

23rd November, 1981.

Speaking to Mr. Reilly of 25 Urquart Street, Westgarth, who has lived in the same house for 78 years.

Start telling me about your Dairy.

I started the Dairy during the depression time and of course when I built it I didn't have any customers or anything like that, it was just a case of going around and canvassing people to get their patronage, and gradually built it up and built it up. I suppose I had it for about six or seven years and then the zoning came in and it was a battle.

Tell me about how you got your cows.

Oh well, of course, the idea of starting the dairy was my uncle and aunt they use to go into the market and buy half a dozen skinny cows from up North somewhere, where the grass wasn't too good, and we use to run them into the creek, down along the creek here and fatten them up and sell them.

How many cows did you have at any one time?

About 7 or 8. Of course we use to milk our cows here, we had a milking cow here too. We use to make our own cream.

How did you deliver the milk?

I had a little utility. Started off with a horse and cart first but in the wet weather and the rain and the water running down your neck it was a little bit too much so I bought a little baby Austin utility. It was quite comfy.

And this house you say was shifted here.

It was moved here, I don't know how many years ago.

cooling plant here, use to cool my own  
and the milk use to come in from the farm and I'd put it through the cooler and bottle it and cool it and deliver the next morning.

You didn't milk all the cows? Where did the milk come from?

Oh no, from the farm. From up at Whittlesea and up that way and delivered down here and we use to pay about 10pence a gallon in those days and I use to deliver it for twopence halfpenny a pint, that's in bottles.

In the bottles then, not the billy cans?

Oh and billy cans, but sometimes in the summer time people use to do their washing the night before, what they had for tea. Well of a hot morning when you pull the lid off you'd know what they had for tea practically, with the sink that didn't get rid of the smell.

The washing up water in the billy?

Those old fashioned billies had seams at the bottom and the lid on all night, and the people would wonder why the milk went off and then it was time to get them onto the bottles or a billy can with enamel and no seams at the bottom.

It was down at the bottom end of Ross Street there, where all those two storey flats - that's the corner of Ross and Uргуart Street, down there. Well that years ago, there were no houses down there at all, that was all vacant. It was run by a fellow named Dyson who use to grow plants and all that sort of thing, and flowers and sell them, like a Nursery. He use to live in a little place, it was an old church that was moved there years ago, it still had the little thing in the front, the little entrance thing - a weatherboard, he lived there for years until he died.

I was kean on the music when I was a kid, and my uncle and aunt got me taught the fiddle and I liked it very much, and as far as playing with the other kids of course, well I wasn't allowed to go out so much because I had to stop home and practice. I suppose when I was nine year old I went to South Street and Ballarat and got second prize under 10 and next year the same thing, but I could never get a first. I was always tipped with either one or two points by somebody else. I got seconds and thirds and honourable mentions every time I went up there. Then of course, when I was about 14 I joined a band and we use to play for dances all around the place.

Tell me where the dances were.

Oh everywhere. All over, Templestowe, Heidelberg, Ivanhoe.

What was the name of the Band?

Luckman and Riley.

Who was Luckman?

She died, she was the pianist.

How many in the band?

It depended. If it was just a little local one, it would probably be three. Like myself, I use to double on the Sax and had a drummer. Always had a drummer of course. It was a special ball or anything like that, Parish Balls, Masonic places we'd probably put in an extra couple perhaps a trumpet or something like that.

So mostly your Saturday nights would be taken up.

Every Saturday night was out of course as far as that goes.

Mr. ~~Reilly~~ Reilly is going to tell us a bit about the depression days.

Well of course, a lot of people were out of work and some of the customers were in poor circumstances and they couldn't pay for their milk. The Council use to give them tickets and they use to pay for the milk that way in those days it was a battle and things were hard in those days. I don't think the people of today realise what it was. It was a battle.

In those days as far as amusements were concerned, Friday night was the night you went up the street and have your mates and hang around the corner and talk and of course sometimes the police would come along and move you along - come on out of the doorways there, but it's different today. Then Sunday afternoons of course, we'd go for a walk perhaps around to the river or Fairfield park or somewhere like that.

Did you swim?

Oh no, we didn't swim in the river. Today youths seem to be different. You'd have a lot of fun in those days. Simple things. Sunday afternoon we'd have a game of Kit, something like - it's hard to explain.

How did you play that?

Well perhaps half a dozen of you would have a stone and you'd put a stone on another brick say about fifteen or twenty feet away and you'd have to knock that off with the stone - little simple things like that. Of course the old marbles. Another thing was we use to go over have a bike wheel. Go to the bike shop and get an old one that's been damaged or something and run it along the street with a stick- the hoop.

Remember the silent pictures, before you went you had to do something at home that night, clean up or do something around the place, you'd get threepence to go to the pictures. Of course you were made. The matinee was Saturday afternoon and then the open air one use to be just under the bridge in High Street just on the left. There's a car place there now. That use to be an open air picture theatre and I remember the pianist there, by gee he was a good pianist too, and there'd be something sad, a funeral or something and you'd here the pianist rum dum dum dum - very sad and then another one perhaps the villain was getting chased and the piano would be going for life.

Do you still play the violin?

Not now. No I don't bother with it.