

BUSSELTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY GROUP
TRACKING NOTES

Filename**Breeden, Robert**

Disc

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Tape #

TRACK NO.	Summary “Businessman: Naturalist: Aboriginal Knowledge”	TRAC K TIME
1	<p>TITLE School Days: Rob’s Siblings Betty and Sidney</p> <p>School days happy ones & was quite good at maths, though not so good at spelling. Couldn’t have cared less about history focused on Britain. Miss Cook tried to switch him from a natural left-hander to right and suggested he’d be in trouble if anything happened to his left hand. He floored her by suggesting she’d be in trouble if anything happened to her right hand! The best thing about Hale School was the cadet unit & quite intensive training with real guns etc - it being wartime. The opportunity of attending a private school for Rob & his siblings was a huge sacrifice for their parents.</p>	6.29
2	<p>TITLE Leaving School & Helping in the Hardware Business</p> <p>More on the outstanding service given by Miss Barbara Lord to the family business as she filled the position of overall manager of all its aspects (46 years, with one day off in that time and 17 km bike ride six days a week, to and from work, for many years of that time). Shortage of manpower during the war; also a shortage of stock. Rob left school in Dec 1944 & his father asked that he come in straight away to assist. Arthur had been demobbed at this stage. Sidney was 11 years younger than Rob & after leaving school went with Nuffield organization to England & later into the car business.</p>	3.47
3	<p>TITLE Back Home 1944: Getting Into Community Activities:</p> <p>In 1949 joined B Company 11/44th Battalion of Army Reserves in Bunbury. Later started No 18 Platoon, B Company in Busselton, with training once a week & weekends & (Northam) camp commitments. Had extra training at School of Infantry in Seymour Victoria. Had to retire for some years but put on list of the Reserve of Officers. Later joined 1st Battalion Royal West Aust’n Regiment, formed to assist with training of National Service conscripts. By this time was married with three children, having met Crystal Wansbrough at an army dance in Bunbury. Crys was born 25th November 1933. Children John, born 1953; Alan, born 1955; Susan, born 1957.</p>	6.30
4	<p>TITLE More on Community Activities</p> <p>Co-founder Small Bore Rifle & Clay Target Clubs. Started Archery Club in 1957 & this produced some top archers who did well Australia wide, including Alice Pinnock (Rumke), Crys & son Alan. Was a foundation member of Pistol & Judo Clubs & the State Emergency Service in which he was coordinator for many years. Started the Wildlife Club (now Naturalist Club) in 1964. Involved in Scouts, Air Scouts and YAL (Young Australia League); also a driver for St Johns Ambulance in earlier times when not so much training required of volunteers.</p> <p>Crys meanwhile was giving a lot of time to Girl Guides & achieving great results from her painting & china painting.</p>	6.35
5	<p>TITLE 1952 Trip Around Australia in Ex Army Truck: Petrol</p> <p>With two friends, 3x44 gallon drums of fuel, 8 weeks of food & guns on board, headed across the Nullabor on very ordinary & dusty ‘road’. About 3 or 4 vehicles a day travelled the Nullabor then. Had a hold-up for days with a petrol blockage and a generator problem. This required waiting for lifts and pedal radio messages etc. In the final outcome they only got one of the two parts needed. A mechanic came hundreds of miles from Norseman to service another person’s breakdown & one of the boys limped in with that vehicle; then having to get a lift back 330 miles to their camp. Got going again after repairs were done.</p>	6.39
5	<p>TITLE Punctures Only Other Trouble: Picking Grapes Mildura & on</p> <p>After picking grapes in Mildura, on to Sydney. Managed to talk their way into joining the audience after the doors had closed at the Bob Dyer Show. On to Queensland, badly affected by drought and jobs very scarce, but lucky to ‘jag’ one on a pineapple plantation west of Rockhampton. The boss very reluctant to put on any other ‘useless’ workers but didn’t want to see the back of these three West Australian lads after their three weeks working there.</p>	6.50

7	<p>TITLE Longreach, Cloncurry & North to Darwin</p> <p>Longreach a very insignificant town then: Cloncurry more impressive with milk shakes and ice creams no less! In Darwin lived in a big shed housing itinerants in Doctors' Gully near the hospital. Had to watch your food in the frig & on one occasion, when late home, another body in one of the boys' beds. Their Darwin contacts were two professional crocodile hunters & barramundi fishermen in the Cape Don, Arafura Sea & North & South Alligator River areas. Crocs were very wary, having been exposed to the 'activities' of servicemen in a war not long finished. Primitive living conditions on boat.</p>	9.31
8	<p>TITLE Headed Home After Six Weeks of Croc Hunting &</p> <p>Charles Cheval who was the Director for the film "Jedda" had requested a big croc should they be able to catch one. Despite being territorial and net shy, one croc actually did get caught up in the barra net, which was stretched from bank to bank of the particular creek the boat was moored in. But what with 5 chaps in a 14 foot boat with an inboard petrol engine, trying to extricate alive an angry 14 foot croc caught in a net by its jaws & leg, and get it into that same boat, was just not possible. We wonder if even Steve Irwin could have found a way! So they had to shoot it & Rob, as the smallest of the crew, had to crawl out on its back & cut the strands of the net. Though dead, when the last strands around the jaws were released, they flew open as a pent-up muscular reflex. Robe certainly got one helluva fright & shot off its back quick smart! Then it was homeward bound without further work stops, on pretty rough roads. Called to see Crys in Bunbury & that night proposed to her. They married in St Pauls on 21st Feb 1953, with reception following at her home.</p>	5.18
9	<p>TITLE Back to Business in Killerby's Hardware</p> <p>The Breedens did not leave the Killerby family business until 1968; then on their own as Breedens Hardware & Gift Centre. Tom the Cheap Grocer had come to town & was cutting prices to force out the smaller operators. Then Coles came. Lunds & Peakes groceries went: Killerby's stuck it out, but was not profitable. Hardware was doing the best. Quality was good, as was after sales service (unlike the chain stores). Self-selection/self-service had arrived. The disadvantages of this are that there is waste in the actual packaging and that the customer is obliged to purchase the whole packet, not the number of screws etc that are actually required.</p>	11.00
10	<p>TITLE Arthur Breeden Energetic, Enterprising, Community</p> <p>Mantra of the family was to always do the honourable thing by your customers. Every help & consideration was given. A 'bulk shed' had been built by the building firm of Donalds' for goods for distribution to Killerby's branch stores at Jarrahwood, Nannup, Donnybrook, Cowaramup & Margaret River. With the separation in 1968 Breedens took over the Hardware Department now established in the 'bulk store' (west of Mitchell Park) and fitted it out as their retail shop. Comments on comparison of the quality of goods & throw-away society.</p>	6.42
11	<p>TITLE Tourism Building Up: Timber Industry a Major Impact on</p> <p>Timber very big in town with a rail line going to Nannup, while the Augusta line went via Busselton's beachfront, then close to Busselton's Bypass to Vasse, Margaret River etc. Breedens Mitre 10 business was sold in 1976 to Don & Rosemary Keynes. Explains origin of Mitre 10 stores (Queensland). Rob & Crys then started their Bunyipop Craft Centre & Wildlife Walkabout Safaris on their Bunyip Pool property at Wonnerup. Father did not just sit back after the business sold but helped Don Keynes for a while & in the craft shop at Bunyip.</p>	7.34