



Verbatim transcript of an interview with

**MICHAEL JOHN HAYES**

Interviewer: **Gillian O'Mara**  
Date of Interview: **06/03/1995**  
Reference Number: **E0081 HAY**  
Duration: **1:00:00**  
Transcriber: **Cheryl Pritchard**  
Date: **16/09/2015**  
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**GO:** It is 6 March 1995 and could I ask your name please?

**MH:** Michael John Hayes, 5 St Agnes Street, Wanneroo. I was born on 29 May 1936. I am a Justice of the Peace.

**GO:** Can you tell me of your first memories as a child?

**MH:** Earliest memories are of Uncle George Anderson. Andy Anderson, had a kiosk at City Beach, sorry not City Beach, Cottesloe, and it was built into the hill opposite the beach and I can remember he had a boat shed down at Peppermint Gove or just off Peppermint Grove, Mosman Bay, with a boat in it.

Another early memory is down at the end of William, not William, yes it would be William Street and further west there was the old areas where the lighters use to come in on the barges that used to bring stuff up the river and used to go fishing with my old grand aunt and grandmother used to go down there, used to go fishing down there. That's all disappeared with the freeway and interchange construction. Early memories, I went to kindy at Mt Hawthorn Kindergarten in Scarborough Beach Road near the state school, from there I went, from what I can remember little bits and pieces I made my mama a calendar, I did some finger painting. I think the finger painting is still around the place somewhere and from there I went to St Mary's, Leederville in first bubs and second bubs.

I remember the slit trenches. We had to have a tin taped up with our hard tack in it, biscuits and lollies in the classroom and a bottle of water. We used to have drills to get into the slit trenches every week. It must have been we had to pick up our tin of bikkies and our water bottle and march out and get into the slit trenches and during the early, that was in the early war years and it was at the old St Mary's off Marian Street and the school was a wooden, it was an old church I think the original St Mary's Church and they converted it into a primary school. And I remember a plane, a sea plane coming down on Lake Monger because I was up in the dock near the school and I could see it coming down and it must have been on fire as smoke was coming out of the back of it. It wasn't on fire smoke coming out of the back of it. I don't know how they even got the damn thing off.

I remember the Catalina's down at Crawley Bay and I went from there, I stopped with my grandmother during the war, early parts of the war years I stopped with my grandmother to go to school. My father was in the Air Force and he was based at Pearce and mum he managed, he was a sergeant and he managed to get married quarters up there which was just. They were red double story red brick buildings and he had a flat or a unit down the bottom of one of those just near the main gate. I used to go up there for school holidays and

there was the Patchings there and there was our family and all the kids used to go over the other side of the Great Eastern Highway and there was an area where they had dispersal bays for the aircraft in the bush and they used to have taxi-ways across the highway through. They had gates between the checkers on the main gate and they use to run the planes over there but I never saw any planes over there I only saw the disposal area. And they had the assault course for training assault course and all us kids used to play on the training assault course and we reckoned we could do it better than the guys in the Air Force. And other memories of Pearce was I used to roam all over the place, I suppose I was about, what would I be, eight, seven or eight and I could remember at one stage of the game I thought what the hell, how are we going to defend the country. There was only a couple of Tiger Moths and a Wirraway and one DC2 I think it might have been and I remember the DC2 had on the window, they had little plugs that you pulled out so you could put your rifle out the window and oh yes and I used to go around with Bluey. Bluey was the milkman and iceman and the baker and he used to cart the supplies around to all the flats and the messes around Pearce and I used to ride around with him and reckoned it was Christmas.

Then one morning, one early one morning there was I woke up and we went out and there was semi-trailers angled parked all the way from the checkers to the main gate at Pearce and they were stacked up with 44 gallon drums of fuel and Ack Ack guns. They only had, talk about Ack Ack guns they had one Ack Ack in placement down near the checkers pub and that's all I can remember of seeing Acks there but anyway I thought what the hell is going on to myself and the next thing I know we are evacuated. So we had to leave Pearce and we went down to one of my grandmothers who lived in Muriel Street and the next thing I know my uncle turned up from Jibbiding which is out of Wubin in his old Inter truck which is still up in a shed in Jibbiding had a gas producer on the back of it and we threw mum's double mattress on the back and we all got on with all our goods and chattels and off we went to Jibbiding because we had to evacuate. Up there the school was the old Jibbiding Hall I remember going to school on the back of job cart. The teachers, don't know where the teachers lived but they used to come along the A road and we used to go through the wheat paddocks to hop on the this cart and every time the horse lifted its tail there was a mad scramble to the back of the cart because we knew what it was going to do. I think I might have spent one term or two terms up there as, in that school.

