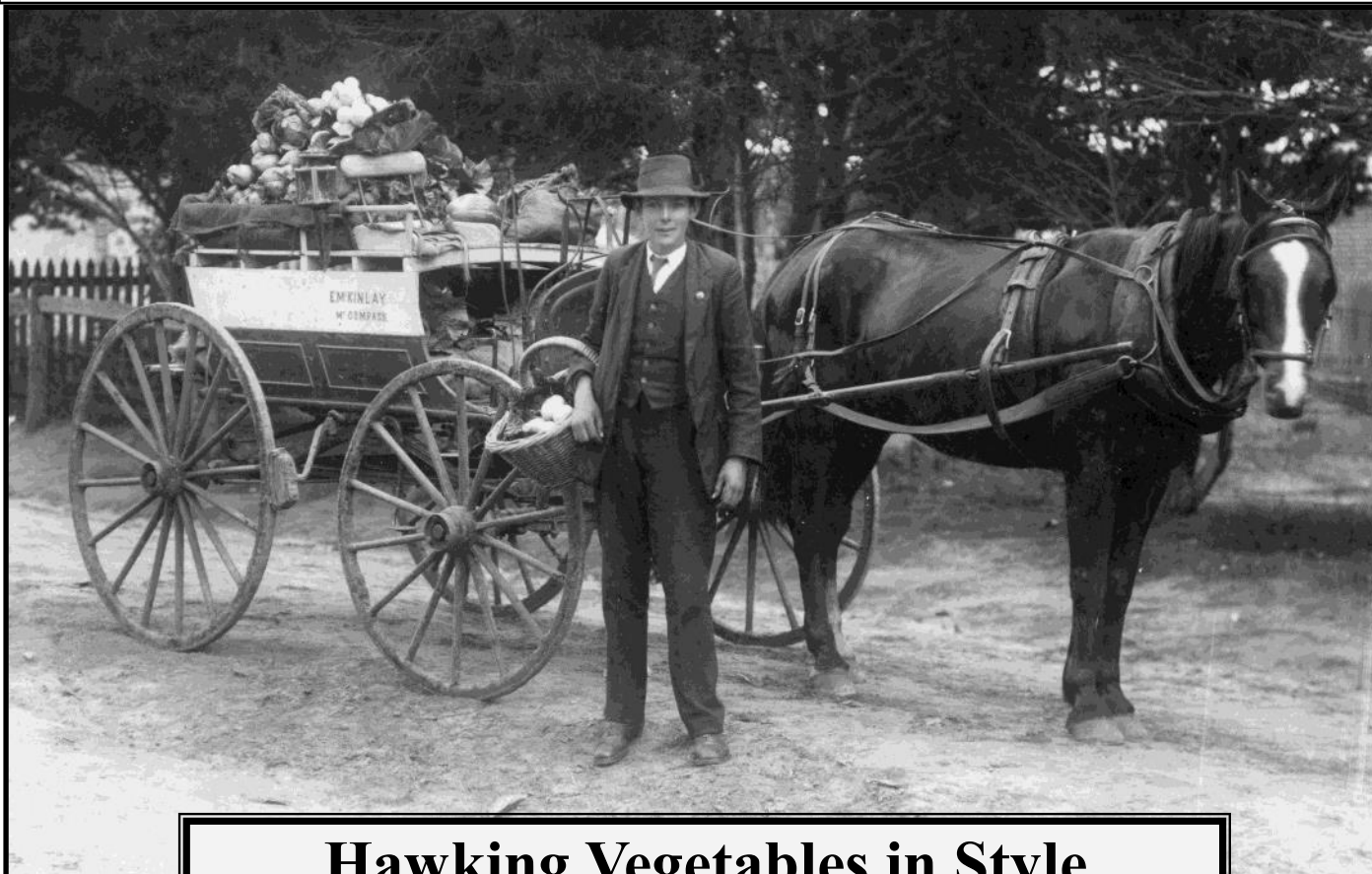


THE MOUNT COMPASS ARCHIVES

CHRONICLE

A FORUM TO PROMOTE THE HISTORY & ARCHIVES OF MOUNT COMPASS

No 21 MARCH 2023



Hawking Vegetables in Style

For those of you wondering who the young lad holding a basket full of fresh produce in this photograph is - it's a young Eric McKinlay. This picture is displayed on the outside wall of Melita's IGA, with Eric photographed in around 1920, hawking his father Harry's vegetables on the south coast .

At the time, his father owned a market-garden property growing a variety of vegetables, along what is now Bahloo Glen Road. A hand-written note on the back of the original postcard states that Harry, who also worked as a blacksmith, had 'fixed up' the buggy that had been purchased in Adelaide for this purpose.

Young Eric's name has been proudly painted on the side of this buggy as 'E McKinlay Mt Compass'. As was usual for most rural children in those days, Eric had left school at 14 to work on the family farm, while also hawking their vegetables to Port Elliot, and to regular customers along the route.

Other local gardeners also hawked their fruit & vegetables around the Fleurieu as a way of selling their produce. Twice a week between the years 1913 and 1940, Hugh Jacobs would hawk his family's vegetables to Victor Harbor for six months of the year, while Eric (above) and Horrie & Oscar Jacobs travelled to their customers in the Port Elliot area. Early last century, Thomas Chaplin of Nangkita would hawk his own produce around Goolwa while Horace Green of Tooperang did the same at Finnis and Milang.

Inside this edition on page 14, are more photographs of Eric alongside his next three vehicles as he progressed from horse-drawn vans to motorised trucks. In the 1930s he discontinued this hawking and handed the round over to his brothers, Bob and Don McKinlay, who would service the districts of Aldinga and Meadows.

The postcard shown above was kindly supplied by Ronda Arthur.

Photographs and articles in the *Chronicle* can be copied for non-commercial purposes provided the Mt Compass Archives are acknowledged as the source.

Editorial

The Archives has recently received a number of donated artifacts. Following the disastrous fire last year which resulted in the demolition of three local shops, a few small items were salvaged and handed to us by the demolition contractor. **Deryk** (our popular local butcher) has also given us his fire-damaged butcher's steel (a type of sharpening tool) as a now historical item for display in the Mt Compass Hall's foyer cabinets.

Melita Hicks has also provided us with a small sheet of iron that was part of an old shed on her Cleland Gully property. That may not in itself sound very interesting but the shed was built by the Wehrmann family nearly a hundred years ago using flattened bitumen drums left behind from the bitumising of Victor Harbor Road in the late 1920s. These empty drums formed the basis of numerous sheds around the district as locals sought to make use of a valuable resource during what became known as 'the Great Depression'. This simple sheet of rusty iron encapsulates a historic period both through its initial use and its practical re-purposing into a building material.

This willingness of people to help retain mementos from our past is very much appreciated.

The second instalment of the **Nangkita Village Settlement**, commencing on page 6, also looks at some of those settlers who remained once this social experiment failed. They may have arrived here from troubled backgrounds, but these settlers were aiming for a better life. They were as representative of society at that time as any other group would be. Some of the men had been in trouble with the law, some had left alcoholic parents, or would themselves desert their wives, others were teetotaling and devoutly religious. Whatever their backgrounds or failings, all during this particular project were aiming for a better life in this Settlement. Although it wasn't achieved, a few did remain to continue this attempt to improve their lives.

