

Mr Fred Walker – Oral History Interview Log

04 October 2018

Time	Subject
	DISC 1
0:00:00	Interview introduction – Fred Walker and sons, Glen Walker and Scott Walker
0:00:45	Lived in South Wentworthville briefly – 5 Janet St – at aunt's house following death of his mother in 1938 – then moved to stay with another aunt at Leichhardt. Outlines reasons for later deciding to settle in South Wentworthville
0:04:14	Memories of living in Leichhardt – aunt ran an SP betting shop from home. House was also HQ for local ARP (Air Raid Precautions) unit during WWII as they had a telephone.
0:06:40	Reason for joining the Merchant Navy – family connections - merchant seamen not recognised as war veterans until decades after World War II – cousin and father both missed out
0:08:23	Interview cuts out

Time	Subject
	DISC 1
00:00:00	Recap War years on SS Mangana – notorious German U-boat, U-862 operating in the Pacific at that period and had threatened other ships along Australian coast - Reputed sighting of U-862 by fellow crewman on SS Mangana
00:03:43	Merchant shipping attacks and mines along Australian coast during War – Niagara sinking carrying cargo of gold
00:05:33	Medals – war service for merchant seamen finally recognised in 1990 but didn't claim then – Youngest son, Scott Walker initiated application for award of Fred's medals – four medals – presentation by Cumberland Council Mayor, Greg Cummings in conjunction with Merrylands RSL in April 2018
00:11:54	Fred's father's experiences in the Merchant Navy – 60 years service, covering both world wars – incident in Canada during WWI – trouble with lungs
00:14:50	Fred in Cairns when peace declared at end of WWII – Life after War
00:16:11	Post-War – meets future wife, Betty Moon at Leichhardt – married in 1955
00:19:11	Story of Fred and Betty's engagement – marriage at Petersham Registry Office – difficulty in obtaining home loan as 50% deposit required then

00:23:09	Moves to Adelaide Steamship Company and begins working on tugboats – spends next 34 years of his career in tugboats
00:23:54	Fred and Betty finally able to buy block of land at Richmond St, South Wentworthville and house is built – George Hudson Readycut timber House – coincidence of Richmond name
00:26:10	Memories of South Wenty in the mid-late 1950s – no sewer or telephone – half the street still vacant lots – rode bike to railway station to get to work – road unsealed
00:29:06	Betty did not drive (even after the family was able to buy a car) – used local bus service on Great Western Highway and travelling vendors would come to the house eg greengrocer, chemist so car not as essential then – Betty later had job in local kindergarten c1970s-80s in Frances St.
00:31:58	Fred credits Betty for managing home and young family for long periods on her own when he was away for long stretches of time with work – recalls one extended period when ship ran aground on reef in North Queensland – Glen and Scott recall walking / catching buses to Wentworthville or Parramatta for shopping – formerly a small group of shops at Alto St – Merrylands Rd shops not visited as harder to get to by public transport then
00:36:29	Fred joined Wentworthville RSL – Club ran Christmas picnics for members children at Warwick Farm – Australian made gifts only for kids
	DISC 2
00:37:46	Glen discusses memories of growing up in South Wenty in 1960s-70s – Boy Scouts involvement – Betty instrumental in having scout hall at Monterey St built with donated bricks from Boral – Glen and Scott joined 1 st Mays Hill Scouts c1970-71 which initially met in the old Presbyterian church hall at corner of Bartlett and Frances Sts, opposite Alderson Park, until the scout hall was built – hall later became kindergarten where Betty worked
00:40:42	All three Walker boys attended Greystanes High School – school boundary issues
00:43:04	Glen and Scott's memories of Hilltop Rd Public School and Greystanes High – fires in local schools – Fred recalls retired teachers being called back into service during WWII as younger teachers were serving in the War
00:46:53	Fruit and vegetables grown in the family backyard at Richmond St, South Wentworthville
00:48:37	Old Regent Cinema, Wentworthville - Fred's work – early starts – tugs travelling from Sydney Harbour to Botany Bay to assist oil tankers in and out of port every week – special job during opening of Opera House in 1973

00:51:44	Merrylands Mall cinema – Glen recalls vinyl ‘love seats’ and kids disrupting movie screenings – memories of Merrylands Mall in the 1970s – abseiling experience outside the Mall
00:54:58	Old brick and tile works sites – mostly closed down – Goodlet & Smith had become a tip site – Gipps Road tip – dumped cars
00:57:40	Housing Commission houses in South Wenty – already built before they moved into the area but Glen and Scott remember them as well-built houses, scattered around the neighbourhood so there was no antipathy to HC residents, everyone got on
00:59:06	Wentworthville RSL – Fred remembers new club canvassing for members at the Wentworthville Hotel circa 1966 – he was badge number 66 – Scott worked at Wenty RSL as a bar steward circa mid-1980s – canal walk between Wenty Leagues and Wenty RSL
01:01:17	Fred joined Wenty Leagues in the early days circa 1959 – dropped membership for some years and rejoined after retiring – presented old brochure to club dating from the period it was first built
01:03:24	Glen and Scott’s uncle worked as a doorman at Wenty RSL Club – Scott recalls the Club’s sweeping staircase conveying a feeling of glamour – Glen and Scott both swam at Wenty Pool as boys and attended school swimming carnivals – also golf for school sport at Fox Hills Golf Course – bus company (Cleary Brothers?) issues with the service and age of the buses
01:08:21	Betty helped out with scouts and in local fundraising activities – knitted items for stall at Merrylands
01:09:22	Wentworthville Mall – Fred, Scott and Glen all remember early shops at the mall and central carpark – Hilltop Road shops not close enough for them to use regularly but recall a few of the shops
01:12:30	M4 Motorway – Fred took all three sons to walk on the new motorway before it opened to vehicular traffic – discussion of impact of M4 on local roads, traffic and community at South Wentworthville
01:17:00	Discussion of general changes in the area – shops and houses
01:19:03	Discussion of what Fred, Glen and Scott each enjoyed most about living in South Wenty
01:24:18	Thanks
01:24:35	End of interview