



Channels of History oral histories

Accession number 29880

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish.

Abstract Oral history project telling women's stories of the Australian Channel Country.

Scope and content The creator of the project, Trish FitzSimons describes the project: Channels of History is a creative research project about the women, land and history of Queensland's Channel Country. Its outcomes include an oral history archive, travelling exhibition and broadcast documentary. It uses video interview and photographic stills, archival film, maps and documents to explore the way in which land and negotiations over its use, ownership and inheritance, are at the heart of the Australian story. The Channel Country is located where New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory come together. Channels of History brings together both contemporary and historical stories about the range of ways that women have participated in this area: as Traditional Owners, landholders, drovers, cooks, mothers, publicans, post office proprietors, governesses, teachers, writers and farmers. It is about patterns of land and land use and the patterns of women's lives; about tall tales and hidden histories and the functions these various stories fulfil.

System of arrangement Arranged into 30 series

Description 1 Betacam-SP; 1 visitors book; 25 digital video files

Additional format Digital copies available.

Access restrictions Unrestricted access.

Copyright status In copyright.

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Series 1: Edna Jessop (2 June 2000)

Series number 1

Series title Edna Jessop

Date 2 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Edna Jessop (nee Zigenbine) consisting of an interview and support footage. Topics include: droving, childbirth, education, women and work, race relations, pastoral industry, race relations, class, Aboriginal wages, gender relations, inheritance, romance, alcohol, land, title, history, female publicans, pubs, drought and traditional Aborigines. **Creator's statement:** Edna Jessop (née Zigenbine) was born in Thargomindah in 1926. Her father was a drover across Northern Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. Her mother mainly travelled with her father and working as a cook as he was droving in the Australian outback. Edna and her siblings were brought up on the move in the bush, largely living in tents and got no formal schooling. By the time she was 16 she was working as a drover with her father and by the age of 24 she was Australia's first (and possibly only) female "boss drover". In later life, as a divorced single mother, Edna moved to Mt Isa in order that her son could get schooling and ran the horse pound for many years. Edna died in 2007, aged 80. Edna's interview has considerable detail on the rhythms and processes of droving prior to road trains becoming the major way of transporting stock from stations.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Jessop, Edna

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Biographical history

Edna Jessop (née Zigenbine) was born in Thargomindah in 1926. Her father was a drover across Northern Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. Her mother mainly travelled with her father and working as a cook as he was droving in the Australian outback. Edna and her siblings were brought up on the move in the bush, largely living in tents and got no formal schooling. By the time she was 16 she was working as a drover with her father and by the age of 24 she was Australia's first (and possibly only) "boss drover". In later life, as a divorced single mother, Edna moved to Mt Isa in order that her son could get schooling and ran the horse pound for many years. Edna died in 2007, aged 80.

Items in this series:

Interview with Edna Jessop

Unit ID 29880/1

Scope and content

An interview with Edna Jessop. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Footage contains close-ups of old photographs and newspaper articles including stills of Enda working in the workshop. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/2

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Dajarra including children playing in the street, the sign of Dajarra, inside sheds and outside houses.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 2: Elizabeth 'Bid' Campbell (2 June 2000)

Series number 2

Series title Elizabeth 'Bid' Campbell

Date 2 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Elizabeth 'Bid' Campbell. Topics include: marriage, childhood, education, land, title, Channel Country environment, history, race relations, gender relations, female publicans, pubs, childbirth, droving, alcohol, class, women's work, drought, traditional Aborigines, on the road, banks, money troubles, the Depression, Channel Country ecosystem, romance, accident, food, garden, Aboriginal wages, Aboriginal women and white children, explorers, floods, washing, real bush vs film bush and water. **Creator's statement:** Elizabeth (Bid) Campbell - née McGlinchey - was born in Winton, 28th February 1917 and grew up on the property of Macsland, just outside Boulia. During a big drought of the 1920's Bid lived on the road with her parents, moving stock through other locales in Queensland and the Northern Territory to keep them alive. By the time of the depression Bid was living back at Macsland but remembers many people living on the road at that time. Bid and her husband were pastoralists of another Channel Country property (Weetaliba) where they had several Aboriginal people working, not for wages. Bid's interview has considerable detail on the tough conditions of her childhood, part of a large family living in a tin shed with a dirt floor. She also talks a lot about her mother Jenny's life, coming from England as a young woman, quickly becoming first a wife and then a widow and then a publican at a Cobb & Co mail stop, before marrying Bid's father. The interview has some discussion of the

relationships of selectors like Bid's family and squatters of the huge properties from which selections were excised.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Campbell, Elizabeth

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Elizabeth (Bid) Campbell - née McGlinchey - was born in Winton, 28th February 1917 and grew up on the property of Macsland, just outside Boulia. During a big drought of the 1920's Bid lived on the road with her parents, moving stock through other locales in Queensland and the Northern Territory to keep them alive. By the time of the depression Bid was living back at Macsland but remembers many people living on the road at that time. Bid and her husband were pastoralists of another Channel Country property (Weetaliba) where they had several Aboriginal people working, not for wages.

Items in this series:

Interview with Elizabeth 'Bid' Campbell

Unit ID 29880/3

Scope and content

An interview with Elizabeth 'Bid' Campbell. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes close-

up footage of Bid's hands. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

(1 digital)

Series 3: Joslin Eatts (3 June 2000)

Series number 3

Series title Joslin Eatts

Date 3 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Joslin Eatts. Topics include: childhood, childbirth, race relations, father/daughter relationship, Aboriginal traditions, history, education, Native Title, women, land and Alice Duncan-Kemp. **Creator's statement:** Joslin Eatts (née McCabe) was born around 1937 in Winton. She was the daughter of Henry (known as Harry) McCabe and Alice Wilson. Alice was a Pitta Pitta woman, Harry a Maiwali Kurawali man, who also had Irish ancestors. At the time of her birth, her parents were working on Currawilla station in the Channel Country but they moved around the Channel Country fencing and working on various stations. From 1927, Joslin's father was not governed by 'The Act' that constrained much of what Aboriginal people could legally do: her mother was similarly exempt from 1938. Her parents split up around 1945 when she was a child and Joslin stayed with her father, whilst her three siblings mostly lived with her mother. As an adult, Joslin avoided working on stations and instead worked in hospitals, in pubs, as a taxi driver. Joslin has six children and for many years was a single parent, in Brisbane, before moving back to Winton. As an adult Joslin has studied history and much of her interview

discusses Aboriginal people in the Channel Country in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Joslin discusses the way that government requirements for Aboriginal people to be paid wages resulted in less security of tenure for her family on their traditional lands.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Eatts, Joslin

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Joslin Eatts – née McCabe - was born around 1937 in Winton. She was the daughter of Henry (known as Harry) McCabe and Alice Wilson. Alice was a Pitta Pitta woman, Harry a Maiwali Kurawali man, who also had Irish ancestors. At the time of her birth, her parents were working on Currawilla station in the Channel Country but they moved around the Channel Country fencing and working on various stations. From 1927, Joslin's father was not governed by 'The Act' that constrained much of what Aboriginal people could legally do: her mother was similarly exempt from 1938. Her parents split up around 1945 when she was a child and Joslin stayed with her father, whilst her three siblings mostly lived with her mother. As an adult, Joslin avoided working on stations and instead worked in hospitals, in pubs, as a taxi driver. Joslin has six children and for many years was a single parent, in Brisbane, before moving back to Winton. As an adult Joslin has studied history and much of her interview discusses Aboriginal people in the Channel Country in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Items in this series:

Interview with Joslin Eatts

Unit ID 29880/4

Scope and content

An interview with Joslin Eatts. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes close-up footage of Joslin's hands. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

(1 digital)

Series 4: Liz Debney (4 June 2000)

Series number 4

Series title Liz Debney

Date 4 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Liz Debney. Topics include: romance, women, land, work, pastoral companies, retirement, education, history, accidents, social life, communications, gender relations, environment, Aboriginal labour, race relations, Native Title, relations amongst women, drought, floods and dust. **Creator's statement:** Liz Debney (nee Elizabeth Lawler) was born in Brisbane in February 1954. She grew up on acreage in the western suburbs of Brisbane, and first came to the Channel Country to work as a housemaid on Coorabulka station in 1972. At the time she imagined this to be a short sojourn before she would return to Brisbane to study to be a teacher, but she never returned to live in the city. At Coorabulka she met her husband Mal Debney,

