

IDLE CHATTER Mark II

Newsletter No: 69

Thursday 21st November 2013

This newsletter is an initiative of the Quandialla Centenary Committee

Sponsored by Murray & Bev Anderson

UNUSAL PHONE CALL

On Tuesday 19th November John received a phone call from a lady in England. Why did she ring Quandialla Post Office? In her possession she has 7 letters that she would like to return to a family member of the author, but she needs assistance in locating them. The first two letters were written from "Burnside" Quandialla in 1949. They were written by Kathleen Edwards who with her husband Arthur and 4 year old daughter Jill arrived in Quandialla to work for Mr and Mrs Burns.

"D" has a Blog – "Letters from Australia 1949" where you can read the letters in their entirety. However I must print the following from the blog for you:-

An emigrant writes home from Australia 1949 – 1952

"When my sister-in-law died two years ago, I found among her papers seven faded air-mail letters. On the top letter the ink was dark and blotchy; the writer had used both sides of the paper; it was almost impossible to read. I put the letters aside, deciding to shred them later.

After several weeks, I looked at them again. This time I noticed the date on the top letter. It was 1949. Doris had saved these letters for over 60 years – I surely couldn't destroy them without making an attempt to decipher them. I sat down and persevered. What a revelation! The letters were from a friend called Kath, who had emigrated to NSW from her home in the Midlands.

As I reached the end, I realised that these letters were a small historical treasure, not only for the family, but as a glimpse into the lives of the early emigrants. I would like to return these letters to the descendants of Kath & Arthur if possible. Their daughter Jill would be about 67 years old now, do not know if she has married etc. – D"

All 7 letters tell a wonderful tale of this family's time in Australia but the 2 that relate to Quandialla are very interesting and maybe an IC reader might know something about this family that I could forward onto "D" to help her find Jill.

Please google the blog if you can and for those who are unable to the following is the parts of the letters that relate to Quandialla.

Dated 23.3.1949 – "We are right in the bush here but it is grand. A great big house with a lovely verandah and beautiful gardens round and then, as far as the eye can see, the farmland. Quandialla is a mile and a half away; those there are our neighbours and our neighbours on the other side are about a mile away. The Burns have a big saloon car and Mr Burns is teaching me to drive. We order most of our things and they come out with the mail every two days. The mail box is at the front gate, which is about a quarter of a mile away, through an avenue of trees. It isn't really lonely here; we get visitors drive out practically every day; they think nothing of driving ten miles for afternoon tea. Growing here in plenty are apples, pears, peaches, apricots, grapes, oranges, lemons, figs and even almond nuts. It's a sight to see them. We get plenty of everything. We make our own butter and ice cream and at last I've got plenty of stuff to bake with. I try my hand at all kinds of cakes and pastries. Arthur is happy at last, doing what he wanted and I've never seen Jill so happy. She's in her delight with everything and she looks fatter and bonnier already."

Dated 24.5.1949 – "There is one English girl in Quandialla, Mavis Keir, from Hull. She married a boy from here when he was stationed there during the war. His father runs a big business in Quandialla. We are quite friendly with them. We go to their house to tea and we went to a dance with them last Tuesday and had a really wonderful time. I think I danced with every male in Quandi. Everyone turns out to dance here, they are held in the show pavilion and a supper is always provided. The dance ended at 2 am. "Burnside" is beautiful Doris. I know you would love it. (*Kath goes on to describing Burnside again*) Quandialla is the nearest place. It is a mile and a half away. It's a very small town tho' with just one street of shops. There's a milk bar, store, public garage and fruit shop. The store sells everything. Pictures are shown in the public hall every Saturday night and dances are held in the pavilion. Quite often there's a Country Women's Association that runs all the functions. (*Kath writes about the surrounding towns*). The Burns' have two children; John married with his own farm twelve miles away. His wife Jean is lovely. Daughter Betty aged 22 a sister at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital is getting married in October. Husband-to-be Ray has his own farm 15 miles away. Jill will go to school on the little school bus. It collects children as far as Ray's place and passes our main gate. It's only a little school and they don't start until they are six."

Unfortunately Mr Burns was taken ill and the following extract was from letter no. 3 Dated 8.12.1949 – "About last June Mr Burns was taken very ill with heart trouble and the specialist told him he must never work again. He is fifty-three and worth thousands, so he decided to sell the place and retire to a private

house somewhere. He said whoever bought the place he would make a condition that they keep us there. Arthur wouldn't hear of that. He said he would hate anyone having to employ him because they had to, so we decided to look for somewhere else." *Kath, Arthur and Jill moved to Camden.*

When "D" rang she said that Jill Edwards would be in her 60's now and she thinks that Jill may have moved back to Australia. John was unable to help "D" at the time but said he would ask around. So....I am putting the call out to all IC Readers. Do we have any information on this family that we might be able to pass on to "D" – if so please get in touch with me as we have "D's" email address. I hope someone out there might be able to help. If you are able please take the time and read these letters they are very interesting. - Sue

THE FUTURE – CENTENARY NEWS

CENTENARY MEETING: Wednesday 27th November 7.30pm at the Bland Hotel. All Welcome.

IDEAS for a NAME for OUR HISTORY BOOK: The Committee is calling for ideas for a name and wording for our front cover. Eg. "Quandialla - 100 Years Young". We are open to all suggestions.

NOW

CONGRATULATIONS: Belated Congratulations to Amanda Daley and Jeff Lahay on the new addition to the family, a daughter.

QUANDIALLA JACKPOTS: Bland Hotel Joker has jackpotted to \$640 and the Bowling Club Members Draw will be \$1300 this Friday.

THANK YOU

Helen Delphine and family wish to thank everyone who sent condolences, flowers and well wishes following Robin's passing. Your support was very much appreciated.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Extracts from IDLE CHATTER

Extract from IDLE CHATTER NO. 37

THURS. JAN 10TH 1957

Mrs Vince Connelly has returned from Sydney after her stay in hospital. She is faced with a very big task unless I come to her aid. She was the recipient of about seventy letters and cards wishing her a speedy recovery and as Mrs Connelly puts it I would be months answering them all by letter". And so at her request I ask you to accept this notice, as her personal thanks to all of you that wrote or sent cards.

Wholly a shot in the dark and without confirmation, I report the engagement of Mr Norman Penfold to Miss Dorothy Froude of Sydney. Here's wishing you both all the best of luck.

Mr T.W. Bailey, sometimes known as "Dobber" or "Pop-eye" has been complaining bitterly that I have been picking on him lately and at the same time keeping my own dark deeds quiet. Always willing to present the other man's view, I offered him ten lines to say what he liked (within reason) and here it is.....

I thought it was all wind. You're a squib Bailey

I have put off writing this last half of a page, hoping that I could get some information about Jean George's wedding. Jean as you are all aware is the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs J.S. George of "Kentucky" and her wedding took place last Saturday. There is little I can tell you except to say that I caught a glimpse of her and she certainly looked a lovely bride. The reception was held in the Memorial Hall. Congratulations Jean, and may you have every happiness.

Cheers for another week **Sue Priestley**