I remember Christmas up there, they, it was the first time I had seen ice cream made and they had, don't know where they got the ice from that came, because they were in the middle of a farming place, it came from, must have come from down Dalwallinu and they put the mixture in a churn and the churn in a bucket of ice and they poured salt on the ice and

churned away and low and behold we had ice cream in the middle of the bush and that sticks in my memory.

I remember the, do you want all this sort memories of the farm up there? It was a wheat farm and they used to run a couple of cows and an old, it was my Uncle Alan Rew-Davies, my mother's sister's husband and the Rew-Davies' were pioneers to the district and they had two houses and Uncle Alan and Aunt Judy they were building a mud brick house and they never had, they only had floors in a couple of rooms. And there used to be a snake that used to get in the place and they had turkeys, which I understand later, talking to Aunt Judy later I always remember these damn turkeys she let them out just before they were ready for market and a fox got the whole lot of them.

Ah, there was not far away there was the rabbit proof fence that went across and it was on the main road to Paynes Find, yeah the main road to Paynes Find, that was one of the roads fronting the farm and you went along that a little way and you went through the rabbit proof fence and the gate and there was a big dam. It was blasted out of rock actually and they use to cart water, it was a government dam, and they used to cart water back to the farm from there. We used to go along the rabbit proof fence to Buntine; I remember they had some relations up that way. I saw the biggest roo I've ever saw in my life on that fence line. Um, and I've seen some roos. From there, oh, there I used to play on the hay stack because it was all sheaves of hay in those days not baled like it is today and we used to get up in the hay stack and help put the hay through the chaff cutter and play in the wheat bit of the old harvester as it was harvesting wheat. We used to sit in the bin and bag, help them bag the wheat pass the twine so that they could sew it and thread the needles and I had a hell of a good time up there, it was the greatest adventure of my life. I think at that age and doing things that normally a normal city guy wouldn't do, it was great. There's lots of little things I remember – old tractors and Grandpa Rew-Davey and he had his little house and old Grandma Rew-Davey had the old timber weather board house and she was the post mistress that was the Jibbiding Post Office. She had an old manual switchboard and the old man used to come up, he come up with his side-arms because he was in the stores, a sergeant in the stores, he had a side-arm, a 45 I suppose with heaps of ammunition and he used to stand at the back of Judy's kitchen outside and shoot a jam tin. He could, he was pretty good, he could shoot a fair number of holes in this jam tin. It was on a post in the yard that when he went out to shoot anything he couldn't and he was never a believer in using the thunder box and up there they had a, Alan used to cut a lot of trees and make charcoal for the gas producers. That was a little side-line he had and they used to dig big pits and put the logs in and then fire them up and then put sheets of corrugated iron on the top of dirt so that it would just char and they made a fair bit of charcoal and they think they used to bag it and

sell it but the old man used to go out and he would sit on these stumps of a morning and instead of going to the old thunder box he had a different one every day and the type of trees up there used to have a hollow in the middle of the stump and he would sit from moved through the bush on a day to day basis.

And that's the memories of the farm up there and after that we came back to Perth, I don't think we actually went back to Pearce. I remember mum must have had Terry at that stage of the game, he was born in 1942 and we were in Perth at my grandmother's place in 23 Wilberforce Street when the air raid sirens went off and we all got under her, threw a couple of mattresses under the dining room table which was a very sturdy affair and a mattress on top and there we sat under that, Gran and old, my old grand aunt and mum and all the kids until the all clear went. Ah, from there I went, I remember my father, I went to 5ED which was 5 Embarkation Depot and that was situated with my dad, he was there, must have been at, when Singapore fell because he used to tell me a tale about, they all these people coming from Singapore they had to lodge them at Perth Boys School, I think it was or it was that school that was opposite the railway station. And they had, when they run out of mattresses they had big rolls of air force towels and they were rolling those out to use as mattresses and some of these guys disappeared and they found out they were down the and went looking for them and they were down the pub and they were trading mattresses, towels for drinks so he herded them back because he was a great believer in when one plays all play and when one works all work. So when they finished doing what they had to do they took a great bundle of towels off and down they went and they got full as a family po on the Air Force towels trading them at the closest pub.