whose family had long lived and worked in the Channel Country. Together they worked on a series of company stations in and around the Queensland and South Australian Channel Country, as well as the Northern Territory and the Queensland Central Highlands. At the time of interview in June 2000 Mal had been managing Glenormiston station for more than 13 years for the North Australia Pastoral Company (NAPCO). This then is the interview of a woman living and working on a station owned by a large pastoral company. She gives detailed description and analysis of gender roles on company owned stations, which in her experience began with the job of being housemaid and companion to the manager's wife: a role that she says 'died out' after the mid 1970s. Mal at the time was a jackaroo on Coorabulka. When he got a promotion to a NAPCO property in the Queensland Central Highlands, she arranged a governess' job on a nearby property and by early 1974 they married and continued working on company properties as Mal worked his way up the ladder to becoming manager. Liz discusses the lack of an equivalent ladder for female employees to progress through. She also discusses the then nascent phenomenon of women joining the previously male hierarchy. 'In time hopefully there will be a female manager.' At the time of the interview she was employed as cook for the station and also in a special part time role as 'training coordinator' for NAPCO. She describes the detail of this role and the way that it involves work on stations becoming part of the Australian Qualifications Framework. She also discusses the vital importance of her role as manager's wife, even though this role is not recognised by the company and she reflects more generally on women then living in the Channel Country and what links them together. She discusses her life as the mother of three children all born whilst she and her husband were working on company stations, including the death of her first born child – a daughter Anna - at the age of 3 and the death of her son Mathew in an accident when he was around 11 years old. She extrapolates from this to discuss how many people in their remote region die young and how the community handles it. She discusses new communication technologies for the outback and what a boon developments such as individual family telephones and email have been. At the time of interview the only electric power came from a diesel powered generator, and she compares the value of it being available 24/7 compared with owner occupied properties where electric power can be much more stringently rationed. Similarly she explains that since 1975 NAPCO has employed a mail plane for their multiple properties. She talks about her relationship to the Channel Country landscape, ranging from her first impressions of the treeless landscape of Coorabulka to discussions of how NAPCO approaches the long term care of the environment at the time of interview. One part of this is the ability of pastoral companies owning multiple stations to move stock around in relation to the weather and which land has had rain. She similarly explains the overall vertical integration of NAPCO, such that particular stations specialize in a particular part of the life cycle of a beast. In discussing the impact of weather phenomena such as droughts and floods she mentions that as company employees, changing weather does not impact their income. However, she explains that living on the western side of the Georgina River means that

they can often be cut off by floods for weeks and months at a time. In mid life Liz started to do a history degree, after meeting the woman undertaking a company history of NAPCO, including Glen Ormiston. She goes on to discuss her knowledge of the history of Glen Ormiston, including its pre contact Aboriginal History, and her perspectives of contemporary race relations, including in relation to native title. At the time of the interview she was undertaking an Education degree in Adult and Workplace Education. Not discussed in the interview, but years later, Liz became the author of *Arrabury: Debney Family 1905-1950* published by the Toowoomba and Darling Downs Family History Society, 2018.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Debney, Liz

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Interview with Liz Debney

Unit ID 29880/5

Scope and content

An interview with Liz Debney. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes close-up footage of Liz's hands. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/6

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Liz preparing lunch.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/7

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Glenormiston House and footage of the land surrounding the house and land seen by car.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 5: Boulia Stone House (June 2000)

Series number 5

Series title Boulia Stone House

Date June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history featuring Boulia Stone House and it's curator Dick Sutor. Built in the mid 1880s, Stone House house reflects the growth of Boulia and district after the consolidation of properties under the Crown Land Act 1884. It is evidence of the role of Boulia as a commercial centre for the district since that time. The Stone House is recognised as one of Boulia's oldest surviving buildings, and is also the only stone building extant in the township. Stone House was purchase by the local Council and became the local museum.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Addis, Erika

Sutor, Dick

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Stone House footage

Unit ID 29880/8

Scope and content

Footage outside and inside the Stone House Museum.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Interview with Stone House curator Dick Sutor

Unit ID 29880/9

Scope and content

An interview with the curator of the Stone House Museum, Dick Stutor, where he talks about the artefacts in the museum.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Stone House footage

Unit ID 29880/10

Scope and content

Footage of the photographs from the museum.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Stone House footage

Unit ID 29880/11

Scope and content

Footage of the photographs from the museum.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Stone House footage

Unit ID 29880/12

Scope and content

End of the footage at the Stone House Museum.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(5 digital)

Series 6: Rhonda Alexander (5 June 2000)

Series number 6

Series title Rhonda Alexander

Date 5 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Rhonda Alexander. Topics include: childhood, her parents' work and

relationship, how she met her husband Bill, being a manager's wife and her children. **Creator's statement:** Rhonda Alexander (née Hill) was born in Rockhampton in 1946 and came to the Channel Country with her mother in 1948. They lived on Herbert Downs station (which was owned by the North Australia Pastoral Company NAPCO) where Rhonda's stepfather was the overseer. Rhonda was actively involved in the work of the station from childhood and as an adult married Bill Alexander, also a NAPCO employee, who managed first Coorabulka station and then other NAPCO properties. Rhonda's interview is focused on the life of a station manager's wife on a company property, including her particular interest in environmental land management and keen involvement in a range of community organizations.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Alexander, Rhonda

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Rhonda Alexander (née Hill) was born in Rockhampton in 1946 and came to the Channel Country with her mother in 1948. They lived on Herbert Downs station (which was owned by the North Australia Pastoral Company NAPCO) where Rhonda's stepfather was the overseer. Rhonda was actively involved in the work of the station from childhood and as an adult married Bill Alexander, also a NAPCO employee, who managed first Coorabulka station and then other NAPCO properties.

Items in this series:

Interview with Rhonda Alexander

Unit ID 29880/13

Scope and content

An interview with Rhonda Alexander. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

(1 digital)

Series 7: June Jackson (June 2000)

Series number 7

Series title June Jackson

Date June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with June Jackson. Topics include: education, work, women, land, communications, romance, alcohol, family structure, pubs, pastoral industries, gender relations, race relations, post office history, leisure, volunteer work, economy, Native Title and inheritance. **Creator's statement:** (Elizabeth) June Jackson (née Wilcox) was born 3 June 1944 in Georgetown, Queensland and moved to the Channel Country as a small child, her mother being part of the McGlinchey clan around Boulia. After her parents separated June's mother worked as a cook for properties and pubs throughout Queensland with June largely brought up by her Charters Towers based grandmother. June returned to the Channel Country as first a governess and then

working for the Boulia telephone exchange; the pub owned by her husband and his family; a small shop; and the post office.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Jackson, June

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

(Elizabeth) June Jackson (née Wilcox) was born 3 June 1944 in Georgetown, Queensland and moved to the Channel Country as a small child, her mother being part of the McGlinchey clan around Boulia. After her parents separated June's mother worked as a cook for properties and pubs throughout Queensland with June largely brought up by her Charters Towers based grandmother. June returned to the Channel Country as first a governess and then working for the Boulia telephone exchange; the pub owned by her husband and his family; a small shop; and the post office.

Items in this series:

Interview with June Jackson

Unit ID 29880/14

Scope and content

An interview with June Jackson. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/15

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of June and her family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 8: Jean Smith (6 June 2000)

Series number 8

Series title Jean Smith

Date 6 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Jean Smith. Topics include: childbirth, gender relations, marriage, housing, childhood, women, land, fire, droving, arriving in the Channel Country, education, work, fear,

water, alcohol, pubs, riding, race relations, tall tales, romance, washing, retirement, drought, flood and history. **Creator's statement:** Jean Smith (née Scobie) was born in Adelaide in 1926 whilst her family was living in Ooroowillannie, on the edge of Sturt's Stony Desert in remote South Australia. ?Jean has a passion for horses and for bush poetry and grew up in the sandhills hardly ever wearing shoes. She knew Tom Kruse, the Birdsville Track mailman that stars in *Back of Beyond*. She came to the Channel Country when she was 21 to work with her elder sister Ethel, who was then a station cook at Davenport Downs station. Jean's husband was a drover and station manager. After his death she ran the pub and post office in Bedourie for more than two decades.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Smith, Jean

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Jean Smith (née Scobie) was born in Adelaide in 1926 whilst her family was living in Ooroowillannie, on the edge of Sturt's Stony Desert in remote South Australia. ?Jean has a passion for horses and for bush poetry and grew up in the sandhills hardly ever wearing shoes. She knew Tom Kruse, the Birdsville Track mailman that stars in *Back of Beyond*. She came to the Channel Country when she was 21 to work with her elder sister Ethel, who was then a station cook at Davenport Downs station. Jean's husband was a drover and station manager. After his death she ran the pub and post office in Bedourie for more than two decades.

Items in this series:

Interview with Jean Smith

Unit ID 29880/16

Scope and content

An interview with Jean Smith. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/17

Scope and content

Supporting footage of outside the Bedourie Post Office including the sign and letter by the door.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/18

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Jean Smith sorting out the mail.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/19

Scope and content

Supporting footage of shots outside the Bedourie Post Office and of the landscape whilst driving to and arriving in Boulia.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(4 digital)

Series 9: Alice Gorringe (7 June 2000)

Series number 9

Series title Alice Gorringe

Date 7 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Alice Gorringe. Topics include: race relations, education, childhood, traditional Aborigines, Aboriginal politics, stepfather/daughter relationship, food, women, land, rain, water, droving, clothes, gender relations, child labour, transport, Native Title, romance, leisure, alcohol, pregnancy, Aboriginal depopulation, children, mustering and history. **Creator's statement:** Alice Gorringe was born with the name Alice Bates in Tibooburra on 25th July, 1935. She was also

known by her married name of Alice Fortune for some time. She is a member of the Barkindji and Mithaka nations. Her parents were unhappy with how the reserve system for Aboriginal people in NSW was functioning during the war and the family came to Queensland. By 1944, Alice's mother had re-partnered with legendary bushman Bill Gorringer and they were living at the Planet Downs outstation of Arrabury station in far South West Queensland. Alice got a deep education in bushcraft, stock work and mechanics from her stepfather and mother and from the age of about 16 worked as a drover, along with her sister Peggy and brother John. For thirty years after having her first child Alice lived around Cloncurry, before moving back to Windorah in the Channel Country when her children were grown.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Gorringer, Alice

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Alice Gorringer was born with the name Alice Bates in Tibooburra on 25th July, 1935. She was also known by her married name of Alice Fortune for some time. She is a member of the Barkindji and Mithaka nations. Her parents were unhappy with how the reserve system for Aboriginal people in NSW was functioning during the war and the family came to Queensland. By 1944, Alice's mother had re-partnered with legendary bushman Bill Gorringer and they were living at the Planet Downs outstation of Arrabury station in far South West Queensland. Alice got a deep education in bushcraft, stock work and mechanics from her stepfather and mother and from the age of about 16 worked as a drover, along with her sister Peggy and brother John. For thirty years after having her first child Alice lived around Cloncurry, before moving back to Windorah in

the Channel Country when her children were grown.

