

PRESENTED TO:



A division of Brickworks
245 South Western Hwy, Armadale, Western Australia.
PO Box 90, Armadale, W.A. 6112
Telephone: (09) 399 5999. Telex: AA92097/
Telegrams: 'BRISTILE' PERTH.

As a souvenir of the Second Annual Dinner at the Armadale & Districts Chamber of Commerce Inc. held on 22 November, 1986. The framed coloured original was presented to the City of Armadale.

Artist: Nick Laven, Lot 104 Keirnan Road, Mundijong.

Printer: Exclusive Printing, Fourth Road, Armadale.

This is the second presentation in a series being made progressively as limited edition, individually number reproductions.

Story of "Armadale Brickworks"

In the early days houses were built 'mud adobe' (sun dried earth blocks), 'wattle and daub' (interlaced twigs plastered in earth), 'pug' (earth and straw) and finally clay bricks from material near the homesite. Late it was found that stronger, durable and more weather proof bricks could be made if heated to a high temperature. So kilns were constructed. A narrow strip of shale in the hills, between Gosnells and Serpentine, proved very suitable for brick making and hand made bricks were produced in the district for many years prior to 1900.

The first mechanised brickworks in the district was constructed by Master Builder George Lazenby in 1897 at Cardup, just south of Byford. The state brickworks at Byford (Beenup) commenced production in 1914.

Around 1900, the existence of good brickmaking shale was confirmed along the top of Armadale hills and Armadale Brickworks was born in 1902, giving the township a major boost. Messrs Coombe, Whiting and Wood were the original partners, but by 1904 (later) Thomas Coombe had brought out the others. The manager of the business from the start until it was closed was "Dadda" Albert Cornish and 'Squire' Taylor was another full era employee.

The brickworks was situated on the site where Dale Cottages now stand (Striech Avenue and John Street). High above it was the quarry, near Bedforddale Hill Road, which may still be noticed today. The Shale was transported to the works in trolleys attached to an endless wire rope operated by gravity power 'full down, empty up'. This flying fox cableway passed under Bunbury Road and parts of the original can still be seen at Dale Cottages Park. A coal fired Hoffman kiln burned the bricks and by 1914 output was 150,000 per week with over 1 million held in stock.

The brickworks was bought by Mr. R.O. Law of Metropolitan Brick Co. in 1914, but finally ceased operations in the Depression of 1930.

Today: The present Armadale brickworks commenced production in 1952, replacing the old State owned brickworks at Byford. It was successively acquired by Hawker Siddeley Building Supplies (1963), Monier Ltd (1972) and Bristile Ltd in 1983. Bristile, which already owned Cardup Bricks, changed the name of its expanded division to Metro Brick which now produces around 30% of W.A's clay bricks.

Attached behind framed picture.