5ED was at the bottom of William Street, somewhere near where the, the Perth Bus Station is now down there and it was just a collection of buildings and it was an embarkation depot and they had a lot of stores there and I don't remember much about it except after the war, it might have been towards the end of the war, they had they used to have army displays down there, I think it was Air Force Week or Army Week or something and they used to have search lights and maps and all sorts of businesses going on down there. And the old man tells me also he was at Maylands for some time. Maylands Aerodrome and he reckons when the Yanks first came in they landed planes off the carriers and he said they landed down wind and went through the fence and nearly into the river. Ah, and he said the only time he was ever scared was he was in the bottom of a bomb store and that he had to go down several stairs, several sets of stairs down to the bottom of this damn thing and it must have been a concrete top on it and he said someone had dropped a bomb at the top of the stairs and went down the stairs bloomp, bloomp, bloomp, bloomp and he was down in there and he reckons he nearly cacked himself he thought it was going to go off at any time.

Ah, during the war they had, at school we had as I said before we had slit trenches which were just narrow boarded up things about, oh, a little bit wider than yourself, the width of your shoulders and they were fairly deep and they had a few sand bags up the top and you go in one end, and you go down an incline one end or down a set of steps and they would zigzag. The idea was you got into those, they weren't that particularly deep but you got in there and if the school got bombed the idea was that the shrapnel would go over your head and you were quite safe from the, from the flying shrapnel. And most schools, I think all the schools had slit trenches, in fact they were the main thing around the place.

A lot of people had bomb shelters. I remember my uncle in Tyler Street in Osborne Park he built a proper air raid shelter for his wife. It was a, he dug it and it was all boarded up with jarrah boards and newspaper plastered on the inside of the jarrah boards. It had a nice seat in it and a, I think a bit of a cot and a roof with all the sand bags and what have you on the top of it. Ah, that was the most elaborate one that I've seen in the homes. But in Sadlier Park, that's a park on the end of Scarborough, the end of Oxford Street in Scarborough Beach Road they had, the district air raid shelters and these were under all the trees and these were big jarrah constructions. You would go down in there and they had seats and ah and ah fairly heavy roof, they had timber beams and quite a depth of sand on the roof and you would go down stairways and into these things and the kids used to play in there all the time. There was about four or five of these things in that park, the Ritz Theatre was just on the other side of Scarborough Beach Road and I think it was to accommodate people from the theatre and the shopping area that was there at the time. Um and the Mount Hawthorn pub there was one close to the Mount Hawthorn pub that end of the park. Us kids used to love playing in them. They were great. We would climb the trees or go down the air raid shelter and play hidey all through the park. They had flower beds and totally different from today. They used to spend time and energy in putting, I think they called them flags a type of plants and you could hide in them and and I spent a lot of time, in fact we use to haunt that park for years.

I don't know when they filled the air raid shelters in. It must have been well after the war.

**GO:** Did your brothers and sisters go with you on these excursions?

**MH:** Yeah, we all used to go on, because we only lived at 148 Scarborough Beach Road, it was only four houses from the corner of Fairfield Street and virtually Fairfield Street was the top end of the park so we used to spend a lot of time down there. I remember, let me think, was I going to say. Down from Lake Monger and Britannia Road right through to Burke

Street was and from virtually from Oxford Street right through to the lake of today there used to be a swamp and it was all not very deep in water. I suppose there would be six inches of water but there was all reeds both the flat and the round type reeds and we used to us kids go down there and roll on these reeds and make what we called play grounds and you would flatten an area of reeds which would keep you out of, they were strong enough to keep you out of the water and you could bounce on them and we had paths through the damn thing and the Lake Monger end used to be the council's rubbish tip, Perth City Council rubbish tip. And they had the old drays still down there then. I can't remember whether they used to have drays collecting the rubbish but they certainly had the drays down there and they started from the lake and worked their way back, up Britannia Road and back towards Oxford Street and Burke Street and they eventually filled that whole area in. But down there was Paddy's, we called it Paddy's Green, that was off Britannia Road and the school used to go down there and play sports and we used to go down there and smoke and all sorts of nonsense. I started smoking, towards it must have been at the end of the war because all us kids could buy was Brown Capstan, no one else liked Brown Capstans, they were too strong so they were readily suppliable and mum use to smoke Red Capstan. I remember that. And then we had canoes down there, where the Glendalough, the Home of Good Shepherds is down there or Little Sisters of the Poor, sorry. The lake used to come, the deep water used to come right up to their fence line and their fence was tin and we used to have canoes down there. The canoes were made out of corrugated iron flattened out a bit with a piece of wood at the front and the back stem and stern and nailed up and we used to get the tar off the roads. On a hot day the tar used to get sticky on the edge of the roads where they patched the roads and we used to bung that in the in any of the holes and the corrugated iron or wherever it leaked and we would go down there. But we would always get a belting, because mum didn't like us down there and, oh, she used to have the razor strop, the old man had a razor strop alongside the sink and he used to strop his cut throat razor and she used to use that and she would grab us with one hand and the razor strop on the other and we would run. We would run around away from the razor strop because when she brought it to bear we would be running away from it and it wouldn't hurt as much and we were that bloody silly we forgot to wash the upper backs of our legs with a mud wash and she could smell it. We would wash the front of our legs and our feet but she always knew when we went down there, myself and my brother George we were always down there. But that's all been filled in and I think the Speech and Hearing Centre's down there now, little part of the lake used to be and you could go out through the reeds from there into the main lake and we used to be adventurous and paddle out there at times. Ah, that lake got full of water hyacinth after the war and we used to, I remember as a school boy going down there and we used to pull the water hyacinth up and get the gilgies off the bottom of the water