Items in this series:

Interview with Alice Gorringe

Unit ID 29880/20

Scope and content

An interview with Alice Gorringe. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/21

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Alice's photographs and Alice and her grandson Rory outside in her yard.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/22

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Alice's grandson Rory looking in the fridge and close-up footage of Alice's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 10: Dot Gorringe (15 June 2000)

Series number 10

Series title Dot Gorringe

Date 15 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Dot Gorringe. Topics include: race relations, education, race relations, romance, work, pubs, Native Title, history and Alice Duncan-Kemp. **Creator's statement:** Dot Gorringe (née Hood) was born on a station outside Quilpie in 1942. Her mother's family name was Madigan and she is a member of the Madigan and Kalali nations. Her childhood was spent on Tobermorey station just across the Northern Territory border from Queensland's Channel Country. Dot moved to Windorah in the late 1950s after meeting her husband John Gorringe and has lived in the area ever since. John worked on roadworks for a big area around Windorah and Dot brought up her children living in camps adjacent to various sections of roadwork, until her children started school, when the family moved to Windorah.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Gorringe, Dot

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Dot Gorringe (née Hood) was born on a station outside Quilpie in 1942. Her mother's family name was Madigan and she is a member of the Madigan and Kalali nations. Her childhood was spent on Tobermorey station just across the Northern Territory border from Queensland's Channel Country. Dot moved to Windorah in the late 1950s after meeting her husband John Gorringe and has lived in the area ever since. John worked on roadworks for a big area around Windorah and Dot brought up her children living in camps adjacent to various sections of roadwork, until her children started school, when the family moved to Windorah.

Items in this series:

Interview with Dot Gorringe

Unit ID 29880/23

Scope and content

An interview with Dot Gorringe. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes some footage of Corella birds. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/24

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Trish and Dot chatting, birds, and close-up footage of Dot's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 11: Anne Kidd (15 June 2000)

Series number 11

Series title Anne Kidd

Date 15 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Anne Kidd. Topics include: definition of the Channel Country, Channel Country ecology, romance, pioneers, the Kidds, Francie Hammond, childbirth, Mayfield ladies, race relations, Aboriginal history, physical hardships, electricity, women, work, children, Duncan-Kemps and inheritance. **Creator's statement:** Anne Kidd (née Preston) was born in Cunnamulla in 1942. Anne came to the Channel Country in 1963 as a trained nurse to Frances Kidd (nee Hammond), known for being 'the first white child born on the Cooper', and has continued living in the Channel Country ever since after marrying Alexander/Sandy Kidd. Anne's interview covers the perspective of life on a family-owned pastoral property in the Channel

Country, the Kidds and Hammonds having been amongst the first settlers/squatters in the area in the late nineteenth century. She has a deep understanding of Channel Country ecology and worked for many years as the community nurse in Windorah. Anne's interview covers the perspective of life on a family-owned pastoral property in the Channel Country, the Kidds and Hammonds having been amongst the first settlers/squatters in the area in the late nineteenth century.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Kidd, Anne

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Anne Kidd (née Preston) was born in Cunnamulla in 1942. Anne came to the Channel Country in 1963 as a trained nurse to Frances Kidd (nee Hammond), known for being 'the first white child born on the Cooper', and has continued living in the Channel Country ever since after marrying Alexander/Sandy Kidd. Anne's interview covers the perspective of life on a family-owned pastoral property in the Channel Country, the Kidds and Hammonds having been amongst the first settlers/squatters in the area in the late nineteenth century. She has a deep understanding of Channel Country ecology and worked for many years as the community nurse in Windorah.

Items in this series:

Interview with Anne Kidd

Unit ID 29880/25

Scope and content

An interview with Anne Kidd. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/26

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Trish and Anne talking and close-up footage of Anne's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 12: Jeannie Reynolds (16 June 2000)

Series number 12

Series title Jeannie Reynolds

Date 16 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Jeannie Reynolds. Topics include: pioneers, Braided Channels, city girls go bush, history, childhood, fire, Mayfield ladies, gender relations, women, land, education, groves, work, romance, childcare, pastoral companies, Kidman, Channel Country environment, drought, muster, retirement, volunteer work, museums, race relations, class and depopulation. **Creator's statement:** Jeannie Reynolds (née Cartwright) was born in a Toowoomba hospital in 1957 but has spent her whole life in the Channel Country, a fifth generation descendant of early squatter/settler families. Her early life with her parents was on Moothandella station until when she was three her mother, two sisters and grandfather all died when the homestead burned down. After that she lived with her father and often with her father's cousins, the 'Mayfield ladies', four unmarried women running Mayfield station. She trained as a nurse before marrying and returning to the Channel Country to run Moothandella station with her husband Warren and to raise and distance educate her children until his death a decade later in 1986. From 1989 she was married to Peter Reynolds, and moved to Morney Plains station, managed by Peter for the S. Kidman & Co. Jeannie discusses her active community life in the Windorah area.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Reynolds, Jeannie

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Jeannie Reynolds (née Cartwright) was born in a Toowoomba hospital in 1957 but has spent her whole life in the Channel Country, a fifth generation descendant of early squatter/settler

families. Her early life with her parents was on Moothandella station until when she was three her mother, two sisters and grandfather all died when the homestead burned down. After that she lived with her father and often with her father's cousins, the 'Mayfield ladies', four unmarried women running Mayfield station. She trained as a nurse before marrying and returning to the Channel Country to run Moothandella station with her husband Warren and to raise and distance educate her children until his death a decade later in 1986. From 1989 she was married to Peter Reynolds, and moved to Morney Plains station, managed by Peter for the S. Kidman & Co.

Items in this series:

Interview with Jeannie Reynolds

Unit ID 29880/27

Scope and content

An interview with Jeannie Reynolds. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/28

Scope and content

Supporting footage of local surroundings and close-up footage of Jeannie's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/29

Scope and content

Supporting footage of a photograph of Jeannie's family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/30

Scope and content

Supporting footage of landscape around Jeannie's home.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/31

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Jeannie working around her home.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/32

Scope and content

Supporting footage of the end of the interview with Jeannie.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(6 digital)

Series 13: Linda Crombie (17 June 2000)

Series number 13

Series title Linda Crombie

Date 17 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Linda Crombie. Topics include: water, traditional Aborigines, race relations, education, romance, Aboriginal workers, childbirth, palmistry, child death, pastoral industry, Aboriginal wages, history, World War II rations, women, land, friendships, Braided Channels and Native Title. **Creator's statement:** Linda (Ahlinda) Crombie (nee Naylon) was born near Mount Gason, South Australia, sometime around 1923, living traditionally with her parents as a member of the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi nation and speaker of that language. Sometime in childhood, amidst a drought, her family got rations and other supplies in Mount Gason. Soon, they were living and working for Pandie Pandie station, on their country, just over the South

Australian border from Queensland. Linda was photographed by the Norman Tindale anthropological expedition, probably in 1934. Linda's husband, Frank Crombie, was from the same area and was working on Nappanuma station when she met him. Linda and Frank lived and work for many years on Roseberth station, then leased by the Morton family, living relatively traditionally down by the river on the station. Later, Linda and Frank returned to Pandie Pandie and then Alton Downs to live and work. When interviewed in 2000, Linda was living in Birdsville. Later in life she worked with the linguist Luise Hercus to preserve knowledge of the Wangkangurru language. This interview includes several sequences where Linda speaks in her first language and/or uses words from language. She died in 2010.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Crombie, Linda

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Linda (Ahlinda) Crombie (née Naylon) was born near Mount Gason, South Australia, sometime around 1923, living traditionally with her parents as a member of the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi nation and speaker of that language. Sometime in childhood, amidst a drought, her family got rations and other supplies in Mount Gason. Soon, they were living and working for Pandie Pandie station, on their country, just over the South Australian border from Queensland. Linda was photographed by the Norman Tindale anthropological expedition, probably in 1934. Linda's husband, Frank Crombie, was from the same area and was working on Nappanuma station when she met him. Linda and Frank lived and work for many years on Roseberth station, then leased by the Morton family, living relatively traditionally down by the river on the station. Later, Linda and Frank returned to Pandie Pandie and then Alton Downs to

live and work. When interviewed in 2000, Linda was living in Birdsville. Later in life she worked with the linguist Luise Hercus to preserve knowledge of the Wangkangurru language. She died in 2010.

