bird life there was beautiful.

How is it not there now?

JR: We're not getting the rains, not getting the waters coming down. We've got people take it all the time for irrigation and the Council have shifted everything else and levelled it off and emptied more I think. Which is wrong, that was a nice place in there. We used to rent that for £5 a year. Thirty-two acres!

Thirty-two – my gosh!

JR: Yeah, crikey that was a nice area. We used to live in that, it was good. Then we'd ask the school kids out we didn't like, sometimes over the weekend they'd come out and of course the first thing they'd do was tip over, get wet.

They could touch the bottom.

JR: Yeah they could touch the bottom; it wasn't dangerous but we had a lot of fun in that lagoon. Now Franklin Park, at one time they had a caravan park out there and then the Army used to come in there at times. Of course we were milking cows then and we had the chiller and I had seven or eight cans of milk. One morning I came down there and there was a couple of blokes there standing alongside the gate with a couple of billies and they said, "Can we have some milk?"

So then I'd empty a can of milk because everybody now and then would buy milk from us. It was good.

So the property you lived on was Lincoln Park?

JR: Lincoln Park was another farm – different – it was across the road from Urimbirra. That's where they've got those ornamental trees and stuff there. Lincoln Park was Taylor's had that. The bloke that built Mt Breckan, Hay. William Gosse Hay and Mr Schultz was the gardener there. He was down at the front gate one time and one of the workers, they were doing something to the fences and one of the workmen hung his coat on the big wooden gate; it was a huge gate they had there. Mr Schultz was in the garden and Mr Hay came out and told Mr Schultz to go down and tell that man to take his coat off that gate!

They were a bit posh weren't they?

JR: Yeah.

Were the Hays here in your lifetime, do you remember?

JR: Yeah, yeah. Yes, I remember them. Andrew Hay was one of the sons. I think he was a preacher at one time; there were two or three of them.

So what happened to all their family?

JR: They all dispersed everywhere I suppose; I don't know what happened to them. Most of them are dead now I suppose.

The wife went on a boat trip and the boat was lost at sea I think.

JR: Oh yeah.

Didn't she go back to England?

JR: It could be, yes.

With one of the daughters I think.

JR: That's possible because Mt Breckan was burnt down in 1890 something was it?

ER: Did some of the Hays come from Alice Springs? Or was that another family?

JR: Could have; I don't know.

I've got a feeling they might have come straight from England.

ER: Oh, right.

I don't know for sure.

JR: My grandfather Rose, he had a deep sea pilot's licence when he was twenty-one.

What was his full name?

JR: Thomas Garner.

ER: George Thomas.

JR: George Thomas Rose, yes.

ER: When he retired from that he was pilot in Melbourne Harbor and he used to bring all the boats into Melbourne.

I'm not sure if we can catch your voice on that so we're playing.

JR: Yes he was a pilot on Melbourne Harbour and he used to bring all the ships in through the Gap down at Lonsdale or whatever it is. Queenscliffe. What do they call that?

I'm not sure. Port Phillip Bay?

JR: Yeah that's right yes into Port Phillip; a very dangerous area there apparently. I've got a photo of him on the HMAS Australia bringing that in. He did a lot of bartering; he gave me that.

ER: That's from Vice-Admiral Saito in Japan but we can't find out what he did to be given it; a lovely cigarette case.

GR embossed on the cover and it's engraved inside to Captain G Rose from Vice-Admiral Saito from Japan. I'll have to Google it and see if I can find out anything.

ER: We don't know because there's nobody left to ask what he did to earn it or why he was given it.

Wow. Isn't that different.

JR: We should have had a cup of coffee.

No thanks but thank you very much for doing the interview, it's been so interesting and let's hope we can put it on the computers at the Library and make it useful. Thank you.

JR: That's quite alright.