

BUSSELTON ORAL HISTORY GROUP (Inc)
TRACKING NOTES

Filename: **Breeden, Robert** **Disc 1**

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	SUMMARY“Businessman: Naturalist: Aboriginal Knowledge”	TRAC K TIME
1	TITLE Introduction Interviewer, Mrs Margaret Tickle, gives a short introduction.	.50
2	TITLE Personal Details & Family Details Rob’s father’s parents were divorced when their son Arthur was a baby. He was brought out as a 7 yr old & via Albany (their names on memorial in Albany as being on the “Munich”) to family in ES; to go back again and return in about 1910 to WA. From aged 13 he was on his own, rising well to the challenge of self reliance and making a good life for himself and his family. Rob’s great grandfather on mother’s side manager of King’s Bank in England. Rob’s grandfather (BGL Killerby) had a wooden leg. He was a stamp & antique dealer. Lists some exotic items that were auctioned from the family’s disposal sale prior to leaving England. (Uncle) Kemp Killerby was the only one to come out with his father in the early 1900’s, to a farm they called “Clombernane” near Vasse. Rob’s grandmother arrived in Fremantle on 28 th December 1912 with her twin daughters Kitty (Kathleen) and Norah (Rob’s mother), eldest daughter Eileen & youngest, Moyra.	6.18
3	TITLE The Killerby Family & Tough Times Rob’s grandmother was born in Mallow in Ireland & was a very resourceful & indomitable woman. When she arrived she was very surprised at how small Busselton was and quite missed the fact that they had been through it when on their way in the horse and cart out to the farm “Clombernane”. As a nurse & midwife travelled bush roads & tracks from Busselton to Nannup to Augusta in her horse & sulky to attend births etc.	7.44
4	TITLE Leaving the Farm: Living in Double Storey in Prince Street Rob’s mother & her sisters educated at Vasse Primary School and later Busselton Primary when that school in Prince Street had only two rooms. At Vasse they usually rode horseback to school & in one incident Norah’s horse Bob broke a leg & had to be destroyed. About 1914 bought the double storey building in Prince Street, near PO (& still there in 2010), so well before the introduction here of the Group Settlement Scheme in about 1924. They set up a very small grocery shop downstairs, carrying just the basic essentials, and lived upstairs. Rob’s mother and sisters earned the equivalent of 25 cents a week working in this little business. Later they were left some money by a relative in England and this allowed the family to begin their BGL Killerby’s business on SW corner Queen & Prince Streets. Grocery and drapery faced Queen Street and later hardware was at the back. Facing Prince Street was Gran Killerby’s little cottage with a large grain & storage shed at the rear. In about 1925 Rob’s father Arthur Breeden was asked to leave his truck driving job at Potters Gorge near Collie & open the ironmongery (hardware) section to cater for everything needed for the Groups.	5.48
5	TITLE Rob’s Father Independent From Aged 13 Arthur Breeden had various jobs after returning from the Great War - including riding shotgun on gold coaches in the Goldfields - & was one of the drivers who took Group Settlers & their families & household possessions down to their Group. So devastated were some at what they faced that he had to sneak away from some in the night, so determined were they not to stay. When Percy Bignell purchased his first motorized vehicle he told Arthur it would do him out of a job, then delivering mail by horse & sulky between Busselton, Margaret River & Cape Leeuwin. He told Rob the story of the challenge between him in his horse & cart & Mr Bignell with his motor vehicle, over the rough bush road to Margaret River. In those days Bussell H’way was known as Millar’s Track. Arthur narrowly won the race & Mr Bignell told Arthur he could be the first person to drive a motor vehicle in the reverse direction (from Margaret River to Busselton), as a reward. Despite Arthur being virtually on his own since a teenager & a tough existence he was forever a gentleman; a very energetic worker & a cheerful & popular person. His saying in business was “that we will not knowingly rob anyone”.	7.17