Items in this series:

Interview with Linda Crombie

Unit ID 29880/33

Scope and content

An interview with Linda Crombie. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/34

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Linda Crombie and close-up footage of Linda's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/35

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Linda outside of her home.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 14: Julie Groves (19 June 2000)

Series number 14

Series title Julie Groves

Date 19 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Julie Groves. Topics include: pioneers, accidents, fire, women, land, Braided Channels, history, romance, work, physical hardships, gender relations, childbirth, Jeannie Reynolds, owners of companies, Anne Kidd, medical emergency, education, women of power, physical facilities, inheritance, intergeneration and electricity. **Creator's statement:** Julie Groves (nee Hill) was born in Longreach, 11 June 1955. Her great grandfather 'had taken up Haughton Vale as a block and put it together in the early 1900s'. Julie's grandmother Mary May Doyle had therefore grown up on Haughton Vale station. Julie grew up in Longreach and met her husband Ian, who had grown up in the Channel Country, when he was at pastoral college in her home town. Julie and Ian both worked around Longreach before Ian's father purchased the lease of Haughton Vale and a neighbouring property and they moved to the Channel Country together in the late 1970s as part of a family partnership. Julie is one of the leaders of 'Women for Power', an organization dedicated to improving rural infrastructure; a parent supervising the education of children via 'School of the Air' and a member of the Barcoo shire council. Julie's interview details the limited resources (lack of running water, telephone, electrical power and short-term power

generation etc.) of life on a family property in the 70s and since.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Groves, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Julie Groves (née Hill) was born in Longreach, 11 June 1955. Her great grandfather 'had taken up Haughton Vale as a block and put it together in the early 1900s'. Julie's grandmother Mary May Doyle had therefore grown up on Haughton Vale station. Julie grew up in Longreach and met her husband Ian, who had grown up in the Channel Country, when he was at pastoral college in her home town. Julie and Ian both worked around Longreach before Ian's father purchased the lease of Haughton Vale and a neighbouring property and they moved to the Channel Country together in the late 1970s as part of a family partnership. Julie is one of the leaders of 'Women for Power', an organization dedicated to improving rural infrastructure; a parent supervising the education of children via 'School of the Air' and a member of the Barcoo shire council.

Items in this series:**Interview with Julie Groves**

Unit ID 29880/36

Scope and content

An interview with Julie Groves. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/37

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Julie Groves and her daughter Nicole at the School of the Air with Nicole doing school work by the radio.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/38

Scope and content

Supporting footage of morning tea break on the station.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 15: Narelle and Bronwen Morrish (19 June 2000)

Series number 15

Series title Narelle and Bronwen Morrish

Date 19 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Narelle Morrish and her daughter Bronwen Morrish. Topics include: flood, childhood, Channel Country, ecology, race relations, education, intergeneration, correspondence, gender relations, domestic violence, JC Pub and Maude Schaffer. **Creator's statement:** Narelle was born in Lismore. She trained to be a nurse in Brisbane and then returned to Lismore as a psychiatric nurse, where she met her husband Bob, a psychologist working in the same hospital. Bob had had a rural childhood in inner western Queensland (Inglewood) and he and Narelle moved first to Winton, buying land at Kynuna, and then moved to the Channel Country in 1979. Narelle's daughter Bronwen was born in 1985, after her parents had moved to Springfield station in the Channel Country. Bronwen discusses growing up with an awareness of racialized violence on the properties close to the one she has grown up on. Her whole education (Grade 10 at the time of the interview) was via the Distance Education school in Longreach, supervised by her parents, including 'School of The Air'. She also discusses informal dimensions of her education, such as watching scientists studying Cooper Creek wetlands. Asked to forecast her life twenty years into the future, aged 34, Bronwen says: 'Research scientist maybe. Um, some days an artist, musician, um just a wide range. Or perhaps a pastoralist but yeah. I'm not sure.' Narelle discusses still seeing drovers bringing through big mobs of stock when she first moved to the Channel Country. This interview was done in June 2000 amidst a good season and they detail some of the burgeoning birdlife on their land. They also discuss how having land amidst different Channel Country ecosystems helps to limit the amount of stock agistment they need to engage in. Narelle discusses the alcohol culture in the Channel Country and its connections to domestic violence. At the time of the interview Narelle had been diagnosed with breast cancer: and she later died from this disease. She refers to but does not discuss her illness. They discuss a recent political battle the family had been engaged in, about the possibility of irrigated cotton farming becoming part of the Channel Country environment and what that would mean for their 'naturally organic' beef farming. In audio only at

the end of the interview there is discussion of historical and contemporary race relations in the Channel Country. This includes discussion of the three way relationship of Aboriginal people, graziers and mining companies and of the impact on their leased land of mining company exploration. Also in audio only at the end of the interview is a short discussion with Bronwen's father and Narelle's husband, Bob Morrish, talking about female legends of the Channel Country, mostly Maude Schaffer and Laura Duncan.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Morrish, Narelle

Morrish, Bronwen

Morrish, Bob

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Narelle was born in Lismore. She trained to be a nurse in Brisbane and then returned to Lismore as a psychiatric nurse, where she met her husband Bob, a psychologist working in the same hospital. Bob had had a rural childhood in inner western Queensland (Inglewood) and he and Narelle moved first to Winton, buying land at Kynuna, and then moved to the Channel Country in 1979. Narelle's daughter Bronwen was born in 1985, after her parents had moved to Springfield station in the Channel Country.

Items in this series:

Interview with Narelle and Bronwen Morrish

Unit ID 29880/39

Scope and content

An interview with Narelle and Bronwen Morrish. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/40

Scope and content

Supporting footage of trees during dusk.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/41

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Flodden Hills home, cattle, Bronwen working and close-up footage of Bronwen's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/42

Scope and content

Supporting footage of the landscape of Flodden Hills.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/43

Scope and content

Supporting footage of the landscape of Flodden Hills.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(5 digital)



Series 16: Mandy Murray (20 June 2000)

Series number 16

Series title Mandy Murray

Date 20 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Mandy Murray. Topics include: childhood, romance, gender relations, women, work, teaching city girls go bush, land, fear, gender roles, daily routine, drought, facilities, flood, women for power, Channel Country, environmental politics, pastoral industry, cotton, history, race relations, Native Title, education and children. **Creator's statement:** Mandy Murray (nee Boyer) was born in Adelaide in September 1961. Sometime in childhood she moved with her parents and four sisters to outer urban Brisbane acreage. She trained as a teacher and came to live in western Queensland by being posted to Aramac in 1985. Having met her husband Lex at a Bachelor's and Spinsters (B & S) ball, after several years she came to the one teacher Jundah Primary School as principal, which was close to the property owned by Lex's family. Lex had grown up in the city and come to the Channel Country in late adolescence. Mandy discusses the pressures of running such a school as a young woman, and of learning to meet the challenges in her six years in the role. Since marriage to Lex and becoming the mother of three children she has continued to work part time at Jundah primary school, two days a week at the time of the interview. She has a passionate interest in photography and has her own dark room on the property that she and Lex live on. She discusses gender roles in various different couples in Channel Country partnerships and the way that her role was inflected by coming to the area as an independent professional. She also discusses the impact on her local community of droughts and floods in the Channel Country, and of life without electric power being provided by the government. At the time of the interview she and Lex ran their property as an organic beef farm and are active in the OBI organization of organic beef farmers. Mandy talks about what is involved in getting certified as an organic beef farm, and how that can be impacted by cotton growing in the same region. Part of this is the collapse of sheep pastoralism in the Jundah area, after the collapse of the wool floor price scheme in the early 1990s. She also discusses why it may be that Jundah has no Aboriginal families living there and her experience of native title debates around the time of the Mabo and Wik. There is also discussion of how her children have different views of their futures than their rural school friends whose families have lived in the Channel Country for several generations. Mandy envisages her life twenty years in the future (around now, in 2021) and imagines living in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Murray, Mandy
Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Mandy Murray (née Boyer) was born in Adelaide in September 1961. Sometime in childhood she moved with her parents and four sisters to outer urban Brisbane acreage. She trained as a teacher and came to live in western Queensland by being posted to Aramac in 1985. Having met her husband Lex at a Bachelor's and Spinsters (B & S) ball, after several years she came to the one teacher Jundah Primary School as principal, which was close to the property owned by Lex's family. Lex had grown up in the city and come to the Channel Country in late adolescence. Since marriage to Lex and becoming the mother of three children she has continued to work part time at Jundah primary school, two days a week at the time of the interview. She has a passionate interest in photography and has her own dark room on the property that she and Lex live on. At the time of the interview she and Lex ran their property as an organic beef farm and are active in the OBI organization of organic beef farmers.