Two of those who successfully remained in this district were the **McKinlay** brothers, whose family name was still to be found here one hundred years later (*refer page 11*). Roma Kirk, a grand-daughter now in her 90s, is one of these McKinlays and has kindly allowed the Archives to scan some of her family photo albums for inclusion in our digital archives. A few of these photos have been included in this edition.

Finally, if anyone reading this would like to attend one of our friendly **Archives history meetings**, we welcome everyone who has an interest in preserving our history to call in on the first Tuesday each month, at 5.00pm.

Regards & happy reading
Steve Kettle

News reports from the past

NANGKITA SETTLEMENT.

NOVEMBER 14.

The holiday was kept at this settlement on Monday. The Wirlunga Aid Committee with their friends, to the number of fifty, formed a picnic party and invited the villagers to be present. A large marquee was erected, and the visiting ladies were soon busy in attending to the wants of the company. After a substantial dinner had been disposed of sports of various kinds were entered into, and a thorough examination was made of the various works. A concert was given by the Nangkita Christy Minstrels, under the leadership of Mr. H. McKinlay, and judging by the applause the visitors were pleased at the entertainment provided for them. Mr. W. Blacker, M.P., spoke a few words, expressing satisfaction at the amount of work done, and counselled the members to keep on, notwithstanding the many obstacles, and success was certain. His remarks were supported by Messrs. De Ceaux and Sibley. In the evening dancing was indulged in.

Potato-planting and other garden work are being vigorously pushed on.

THE NANGKITA VILLAGE SETTLEMENT.—Mr. W. J. Blacker, M.P., has contributed to the daily papers an account of a trip to the Nangkita Village Settlement, from which we extract the following:—Although denounced as a failure the settlement is at the present time flourishing, and judging by present appearance will continue to flourish in spite of all that may be said to the contrary. Of the 25 original male settlers only seven remain, four married and three single men, but these men and women are sticklers and don't mean to shift. When they left Port Adelaide they were destitute, penniless, and forsaken. For a long time they had tried to obtain employment without success, and although they had very little knowledge of agricultural or horticultural pursuits they were determined to try. That they have made mistakes and thrown away much valuable time and labor they do not deny, yet they have achieved wonderful results, and now from practical experience and the object-lessons they have learnt from the other surrounding settlers they have a good general idea of the work they require to do. At the time of our visit they had just commenced stacking their hay, which consists of only six acres, but is wonderfully good, and

Left: Adelaide Observer - 24 November 1894
Above: Mt Barker Courier - 27 November 1896

Obituaries

For those who may not have heard, **Reginald (Reg) Clifford** passed away on 22nd December 2022, at the age of 77. Reg was born at Mt Compass in 1945 to Hazel & Fergus (Fergie) Clifford, while they were living along Nangkita Road (Section 336). After Reg's marriage to Elsie, the couple also lived on Nangkita Road for a while (where the Polana Deer Farm previously was).

After leaving the Mt Compass school in 1959, Reg worked for a number of locals, such as the builder Max Williams and on the McHugh's family dairy, but may best be remembered through his approx. 25 years working at the Mount Compass Dairy Vale factory. Part of his adult life was spent living here, but the majority of it was in Victor Harbor.



Another one of our born & bred Mt Compass sons, **Barry D McKinlay**, passed away this month (February). Barry was born in 1950, the son of local farmers Don & Olive McKinlay, but had spent the last 43 years living at Kununurra in the Kimberly Region of Western Australia.



He had been a keen member of the Mt Compass Scouts (*see Chronicle No 10*) and would progress to earn the coveted Queen Scout Award in 1967. This may have helped set him up to join the army, serving in Vietnam during 1970-71 with the 106 Field Workshop RAEME*.

Those of you who have looked at the Honour Roll displays in the Hall foyer may recall seeing Barry's name as one of the three young, local men who are listed under the Vietnam War section (1962-73).

In civilian life, Barry moved to Western Australia to work for an American company carrying out broad-acre, irrigation farming until its closure in 1981. He then moved to Kununurra to work for Pacific Seeds growing hybrid grain before moving over to the Dept of Agriculture & Food WA. After retiring, Barry remained in the region until his passing.

Barry had married a Queensland girl (Betty) and together they raised four boys, Scott, Shayne, Tim & Mike. He was aged 73 at his passing and had requested that his ashes be brought back to Mt Compass, to be interred in the Cemetery here.

* <https://106fdwksp.raeme.org.au>

Thanks to Kevin McKinlay & family for additional information

The Grotto Family at Nangkita in the 1930s

A recent chance encounter in Mt Compass between Marlene Connor and a visiting descendant of the Grotto family lead to a copy of their family's history being forwarded to the Archives. Below is a summary of the section covering their decade at Nangkita. Many families have passed through this district over the years with very little remaining to show they were ever here. This is just one of those families.

Antonio Grotto was born in 1897 at Vidor, Italy, some 80 kilometres north of Venice. When he was aged just two, his father passed away leaving him to be cared for by both his mother, who was suffering her own health problems, and his oldest sister. Despite this, he did receive a reasonable education, better than most of his contemporaries, but he was also required to work long hours in the fields alongside his family.

When Italy entered World War One on the side of the Allies, Antonio was caught up in the general mobilisation, joining a crack mountain regiment. He sustained a bayonet wound to the leg and was amongst 300,000 prisoners captured by the Germans in October 1917. As a Prisoner of War he was sent to a camp in Germany, where he saw out the remainder of the conflict and witnessed the collapse of civilisation there.

When he was finally returned to Italy in 1919, Antonio and his future wife Oliva Mattiazzo met through a mutual friend and were married in 1921. Their first child was born soon after and, as the sole remaining adult male of his extended family, Antonio bore a heavy responsibility during those difficult times.

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Antonio worked at various jobs such as restoring a local war-damaged church and brick making, while also helping with seasonal work on their land allotment. An income also came from working at a cement works in France and as a carpenter's labourer in Turin.

One winter when work options closed down, Antonio sought out other possibilities which ended with his migrating to Australia in 1927. Using family support, he managed to borrow 5,000 Italian lire to pay the 3,500 lire fare, while using the remainder to cover his family's living expenses. Oliva's father, at some risk to his own finances, had agreed to guarantee the loan, ensuring they could begin a new life.

Upon arriving at Port Adelaide aboard the "Palermo", Antonio found Australia was entering a period of major depression, with large demonstrations by unemployed workers protesting against people like Antonio being allowed into the country. Protestors did try to board Antonio's ship but were stopped thanks to action by the Italian Vice-Consul, with the passengers then being allowed to disembark.

Following some early problems in finding an honest employer, Antonio was referred to Mr Hunt at Finnis. There he managed to obtain work cutting wattle bark, which was used in the tanning process. Antonio also worked on a tobacco crop at Tooperang and was provided with a cottage which included a bed, blankets, crockery and cooking pans. Tom Langley, one of the first people to own a car in that district, helped Antonio with his shopping - aided by an Italian-English dictionary.

Antonio then worked for the Galpins at Currency Creek, carrying out general farm labouring and dairy work. He now felt settled and decided it was time for his family to join him.

Antonio's wife Oliva and their three young children, Rino, Eufemia & Giuseppe, travelled out to join him in 1930. The family lived in a house on Galpin's property, with the children attending Rockwood School (later known as Tooperang School).