hyacinth. They used to get in the roots, as the things floated and we pulled them up on the bank and shake them and out come, and out would come these damn gilgies and we would fill a billy up with gilgies and then throw the water hyacinth back in the lake and you would bank them all up one on top of the other and you could use them as a raft then because they were, until they broke up, you could raft around the lake on the damn things. And, but then they sprayed the lake and got rid of the water hyacinth. Must have nearly covered the damn lake because it used to float with the wind, prevailing winds, and they would be on one bank or the other and, that was a good trip down there. I suppose I would have been 13-12-13-14 at that stage of the game when we used to do that.

What else used I do? Ride our push bikes to, over to, Wembley and there was a big drainage pipe there that came out from underneath all the factories and that. It was a storm water pipe but you could walk erect in the damn thing, it was that big and we used to go for miles up this damn pipe, up the, I think today if there was ever a storm and the damn thing filled up we would have been drowned because we used to even ride our bikes up the first section of it and then park our bikes because it reduced in size a little bit where more pipes came in, it came out at Jolimont really. Yeah most of us had push bikes in those days because it was our only mode of transport we had. We usually had, they were fixed, what we call fixed-wheel, they never had any gears or anything. They were just all ratchet gears – you could free-wheel on them and later on they got to three speed Sturmey-Archer gear changes. But I had myself personally, I had a little twenty- inch bike and I could make that do anything. It's like the BMX bikes of today except it was, it had a free-wheeling hub in it and I think that was my main mode of transport until I got a car.

My father was a push-bike rider, and, racing and he bought this and I used to go to the races with him but we would ride our pushbikes from Mount Hawthorn to the Dalkeith Hot Pool for a swim. We would be going all the way over to the Crawley Baths which was closer, through Kings Park and all the little byways and highways through Kings Park walk tracks but we cycled down. We used to ride over to the Bunbury Bridge at East Perth and go over the other side to behind the cement works where the barges used to come in to unload the shell, where they used to make the cement out of the shell and that was very deep water there because we could hardly, we were pretty good swimmers, and we used to dive down there and we could never get to the bottom but you would go through the different layers of warmth of water, it got colder the deeper you went the colder it got. I suppose there still there today those unloading areas and had a little shed there and we used to go there and smoke and one thing and another. And but it was – Bunbury Bridge there was a little foot



bridge alongside of it, going over it and there was only two boards and if you rode your bike and I lost a pair of shoes doing this. We used to ride our bikes across it and had my shoes on my handle bars and there was a space between the two boards and my front wheel went down the bloody space and I nearly finished up in the river with my bike but I lost my shoes, they fell off the handle bars and into the river and that was goodbye nurse. I had a bit of explaining to do over that little lot. Where else did we ride to? Oh yeah, I used to ride over to the Maylands Hotel because my father used to, he was an avid push-bike racer. He didn't stop racing until he was about 45 and he used to finish his races there so I would ride my bike over and then ride home with him when the race was finished. Sometimes I would be able to ride his bike – I must have got a lift over there and used to ride his bike back. We had a little ways to get through Mt Lawley and North Perth so you wouldn't have to go over many hills and keep on the flats the main way around. There's ways and means of getting around Perth that you can ride on a fairly level areas all the time without having to go up hills and down dales. I used to follow him push bike riding. I remember – must have been during the war years and he was riding in the Beverley to Perth and it was an old model car – I remember the blokes name that was driving it – it was one of his mates who was in the Air Force, his name was Ross Watts. He was a Sunderland pilot and he was driving the car following the old man down on the race and tyres were a bit hard and rubber was hard to get and I remembered they punctured a couple of times, it must have been a 28 model car, one of those split rim things and we got to the side of the road and they pulled up all the grass and stuffed the tyres with, because they couldn't repair the tube anymore, they stuffed the tyre with grass and made it a solid tyre and then put the split rim back on. And, I remember coming down, in that car anyway, coming down St Georges Terrace and in the middle of St Georges Terrace there used to be underground toilets and I can remember just missing – the driver must have gone to sleep – and everybody in the car was screaming and as we just missed the entry to one of these toilets. It was right in the middle of the road though, the entry and it was a close go there.