Items in this series:

Interview with Mandy Murray

Unit ID 29880/44

Scope and content

An interview with Mandy Murray. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/45

Scope and content

Supporting footage of exteriors of the Murray house.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/46

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Mandy.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 17: Jundah, Battle Hole, Barcoo Shire Museum (21 June 2000)

Series number 17

Series title Jundah, Battle Hole, Barcoo Shire Museum

Date 21 June 2000

Scope and content

Series of footage of Jundah, Battle Hole and the Barcoo Shire Museum.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/47

Scope and content

Supporting footage of a Jundah shop.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/48

Scope and content

Supporting footage of landscapes including leaving Jundah and entering Battle Hole/Welford.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/49

Scope and content

Supporting footage of landscapes including leaving Jundah and entering Battle Hole/Welford.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/50

Scope and content

Supporting footage of the Barcoo Shire Museum in Jundah.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/51

Scope and content

Supporting footage from inside the Barcoo Shire Museum in Jundah.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(5 digital)

Series 18: Bev Maunsell (21 June 2000)

Series number 18

Series title Bev Maunsell

Date 21 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Bev Maunsell. Topics include: race relations, Braided Channels, women, work, Channel Country, physical hardship, dust storm, facilities, galah sessions, childbirth, butchering, pastoral industry, gender relations, leisure, romance, racing industry, Laura Duncan, pubs, alcohol, Windorah security, land, education, correspondence, Maude Schaffer, class, history, Currawilla, Jundah, accidents, shire councils, health and Native Title. **Creator's statement:** Bev Maunsell (née Barr) was born in Pittsworth, Darling Downs Queensland in August 1947. She moved to the Channel Country in 1962 to work on the Windorah telephone exchange, after her parents had taken over the garage in that community. Around the age of 16, Bev met Graham

Maunsell, who would become her husband. He was a road worker, a station worker, a truck driver and a jockey for the western Queensland racing circuit. He died at a young age, leaving Bev a widow. Having lived in Brisbane for several years whilst their children were small and Graham was getting training in the racing industry, they returned to the Channel Country to live in 1971. Bev's interview has considerable detail on the extremities of life in the Channel Country: including dust storms; on life before modern telecommunications were available; on the prevalence of accidents, typically involving transport or machinery. She also talks about her working life: as a 'lady's maid' on a company cattle station with a full array of employees, as the wife of a station worker and a mother educating her children in isolation, and later as a teacher's aide. Bev's interview details a female perspective of social life in the Channel Country including tennis, racing and pubs. She also describes her experiences of two of the rare women to manage or own Channel Country properties: Laura Duncan and Maud Schaffer.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Maunsell, Bev

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Bev Maunsell (née Barr) was born in Pittsworth, Darling Downs Queensland in August 1947. She moved to the Channel Country in 1962 to work on the Windorah telephone exchange, after her parents had taken over the garage in that community. Around the age of 16, Bev met Graham Maunsell, who would become her husband. He was a road worker, a station worker, a truck driver and a jockey for the western Queensland racing circuit. He died at a young age, leaving Bev a widow. Having lived in Brisbane for several years whilst their children were small and

Graham was getting training in the racing industry, they returned to the Channel Country to live in 1971.

Items in this series:

Interview with Bev Maunsell

Unit ID 29880/52

Scope and content

An interview with Bev Maunsell. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/53

Scope and content

Supporting footage featuring close-up footage of Bev's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/54

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Bev.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/55

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Bev.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(4 digital)

Series 19: Gladys Cross (22 June 2000)

Series number 19

Series title Gladys Cross

Date 22 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Gladys Cross. Topics include: pioneers, education, childhood, romance, flood,

World War II, Windorah, religion, drovers, alcohol, health, leisure, race, pubs, pastoral industry, facilities, drought, women, land, gender relations, work, race relations, fear, division of labour, Maude Schaffer, women managers, JC Pub, health, gender roles, physical hardships, inheritance, dingoes, Aboriginal intra-conflict, Native Title and retirement. Gladys' interview has detailed discussion of different versions of gender relations and the division of labour on family owned properties. **Creator's statement:** Gladys Cross (nee Geiger) was born in Jundah hospital on the 10th February 1937. Her parents at the time lived on Coorallie? station near the South Australian border where her father was a stockman. When she was three the family moved to Carranya station, much closer to Windorah, for her father's work. Gladys moved into the town of Windorah to live when she started school aged around 10, part of the district wanting to have enough children to reopen the school, and possible because Gladys' father got a job on the bridge then being built close to Windorah. She finished school in Grade 5, aged 15 and started to work in the dining room of the Windorah hotel, an important institution for drovers between contracts and for the social life surrounding the outback races etc. Eventually, aged 26, she married Ted Cross, only child of the family that ran the Windorah shop and related to her employers at the hotel where she worked. Carranya Station – "a quarter of a million acres"- had originally been owned by the Geiger family but then had been bought by the Cross family, so after marriage Gladys and her husband Ray ran Carranya, with Gladys very active in the life of the property, as well as running her household. Reg was an invalid for many years before dying of emphysema aged 60, and Gladys ran Carranya before and after his death. Gladys runs the property with the assistance of both her daughters and her sons. Gladys talks a lot of resilience in the face of physical hardships, including no electricity until the 1970s, limited refrigeration, regular droughts and floods etc. At the time of the interview in 2000, electric power was still by generator rather than government provision. Gladys runs Carranya with the assistance of both her daughters and her sons and there is considerable discussion of inheritance and how it might function in their family. There is also discussion of how technological developments have limited the available work for those who want to live in the area.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Cross, Gladys

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Gladys Cross (née Geiger) was born in Jundah hospital on the 10th February 1937. Her parents at the time lived on Coorallie? station near the South Australian border where her father was a stockman. When she was three the family moved to Carranya station, much closer to Windorah, for her father's work. Gladys moved into the town of Windorah to live when she started school aged around 10, part of the district wanting to have enough children to reopen the school, and possible because Gladys' father got a job on the bridge then being built close to Windorah. She finished school in Grade 5, aged 15 and started to work in the dining room of the Windorah hotel, an important institution for drovers between contracts and for the social life surrounding the outback races etc. Eventually, aged 26, she married Ted Cross, only child of the family that ran the Windorah shop and related to her employers at the hotel where she worked. Carranya Station – “a quarter of a million acres”- had originally been owned by the Geiger family but then had been bought by the Cross family, so after marriage Gladys and her husband Ray ran Carranya, with Gladys very active in the life of the property, as well as running her household. Reg was an invalid for many years before dying of emphysema aged 60, and Gladys ran Carranya before and after his death. Gladys runs the property with the assistance of both her daughters and her sons.

Items in this series:

Interview with Gladys Cross

Unit ID 29880/56

Scope and content

An interview with Gladys Cross. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes shots of her grandchild. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/57

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Gladys.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/58

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Gladys.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/59

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Gladys cutting horse meat.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/60

Scope and content

Supporting footage of the landscapes at Red Sand Hills and travelling shots.

Description

Description 1 digital video

[View the items](#)

(5 digital)

Series 20: Kristina Plant (25 June 2000)

Series number 20

Series title Kristina Plant

Date 25 June 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Kristina Plant. Topics include: childhood, women, work, race relations, land,

Braided Channels, father/daughter relationship, gender relations, pastoral company, female conflict and domestic life. **Creator's statement:** Kristina Plant (nee Schrader) was born in Charleville around 1977. At the time her parents were working for S. Kidman & Co on Morney Station, west of Windorah. When she was 2 she moved with her parents and with her brother and sister to Sandringham Station in the Channel Country, which her father Geoff managed for Kidman for several decades from 1979. This then is an interview about a young woman's experience of growing up on Channel Country company owned properties, including her experience of when the company bosses came to visit. Kristina describes the rhythm of her mother's day, cooking for around 15 men on the stations, as well as looking after her children, and her pigs. At the end of the interview she briefly discusses her grandmother Sylvia Geiger and her love of goats. Her mother's life was very homestead based, but Kristina herself grew up working with her father on the station, and watching him work. She was distance educated, including access to School of the Air. From the age of 12 she was on the Kidman payroll for her stock work after school and in holidays. She did a lot of horse riding from an early age, but also assisted with stock camp cooking on occasion. Her first view of a city was going to Brisbane for Expo '88 on a school camp. Her high school education was in a Mt Isa boarding school until Grade 10, followed by a year's distance education and two years at pastoral college in Longreach. As a teenager she regularly competed in camp drafting, and she also for a time had a jockey's license to compete in outback race meetings. The interview discusses race relations considerably, from a perspective where Kristina was often in a minority as a non-Aboriginal child in both primary and secondary schooling. She also discusses the multiple interconnections of the tiny human population of the distant but connected towns of Boulia, Birdsville and Windorah. There is discussion of gender relations in the company station system, including what the terms jillaroo, jackeroo and stockman are used. Kristina grew up with the ambition to be the first Kidman female manager, but some unpleasant experiences around the age of 18 changed her mind. Around the age of 19 she left the Channel Country to work on the land in the Brisbane Valley. At the time of the interview she was married and living on a property near Chinchilla, in inner western Queensland, working the land alongside her husband.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Plant, Kristina

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Kristina Plant (née Schrader) was born in Charleville around 1977. At the time her parents were working for S. Kidman & Co on Morney Station, west of Windorah. When she was 2 she moved with her parents and with her brother and sister to Sandringham Station in the Channel Country, which her father Geoff managed for Kidman for several decades from 1979. She was distance educated, including access to School of the Air. From the age of 12 she was on the Kidman payroll for her stock work after school and in holidays. She did a lot of horse riding from an early age, but also assisted with stock camp cooking on occasion. Her first view of a city was going to Brisbane for Expo '88 on a school camp. Her high school education was in a Mt Isa boarding school until Grade 10, followed by a year's distance education and two years at pastoral college in Longreach. As a teenager she regularly competed in camp drafting, and she also for a time had a jockey's license to compete in outback race meetings. Kristina grew up with the ambition to be the first Kidman female manager, but some unpleasant experiences around the age of 18 changed her mind. Around the age of 19 she left the Channel Country to work on the land in the Brisbane Valley. At the time of the interview she was married and living on a property near Chinchilla, in inner western Queensland, working the land alongside her husband.