In 1931, their fourth child was born in Australia and given the very Australian name of Donald, after the cricketer, Don Bradman.

The Galpin family, after purchasing a property at Tooperang, encountered financial difficulty and allowed Antonio and his family to move into the house on their farm. The Grottos milked ten cows there but had no other income source. This was 1931 and although the family did receive government relief in the form of food and clothing, as with many others during those difficult times, their staple diet consisted of rabbits they either trapped or shot.

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The Grotto family in 1933: Left to right- **Rino, Antonio** (father), **Eufemia, Donald, George, Oliva** (mother) and **Giuseppe** (holding a cat). This photograph appears to have been taken at Nangkita.



The Grotto family in front of their Nangkita home in 1936: Left to Right, back: Eufemia, Antonio, Giuseppe, Oliva & Rino. Front: Donald, Oswald and George. This is the mud house built by the Boothey family early last century.

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In 1932 another son, George Anthony, was born and named after the reigning Monarch at the time, King George V. The family was clearly trying their best to fit in with those around them by naming their children in this way.

In that same year, they moved to Nangkita with Antonio now working for the District Council, and then later for local farmer, George Stone. The house they lived in was the old mud brick home on section 288 that had been Boothey's cottage and would later be the Nangkita Cub's clubhouse. A photograph of the family alongside this house is shown above (*also refer to the colour photo on page 9 of Chronicle 17*).

It is highly likely that Antonio was the man who helped work on Geoff & Bessie Stone's new home on the same block. Richard Peters oversaw the construction, with his new son-in-law Geoff (the son of George Stone mentioned above) carrying out much of the work. The story has been handed down that an Italian man carried out the facing on the Mount Magnificent pink-marble stone that had been used.

The Grotto's children, Rino, Giuseppe, Eufemia and Donald would now attend the Mount Compass School, which involved a walk of eight kilometres each way. The family history notes that at this point they were receiving a great deal of support from the Stone family. A sixth child (Oswald John) was also added to the growing clan, in 1934.

In 1935 the family made the decision to become naturalised citizens (which prior to 1949, actually meant becoming British citizens). His employer George Stone, along with his son Geoff, signed the application forms declaring that Antonio was a person of 'good repute'. Richard Peters JP certified the paperwork and George's wife Lilla Stone completed a report on the family in her capacity as Nangkita's Postmistress. As was stipulated in those days, Antonio's Italian citizenship had to be renounced as part of the process.

The Grottos left Nangkita in 1937, moving into a cottage near the Finnis River, while Antonio now worked on a dairy at Ashbourne, earning considerably more money than previously. Their three school age children transferred from the Mt Compass School to Nangkita School.

This family had now earned sufficient money to repay their debt back in Italy, much to the surprise of those they had left behind. Antonio & Oliva later settled in Adelaide, with their children successfully living their own lives.

The bulk of the information recorded here was taken from the Grotto family history, with additional material obtained from documents and interviews stored in the Mt Compass Archives.

The Rise and Decline of Nangkita's Village Settlement

PART 2

(Continued from previous Chronicle)

In October 1895, a parliamentary Select Committee's report following their fact-finding visit to Nangkita's Village Settlement, did not paint a rosy picture. That visit started badly, with the road from Willunga (Nangkita Road) described as just a 'sandy track' where one of the wheels from the parliamentarian's trap sank deep into a hole, resulting in one of the MPs being thrown off! When the Committee did finally arrive, they found that the settler numbers had dwindled down to just nine members - and even two of those were now working elsewhere!

The parliamentarians were informed that ten members had left in the previous few weeks, primarily because of new instructions from the Commissioner of Crown Lands. Trustees would now have to remain in office for twelve months (they had been changing frequently) and a view was forming that the settlements were being treated as recipients of welfare rather than as independent communities. This was a period well before our modern social security era.

If a villager found the work too difficult or became disenchanted and left, the departure meant those who remained would be responsible for any debt that was still owing to the government - the debt did not follow the member who left. Subsequently, the visiting MPs calculated the remaining nine settlers now had an indebtedness of over £110 each. It was now a year and a half into this settlement and the accommodation had still not improved. Only one stone building had been erected, with the remaining buildings described as simply 'mud huts.'

(There are two possible sites for this first stone building. The likely structure is the small stone hut which would later become the larger Langley/Tonkin home that is still in use today (see below). The other is the old stone ruin on the school block, which may have been an early schoolhouse, before a larger timber framed structure was erected on the same land (right).

When formally replying to the parliamentarian's questions, only two of the settlers participated in the recorded proceedings, held in the schoolroom. The acting Chairman, George Maybee, bore the brunt of what appeared to be intense questioning. He reported on the amount of acreage planted to various crops and also added that they intended to increase their number to fifteen members. This he stated, would require a further £350 (\$700) from the government.

Under questioning Mr Maybee made it clear he was of the opinion the settlers were earning their money, and should have control over how it was spent. The politicians were of the opinion that if the money came from the government, they should have some say over its expenditure. The Village Secretary at the time, William Dixon Thompson, also spoke, corroborating Mr Maybee's answers.

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Above: The only marked historical site in Nangkita. The claim that this is the ruin of an old schoolhouse has been orally passed down through the generations. A plaque placed at the site in 1994 to mark the centenary of the Village school states that the first building was of wattle & daub construction. The above structure may have been built at some later point before it was then replaced as the numbers of children increased.

A larger timber framed school building that could hold up to 32 people was erected at some point on this School Reserve but was removed following the school's closure in 1943.

Left: A stone hut marked on early Settlement records was located where the right hand side of this Nangkita home now stands.



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Conservative opposition MPs in the state parliament were increasingly denigrating the scheme, such as when John Moule MP accused many settlers “*with either loafing or being very idle.*” The Nangkita settlement was one of three he labelled in parliament as “*lazy villages*”, with some settlers, he exclaimed, only working seven and a half hours a day rather than the eight they were supposed to. Some villages he thought should be closed and settlers distributed amongst those more likely to succeed. The Nangkita Village was, he stated, “*sick at heart*”. His political opponents derided his comments however, claiming “*He has got hold of a lot of gossip and scandal*”.

Accommodation at the Village consisted primarily of wattle and daub huts which undoubtedly would have been rather cold in the Nangkita winters. Donations of clothing were still being sort even by their second year, with Mr W D Thompson (as acting secretary) compelled to write an explanatory letter to the Southern Argus. In that, he clearly stated that rumours in Strathalbyn of Settlement members not wanting any “*second hand clothing or anything else, from Strathalbyn or anywhere else*” were wrong.

An unexplained, but intriguing disciplinary act occurred in January 1896. One member of the Nangkita Settlement was expelled “*owing to the uncontrollable conduct of his wife, who has at various times upset the village from end to end.*” What this woman’s conduct had been exactly, was not reported, but the Village Committee was clearly still in charge at this time.

Only three Trustees had been appointed at that January’s Annual General Meeting, possibly due to reduced numbers. They were the two stalwarts, G Maybee and W D Thompson, along with another of the originals, Mr James Cutt senior. These men were still taking a positive view of the future, reporting that four new members had joined the Association in the previous two months, with other applications being processed.

