



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB LTD

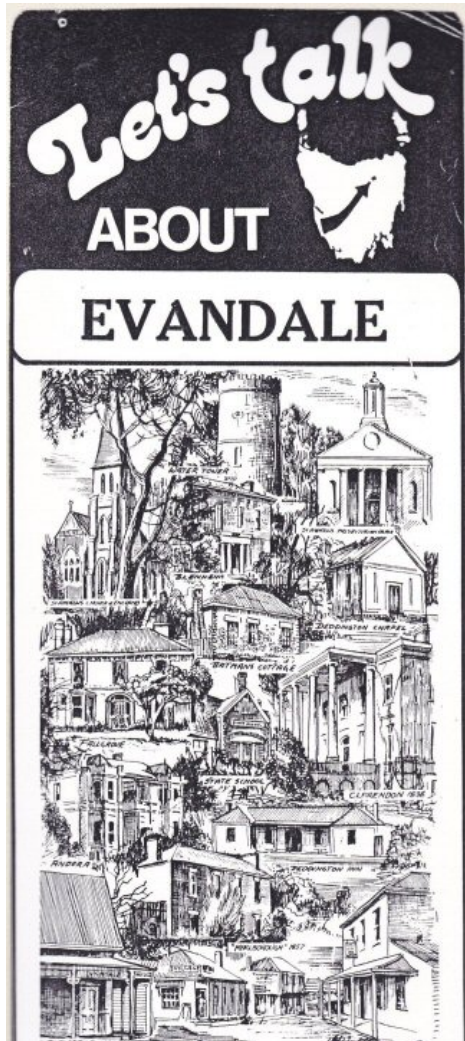
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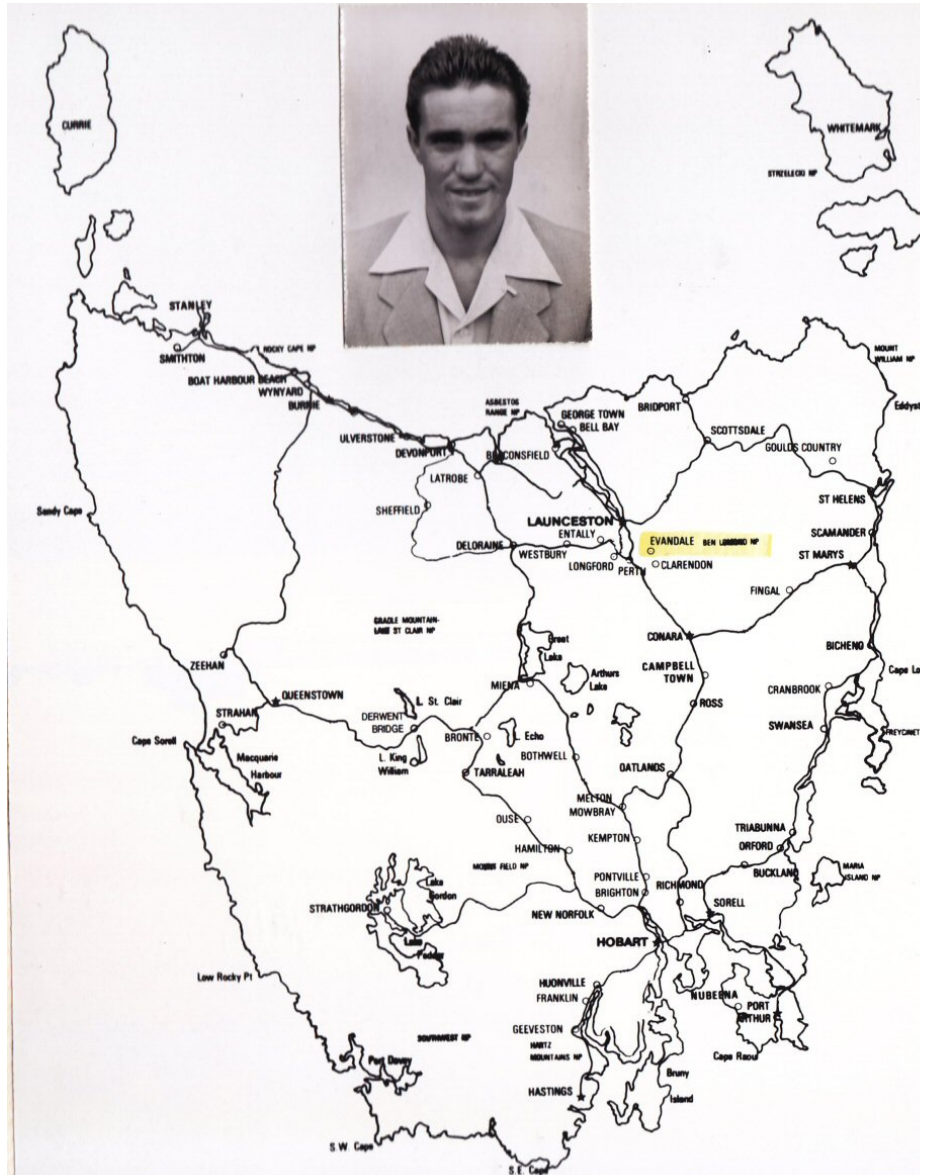
www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