Items in this series:

Interview with Kristina Plant

Unit ID 29880/61

Scope and content

An interview with Kristina Plant. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/62

Scope and content

Supporting footage featuring close-ups of Kristina's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 21: David Duncan-Kemp (30 August 2000)

Series number 21

Series title David Duncan-Kemp

Date 30 August 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with David Duncan-Kemp. Topics include: Laura Duncan I, pastoral industry,

Aboriginal labour, Alice Duncan-Kemp, inheritance, Laura Duncan II, race relations, disease, women, land and definition of the Channel Country. **Creator's statement:** David was interviewed in relation to his knowledge of his mother, Alice Duncan-Kemp (1901-1988), his aunt Laura Duncan (1903 -1988) and his grandmother, Laura Duncan (1875-1955). David's grandmother, Laura Duncan(née Davis), was born in Sydney in 1875. She came to the Channel Country when she married David's grandfather father, William Duncan, 'before the turn of the century' (presumably sometime in the 1890s) and came to live on Mooraberrie station, where he was the manager. Shortly after this they became the lessees of Mooraberrie. William Duncan died in 1907, leaving Laura to run the station. In William Duncan's will the station was left in trust to the three daughters, the trust to end when the youngest was 21. David suggests that this will caused many tensions for his mother, her sisters and his grandmother, but he does not detail them. Questions of inheritance also complicate the next generation's relation to Mooraberrie. In 1917, Laura had a legal battle with the TJ Ryan Queensland Government about whether she could sell her cattle in Adelaide, or whether they had to be sent to Brisbane for sale. This battle was fought all the way through to the UK Privy Council and David says he is not sure who won in the end. David then discusses his mother Alice: her childhood on Mooraberrie, and the multiple books that she wrote about that childhood. There is considerable discussion of the contribution of Aboriginal labour to running the station: 'I honestly believe that if the Aboriginals hadn't been there, they would not have survived'. Alice left Mooraberrie when she was 17 or 18 and in 1923 married David's father, Frederick Kemp. He was a bank manager so they moved around Queensland and New South Wales to different branches. He discusses his mother's commitment to writing, mostly about her childhood at Mooraberrie and her relationship with Aboriginal people at that time. As an adult she had considerable contact with Dr. Winterbotham, head of the Anthropology Museum at the University of Queensland. He also discusses his knowledge of the life of his aunt Laura Duncan, born in 1903. He describes her competence with cars, horses, cattle and cooking. He also discusses her feminism. He says that after the 1920s, Mooraberrie employed non Aboriginal people and that from 1940 (when his aunt Laura took over management from her mother, Laura) there were no Aboriginal people employed. David, and his wife Dawn, also discuss Arthur Churches, who comes to Mooraberrie in 1927 as an employee, becomes the younger Laura's partner and runs the property with her.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Duncan-Kemp, David

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Interview with David Duncan-Kemp

Unit ID 29880/63

Scope and content

An interview with David Duncan-Kemp. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/64

Scope and content

Supporting footage featuring a cutaway of Dawn Duncan-Kemp.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/65

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Dawn Duncan-Kemp looking at family memorabilia. Dawn speaks briefly at the end about the family history.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/66

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs from the Duncan-Kemp family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/67

Scope and content

Supporting footage of landscape whilst driving including the town and the cemetery.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(5 digital)

Series 22: Sylvie Duncan-Kemp (30 August 2000)

Series number 22

Series title Sylvie Duncan-Kemp

Date 30 August 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Sylvie Duncan-Kemp. Topics include: Alice Duncan-Kemp, women, land, Laura Duncan II, race relations and inheritance. **Creator's statement:** Sylvie Duncan-Kemp, daughter of Alice (1901-1988), granddaughter of Laura Duncan (1903-1988), and niece of Laura Duncan (1903-1988). Sylvie was born in 1934/35. This interview is fundamentally about Sylvie's knowledge of these female relative's lives. At the outset Sylvie says that she does not wish to discuss her grandmother and that she knows little of her mother's life: 'Because when I was at home, um – she would be in her Writing Room. She would shut herself away and ... I got the distinct impression that, you know, don't disturb. Do not disturb'. Whilst downplaying her knowledge of her mother's life, Sylvie discusses her mother's relationship to Aboriginal people and to their paradigm of health and use of plants in same. She also discusses Alice's unhappiness with Angus and Robertson as publishers and her better relationship with the

Brisbane publishers Smith Patterson. And again of Alice: 'I think she related, a bit like me, she related more to animals than to humans. Mmm. Because I think, somewhere along the way, human beings let her down.'. In the interview this appears to be related especially to the inheritance of the land of Mooraberrie and of Alice's relationship to Dr. Winterbotham and the University of Queensland anthropology museum. Sylvie also discusses the diminution of Aboriginal people at Mooraberrie across the twentieth century and her understanding of why and how this happened. Also discussed is the way that inheritance worked in her family and how it was that the S. Kidman company came to own Mooraberrie station, Sylvie having been one of those that inherited the land after the death of her aunt Laura. Finally, Sylvie discusses her own love for the land of Mooraberrie.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Duncan-Kemp, Sylvie

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other**Biographical history**

Sylvie Duncan-Kemp, daughter of Alice (1901-1988), granddaughter of Laura Duncan (1903-1988), and niece of Laura Duncan (1903-1988).

Items in this series:

Interview with Sylvie Duncan-Kemp

Unit ID 29880/68

Scope and content

An interview with Sylvie Duncan-Kemp. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

(1 digital)

Series 23: Isabel Tarrago & Shirley Finn (3 September 2000)

Series number 23

Series title Isabel Tarrago & Shirley Finn

Date 3 September 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Isabel Tarrago and Shirley Finn (both nee Hansen). Topics include: race relations, intersex, childbirth, traditional Aborigines, pastoral industry, Aboriginal wages, history, education, romance, white women/black kids, women, domestics, gender relations, alcohol, Aboriginal labour, Native Title, Aboriginal ceremonies, Pituri, Channel Country, Topsy Hansen, Malcolm Fraser, physical hardships, owners/managers, land and work. **Creator's statement:** Much of this interview too is about the life of their mother, (Annie) Topsy Hansen (née Daley) and other Aboriginal people that were central to the pastoral industry. Topsy's mother was a

traditional Aboriginal woman born at Meetukka? that is now part of Glen Ormiston station and her father Arthur Daley, was an Irish water bore operator. Topsy's mother died in her childbirth (around 1903), and she was brought up both in Aboriginal camps in the area and also under the wing of various station manager's wives, (in particular 'Granny Brown' from first Roxborough and then Glen Ormiston Station) with very little input from her father. As a child Topsy moved between Lake Nash, Barkly and Carondotta stations and was working for those stations from a very young age, where she experienced a mixture of extreme cruelty and great kindness. Topsy became the station cook of Glen Ormiston station and married Snapshot Hansen – also a traditional owner from Meetukka/Glen Ormiston who was a drover and musterer and feral brumby shooter across many Channel Country stations. Both Snapshot and Topsy were 'under the Act' that greatly restricted the lives of Aboriginal people and there is considerable discussion of the impact of this. Both Snapshot and Topsy were 'senior law' man and woman respectively and combined their traditional cultural responsibilities with their work on the station. The interview discusses this in some detail, including the responsibility that their paternal grandmother had for pituri and the pituri trade. Around the mid 1960s when Australian law changed, giving Aboriginal workers equal pay to non-Aboriginal workers, Snapshot and Topsy lost their work and their home. Snapshot died soon afterwards. Topsy worked as a cook in hotels across North western Queensland and eventually in an aged care home in Brisbane, as well as working for the Aboriginal organization, OPAL (One People of Australia League). Topsy died 31st August, 1988, aged 85. After her death, Isabel and her husband scattered her ashes at Lake Wanditta, part of Meetakka/Glen Ormiston. The interview also briefly sketches in the sisters' lives. Both Isabel and her sister Shirley were born in the Channel Country but from the age of six were at boarding schools in Charters Towers, home only for Christmas holidays. Whilst at boarding school 'Granny Brown' provided a lot of care to both sisters, and was viewed as a surrogate grandmother. The pastoral lease to Glen Ormiston station was owned by the Collins White company, associated with Malcolm Fraser's family, and there is discussion of the Hansen family's relationship with the Frasers in the context of this ownership. Isabel continued her education in Sydney from the age of 16 and at the time of the interview was working for the Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet. Shirley did stock work as a young woman, and has since done a university degree at the University of Queensland and worked for the Queensland Public Service. At the time of the interview she was working for the Queensland Police Service.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Tarrago, Isabel

Finn, Shirley

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Isabel Tarrago and her sister Shirley Finn (both née Hansen) were born in the Channel Country but from the age of six were at boarding schools in Charters Towers, home only for Christmas holidays. Whilst at boarding school 'Granny Brown' provided a lot of care to both sisters, and was viewed as a surrogate grandmother. Isabel continued her education in Sydney from the age of 16 and at the time of the interview was working for the Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet. Shirley did stock work as a young woman, and has since done a university degree at the University of Queensland and worked for the Queensland Public Service. At the time of the interview she was working for the Queensland Police Service.