It was all to no avail however, the Nangkita Village Settlement was closed in May 1896, with a total indebtedness to the government reported in October that year, of £1,004. The Commissioner of Crown Lands stated to parliament that there were still men at Nangkita making arrangements to take up a portion of the settlement, while the remainder will be dealt with by the land board. Despite all the trials and tribulations of working for the common good, it could not all have been all bad. No sooner had the Village closed, than the remaining settlers announced they would now carry on operations as a co-operative association “**on exactly the same lines as in the past.**”

The Port Adelaide spirit appears to have thrived amongst the remaining settlers, with reports that the ‘eight-hour day’ was celebrated at Nangkita for the first time in September that year. This commenced with a well attended picnic along with a ‘tea meeting’, followed by a social, which itself was followed by a ball - where dancing continued until 6am the next morning!

In November of 1896, the local MP (Mr Blacker - below, right) wrote that of the 25 original male settlers, seven still remained - four married men and three singles. The total population being 11 adults and 19 children. When they left Port Adelaide, they had been labelled as destitute, penniless and forsaken, but the Nangkita area was described after the Settlement’s closing, as being “*alive and flourishing.*”

Of the 23 occupations reported in government records for the original settlers, a number of trades were listed, along with the 13 who were labourers. By the time of its demise, the Settlement occupations were reduced to 5 labourers and only one tradesman, a plasterer. That person would have been George Maybee who was a strong supporter of this movement from its inception. All other tradesmen had left.

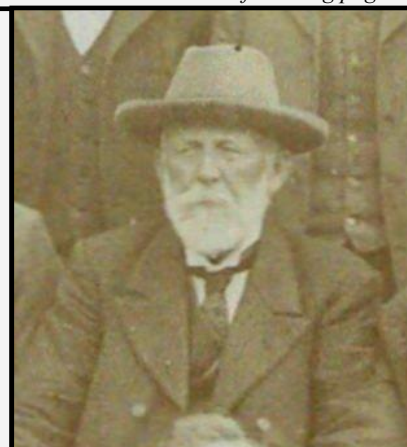
Mr Charles Ryder, one of the original settlers retired from the Village in August 1897, with a farewell social and dance followed by a supper laid on “*in one of the empty houses.*” Unfortunately all these early mud huts rotted away after the timbers were eaten by termites, with nothing to now show they ever existed. Charles’ brother, Robert Ryder, remained in the area at least until 1907.

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Left: Rosetta Amy Thompson nee Ryder (1855-1948) was married to W D Thompson, a key proponent of the Settlement. Two of her brothers were also original members of the group (refer page 7). *Photo from findagrave.com*

Right: Local MP from 1892 until his death in 1913, Mr William James Blacker was a vociferous supporter of the Village Settlement. He is pictured here in 1904 when he posed for a group photograph with the Mt Compass Show Committee. A popular politician with a farm at Willunga, Mr Blacker was known as a “*staunch liberal*”.



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In December 1897 it was reported that by mutual arrangement, each villager would have his own plot of prepared land which he tilled himself, while the larger parts of the estate would be used for general purposes. Individualism and communism were thought to have linked hands, resulting in the prospect of better work and more contentment. This collective spirit would last for at least another year or so.

The Village Settlement land was advertised for Lease in 1899, with the choice of a right to either purchase outright or sign a Perpetual Lease. The township blocks in the centre of Nangkita were offered as parcels of land on both sides of the road, thus giving all new owners access to the creek/drain. The main section of the Nangkita Village was sold to five individual Settler members who had remained: **Langley, Stockley, Cutt, Maybee and Thompson.**

The land along Waterfall Drive and Swampy Crescent also became part of this sale as properties that at first had been known as "*Working Men's Blocks*" but were later termed "*Homestead Blocks*".

In January 1900, six parliamentary members of the Royal Commission looking into these settlements, visited what remained at Nangkita. They were as usual, accompanied by the local MP Mr W J Blacker, who acted as their guide, with a report of this visit printed in the *SA Register*. The article noted that five settlers who remained were now Crown leasees, with their land bluntly described as "*patchy, some rich and some poor, but the fertile soil does not provide a good living.*"

In March 1900, the settlers who did remain decided to celebrate the sixth anniversary of their Village Settlement with a church service in the schoolroom and visits by Members of Parliament. Children's sports were also held and a public meeting with speeches from the politicians ensued. The fact that these Settlers believed this was something worth celebrating does point towards a feeling of accomplishment amongst them.

Of all the people who passed through this Village Settlement scheme, the two men who carried out the very first inspection of the property, George Maybee and William Dixon Thompson also happened to be the ones who remained the longest in Nangkita. The final Sands & McDougal Directory listing in which they are both recorded as still living there was the 1914 edition. Two other men however, Harry McKinlay and his brother Fred, had chosen to move to the other end of Nangkita Road (Mt Compass) with members of their families continuing to farm there for over 100 years (*refer page 11*).

Although the Village Settlements as a concept had failed (not just the one at Nangkita), the development did have an impact on this region. Nangkita boomed into a larger settlement than that of Mt Compass (at first), it was also the first to have a school, had its own post office and the polling station was located there. Over time however, as the Victor Harbor Road grew in importance, a more centralised retail area developed at Mt Compass, leaving Nangkita to lose most of its facilities over time, becoming simply a grouping of small-acreage properties, albeit with an interesting history.

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Right: This appendix is from an 1895 Government Report listing both the Settlers occupations and the four changes made to Trustees, all within less than two years.

Although 25 names were listed in Adelaide's newspapers as original settlers, only 23, as shown here, may have journeyed to Nangkita.

Fred McKinlay was known as both a blacksmith and boilermaker, with his brother Harry apparently not included in this first group (*see page 11*).

The Settlement did have at least one original member claiming to be a farmer.

APPENDIX I

Occupations of the Villagers at Commencement of the Settlement and at the present time Nangkita

	<u>At Start</u>	<u>Now</u>
Boilermaker	1	-
Bricklayer	1	-
Blacksmith	1	-
Carpenter	2	-
Coppersmith	1	-
Farmer	1	-
Gardener	1	-
Labourer	13	5
Plasterer	1	1
Soapmaker	1	-

1. John Mossop (Chairman), Soapmaker; W.D. Thompson, Gardener; G. Maybee, Plasterer; C.E. Gilchrist, Labourer; H. Kast, Bricklayer, succeeded by G. Taylor.
2. G. Bigglands (Chairman), Carpenter, succeeded by G. Maybee, Plasterer; H. McKinlay; J. Douglas, Labourer; G. Fergusson; B. Coleman.
3. W.D. Thompson (Chairman), Gardener; H. Coghlin, succeeded by G. Maybee; G. Bigglands, Carpenter, succeeded by J. Douglas, Labourer; R. Stockley, Labourer; J. Catt, Sen., Blacksmith.
4. G. Fergusson (Chairman); W.D. Thompson, Gardener; J. Worrall; G. Maybee, Plasterer; J. Douglas, Labourer.