Shortages, sugar was rationed and clothes were rationed and tea was rationed and I remember mum used to have ration cards – I've still got some for clothing and you used to have – you would get rations for pound of sugar or something a week per person and you. Yeah I was saying about ration tickets. Clothing ration tickets you used to have to have. To buy shoes you used to have so many tickets for a pair of shoes and so many tickets for a coat and so much for a shirt and that was strictly rationed. Petrol was rationed and after the war when Bob Menzies got rid of petrol rationing, which went on for a fair while after the war they tossed all the ration tickets in the Lake Monger Tip and us school kids went and found them and we had, we were using them as money at school and forty there was one gallon,

five gallons, ten gallons and forty four gallons and we used to play using them as bartering. Played marbles and if you'd win a ration ticket you could use them for virtually money – it was money as far as us kids were concerned. They used to be books and books of the damn things and the kids that found them they were the richest. It was a real battle to go and find them. But they must have got rid of a lot of them.

The cars to get over the problem of not enough fuel they made gas producers. The gas producer sat on the back of your car and they burnt charcoal and you got carbon monoxide, it was burnt at a slow rate and all the cars, or virtually nearly all the cars, had gas producers on the back and they used to poof out smoke and you had to light them with a blow torch or a piece of asbestos in a wire cage. It was a block of asbestos and you would or something like that and you'd dip it in kerosene and light it up and you put in the back and then blow the charcoal would catch and away it would go. Now the gas that was produced used to be taken up put into the carburettor or into the inlet manifold and ah. Me old man had a car and the fuel line and the gas producer, the hot gas line was running parallel to one another and he used, cost him more running the car with the gas producer going because he would vaporize all his fuel and he wouldn't get a vapour lock because of the vacuum tank but he finished up putting it on blocks for the duration of the war, alongside my grandmother's house and that was gas producers.

Now the cars, they used to have white painted around the edge of the mud guards – a white strip mud guards and running board and hoods over the lights so that didn't shine a great amount of light it was just little bit of light coming out the front so you can barely see your way at ten-mile an hour. I don't think there was many street lights on and we use to have blackouts. Now the blackouts, if you didn't have an efficient blind, Holland blinds, in your windows you had to nail up blankets and they would go around outside the house and check that there was no chink of light coming in. Yeah, so they used to go outside and make sure there was no light showing and none of the neon lights were on, they were all turned off at the wall.

I can't remember what we used to do at the pictures. I know the gardens probably didn't function. I know the Ritz kept going all the time. We used to go down the Oxford every Saturday afternoon they used to have a matinee for the kids and we would catch the tram down Oxford Street, pay our penny – it was a penny fare no matter where you went for kids and we used to go down to the New Oxford Theatre and they had the matinee and they had a serial going every, in the afternoon before the feature there would be a serial and we would go and buy ice cream or whatever. Whatever we could get our hands on in those days. And, so the theatres went but I'm sure the picture gardens didn't go during the war.

Righto – I don't know too much about the end of the war, except I remember at school we got VE medals. We got two medals one was to celebrate the end of the war in Europe and the other one was to celebrate the end of the war over the Japanese. And, I've got a feeling there was a, I might have a medal around somewhere. There was a lot of – all school kids got presented with these medals and

**GO:** All school kids or all private school or

**MH:** No all public schools, they were a government medal got out to celebrate the end of the war in Europe. My uncle, Uncle George was, joined up – he was – he left home as a young lad and went to Wiluna and he's George William Hayes – he was called Bully Hayes and he was a king brawler in Wiluna. When he first left home the first place he went to was Kalgoorlie when the riots were on and I remember him telling me that he woke up one, they got to Kalgoorlie in the middle of the riots and he was one of the ones that commandeered a tram and they went out to Boulder from Kalgoorlie. All the drunken idiots I suppose they would be at that time and they all had to get out of Kalgoorlie and they went to Wiluna. Now apparently there must have been a train line from Wiluna back to Kal because when he joined up, they all joined up from Wiluna, as soon as with the outbreak of war. I know he was a good brawler because his mate Curly O'Connor his father was, had a boarding house in Wiluna and it had a, from what I can understand, it had a wooden mess hall and all the sleeping quarters were under canvas, all little two- man tents and Curly O'Connor's old man was the king of this, or owned this single man's quarters and he was reputed to be the roughest man, toughest man in Wiluna. But George beat him in a bar room brawl, he was a good brawler so he became Bully Hayes.