Items in this series:

Interview with Isabel Tarrago & Shirley Finn

Unit ID 29880/69

Scope and content

An interview with Isabel Tarrago and Shirley Finn. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons.

Includes transcript.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/70

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Isabel and Shirley's family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/71

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Isabel and Shirley's family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 24: Francie Hammond (3 September 2000)

Series number 24

Series title Francie Hammond

Date 3 September 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Francie Hammond. Topics include: birth, pioneers, Kidds, race relations, city girls gone bush, education, Mayfield ladies, gender relations, Braided Channels, Laura Duncan, Aboriginal and white children, dust storm, floods, droughts, women, land, spinster, writing, health, class, accidents, Jeannie Reynolds, Gorrings, physical hardships and Mrs Richards.

Creator's statement: Francie Hammond was born in Brisbane on the 5th April, 1926 as Francis Mary Hammond. At the time of her birth Francie's father and his wider family had already lived in the Channel Country for two generations and she says that an aunt had been the first non-Aboriginal child born there. Her mother had come to the Channel Country as a governess to her father's family. With her mother dying during her birth, Francie stayed in the city for her first two years of life before heading west where her father George had a second wife, not keen on either the bush or children. Francie lived with (and until the age of 14 was educated by) her father's extended Kidd family, especially the four 'Mayfield Ladies'. She went to boarding school in Brisbane for a couple of years during later adolescence. She would talk to her father daily on a party line telephone, and see him approximately weekly. At the age of around 60 Francie moved to Brisbane when her cousins began to age and have health needs that required city hospitals. Her interview has lots of detail on droughts and floods and dust storms and on her knowledge of her aunt and older female cousins running Mayfield station. And on life before and after mechanical refrigeration.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Hammond, Francie

Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Francie Hammond was born in Brisbane on the 5th April, 1926 as Francis Mary Hammond. At the time of her birth Francie's father and his wider family had already lived in the Channel Country for two generations and she says that an aunt had been the first non-Aboriginal child born there. Her mother had come to the Channel Country as a governess to her father's family. With her mother dying during her birth, Francie stayed in the city for her first two years of life before heading west where her father George had a second wife, not keen on either the bush or children. Francie lived with (and until the age of 14 was educated by) her father's extended Kidd family, especially the four 'Mayfield Ladies'. She went to boarding school in Brisbane for a couple of years during later adolescence. She would talk to her father daily on a party line telephone, and see him approximately weekly. At the age of around 60 Francie moved to Brisbane when her cousins began to age and have health needs that required city hospitals.

Items in this series:

Interview with Francie Hammond

Unit ID 29880/72

Scope and content

An interview with Francie Hammond. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/73

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Francie and family.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/74

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs of Francie and family, Francie presenting the photographs and close-up footage of Francie's hands.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 25: Pam Watson (4 September 2000)

Series number 25

Series title Pam Watson

Date 4 September 2000

Scope and content

Oral history with Pamela Lukin Watson (1927-2020), nee Pamela Lukin. Topics include: pioneers, Gresley Lukin, history, gender relations, race relations, Pituri, Isabel Tarrago, Alice Duncan-Kemp, childhood, Mooraberrie, drought and Debney. **Creator's statement:** Pam is interviewed not as a woman of the Channel Country but as a *historian* of the Channel Country and a scholar of Channel Country historiography. Her book, *Frontier Lands and Pioneer Legends: How Pastoralists gained Karuwali land* (Allen and Unwin 1998) was a key source in initiating the *Channels of History* project. She is related to the radical journalist and newspaper proprietor Gresley Lukin that in 1880 wrote a series of editorials in *The Queenslander* denouncing 'white brutality to Aboriginal people'. She discusses the complex attitudes to him in her conservative Brisbane childhood family, and the ways that this childhood set her up for a deep interest in historiography. Pam's first professional qualification was in pharmacy, studied at the Brisbane Technical College. Subsequently she married an American, Robert Watson, and moved to live with him in New York, where she was a tour guide to the United Nations building. She moved back to Australia when her husband was very unwell and after his death studied anthropology at university, including undertaking an honours dissertation (1980) on the pituri trade of Aboriginal peoples of the Channel Country, eventually published in the eminent journal *Oceania*. Her doctorate explored similar themes, researching the use of Betel nut by first peoples of New Guinea. In this interview she elaborates on the pituri trade, and too the way it was used by non-Aboriginal pastoralists, including Sidney Kidman. She also summarizes the history underlying *Frontier Lands and Pioneer Legends*: the accounts of Costello, Mary Durack, Alice Duncan Kemp, Michael Collins and Oscar de Satge about their family's 'pioneering' in the Channel Country. In particular she goes into great detail about Alice Duncan Kemp's account, based on the four books that she wrote of her childhood in the Channel Country. There is some discussion of the 'Debney Peace' although Pam attests that this is not a topic that she has specifically researched. There is also discussion of the Collins family and their form of colonialism, and of the different approach taken by the Coghlan family, who owned Glenormiston before the Collins White family. She also discusses the process of getting 'Frontier Lands and Pioneer Legends' published and its reception.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Watson, Pamela
Hornsey, Julie

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Pamela Lukin Watson's (1927-2020) (née Pamela Lukin), first professional qualification was in pharmacy, which she studied at the Brisbane Technical College. Subsequently she married an American, Robert Watson, and moved to live with him in New York, where she was a tour guide to the United Nations building. She moved back to Australia when her husband was very unwell and after his death studied anthropology at university, including undertaking an honours dissertation (1980) on the pituri trade of Aboriginal peoples of the Channel Country, eventually published in the eminent journal *Oceania*. Her doctorate explored similar themes, researching the use of Betel nut by first peoples of New Guinea.

Items in this series:

Interview with Pam Watson

Unit ID 29880/75

Scope and content

An interview with Pam Watson. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/76

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Pam's family outside her house.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/77

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Pam's family outside her house.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/78

Scope and content

Supporting footage from the town of Barcoo.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(4 digital)

Series 26: Patricia Hodgkinson (10 January 2002)

Series number 26

Series title Patricia Hodgkinson

Date 10 January 2002

Scope and content

Oral history with Patricia Hodgkinson (nee Richards). Topics include: father's family, paternal grandmother, mother's background, Mount Murchison Station, sister's accidental death, Channel Country, race relations, Aboriginal women, Aboriginal wages, Laura Duncan, Alice Duncan-Kemp, trachoma treatment, horse riding, gender relations, relationship with her mother, reading, land, Mt. Leonard homestead, dust storms, floods, wildflowers, education, transport, women, mother's hypochondria, birthing, medicine, class, World War II service, meeting her husband Hugh, family lineage, Gorringe family, railway gangers and the pastoral industry. **Creator's statement:** Patricia was interviewed about her childhood in the Channel Country and also for her knowledge of her mother's life, Ruby Margeurite Richards (nee de Courcy-Talbot). Patricia was born 18th November 1920 at the Cottage Hospital in Wilcannia, where her father at the time was managing Mount Murchison Station for the S. Kidman company. The bulk of this interview is

about her childhood at Mount Leonard Station, owned by Sinclair, Scott (her father) and Co, so midway between a single family and a company property. Early in the interview Patricia gives considerable detail about her father's and mother's family's history. This includes the story of how Patricia's mother first came to the Channel Country as a young adult orphan helping her aunt – Mrs Craigie – as the publican of the Bedourie hotel. There are some 'tall tale' details here of Mrs Craigie baking her own currency – shin splints -for drovers who stayed in the hotel between contracts and similarly mythic stories about her father and how he came to be a pastoral manager in the Channel Country as a very young man in the early twentieth century. That was where he met Patricia's mother – Ruby Marguerite – before their marriage in 1912. During the First World War her father managed Mount Murchison station, near Wilcannia: thus Patricia's birthplace. Patricia's mother was never at ease in the Australian outback and there are many stories of her mother's unhappiness at Mount Murchison, including in an awkward encounter with Sidney Kidman and the tragic story of the death of Patricia's sister Lucille amidst a Darling River flood. This tragedy caused Patricia's family to leave the employment of Kidman and for her father to accept the position of manager of Mt Leonard station, in 1923, when Patricia was three. There is great detail of the story of coming to Mt Leonard up the Birdsville Track during a flood in one of the first generation Model T Ford cars (Tin Lizzies) and of the first encounter of Aboriginal women with Patricia's mother at Mt Leonard once the family finally arrived. There is also discussion in more general terms of how important cars were in inducing non-Aboriginal women to live in the Channel Country. Patricia shares her (second hand) knowledge of a massacre of Aboriginal people that had occurred on Mt Leonard in 1902 and her childhood experience twenty years later of the Aboriginal community that remained on the station and its environs. There is discussion of the racial dimensions of labour on Mt Leonard station in her childhood – including forms of remuneration for Aboriginal workers - and of the especially close relationship between her father and 'old Jo', a traditional owner of Mt Leonard station who had survived the massacre as a child. Patricia rejects several aspects of Alice Duncan Kemp's memoirs in regard to relationships with Aboriginal people, but by contrast discusses what came to be the close relationship of her father and Alice's sister Laura. She also discusses her mother's role as nurse to both the family and to Aboriginal people with chronic and minor ailments, such as sore eyes from dust storms and blinding sun. Patricia discusses her childhood on the station, largely spent with her father and brothers on the land, and the role of horses and guns in the life of the station, including when animals had to be shot during drought, and the process of 'breaking in' a horse. She describes her father making a tennis court with everyone helping for Christmas 1929. There is also extensive discussion of her mother's troubled relation to the land and the life of the Channel Country, and too to her family. From the age of 5 Patricia goes to a succession of boarding schools in several cities and for one year lives with paternal relatives in Lindfield, Sydney. She also explains how she came to be a welfare officer in the WAF in the Second World War and about trips back to the Channel Country in 1939 and again several