Village Settlers who decided to remain:

James CUTT Snr – Was born in Orkney, Scotland in 1840 and migrated to Australia in 1862, aboard the “*Sir John Lawrence*”. He married **Mary Jane LEE** at Alberton in 1867 and with whom he had at least four children, Ann Jane 1869, Mary Edith 1870, James 1873 & James Craigie 1874. His occupation was at various times both a mariner and a labourer. In 1897 their son James (Jnr) married Bertha P Kast, the daughter of **Henry A Kast** (1849-1911), one of the original 25 settlers but who was living back in Pt Adelaide by this time. In 1899, with the abandonment of the Village Settlement scheme, James Cutt Snr leased 12.5 acres (sections 368 & 370) in the old Village Settlement and was still listed as a Nangkita resident when he died in 1907 at his daughter’s home in Alberton, aged 66. Mary passed away in 1936.

William Dixon THOMPSON – Was born in Scotland in 1854 with both parents dying when he was just 16 years of age. It is not known when William migrated out to Australia but in 1878 he married **Rosetta RYDER** at Port Adelaide. Her brothers, **Robert** and **Charles Ryder**, would also become Village settlers at Nangkita. William served as Secretary and Chairman of both the Village Board and the Nangkita Band of Hope society* and was a Postmaster at Nangkita. (Rosetta also served on the Band of Hope executive.) The last two of their nine children were born at Nangkita, with one of them, **Andrew Christopher Thompson** dying in 1915 while serving overseas in WW1 (*refer back page*). Three of the couple’s other sons had enlisted with the Light Horse in that same war, but returned to Australia. After the Village Settlement closed, William leased sections 364, 365, 373, 374 & 375 (35 acres) at Nangkita which would later be owned by Geoff Stone. By 1916 he was back living in Adelaide, where they would both pass away (at Cheltenham), William in 1924 and Rosetta in 1948.

William Richard STOCKLEY – William was born in England in 1842 and migrated to Australia as a single man in 1864. He married **Elizabeth Ann NICHOLAS** in 1879 at Bowden, after his first wife had passed away three years prior. The couple had six children, with the youngest, Annie Nicholas Stockley marrying a local man, Arthur Fred Darwin in 1916. William was the Electoral Registrar for Nangkita’s Polling Station from 1904 to 1906 and the Postmaster for 11 years (*refer to Chronicle No 17*). He also served as a Board Member for the Village Settlement and as Treasurer and President of the Nangkita Band of Hope, a temperance society. Following the dissolution of the Village Settlement he leased Sections 369 & 290 at Nangkita until returning to Adelaide as a labourer in about 1906 due to ill health. He died at Hindmarsh in 1925.

Charles Richard & Robert RYDER - Two brothers born at Pt Adelaide and both among the original group of settlers. Their older sister Rosetta, was married to another Village member, William Dixon Thompson (mentioned above). In 1898, Charles married Rosina Moore (nee Wills), the widowed daughter of Thomas & Eliza Wills, neighbours of the Village Settlement. Charles had possibly left the settlement in the previous year but in 1903 he was listed in that year’s Sands & McDougall Directory as a gardener at Mt Compass. Robert is recorded in that same directory as being a gardener here from 1904 to 1907. *One of these brothers kicked what was possibly the very first goal for a Nangkita football team during a friendly match against Strathalbyn in August 1894 (refer Chronicle No.20).*

George James MAYBEE & Herbert C COOK – refer to family history in Chronicle no 20, pages 11-12.

Charles & Mary LANGLEY – refer to family history in Chronicle no 17, pages 13-15.

Fred W McKINLAY & Harry P McKINLAY – refer to family history on following pages 10 & 11.



**The group of 25 men who made up the original list of members, as published in newspapers of the day, were all from the Port Adelaide area. Some of them were related by marriage, others were immediate family members.*

Judging by old newspaper articles available online, a number of them had faced alcohol issues within their families while at Port Adelaide and some also had run-ins with the law. This included at least two of these families who faced court action for not sending their children to school (claiming they were not able to afford the fees).

*Abstinence from alcohol was a requirement for those interested in becoming settlers at Nangkita. Temperance groups had gained a foothold at Port Adelaide by the late 1800s and a number of the new settlers went on to form the Nangkita “**Band of Hope**” - a young person’s Temperance Society, in which they held executive positions.*

References: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/82134796@N03/50514698923>, “*Oral Perceptions*” by Meredith McLean, website: trove.nla.gov.au, Daisy Arnold (nee Langley) history notes. “*Chasing Rainbows in the Rain*” by Ann Riddle, Essay “*The Pull-down Brigade : The Conservative Campaign against the Village Settlements in 1895*” - by Julie-Ann Ellis, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kingston-charles-cameron-6966>, “*Where the Compass Leads You*” by Linton Jacobs, Roma Kirk (nee McKinlay). Wikipedia.org



That was the day our mains water supply was officially opened - prior to this, the town relied solely on rainwater tanks and bore water.

As can be seen from the photo above, the day attracted many politicians, with funding provided by all three tiers of government (local, state & federal). The formal ceremony was conducted opposite Mount Compass Area School, at the top of the walkway, where a new water fountain featuring the requisite plaque, had been constructed.

This is not a joke, the project received funding under what was known as the ‘COWSIP’ Scheme (Country Towns Water Supply Improvement Program) – a strangely appropriate acronym for this town! The estimated final cost for the project was \$550,000– an amount that had precluded the E&WS (Engineering & Water Supply Dept) from providing mains water themselves. In their eyes, the expected income return was not sufficient for the project to go ahead. Pressure from councillor Dorothy Jacobs, the District Council Engineer, Andrew Ciric and many locals helped ensure this much needed service would finally proceed.

From newspaper reports of the day, the initial installation included two bores, located in swamp land on the northern entrance to Mt Compass, a 325 kilolitre (kl) tank built on what became known as Tank Road and 4.58km of mains, providing water to 60 township properties, with the ultimate aim of connecting all 120 properties. The two bores were providing 28kl and 16kl an hour in 1987 and it was noted that the particular site chosen for these bores would minimise the risk of pollution.

Top Photo: Roy Galpin (Chairman of DC of Pt Elliot & Goolwa), Ted Chapman (State MP), Dorothy Jacobs (Councillor), Alexander Downer (Federal MP), Andrew Ciric (Council Engineer), Don Hopgood (Deputy Premier & Minister of Water Resources), Senator Dominic Foreman (representing Minister for Resources & Energy).