On the way back to Northam Army Camp when they joined up they met a sergeant they hated. Apparently he treated a lot of the guys that went to Wiluna pretty badly and low and behold he was on the railway station when the train with all the recruits pulled in at Wiluna and they beat this Sergeant of Police up to a pulp and left him laying on the station as the train pulled out. There was a lot of payback that went on. He joined up – he was in the RAF, the 2/11th and they took off and went to Libya and he got, he went through the Libyan campaign and I got a letter there that he wrote to my father about that and about the Tobruk, when they first captured Tobruk and Bardia and from there he went to Greece and he got caught in Crete imprisoned. When they couldn't get out of Crete they fought down the Greece peninsula and fell back to Crete and then the Germans sent parachutists in and they couldn't get the troops off Crete so he got captured and he was sent to Germany and he was a prisoner of war but he escaped a terrible number of times, quite a number of times, they reckoned he had the best escape record of the 2/11th or the guys that were imprisoned

there. He even got out in a garbage tin one time and he. They were marching through Gratz on a work detail and a door opened – this was his final escape – and a door opened and he ran in and they shut the door behind him. From there he went, he married the girl of the house, Mellie, after the war and they went up into the mountains. Must have been with the Yugoslavs because they were still in the mountains six months after the war had finished and they were still fighting and coming down to the farms pinching and he reckons one of his mates, I can't remember his name now, could hardly carry a pig on his shoulders up the mountain. They used to pinch pigs and anything they could lay their hands on for supplies and the six months afterwards he, the war had finished, that he got to know the war had finished and his mate Curly O'Connor whom I've spoken about earlier was in the Air Force and he was in Italy and he used to go looking for George up in Germany and Austria because he knew he was in prison because we used to get letters through the Red Cross, Gran used to and Curly was his mate and he found out and he went looking for George. He was a bit of a villain old Curly because he used to run tyres from Italy on a truck up into Germany and sell them there and I can't remember what he used to haul back but he used to make a killing in both directions he'd haul something out of Germany to Italy that they were short of but I know he used to take tyres one way that's for sure. But he couldn't find George. Anyway George made his own way to England with Mellie and they got married and then she had to stop in England and he was repatriated and I remember going down the wharf when he came home with a great big sheet with Welcome Home George or something like that on it. The whole tribe was down there and then Mellie came out later on, she was Austrian and she couldn't speak very much German, much English I should say. They had one kid but. George is still alive and he still goes to all the 2/11th reunions all over Australia. He's a real strong 2/11th man and he marches every day on Anzac Day and he still chases, his wife's dead now, he's eighty this year and he still chases women, he's a proper bloody villain. But that was – he taught me to smoke, he came back from the war with a kitbag full of cigarettes – Lucky Strikes and Chesterfields and that's when I learnt to smoke at the end of the war because I was using his Lucky Strikes and Chesterfields and I was living at Gran's and Aunt's in. I spent most of my time at 23 Wilberforce Street.

When Pearce got evacuated they thought the Japanese were going to invade and that's why all the trucks came in. I started to tell you about the trucks before but they had Ack Ack guns and all sorts of nonsense on them and they had fuel dumps all over the 44 gallon fuel dumps all over Pearce aerodrome for refuelling the planes which were non-existent as far as I was concerned and all the guys were singing and they all had their side arms and what have you on and that's the time we got evacuated up to Jibbiding. I don't think I ever got back to Pearce after that. The Home Guard, Bob Acton, had a crook leg and he couldn't, they

wouldn't take him in army permanently because of his, he had a motor cycle accident when he was young, that was my Uncle Bob and he joined, I suppose you would call it the Citizens Military Forces again and he got discharged after the war. He was away most of the time on civil defence, or home defence type operations. Another one of my uncles, Alan Rew-Davey from Jibbiding, the farm we went, he went away too. But he went to South Australia to do some course and they were going to send him off and somewhere and he got asthma bad and nearly died so they sent him home but he was a farmer and I think he was man-powered on to the farm after that. I know Gran used to knit balaclavas and socks and mittens and they used to make up parcels to send via the Red Cross to Uncle George in the prison camp. They used to bake fruit cakes and it was a big operation to get enough fruit and sugar and eggs and what have you to make the fruit cake they'd go short on their, we would be short at home on all the rations stuff but they had a habit. Old aunt and gran had a habit of, for years; even after the war until they died they used to always have spares of everything. They had spare sugar and three or four packets of sugar and flour and all that in a cupboard. I think that must have been through the war.