decades later. She discusses what Cooper Creek is like in flood around Mt Leonard Station, including from a child's perspective: *When we knew that the storms were coming, there'd be lightning and thunder, dry lightning – dry thunder, we kids would get up on top of these water tanks and we'd do war dances because of the gorgeous noise.* There are evocative description of her first experience of flowers as a child of 7 when she experienced the first real Channel Country rain. There is also considerable discussion of the Hagen Family and their great competence as station employees, both for stockwork and domestic service.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Hodgkinson, Patricia

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Patricia Hodgkinson (nee Richards) was born 18th November 1920 at the Cottage Hospital in Wilcannia, where her father at the time was managing Mount Murchison Station for the S. Kidman company.

Items in this series:

Interview with Patricia Hodgkinson

Unit ID 29880/79

Scope and content

An interview with Patricia Hodgkinson. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/80

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Patricia typing at her computer, her hands and photographs.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 27: Edith McFarlane (17 May 2002)

Series number 27

Series title Edith McFarlane

Date 17 May 2002

Scope and content

Oral history with Edith McFarlane. Topics include: childhood, education, drought of 1925, her husband, Durham Downs, garden, working life of a governess, Mrs McCullagh, traditional Aborigines, flour making, string making, pituri, race relations, Stolen Generation, gender relations, Aboriginal women servants (Elsie and Ada), Aboriginal treatment of children, Channel Country, flood, Laura Duncan, childbirth, Film Australia documentary, grasshopper plague, rat plague, living in Tanbar, writing, children's education and the Aboriginal population. **Creator's statement:** Edith McFarlane (nee Weidenhöfer) was born in Adelaide in 1903 and her childhood was on a small farm in the Torrens Valley. Her parents had gone to Paraguay with William Lane and the 'New Australia' movement, but settled back in Adelaide when that utopian scheme failed. She completed her 'senior' qualification in Adelaide and followed that with a two year kindergarten training course before briefly running her own kindergarten. Edith went to the Channel Country in 1925 as a governess to Durham Downs station, having read Mrs Aeneas Gunn's *We of the Never Never* that made her imagine living in the outback. This is an interview with someone who lived in the Channel Country for more than three decades having been born elsewhere, but who, at the time of the interview had lived away from the Channel Country for more than four decades. She describes an arduous journey to get to Durham Downs, via train, mail coach and car, amidst a very tough drought. The station was owned by S.Kidman and Co. She goes on to describe in detail her difficult role as governess, with few resources and multiple and expanding expectations. She also gives considerable detail on the lives of Aboriginal people on the station, with many dimensions of their traditional way of life intact: including housing, hunting and gathering, clothing, fibre, trade in pituri, traditional ceremonies including after death; traditional forms of long distance communication etc. She discusses Aboriginal women working around the houses of various stations that she worked with. Later in the interview she gives her analysis of why in the three plus decades she lived in the Channel Country, there came to be fewer and fewer Aboriginal people living there. Edith was in a Film Australia documentary in the 1950s about the Channel Country and she describes her experience of being filmed. She also discusses her experience of floods in the channel Country and also of plagues of grasshoppers and of rats. Edith discusses writing about her experience of living in the Channel Country, which was self-published as *Land of Contrasts* [1976, reprinted with additional material 1996]. Edith died in 2012.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

McFarlane, Edith, 1903-2012

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Other

Biographical history

Edith McFarlane (née Weidenhöfer) was born in Adelaide in 1903 and her childhood was on a small farm in the Torrens Valley. Her parents had gone to Paraguay with William Lane and the 'New Australia' movement, but settled back in Adelaide when that utopian scheme failed. She completed her 'senior' qualification in Adelaide and followed that with a two year kindergarten training course before briefly running her own kindergarten. Edith went to the Channel Country in 1925 as a governess to Durham Downs station, having read Mrs Aeneas Gunn's *We of the Never Never* that made her imagine living in the outback. Edith was in a Film Australia documentary in the 1950s about the Channel Country and wrote about her experience of living in the Channel Country, which was self-published as *Land of Contrasts*. Edith died in 2012.

Items in this series:

Interview with Edith McFarlane

Unit ID 29880/81

Scope and content

An interview with Edith McFarlane. The interviewer is Trish FitzSimons. Includes footage of Edith's hands and stills at the end. ***Includes transcript.***

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

Access

Other guides Transcript available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/82

Scope and content

Supporting footage of photographs from Edith's album.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(2 digital)

Series 28: Sundry Channel Country footage (2000)

Series number 28

Series title Sundry Channel Country footage

Date 2000

Scope and content

Collection of sundry Channel Country footage.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Hornsey, Julie

Addis, Erika

Description

Description 1 oral history

Locate OMDIG

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/83

Scope and content

Supporting footage of land and wildlife whilst driving from Mt. Isa to Bedourie.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/84

Scope and content

Supporting footage of Windorah including surrounding landscape and town footage.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Support footage

Unit ID 29880/85

Scope and content

Supporting footage of landscape taken whilst driving from Birdsville to Windorah.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(3 digital)

Series 29: Edited mini-documentaries (2002)

Series number 29

Series title Edited mini-documentaries

Date 2002

Scope and content

Collection of edited mini-documentaries for Channels of History which explores the relationship

with women, land and history in the Channel Country.

Author / Creator

FitzSimons, Trish

Description

Description 1 Betacam-SP

Additional format Digital copy available

Locate OMOSBOX Box 23508 O/S

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access

Copyright status In copyright

Conditions of use CC-BY-ND

Items in this series:

Introduction

Unit ID 29880/86

Scope and content

Introduction for the mini-documentaries. Caption from title screen: "This segment introduces the themes explored in more depth in the other videos and the text panels".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

A Land of Drought and Flooding Rains

Unit ID 29880/87

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'A Land of Drought and Flooding Rains'. Caption from title screen: "Water or its absence is a vital feature of people's lives in a land with a very low rainfall but intermittent flooding, including the drainage of much country to the north".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

A Pastoral Partnership

Unit ID 29880/88

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'A Pastoral Partnership'. Caption from title screen: "Initially seen as a barrier to establishing the pastoral industry, Aboriginal people were central to its workforce by the early twentieth century. Now the pastoral industry requires less labour, and few Aboriginal people live and work on stations".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

When the Going Gets Tough

Unit ID 29880/89

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'When the Going Gets Tough'. Caption from title screen: "The first

generation of non Aboriginal women to live in the Channel Country survived isolation and great physical hardship. Even today many women live without facilities such as mains power. It isn't everyone's idea of a good life".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Hand, Land and Labour

Unit ID 29880/90

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'Hand, Land and Labour'. Caption from title screen: "The labour of women has been central to the history of the Channel Country. Women's roles have varied, over time and place - one key difference is between single family properties and the company properties".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Braided Lives

Unit ID 29880/91

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'Braided Lives'. Caption from title screen: "The Channel Country has an area the size of Victoria and a population of only 1,500. The lives of its women are as intertwined as the river channels upon which they depend".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

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On and Off the Grog

Unit ID 29880/92

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'On and Off the Grog'. Caption from title screen: "Alcohol has been important in an area where many men have lived without families, working long and hard, but with substantial breaks every few months. Many of the pubs were owned, run and worked in by women".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

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Sheilas and Blokes

Unit ID 29880/93

Scope and content

Mini-documentary entitled 'Sheilas and Blokes'. Caption from title screen: "The Channel Country was mostly settled by single European men. Early last century non Aboriginal women were a tiny minority and even now there are many more men in the region".

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

Credits for mini-documentaries

Unit ID 29880/94

Scope and content

Credit sequence for the mini-documentaries.

Description

Description 1 digital video

Additional format Digital copy available

[View the items](#)

(9 digital)

Series 30: Visitor book (2002)

Series number 30

Series title Visitor book

Date 2002

Scope and content

One visitor book containing signatures and comments of people who visited the Channels of History exhibition.

Description

Description 1 visitors' book

Access

Access restrictions Unrestricted access.

Copyright status In copyright

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