

Mr Charles (Charlie) Munnery – Oral History Interview Log

Part I – 17 September 2018

Time	Subject
	DISC 1
0:00:36	Family background – details mother’s family background – Hannan and Ware families; St Lawrence and Mackay, Queensland
0:05:11	Parents, Harry Munnery and (Sarah) Alma Hannan meet and marry in Mackay in 1923, then move to Sarina, Queensland - father’s reasons for moving to Mackay - first home.
0:07:43	Family moves to Mill St, Sarina - description of house - attends Sarina State School
0:09:37	Sarina – Plane Creek Sugar Mill and distillery – largest employers in town
0:10:15	Starts first job – carpentry apprenticeship aged 14½ - at Plane Creek Mill where his father worked. Description of job and importance of the crushing season in the sugar industry in the 1930s
0:18:09	With declaration of World War II in 1939, the sugar mill was given protected industry status – due to its role in producing sugar and manufacturing parts in the engineering department for the war effort. This meant staff who enlisted to serve in the War had to wait until the end of crushing season and for official clearance before they could go to the War.
0:19:02	Effect of War on Sarina – boon for unemployed men – Depression memories – formation of Voluntary Defence Corps using WWI veterans to undertake coastal defence activities – construction of air raid shelters – black out windows
0:27:07	Father’s reaction to Charlie enlisting to serve in the War – had undiagnosed PTS from own experiences serving in World War I and would suffer periodically from memories of what he witnessed in France
0:33:18	Enlistment – 1942 – reasons for joining up and choice of service
0:38:17	2/6 Australian Infantry Battalion “Coles Battalion” – training at Glen Innes, Brisbane, Tenterfield and Canungra – experience of army life
	DISC 2
0:45:24	Final training on Atherton Tablelands then departure to Pacific War 1943 in New Guinea – Aitape – initial experiences in New Guinea – mission to drive back Japanese towards Wewak
0:49:56	Conditions in New Guinea – wounding – flamethrower experience
1:05:59	Other operations – Finisterre Mountains – war ends

1:09:23	Repatriation to Australia from New Guinea delayed due to shortage of transport and weather conditions
1:10:37	Losses in Battalion
1:13:02	Mateship bonds with other soldiers – lifelong friendships formed as a result of the War
1:15:45	Lessons in life learnt from war experiences
1:18:51	Volunteers to serve in Japanese Occupation Force – new unit formed – long wait in Morotai due to shortage of ships to transport troops– strike
1:22:41	Hiroshima – Hitachi – posting – radiation residues
1:25:25	Japanese Occupational Force – description of job
1:27:31	Returned to Australia in 1947 – Civilian life readjustment – visit to Munnery relatives in Merrylands – job with floor tiler
1:31:57	Joined Merrylands football team – leads to association with Roach family (brothers, Cliff and Laurie a former Army acquaintance)
1:36:48	Meets his future wife Betty Roach (sister of Cliff and Laurie) – buys land in Claremont St, Merrylands (audio cuts out)

Part II – 15 October 2018

Time	Subject
	DISC 3
00:00:00	Introduction and recap from previous session
00:00:43	Marriage to Betty Roach on 15 April 1950 at Holy Trinity, Granville; Reception at Merrylands School of Arts hall
00:01:38	Bought block of land at Alan St, Yagoona and built first house
00:04:31	Moved back to Merrylands – bought block of land in Newman St where Charles Mance Park is now situated
00:05:45	Moved to Burford St, Merrylands, near rubbish dump and Newman & Underwood tile works (now King Park) – built house
00:06:08	Worked at Victa Homes (part of Victa Industries)
00:08:59	Memories of Burford St area mid to late 1950s
00:10:13	Moved to Paton St, Merrylands West near Walker Benson Tile Works c1961
00:10:32	New job with JBL, a New Zealand company, as a Building Supervisor – 15

	years
00:11:34	Association with RSL – joined 1947, initially with Granville RSL and then Merrylands – recalls the first Merrylands clubhouse commonly referred to then as the “old hut” (aka the “tin shed”) had a poor reputation locally until Jim Crome became President of the sub-branch.
00:15:35	First clubhouse was built by Whitworth & Townsend – simple structure (fibro and timber)
00:16:06	RSL Committee enlarged circa mid-1950s when future development of the RSL Club came under consideration – social secretary role
00:16:51	Decision made to have a separate RSL President to manage the Club – Jim Crome appointed – Charlie Brown held liquor licence – Fred Gardener was Treasurer – stable committee 14 members
00:18:27	Jim Crome engaged architect, Jack Wilson, to design a masterplan to guide the Club’s development over a 10-year period
00:19:22	1958 – Bill Townsend elected President at first committee meeting as a fully licensed club – Charles Munnery was one of the Vice-Presidents
00:20:00	1959 – Club Presidential election – Bill and Charlie tied for president at first count
00:21:17	1960 – Presidential election Charles Munnery won vote and became President for next 14 years (until 1974) when he resigned
00:21:40	RSL Youth Club started (date?) – first intake was sons and daughters of RSL members then opened to wider community – sporting facilities to develop local youth
00:23:36	Strong youth club committee – Eric Tweedale was the first superintendent, Ab Balding first secretary and Charles Munnery first President
00:24:00	Youth Club started in a room of the main RSL Club building with separate access. Cricket was the first team assembled, then boxing
00:25:40	Built new youth club - 1000 kids a week would participate in the wide range of sports and other activities offered - dances held at club – strict regulations
00:29:30	Youth Club built c1962-3 – Jack Wilson designed building – issues with the foundations – development of King Park for sport – establishment of King Park Committee with Ab Balding as Chairman
00:31:52	Merrylands RSL Youth Club travelled to Randwick annually to compete against other RSL youth clubs – general behaviour and dress code – visits by leading sportsmen of the day
00:38:25	Ethos as Merrylands RSL Club President – incidents requiring tough decisions

00:45:39	RSL social and community activities
00:47:25	RSL welfare activities – begins connection with Legacy in Nowra (1974) after leaving Merrylands – Chairman of Nowra Legacy – restoration of Legacy House – moves to Port Macquarie continues involvement with Legacy - links with Gosford Legacy – encourages better communication between northern region Legacy clubs
	DISC 4
00:54:46	Begins involvement with IDAFE (Intellectually Disabled Adults Further Education) at Port Macquarie – acquired building for IDAFE – example of a man who was helped by IDAFE
01:02:52	Legacy – Raymond Terrace – retired from welfare work but retains friendships with a few clients – Legacy work still as vital as ever
01:07:09	Merrylands RSL building programme (c1960s) – tight finances – dealings with bank manager leads to drafting of Club’s first budget – Club’s financial situation improves as a result
01:15:24	7 th National Quadraplegic and Paraplegic Games held at Merrylands in 1972 – organising committee involvement
01:18:16	Holroyd Council (c1960s – 1974)- views of
01:22:32	Merrylands RSL progress – reasons for club’s continued success when others have closed their doors – good management team and staff loyalty – huge social membership numbers
01:28:45	Thanks
01:29:09	End of interview