1st May 2017

THE EARLY TASMANIANS



Birth place of John Bryan



Some true tales of the life of the Bugles editor from the beginning. Life was good in this small town sitting atop a hill 600 feet above sea level which made it hard work riding bicycles uphill to the village from the exterior which required a set of gears to ease the effort of climbing the hills on every side.

BICYCLES WERE POPULAR

Not many people had a car in these dark days following WWII. Most vehicles had Spur Gearboxes requiring a technique of double-de-clutching, using a gear lever bolted on the fuel tank.

DRIVING SCHOOLS ..! ??

Roads weren't crowded like they are today and far less frantic, with many potential drivers were taken out of town away from the jurisdiction of the local policeman who was more interested in making you walk home for not displaying a **Red Light** to the rear at night, but you could practice driving with

another driver beside you on the open road.

This was a sensible idea and gave you the student, time to practice your newly found skills of double-de clutching and lights on bicycles.

SOLO – NO INSTRUCTION

My school friends father had an old Ford car on blocks in his yard and we kids used to practice changing gears and double-de-clutching so this initial practicing was very useful when it came to the real thing.

This happened before my teens, being quite tall I could reach the pedals and already knew how to drive. The following is true.



I was on a farm in Tasmania with the driver of this (International ex wartime truck) on our way to collect some firewood.

We arrived at a five-bar gate and the driver got out to open the gate.

I slipped over into the drivers seat as he opened the gate, he promptly beckoned me to come forward, as I slipped it into 1st gear and drove through the gate.

The driver got in the passenger side and made me drive up the field to a wood pile, and started loading.

MOTORCYCLE FIRST SOLO



The Harley Davidson WLA 1942 which had a foot operated clutch with hand change gear lever on the fuel tank. (Clutch & Gear Lever).were both on the Left Side,

The Clutch was operated by a Heal - Toe rocking motion with friction control between fully in and fully out. At this time in my driving career I was on tip toe's trying to balance this heavy machine for me, and operating the clutch at the same time and adding enough power with the right-handed twist grip throttle.

The owner sat on the rear pannier rack and helped with the initial balancing act assisting with my confidence whilst getting the knack of engaging the clutch with enough slip to avoid stalling the engine as I moved off.

A couple of more goes and I was sent solo again.

THE LOCAL WOOD PILES



My Father, along with several others around Evandale, took great pride in the size of their wood piles were a must as wood burning stoves were the order of the day, in the winter everyone gathered around this heat source.

Once a week this unique cast iron icon was allowed to cool down for its weekly polish of blacklead.

To deter pilfering of the wood pile they would spike their individual piled of wood with detonators and barbed wire and other booby traps.

Some people did have electric cookers, but they were expensive to run, weren't as large as the cast iron models and were useless as a general heat source once dinner was over.

THE ROYAL ENFIELD 125cc



The Royal Enfield WWII surplus machines amounted to hundreds of these Villiers engine motor cycles with a gear lever on the right side of the fuel tank.

The owner of one of these was just 16 with his new license, I casually asked if I could drive it.

He said I will put in 1st gear for you accordingly onlookers, said he panicked as I sped off down the road changing gears (1-2-3) I never told him about the Harley.

Every time he started his bike he would rev the engine right up, and push it off the rear stand as the revs died down, he would slam it into 1st gear and roar off down the road.

Eventually all this unwarranted revving became somewhat annoying and someone selected 1st gear while he had an ice cream or something outside the milk bar.

Refreshed, he swung his leg over the bike, kicks the crank, revs the engine up high, pushes it off the stand and the machine roars off totally out of control as he was not ready for the sudden surge of power, as he inadvertantly wound the throttle to the maximum.

This escapade cured him of his so called amazing skills in a quick get away.

This was a good source of laughter for some time, after which he disappeared from the scence.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD



One of the original, listed buildings at Evandale constructed of timber and corrugated metal roofing which

made a terrible noise inside during a heavy rain storm.

Viewing the building on Google Earth it is looking to be in need of some serious restoration.