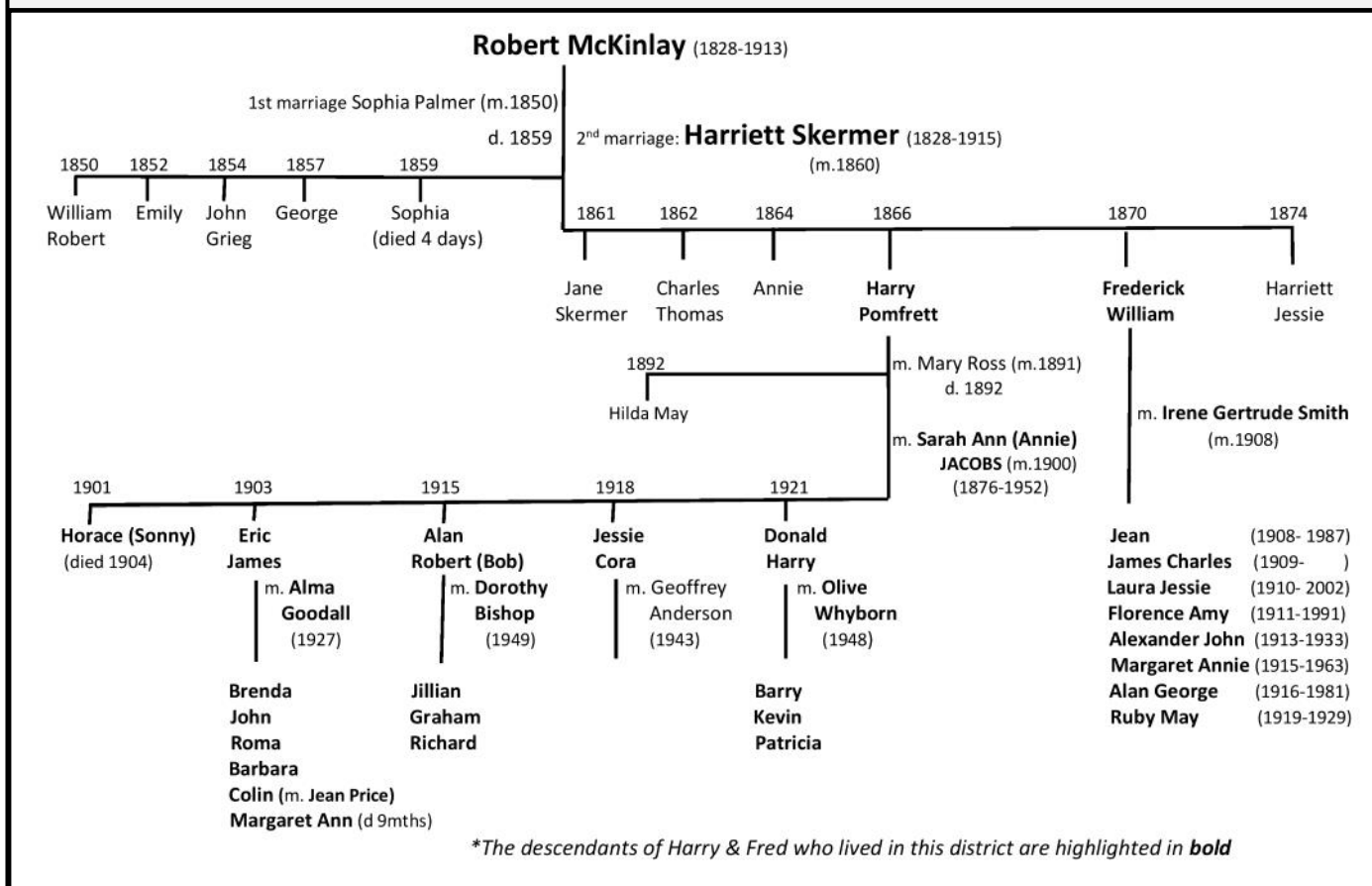
Right: This is a section of the crowd who viewed the formal ceremony. A range of ages and fashions are on display here - is there anyone you recognise?

(Photos donated by L & D Jacobs' family)



The McKinlay family - 100 years in this district

For over a hundred years, the McKinlay name has been linked to Mount Compass. Their family dynasty began with two brothers who moved here in 1894 as members of the Nangkita Village Settlement – this is an overview of their time here.



Robert McKinlay (1828-1914) was born in Scotland but migrated here in 1849 as a single, 20 year old, under an assisted passage scheme. He sailed from London aboard the 580 ton barque “Emily” as did his soon-to-be wife, the English born Sophia PALMER. They were married in North Adelaide one year after arriving.

In 1859, seven days after giving birth to their fifth child, Sophia passed away. The child had died after just 4 days.

The following year Robert, a boat builder & carpenter at Port Adelaide, married **Harriett Skermer** (1828-1915) at Trinity Church Adelaide and with whom he would have a further six children.

In 1913 at the age of 85, Robert passed away, with Harriett passing in 1915. The couple are both buried at Cheltenham Cemetery, along with their son Charles Thomas who died in 1921.

It would be two of Robert and Harriett’s children, Harry and Frederick, who would be amongst the early pioneers of this district. Both were recorded as having the occupation of ‘blacksmith’ in their father’s will, written in 1893.

The first brother to arrive at Nangkita in 1894 was **Frederick (aka Fred) William McKinlay** who had been born at Queenstown, Port Adelaide. In November 1895 however, with the **Nangkita Village Settlement** in its final days, Fred signed the lease on a 100 acre property at Mt Compass (Section 331).

Fred had been one of the original 25 listed members and the Settlement’s first Secretary. It was likely that he authored some of the published newspaper reports as their un-named correspondent. He also became Mt Compass’ first librarian for a service operated by the local Literary Society from 1904. Older residents can still recall seeing the remnants of a large commercial orchard he planted between his house and Nangkita Road.

After living as a single man on his property for a number of years, Fred married the local school teacher, Irene Gertrude Isabel Chalklen Smith in 1908. Miss Smith taught at the Mount Compass School from 1901 to 1907 but as women were not allowed to continue teaching once they married, she had to then leave the profession. All the couple’s children would attend the local school, with their first child (Jean) starting in 1915.

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With Fred being older than the other early settlers along Nangkita Road, he was nicknamed the “Mayor of Nippertown”. He played the coronet at dances held in the Roadman’s Cottage and is credited with playing at the musical evening that instigated the birth of Mt Compass’ Literary Society. This group would continue for over 50 years in its role as a self-improvement society for local residents, conducting debates, practising public speaking and performing plays etc.

Although Fred was known as a blacksmith, he also worked with wood, owning a treadle wood-lathe. He was perhaps a man of many skills as his occupation on the 1916 land grant of section 331, is recorded as ‘boilermaker’.

The house and his prized orchard would have a close call in 1926, from a scrub fire that passed through the neighbouring properties of Ern Jacobs and Richard Peters. His neighbour’s homes were saved through the efforts of forty to fifty locals but a newspaper article reported that the greatest effort was made in saving Fred’s house and his prized orchard, one third of which was unfortunately destroyed.

A terrible tragedy would occur in 1929, which would have affected the family quite dramatically. Alexander, one of Fred & Irene’s sons, accidentally shot and killed his nine year old sister Ruby, while playing in their backyard. He committed suicide four years later, at the age of 19.

The youngest son Allan (who some may recall as having the nickname of ‘magic’) lived alone with his father on Nangkita Road after his parents separated, in the old stone home on what is now Steve & Michelle Peters’ property. Alan would hawk fruit around the district from his father’s productive orchard, with Fred rarely venturing out from the farm in later life.

In 1954 at the age of 83, Fred McKinlay passed away in Adelaide. After spending most of his adult life in Mt Compass, he was buried at the Cheltenham cemetery, where his parents are also buried. Arch Peters described him as “*a great reader, a man who seemed satisfied with his own company*”. The Nangkita Road property was then sold to Kelvin Peters in 1955 and is still in Peters’ family ownership.

Fred’s brother, **Harry Pomfrett McKinlay** (*right*) was born on the 4th December 1866, also in Queenstown. His first marriage, on the 4th March 1891 was to **Mary Ross** and they had one child, Hilda May, the following year. Mary died of pneumonia at the age of 26, seven days after her daughter’s birth. The family were residents of Broken Hill at this time.