My aunt was very bitter about Japanese and Russians, apparently her great, her grandfather's brother, Edmund Warnington O'Reilly was in the Crimean War and when she was a kid he used to tell her tales about the Crimean War and he went to give a wounded Russian a drink, I think it was a wounded Russian, and he tried to stab him while he was giving this fellow a drink so that put the kybosh on the Russians. She didn't like them because of that. I think Uncle Duster or Edmond, they use to call him Uncle Duster was her favourite uncle or grand uncle actually and she didn't like the Japanese. After the war she wouldn't have anything made in Japan in the house whatsoever. If it was made in Japan, wasn't in the house and she carried that until the day she died and she was 90 odd when she died and it was only about 1970-75 when she died and she wouldn't have a bar of the Japanese she reckoned they were cruel.

Now, Kevin O'Ryan was another relation – he joined up in, he came from Melbourne and I remember him here as a, I was only a kid of course, and he would have only been 18 or 19 at the time but to me he was a big soldier – I used to watch him at aunt's and gran's in the bathroom having a shave and used to wonder at this. He had the safety razor, he didn't have a cut throat. I only remember my father having a cut throat and he used to. He was stationed at Midland Junction but used to come to Perth for the weekends, get time off the weekends and he would come and camp, him and his mate used to come and camp at Gran's and Aunt's place. They were always broke, always having a good time and Aunt used to give him ten shillings, make sure he had enough money to go out. She'd always say to him Kevin have you got enough money – oh I'm a bit broke Aunty Lou and she would say

here's ten shillings to go out and Kevin said told me of recent years that he never forgot the generosity of old aunt and gran. They were both, or gran was a widow from a long time. When my old man was only a small boy and Uncle George after he came back as, during World War One, on his way back from England he was a war worker he drank some sort of spirits in Africa and burnt his stomach out and he had great purple scars and he never really did a day's much of a day's work after that.

But so Aunt and Gran used to work pretty damn hard for their money. They'd do office cleaning and house cleaning, six days a week really and but they used to give Kevin O'Ryan ten shillings. He used to bring them kitbags of rice which he reckons, I thought in those days or the tale I got was that they found caches of rice that the Japs were supposed to have buried on shore before the war but I think it might have been pinched, I'm not too sure. But Kevin said his main job was, while he was in Western Australia, and he went to the islands afterwards, was dig ammunition pits in. They used to all the way up through Moora and Three Springs and through that area they dug ammunition pits in, well in from the bush and filled them up with ammo. He reckons that probably some of them are still there today.

Talking about burying stuff – my father went down to Albany. After we were evacuated from Pearce he went down to Albany to the Air Force down there and he used to tell some tales. Him and another guy were in-charge of parties, burying fuel in 44 gallon drums. They used to send the farmer, orchardist away from the farm and then they dig pits in the farm and carry away all the soil and fill the pits up with 44 gallon drums of fuel and then put the soil back, top soil back, and rake the leaves back so you couldn't tell where the things were and only him and another guy had a map of where all the fuel dumps are, were and he said nobody ever went back for them, they just rotted away and must have got some signs and they were still in the orchards around Albany, Mt Barker area. He said, he often said, about how mad the Yanks were. Apparently some Yanks down there with Catalina's and what have you and subs and he said the elementary radar they had down there picked up what they thought was a squadron of Jap planes coming in from a carrier – they thought the carriers were coming down and the Yanks were the only ones game enough to go out and have a look and see who or what it was coming in. That turned out to be a damn flock of seagulls or ducks flying in formation. But he reckons they were marvellous as far as that was concerned.

He used to tell a tale about coming back from Albany with a submariner. This guy offered him some torpedo juice, which was the torpedo propellant and I think it was just about pure alcohol and he knocked it back, and the old man never knocked back a drink very much, but he knocked this back and he reckons by the time they hit Mt Barker this bloke was out to it

and he never woke up until they got to Perth. It was a nice way of travelling on the train, it used to take about eight hours to get, I think, to get from Albany to Perth on the train. But he used to tell that tale quite often.