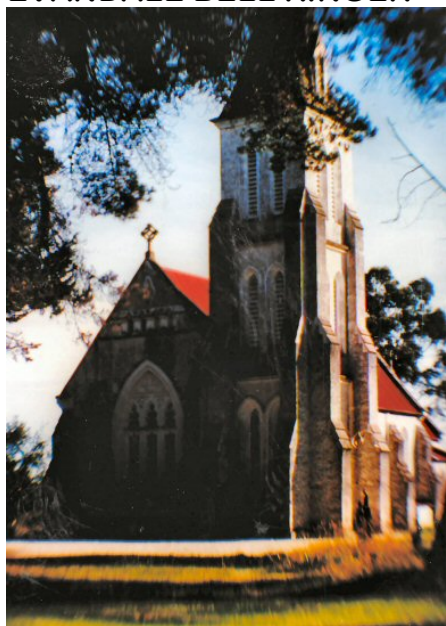
MY FATHERS VEGETABLES



He tried to get me interested in gardening, but the weeds seemed to do much better than the vegetables. However he and his father supplied a lot of vegetables, potatoes, marrows, pumpkins, carrots, you name it they grew it all from seeds. There was a constant stream of people with fresh vegetables.

We had chickens also, some laid eggs some provided dinner, no refrigerated food – all fresh daily..!

EVANDALE BELL RINGER



The Church of England and The Presbyterian Church were opposite each other. I would ring the bell at the C of E one hour ahead of the Presbyterian and then cross the road to ring the other bell and then rush down stairs to pump air for the organ, whereas the C of E church had an electric pump for their organ.

It was quite a rush for three hours.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Already I have done my bit for the Church and hope they both have electric pumps for their organs..

These two churches (CoE) was part completed in 1834 and completion in 1844 it is now 173 years old.

The (Kirk) became the Presbyterian Church and was completed in 1840 it too is pretty old at 177 years old.

THE OLD WATER TOWER



Driving into Evandale toward the old water tower gives an idea of the steepness of the hill.

OBTAINING MY LICENSE

My 16th Birthday had arrived and I went to the Police Station, having borrowed the Harley Davidson first. I knocked at the door and the policeman appeared asking me what I wanted: I replied that I wanted my Motor Cycle License, his response was that he had seen me driving around, so why did I want a license ...!! Oh dear, I've done it now.

Anyway he said I better drive around the block to see if I could get around without falling off.

Returning to his office he had my license ready for his signature.

MY FIRST JOB WITH ANA



A Bristol 170



Douglas DC4



I joined the Tasmanian flying club and entered the Examiner Newspaper Flying Scholarship.



Scholarship Contestants:



Vic Fairweather 2nd John Bryan 3rd

THE OLD FARMING DAYS IN TASMANIA WERE GREAT DAYS



During my early travels I used to follow my father with his traction engine and threshing machine to the farms where they would set up the equipment to process the grain into sacks from the hay stack in the background.

It took about 10 / 12 people to support this, taking a week with the workers sleeping in the barn and meals were provided by the farmer's wife and her assistants all seated around a large table.

The end of the steam era came fairly rapidly with introduction of mobile units which went from farm to farm and harvest the crop from the ground loading the processed crop directly into a couple of trucks via a blower pip driving along side this mobile all-in-one unit transported directly to the Silo's.

The straw would be dispelled in a line and picked up by an automatic bailing machine and loaded onto a trailer and taken to a covered storage barn.

17, going on 18 a school friend and I decided to go to Adelaide which was reckoned to be a smart place.

After a few days we reckoned we needed to earn some money, so we boarded a train to Nhill and got a job in the flour mill.

We saw an advert for some workers at the Delatite Saw Mill at a place called Mirimbah, Victoria.

WORKING IN THE BUSH



This place was great, your own wooden hut, hot showers and a Chinese Cook in the mess house providing meals seven days a week **FIRST IMPRESSIONS...!!**



WORKING BUSH SAWMILL

Amazing, each section was under cover from the hot sun, at the foot of Mt Buller ski resort 6,000ft.



HAULING LOGS TO TOWN



On my BMW, with Ron McIntyre

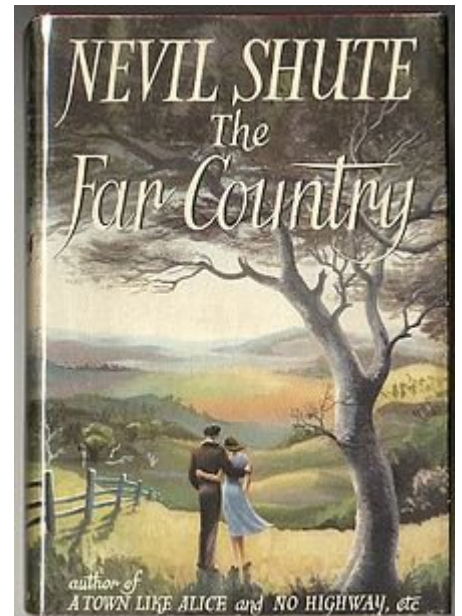
RE-BUILDING A BRIDGE



It was all hands for the weekend to get this bridge rebuilt in a day across the Delatite River. The fast flowing (Devils River) its Aboriginal name

(61 years later this whole area has become a very large skiing resort with hundreds of chalets and new access roads to the mountain snowline in winter)

THE FAR COUNTRY



In the early 50's a strange man appeared around the saw mill carrying a 4 gallon square drum, and went to the Delatite river close by the saw mill and started fishing. We didn't know who he was but he certainly could catch Trout.

