

ARTHUR HOWARD - 9 -

Where did you buy your bike?

"I bought my first push bike the Seagull Cycle shop from Harold Collyer, Sixteen pounds I think it cost, a semi-racer as they called them in those days, 3-speed gears complete with headlights, electric headlight which was the latest thing, dynamo running off the wheel, French side brakes, yes sixteen pounds."

That would be a lot of money in those days?

"That was in 19, in the mid-1930's, that's right, perhaps 35 or 36, somewhere round about then. I remember I think I had two pounds and I went down and put a deposit on it unbeknowing to my parents at that stage, I wanted a push bike, a new push bike as I had an old one that was always breaking down and I then took on a paper round to get some money, I used to deliver papers in the morning and on a Saturday night used to sell Heralds and the Sporting Globe and I think it took me a year of saving and selling to pay off the Sixteen pound for the push bike, I think it was sixteen pounds. That was a colossal sum in those days."

Did they just keep it at the shop until you finished paying for it?

"Yes. I'd picked out a colour that I wanted and it was probably one of the stock colours that was going through at that particular time, had my name written on it, and all the works that was to go with a push bike in those days.

I remember once a week either on a Friday night, which we had late night shopping in those days, this is in the early 30's, perhaps late 20's early 30's taking a truck which was a box with 4 wheels on it, every kid had his truck in those days down to Fairfield to buy potatoes at the best price, we had 3 or 4 grocer shops

Greengrocers?

"Greengrocer shops in Fairfield and everybody would be turning out potatoes for 28 pounds a shilling or 30 pounds a shilling or 35 pounds a shilling or whatever it was wherever you got the best deal you used to line up with your truck outside the shop and they used to tip a bag or half a bag of potatoes into your truck and you'd pay the money and pull the truck back home. It was, as far as I can remember, we were right in the heart of the Depression then and potatoes seemed to be the most staple diet -

Cheap and Filling?

"Yes cheap and filling, so that was quite a feature, I think once every 2 weeks or how long it took for the families to get through the potatoes we'd be off again. Mother would walk down to Fairfield, we lived in Toolangi Road then and she walked down to Fairfield and she'd say potatoes are going to be cheap this week-end, or they're going, or we wont be able to get as many for a pound as we did last week -

For a shilling?

"For a shilling and so we'd take off, or sometimes late on Saturday after 12 o'clock they would put a few extra pound on for the shilling to get rid of them, as a sort of inducement to buy, if you knew that was going on of course you used to land at the shop fairly late on Saturday morning and get the bargains."

This has been Arthur Howard talking for the last bit of the tape.

"In the 1920's perhaps the late 1920's, as I remember it, in Fairfield there must have been a dog problem, in the street, because I know in the Street I used to live in everybody had their own pet dog, so these dogs used to move up and down Station Street, so they had a Ranger that used to ride up and down on horseback and to move the dogs along he used to have this stock whip and he'd lash out and he'd crack the dogs across the backside with the stock whip. I can remember very vividly many incidents happening in Station Street where he was dragged from his horse and got into a fight involved with somebody whose dog he'd hit with the whip. During the week the same Ranger, his name eludes me at this stage, used to be on the dog cart and in those days we used to have a regular cart going around picking up the stray dogs off the street and I can remember him using this loop on a long pole,

latching the loop around the dog's neck
and driving them a mile with the stock
and to get them into the pen.