Next brother, Harold, he didn't last too long. He was only, lived a week I think.

And then there comes George. He married. George Lynton Hayes he married Marie Rowlands and she's from Anglo Indian stock and they came out from India after the petition. His got three-four kids. Maureen married Jim Campbell, which was - my sister Maureen married Jim Campbell that was her school boy sweet-heart and after - they had four kids and then she's divorced now and remarried to a guy called Anthony Batten, Tony Batten. He's got a war museum up at Gin Gin called Uniforms of the World and he's got hundreds and hundreds of uniforms and militaria up there which he displays. Got lots and lots of medals and worth thousands and thousands of dollars.

Terry married Danny, oh what was the name, Danny Ashcroft and her mother's married to, He was, she was German or Polish or one of the countries up that way. It wasn't German and she married a bloke named Ashcroft who was a Pom and they had Danny and then I don't know what happened to Ashcroft but she finished up marrying Gunars who comes from - the first place that was liberated from, not liberated, but rebelled against the commos, Lithuania, I think. He was in the city when they, he went back for a trip, he's still alive, went back for a trip and while he was there they, there was all the celebrations that they ousted the Russians and declared independence. He reckons it was quite stirring for him. And they have got three kids. Kevin, married Sandra Ronki and they've got two kids. Kevin's into surfing and works for Telecom as well and his son's represented the state a couple of times in the surfing competitions on boards. And Chris he married, never had any kids, and got divorced, argued and got divorced and he lives out Quinns still. George is a registered builder, that's my oldest brother, next brother next to me - he's a chippy and Terry's a salesman and Christopher's another chippy/carpenter. But George got his ticket, his Builders Registration ticket because of their number of houses he built at Quinns. He's been a builder at Quinns for years and years and years. He was one of the earliest out there.

I remember Quinns before it; we used to go out camping as kids out there. There used to be a well just near where the caravan park is today. We used to go and spend every Easter out there with an old Bedford truck and an old bloke named Stan White and a couple of families. We would take a bag of spuds and a bag of onions and a great string of sausages and get crayfish. God only knows how much crayfish we got out of the reef there. There was a little crack in the reef and we used to just throw a craypot down and they would come up full.

You could do it twice a day, evening and morning and get full of crayfish and mutton fish off the reef or abalone.

**GO:** How did you get out to Quinns?

**MH:** In this old Bedford truck. All aboard the old Bedford and out we'd go. And the women would sleep up on the tray of the truck and they would have a big tarp across the top of the truck, over the tray and down outside. All the women and kids slept on mattresses on the tray and all the blokes slept on the ground. And we used to have a, the old Dixies that the army used to have, their food Dixies. And they use to cook in the lid of the Dixie which was fairly big. They used to fry onions and tomatoes and chips and sausages and boil the water in the Dixie, all on an open fire. There were only a few shacks on Quinns at Quinns at the time.

**GO:** How old would you have been?

**MH:** Twelve, thirteen. About twelve I think. But there was an old track out there. Used to be in the expedition. And shoot rabbits and spear. Actually the beach has changed a lot since then. Over the years the beach changed because there used to be a little bit of a reef or it used to run a fair way. Run parallel to the coast and there was clear water between the reef. You could walk out on the reef in various spots but there was clear water pools all the way along. And the guys used to take harpoons and sit up on the sand hills and look for the damn stingrays swimming up and down and they'd try and harpoon them. We had a lot of fun there as kids.

Then the other place I used to go to on the coast was at Marmion. When the shacks were on the beach at Marmion, Sorrento it was actually Marmion. And they eventually got kicked off there. Fred Green, he's a plumber, his father had a, his father was a grocer I think or travelling grocer. Or was he a plumber too. Anyway, he had a shack out there and we went out there when the boy scouts used to camp there and had sleeper floor on the shacks, I remember that because we, it had a petrol or metho stove, petrol stove and we overfilled it and spilled the damn stuff and the flaming liquid was flowing over the bloody floor of the shacks and we threw water on it. That made it go worse and we eventually put sand on it and then young, Fred Green's young brother, Vern he dobbed us in to the old man when he came to pick us up. Wasn't too good.

And then I graduated from that to the shacks at Whitfords. Now, I would.

**GO:** Thank you for your interview on the war. May I come back again?



**MH:** Yeah for sure. Thanks Gill for coming, it was good being able to talk about it. It's brought back a few memories. There's still a lot to, I can probably, the more you think about the more you remember and but they were the main things I can think of and thanks very much for the chance of being interviewed.

**End of recording**

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