Within two years of his wife’s death, Harry joined up with the settlers at the Nangkita Village Settlement, working as both a gardener and blacksmith. Although Harry was not listed in the initial 25 families, he was noted in newspaper articles as one of the settlers by November of that first year (1894).

When he left the Settlement, Harry moved to a 44 acre property on what is now Bahloo Glen Road, (section 324) but did not have sufficient capital to clear what was then still scrub land. This property cost Harry £44 (\$88) which he had to repay at the bargain rate of £1 per year. The first house he built there (of which no sign now remains) was a mud hut at the bottom end of the block (foot of Mt Moon). Harry would later own an adjacent section containing Mount Moon itself (section 215).

For those who are not aware, Bahloo Glen Road was originally created simply as a track to Harry McKinlay’s property.

His second marriage was to **Sarah Ann (Annie) Jacobs** (1876-1952) at Willunga, on 16th May 1900. Sarah’s parents were the late James Jacobs, and Sarah Edwards who had married John Youlton by the time of her daughter’s marriage. Three of Annie’s siblings would also become notable Mt Compass members of the Jacobs clan: Cora (who would marry Richard Peters) and Mel & Ern Jacobs.

The couple would have five children together: **Horace Alan McKinlay** (1901-1904), **Eric James McKinlay** (1903-1988), **Alan Robert (Bob) McKinlay** (1915-2000), **Jessie Cora McKinlay** (1918-2001) and **Donald Harry McKinlay** (1921-1990).



Harry Pomfrett McKinlay (1866-1943)

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In 1899, to earn the capital required to farm his own property, Harry started work as the Farm Overseer with the "Industrial School for the Blind" farm at Black Swamp (near the railway bridge at Currency Creek). In this role he is known to have overseen the digging of their drainage works and the addition of new buildings.

Making use of his blacksmith experience, Harry then moved on to work for the railways which included work on the new Adelaide to Willunga line. He was soon promoted to become a supervisor, with his family accompanying him in his travels around the State. 1912 school records show that his children moved from the Mount Compass School to Willunga but then in 1915 they moved back here, this time from the school at Melrose. The following year saw the children transfer across to the Willunga School once again. Harry's listed occupation in the 1915 Mt Compass school records was "Inspector of Railway Construction".

It is recorded that the family grew vegetables on their Mount Compass property even while Harry worked away to raise funds. In 1901, following his marriage to Annie, his occupation was recorded as 'gardener' but he also repaired local carts & ploughs as well as making gardening implements in his blacksmith forge.

This blacksmithing area was set up at one end of his shed and in later life his grandson, John McKinlay, recalled that Harry had a large bellows for his forge, along with a very large anvil. John recounted watching as his grandfather stood at the forge, operating the bellows and banging his hammer down on the anvil.

Harry became the first secretary of the Mount Compass Agricultural Bureau in 1896, remaining in that position until 1900. He also took on the demanding role of Secretary for the Show Society for 16 years, from 1902 onwards, with the responsibility of handling the entry and prize money throughout the day. Harry was also Secretary of the Hall Committee for many years from 1921, following on from Mr Frank Slater.

As if he didn't have enough to do, Harry was also the first secretary of the local Literary Society. Arch Peters, in one of his many historical writings, described him as a "good citizen" and from the point of view of his blacksmithing work, he found him to be "always obliging".

For Annie & Harry's 25th wedding anniversary (silver) in 1925, newspapers recorded that over 70 friends and family crowded into the small Mt Compass Hall (now the Supper Room) to help congratulate the couple. Mr David Wright, who at the time was one of the oldest residents, presented the couple with a gift from those attending while a number of local dignitaries spoke on the night. Entertainment consisted of musical and spoken items along with games, which was quite typical for gatherings in the 1920s.

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**Harry & Annie with two of their sons, Don and Bob on a camping holiday at Fisherman's Bay c1939.
Their greengrocer's van is parked alongside, tied to the tent.**

As a young man, Harry and his father are known to have sailed on the Port River, which may have been where he acquired his fondness for fishing.

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Following his passing on 2nd October 1943, Harry had the distinction of becoming the first person to be buried in the recently opened Mount Compass Cemetery (*refer headstone on right*).

The eldest son, **Eric, along with his wife Alma**, was working on the Mount Moon property and, with the help of his father, built the house that still remains in use today (*see below*). A kitchen was added, followed later with a sitting room, as the family grew. During the war years the Army contracted Eric to grow pumpkins and carrots on this farm. At the time there was no access to chemicals for weed control, with the need to manually weed the carrot crops apparently proving to be a very tedious task.

To water all his vegetables, Eric built a large irrigation dam below Mount Moon, which he filled with water pumped from the drain (creek) running through the Arthur's land next door. He also expanded their options for the land by employing Gil Smith to clear the top of Mount Moon. However, in 1952, the family then decided the time was right to move onto a larger, 80 acre, vegetable growing property on Currency Creek, near Goolwa.



Eric may have inherited some of his father's Secretarial skills as he contributed a detailed essay entitled "Water Conservation" to the 1946 book "*History and Development of Mt Compass*". The use of water in farming may have been a special interest of his as, in the "Chasing Rainbows" history book, Eric is especially mentioned for his inventiveness regarding the irrigation of horticultural crops.

The three brothers, Eric, Bob and Don also dabbled in share farming, including pulling swedes for one of the major landowners, Jack Sneyd. Jack planted 50 acres of swedes each year which, once pulled and bunched, were brought to Mount Compass for washing in readiness for transporting to Adelaide.

When Eric left the district his brother, **Alan Robert (known as Bob)**, then moved onto the Mt Moon property, along with his wife Dorothy (nee Bishop), from their farm at Enterprise Colony. This kept Mount Moon within McKinlay family ownership until it was eventually sold in 1995 to the Stadler family, who still maintain ownership of it today.

In the 1940s, the three brothers bought land on the Finnis River at Enterprise Colony. Eric purchased the 64 acre Section 173, in 1945, while Bob and Don combined to purchase the neighbouring Section 175 in 1949.

Bob farmed for many years in partnership with his younger brother Don who, along with his wife Olive, lived in the old family home on Bahloo Glen Road. Don had demonstrated his farming abilities at an early age by winning the competitive schoolboy's potato growing competition two years in a row (1934 & 1935).

Bob and Don operated as the "McKinlay Bros" partnership up until 1967 after which they each took ownership of half of the Mount Moon property (Bob's farm of 122 acres and Don's of 98 acres).

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The McKinlay house c1940s, sitting at the foot of Mt Moon. It was built by Eric with the help of his father Harry, with the extensions on the right (sitting room & kitchen) added following the initial construction.

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In the early days of the family's market gardening ventures, vegetables were hawked around the south coast, with a photograph of young Eric McKinlay alongside his horse and cart now on display above Melita's IGA Supermarket (see front page).

Horse drawn vehicles faded into the background when Eric purchased a Ford 22.5bhp truck in 1923 and then later upgraded to a larger Chevrolet truck for deliveries. The Ford van was also used to take local men on popular camping holidays in the quiet winter months (*refer photo below*). The McKinlay clan (up to eleven of them one year) also used this truck for holidays at Fisherman's Bay with their good friends, the Jacobs family.

Bob enlisted during World War 2 (*refer back page*), while his brothers continued the vital task of growing carrots under contract with the army. They employed Italian Prisoners of War while Bob was away to provide extra hands on the farm. Bob saw action overseas, including Borneo where there was some heavy fighting but, as he was still a single man at the time, he wasn't discharged until months after the war had finished.