6	<p>TITLE Parents Marriage</p> <p>It was presumed that as Norah was only 20 years of age she & Arthur would not have permission to marry, so they sneaked off to the Anglican parson - who promptly told them to go home & get permission. Arthur must have fronted up to Grandad Killerby, who then considered the matter of his daughter's marriage for some weeks before giving his formal consent in a letter dated 11th December 1924. Sadly Norah's father died a month before they were married on 23rd April 1925. It was a good marriage Rob says, until "death did them part". Rob mentions building the 'bulk store' on their ¼ acre block on north side Prince Street & later purchasing the block immediately behind, through to Kent Street.</p>	5.51
7	<p>TITLE Arthur Breeden Saw Service in Both Wars</p> <p>The circumstances of father enlisting in WW 1. Was fishing down at Augusta for a professional fisherman with two others when the trio decided to enlist. Arthur saw plenty of action in France in WW 2 but repatriated back when wounded badly. No 7850 Private SA Breeden was honourably discharged from the 16 Battalion 4th Brigade, as served with honour & disabled on 26th June 1919. His name is on the Augusta War Memorial. With WW 2 looming Arthur enlisted again in 1938 as 30924 in the 44th Battalion. Later he was Captain in the 19th Garrison Battalion stationed at Geraldton where he was the Adjutant. He was responsible for the movement of only a few hundred troops to guard the whole of the West Australian coast from Geraldton to Derby. Rob relates the story of a man on sentry duty in Geraldton, in the dark hours about dawn, raising the alarm when a number of landing craft were observed coming ashore. As it got lighter it proved to be a pod of whales between the shore & one of our ships further out!</p>	5.54
8	<p>TITLE Progress in Business Cnr Queen & Prince Streets</p> <p>Rob came back into the hardware business when it was still behind grocery and drapery facing Queen Street, corner of Prince Street, coming back in 1944 from Hale School in Perth. Later the bulk store on the north side of Prince Street was converted into Killerby's Hardware Dept to give the corner store more space. Later the Breedens' took their shares out of Killerbys Pty Ltd by way of taking over the hardware department and trading as Breedens Hardware and Gift Centre. Arthur meanwhile was high up in the Masonic Lodge and Norah was an inaugural member of the Art Society under Margaret Johnson. Norah's mother in her turn was a very good artist also. When the time came at aged 81 Rob's father Arthur died peacefully in his sleep at his home. Arthur & Norah Breeden Park on the town side of the Vasse River is named for them & Breeden Street in West Busselton also named for Arthur's service to Group Settlement.</p>	9.31
9	<p>TITLE Mother (Norah's) Siblings</p> <p>Eileen was the eldest and she married Ernest Pearce. Kempston (Kemp) was next & his wife was Vera Fitzgerald. Norah & Kitty (Kathleen) were twins. Kitty went into nursing but died of tuberculosis and was unmarried. Moyra, the youngest married Dave Stone from Borden and farmed on their "Lenham" property 4 km from Cranbrook. Rob had a close cousin in Dick Pearce & they much enjoyed going down to the farm & a chance for shooting & camping in the Stirling Ranges. Kemp was the Mayor for a time & a prominent citizen & active in community affairs. He was the Managing Director of Killerbys Pty Ltd with the controlling interest. There were disagreements. When he died his son Gerry took his place but agreed to the family separation which allowed the Breedens to continue in hardware on their own account.</p>	6.09
10	<p>TITLE The Business of Killerbys</p> <p>During the war Kemp & Arthur were away & their branch stores were closed - except Nannup. Mother & Auntie Vera did 3 month stints there & Rob occasionally when home from Hale School. Rob also delivered in Busselton with draught horse & wagon. He gives huge credit to the part played in the running of their business by Miss Barbara Lord - particularly during the War years. In total Barbara worked for the family business, in the office and as the manager when necessary, for 46 years. During these 46 years with the firm, Barbara had only one day off 'sick' and for most of those years rode her bike 17 km each way, 6 days a week, to & from Busselton and the family home at Chapman Hill. In this year, 2010, Barbara is still alive and is around 102 years of age.</p>	6.35

11	TITLE	Rob's Youth Family originally lived in Fairbairn Road. Jack Bussell also lived down the road and shared with Rob his knowledge of, and notes on, local aboriginal language & customs. Jack was recognized as the last of the white people to fluently speak the local aboriginal dialect. Rob spent much of his time in the bush and estuary looking at wildlife & had contact with some older aboriginals who lived down the road. Some of them were Jimmy Isaacs, Mrs Nettup, Nutty Leyland and Tim Harris & he learned many things from them. He and his sister or a friend camped out - when he had reached around 10 years of age or so - and often under the pine trees on the "Little Holland House" property (now Country Road Estate) where Miss Princep lived: bit scary but fun.		6.43
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