After a couple of hours he returned the fish to the river and retired to his cabin opposite the saw mill.

Eventually, all was revealed, he was a novelist.

'The Far Country' was based on actual people in the vicinity, based on truth.

He changed the names of all the people, except the 'Merryjig Pub' and the local Policeman.

Not being a book-worm myself I didn't get to read this novel until sometime later.

I could still remember the names of the people whose names were changed.

THE MERRY JIG HOTEL



John Bryan, Reg Smith, Ted Clarke outside the old pub which was being eaten alive by White Ants.

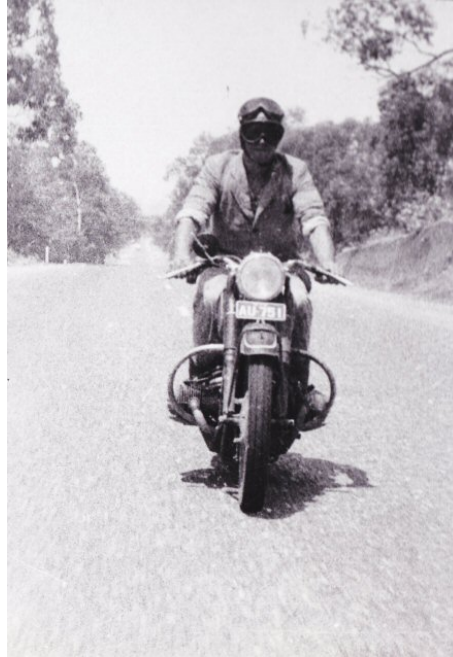
You couldn't lean on the walls, for fear of going right through.

THE GOLD COAST AHEAD



I RODE UP BEHIND THEM

Took their picture and handed them my camera, they took my picture and I took the camera back and resumed my previous high speed.



Leaving them behind I don't know who they were, or where they were going, if you note my shadow it was about 1130a.m

Note also the lack of traffic on the roads once out of town..

FIVE YEARS IN THE BUSH

We had some Italian immigrants join us for the last two years, they helped me with Italian studies and taught them English.

During this time I met a very nice Dutch girl and I was now studying the Dutch language.

Things were going fine for about a year until her parents decided I wasn't Catholic enough and we should split, so we did..!

MEANWHILE THE ITALIANS

Had decided they were missing life in Italy and were considering returning to Italy.

They asked if I was interested in going with them. I asked when?

They replied they were going to Melbourne next week.

We booked our tickets for a departure in six months time.

A CHANCE MEETING

I bumped into my Dutch girl friend in Mansfield, and she told me, that

she was being sent to Holland to forget our relationship.



I was leaving in two weeks and she was leaving in exactly three weeks. How about that for a secret rendezvous..! We decided I would wait in Italy with my friends and board her ship at Naples and we could continue to Southampton together.

I would disembark and wait for a letter to see if I could stay with her Grand Parents who were brilliant.

Incidentally she came to see me off at Melbourne and later on I went to Rotterdam to see her off when she returned to Australia.

DEPARTING FOR ITALY



March 1956 with Cornie Rekers, on the M.V. "AUSTRALIA" before setting sail, 'so to speak.'

These ships were basically transporting the £10 migrants to a new life in OZ and on the return journey the ships were half empty. This made the 3-week sea voyage quite pleasant, with a self service laundry or a personal laundry service and a good bar service.



JB, Peter, Luigi, Stefano Pesavento enjoying the early sunshine across the 'Great Australian Bight'



Only pretending folks, this bit is not connected to the engine which was huge, with opposing pistons.

**IN NOMINE
NEPTUNI OPTIMI MAXIMI MARIUM DEI VENERATISSIMI**

Nos, summus huius navis Dux atque Rector, solemniter conclamamus per terras, maria, coelaque Domin John Bryan

quum hodie transatlanticus **"/N AUSTRALIA** *dicatus* _____

transiret, pro traditionis ritu recte baptisat _____ *atque ipsi nomen impositum esse*

lobster

Marium Deus eum saluum faciat in omni tempestate ac rebus adversis. Amen!

TESTES **DUX ATQUE RECTOR**

_____ Boelee

Datum, 29/3/56

LLOYD TRIESTINO

IF ONLY NEVILLE SHUTE HAD LISTENED TO MY TALES