

MY NAME IS LOUISE PARKER AND I AM INTERVIEWING MR. ROY MALONE OF 27 LETCHWORTH PARADE, BALMORAL, ON HIS EXPERIENCES AND RECOLLECTIONS OF RATHMINES PUBLIC SCHOOL FROM APPROXIMATELY 1957 TO 1962. IT IS HOPED THAT THIS TAPE WILL FORM A RESEARCH RESOURCE WHICH WILL BE USED BY THE SCHOOL.

L.P. Mr. Malone, what age did you start school, and approximately, what year?

R.M. Approximately 7 years of age and between 1957 and 1958.

L.P. When is your date of birth?

R.M. 1950.

L.P. And what school building did you attend when you went to Rathmines School?

R.M. There were only two buildings...

L.P. Two buildings or two classes?

R.M. Only two classes, actually sorry, and one was Mr. Clark's classroom, one was Mrs. Clark's and there was a small office.

L.P. Right, and where was the office situated?

R.M. At the end of the building, I believe.

L.P. The lake end of the building?

R.M. No, you have got me on that, I'm not sure.

L.P. And the toilet block was separate, could you describe that, was it brick?

R.M. Yes, yes the toilet block was separate and it was an old timber affair.

L.P. It was separated in to boys and girls.

R.M. Yes, it was separated.

L.P. Mr. Clark's classroom and Mrs. Clark's classroom it was separated by a door was it, there was a door in the wall?

R.M. No, not that I remember there was only, there was a separate doorway to each classroom and the only access was via the verandah.

L.P. Right, during the time that you were there, what did you do for a library?

R.M. As far as I can remember, there was no library.

L.P. Right, and could you tell me if there was a canteen operating?



R.M. No, I cannot recollect a canteen.

L.P. Right, and did you have a uniform at all?

R.M. Not that I can recollect, no.

L.P. Right. While you were at Rathmines School, you attended the propeller presentation, would you be able to describe the day for me and tell me about it?

R.M. Yes, I can remember the Squadron Leader coming to the School...

L.P. Can you remember his name?

R.M. No, not at this stage, and he presented Mr. Clark with the propeller which was mounted above the classroom, in Mr. Clark's classroom above the blackboard um, there was not much ceremony really to go with it, there was only just the handing over of the propeller and having it mounted above the blackboard.

L.P. Right, the Squadron Leader to Mr. Clark.

R.M. Yes.

L.P. And the whole school attended it?

R.M. Yes.



L.P. And what building was that held in?

R.M. That was in the eastern building.

L.P. Right, in Mr. Clark's classroom.

R.M. Yes, that's right.

L.P. The break-up of classes between Mr. Clark and Mrs. Clark, can you tell me which had which?

R.M. No, not at this stage, Mr. Clark seemed to have the older children and mostly all the boys.

L.P. Right, and do you remember how many children were in each class at all, approximately?

R.M. Quite a number, the classroom was full, no I can't remember the exact number no.

L.P. And there was a walkway between the school building and the toilet block?

R.M. No, there was only a dirt path, there was no ...

L.P. No, actual walkway...

R.M. No.



L.P. Right. Were there any football fields or any sporting activities held while you were there?

R.M. Yes, we were allowed to use the Air Force Base's facilities on what used to be the cricket oval and I think mostly we played soccer there.

L.P. Right, and the school supplied the soccer ball and things like that?

R.M. Yes, that's correct.

L.P. You didn't play tennis at all?

R.M. No, there was no tennis, the only tennis that was available in those days was at the tennis courts at Wangi Power Station.

L.P. Right. You attended March Past at the R.A.A.F. Base.

R.M. Yes, we used to go down and watch the flag raising ceremony and so forth in the actual ...

L.P. Mr. and Mrs. Clark took you down?



R.M. I would say they would have but I can't remember if they actually did, but um, I had actual free access to the Air Force Base because my father worked there for some time and I also knew the guards at the gate and was allowed free access to the Air Force Base.

L.P. Right, do you remember anything in particular happening between the school and the Air Force Base at the time, you know maybe rifle range mishaps, bombs going off or the planes flying over?

R.M. From the school it was only a short walk down to the actual practice range where they used to do all their target shooting and in our lunch hour we used to jump the school fence and go down there and watch them doing all their target practice. You know, when you think about it, it was dangerous I suppose, but they tested all their cannons for the Catalinas, all heavy artillery, all small arms they had two days a week in which they used to do target practice and we used to line along the side of the fence and watch them doing all their target practice.

L.P. And these two days, you can't remember when that was?

R.M. No, not the two separate days, but the big, on certain occasions, the testing of the Catalina cannons which was a big thing because they used to take them off the planes and mount them on stands and fire them into the sand.

L.P. Right, they imported sand or...?

R.M. Yes they had a big sand heap which was probably nearly as high as a house there and they had targets set up in front of this sand mound and they used to fire the cannons and machine guns and small arms and ...

L.P. Was the sand mound located near the school, like in relation to the R.A.A.F. Base.

R.M. It was actually where the practice tennis wall is now, that's where the...

L.P. Near the shopping centre?

R.M. Yes. Not actually where the tennis courts are but where they practice. There is a brick wall there that they hit their balls up against and they are allowed to practice tennis there.

L.P. In Rosemary Row, near the lake.

R.M. Yes. It was actually only 30 or 40 feet from the fenceline so we were allowed to stand along the side of the fence, oh well we weren't allowed to be we got away with it anyway, and we were allowed to watch all these firearms being tested and so forth.



L.P. Can you remember what most of the parents did of the children in the school. What most of their occupations were?

R.M. Yes, most of them were either miners or worked in Wangi Power Station. There were only three main forms of employment in the area, that was the council, the mines, Awaba Mine and Wangi Power Station.

L.P. Right, you didn't have many R.A.A.F. children?

R.M. Yes we had quite a few R.A.A.F. children in the class, yes.

L.P. Right. I believe you knew Irvine Homer's family.

R.M. Yes, yes, I knew Irvine and his sister and also Mr. Homer.

L.P. Right.

R.M. Mr. Homer was a paraplegic but actually used to do very good oil paintings and watercolour paintings by using his mouth, to hold the paintbrush, the paintings were exceptionally good.

L.P. Right, and he painted plates I believe, do you remember those at all?

R.M. No, not at this stage, no.

L.P. Can you remember A.B. Rea setting up their shipbuilding...?



R.M. Yes, he used to, when he took over, not only the ramp that was used to pull the Catalinas out of the water, he also took over the slipway around on the point and he built several barges there and did ship repairs there for several years. He used to take them over and tow them out through Swansea Channel. Yes he had quite a good operation going there, I don't know the exact reasons why it closed but it had a good set up going.

L.P. Right, and did he employ many people?

R.M. Yes, there was quite a few people there. There were people doing sand blasting and a lot had quite a few welders working for them and he had that business going for several years there.

L.P. And can you remember if there was a uniform when you attended the school?

R.M. No, I don't believe that I at any stage wore a uniform.

L.P. Can you remember doing any cultural activities at the school with Mr. Clark, any plays or anything?

R.M. No, he was not interested in that type of social activity really.



L.P. Right, well thank you very much for participating in our  
tape.

R.M. No trouble...

L.P. Thank you.

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