During the war, Eric and Don both joined the Mt Compass Volunteer Defence Corps (ie Home Guard) as did many other local men who were unable to enlist due to working in what was deemed an essential industry.

In 1979, after an expansion that included share farming near Currency Creek, Don and Olive left Mt Compass for Tumbly Bay to be near their daughter. This left Bob and Dorothy as the final McKinlay residents. They eventually retired from the farm in 1995 and moved to Victor Harbor - it would be the first time in 101 years that there would be no-one called 'McKinlay' living in this district. (*However, a grandchild of Roma Kirk nee McKinlay, Kerri Vowles, does presently live in Mt Compass and is married to Shannon Baldock.*)

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Below: Three of the McKinlay family's transportation methods. **Top left:** Eric in his horse drawn van used for deliveries to the south coast. **Top right:** A group of local men enjoying 1932 a trip to the Flinders Ranges in Eric's Ford delivery van. Eric is standing to the left smoking a pipe while his brother Bob, is standing fourth from the right. These trips became a regular occurrence during the quieter off-season. **Bottom:** Eric alongside his heavily laden c1940 Chevrolet truck, piled full of swedes ready for delivery to the East End Market.



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Community & Social Involvement

Apart from the community involvement mentioned previously, Harry and Fred both served on the Committee of Management that oversaw the old Roadman's Cottage. This was used as the local hall between 1899 and 1903 for such purposes as public meetings and social gatherings prior to the first hall being built in 1903. Harry would also become one of the new hall's Trustees, a position of some responsibility. Along with two others, he spent some days quarrying the local stone used to build the new hall and sharpened all their quarrying tools at no cost.

Harry & Fred McKinlay were both members of the inaugural Show Committee in 1902, which was held in the Roadman's Cottage, built on what is now known as Roadman's Reserve.

The McKinlay descendants that did remain in this district also made their contributions to community life. Bob and his wife Dorothy were the epitome of community minded citizens, Bob with his RSL involvement and Dorothy with her many years of volunteer work with the local *Entre Nous* newsletter (amongst her numerous other community commitments). Don and Olive would become involved in the new Memorial Hall development, with Don providing his farm truck to transport the large Gorbat Blocks used in its construction.

Don passed away in 1990 after spending his final six years in Victor Harbor. His family made the decision to scatter his ashes on top of Mt Moon, which had played such a key part in this family's life. They also placed a large stone and plaque to mark the site, which remains there to this day.

Eric played football in Mt Compass, even before the competitive games started in 1924, with Bob, who would play until he was 36 years of age, also joining in by then. His cousin James (Jim) McKinlay, (a son of Fred and Irene) was also a player in the first competitive Nangkita-Mt Compass team at around 15 years of age. His sisters Laura and Florrie played tennis as teenagers for Mt Compass, in the mid 1920s, but the surviving children of Fred and Irene McKinlay would all soon leave the district.

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Note: *The surname is pronounced as McKinlay by the family, rather than McKinlee.* During the time the family lived in the Port Adelaide area there was also another family with the similar surname spelling of **McKinley** and it can be assumed that the two families wanted to distinguish between their names. Having noted that, some of the family's Birth, Death & Marriage printed records have been mis-spelt as McKinley, leading to the conclusion that some in the family may have pronounced it one way, some the other way.

More detailed information on individual McKinlay family members can be found in old *Entre Nous* newsletters and both of Linton Jacobs' publications. If anyone requires assistance locating these, feel free to contact the Archives.

References: Where the Compass Leads You -Linton Jacobs. Ancestry.com, trove.nla.com.au, Advertiser Funeral Notices, Chasing Rainbows in The Rain- Ann Riddle, "First Hundred Years" 1946 history book, Arch Peters history notes, Sands & McDougall Directories, Entre Nous newsletters, Kevin & Olive McKinlay, audio recording of an interview with John McKinlay and a big thank you to Roma Kirk (nee McKinlay) for providing many of these photographs.

Below: another group of local men ready for a holiday in Eric McKinlay's van



Dorothy McKinlay (left) was Presented with her **Citizen of the Year Award** in January 1991, with her husband Bob, alongside.



Andrew Christopher Thompson WW1

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Born at Nangkita in 1896 to original settlers at the Nangkita Village, William & Rosetta Thompson, Andrew's schooling was conducted entirely at Nangkita.

However, by the time he enlisted in November 1914 at the age of 18, Andrew had left the district and was living at Oaklands, hence the apparent reason for his omission from the town's Honour Roll.

His Service Records show that he was 5 foot 7 inches tall (1.74m) with red hair and a fair complexion. He reported having previously served 4 months in the Senior Cadets and 6 months with the Citizen Forces.

Andrew was assigned to the 4th Reinforcements Base Infantry at the Oaklands Camp before becoming a driver. In April 1915 he sailed for the Middle East aboard the *HMAT Port Lincoln* and saw five days in the trenches before contracting measles and pneumonia which saw him hospitalised in Alexandria. Following his recovery, including some time in a convalescence camp, he re-joined his unit at the front - from which he would not return.

Private A C Thompson was serving in the 4th Company Australian Army Service Corps (AASC) on the Western Frontier of Egypt, when he **'died of wounds received in action'** on 13th December 1915. He was buried in the Chatby Military Cemetery, Egypt.



Three of his brothers would also serve in this War, all with the 3rd Light Horse.

Alan Robert (Bob) McKinlay WW2

Born in November 1915 to Harry and Annie McKinlay, Bob (as he was known) attended the Mt Compass School until he left at 14 years of age to work on the family farm.

He enlisted as a 25 year old at Wayville on 14th April 1941 and would become a Craftsman in the 2/9th Australian Armoured Regiment's Workshop. He was later a gun-fitter, working on army tanks. With the possibility of Japan entering the conflict, Bob was retained in Australia - along with many others in case they were required here.

In March 1945 he eventually sailed from Cairns to the Pacific Islands and saw action at Morotai, Dutch Borneo, Tarakan, Labuan & Brunei.

Bob was given an occupational discharge (rural) in December 1945 and returned to help his brother Don, on their Mt Compass property. In 1949, Bob married Dorothy Bishop, raising three children, Jillian, Graham and Richard. Their first house was close to the Finnis River at Enterprise Colony. This was a small, three roomed house with no electricity, no telephone and no laundry.

In 1953 they bought the Mount Moon block (section 215) from Bob's brother Eric, where they grew potatoes and other vegetables up until 1995, when they retired to Bay Village at Victor Harbor.

Bob passed away on 5th August 2000 at the age of 84 and Dorothy in October 2011. They were both cremated, with their ashes placed in the Mount Compass Cemetery.



More information is available on our Honour Roll website:

<https://mtcompassarchives.org/honourroll/ww2/mckinlay-alan.html>

The views & opinions reflected in this Journal do not represent the views of the Mt Compass War Memorial Community Centre Inc.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of articles printed here. If you wish to advise of any corrections required or can add further information regarding any item, please contact me using the address below.

Most importantly: if you have any information, documents or photographs that that could be of interest to the Archives please give me a call or send an email.

Steve Kettle (mtcompassarchives@gmail.com)