Wokalup Research Station Staff Reunion 1999

Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia

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WOKALUP
RESEARCH STATION
STAFF REUNION 1999
Welcome to the Wokalup Research Station Reunion.

The hint of having a Reunion was first mentioned two years ago and then again 12 months ago but as everyone knows, time flies past so quickly. With Wokalup about to have a change in direction and become part of the Education Department it was felt that it was a most appropriate time to have the long awaited Reunion whilst Wokalup Research Station was still part of Agriculture Western Australia or it just wouldn’t happen.

We had to rely on peoples’ memories to collate an invitation list so if anyone was overlooked please accept this apology as it was not intentional. A big “Thank you” to Ron McTaggart, Ken Angell and Norm Barrett for compiling a list for the 1960 era and many thanks to the people who were able to obtain current addresses!

This book has been compiled from memories of many staff members who have passed through Wokalup (whether it was for 1 year or 27) who replied to the Staff Reunion invitation. It is ashamed that we don’t have memories from all staff members but every attempt was made. I am sure that there will be many, many more fond memories told throughout the evening tonight!

Wokalup acknowledges that it could not have survived without the input from Research, Professional and Technical staff from other offices within the Department (or Agency as it is known today) and it has been a pleasure to have worked with you all.

“Fun, laughter and many good memories”

Thank you Wokalup!
I Remember It Well... an Ode to Woky

It's years since I worked at Woky
When I was young, single & slimmer!
I remember it all, good times and bad
the memories don't get any dimmer.

Jim, Matt and Leah made me welcome
My time there hadn't gone too far,
When Phil joined the crew, and Fred came back too
After recovering from crashing his car.

Each month we weighed big mobs of cattle
At calving we gave them all tags,
Most cows were quiet and friendly
But some were bloody vicious old bags!

We trundled around in the Toyota
Looking for cows that seemed to be lost,
For hours we'd search, but who'd find them?
That's why they made Jim the BOSS!

We poked things inside the Friesians,
When it was time for them to mate,
I had a little trouble reaching that high
So the guys kindly built me a crate!

The boys from head office would visit
And tell us just what we'd do next,
Give instructions on how we should do it
Then leave us all looking quite vexed.

They took blood samples from the cows
(they probably hurt them quite a bit),
They injected them with all sorts of hormones
And then we collected the shit!

But after two years, I had to leave
Other attractions were getting too strong.....
It wasn't the job, just the distance
'tween Woky and Jerramungup was too bloody long!

I wasn't at Woky long, but I made an impression
That just isn't a brag....
For when opening a gift for my first newborn son
Out dropped his own Woky ear tag!

By Margaret Watkins
Dear Karen,

Thank you for sending an invitation to the “Woky” reunion to my Dad and Mum (Ken and Dorothy Simes). They both had their 88th birthday this year and “old age” has caught up with them just in the past 6 months making it impossible for them to travel.

Since they can not be there I thought I would prompt Dad for a few memories but they were a bit hazy. However here is a little information which you might find interesting.

Dad went to Wokalup Research Station as its first Manager in 1949 and stayed until he retired in 1976. In the beginning there was a staff of 2 and when he retired there were 17. His boss was Maurice Culity. When the property was the A.I. centre there was quite a large staff. We lived in the old homestead (the wooden one) and the Blechendyn family lived next door in the old brick homestead. Later we moved to a new brick house on the hill and just before Dad retired a new house was built in about the same place.

Some of the experimental work involved a cotton trial, peach orchard, different grasses, castor beans for castor oil, irrigation trials and of course lots of cross breeding trials.

Having spent all my childhood at Woky I have some very fond memories of some of the many people who lived and worked there. The Blechendyn family, Judith, Barbara, Evan and Richard. They were mates for my sister, Valda, and I. We went wandering all over the place birds nesting, shooting parrots in the old olive trees at the homestead, swimming in the irrigation channels, picnicking, picking wildflowers especially donkey orchids and climbing the old mulberry tree at the homestead. No doubt we got up to mischief too but I can’t remember that!!

Fond memories of Mr & Mrs Bailey. Mr Bailey used to work at the “bull sheds”. One night a week we used to go to the Baileys to watch “Bonanza” on T.V. Mrs Bailey would make us supper and then we would walk home.

The Strand family and Susan, a Danish family who were at Woky for a short time. Mr and Mrs Strand did not speak very good English. Mr and Mrs Elliot and Mark.

When Dad’s boss, Mr Culity came with visitors things would get spruced up and Mum would get busy cooking huge pavlovas with egg whites Dad would bring down from the A.I. Lab. Some of the visitors were Emanuel Igwie from Uganda, and a group of Muslims, which caused a bit of a problem at home because the women were not allowed to use the same bathroom as the men and we only had one.
Dad particularly asked me to convey his good wishes to those who work at Woky and to the property in its new roll.

Sandra France
Jim Brennen (Manager 1976 - 1985)

Wokalup became part of my life in 1973 when I transferred from the Bunbury District Office to take up the position of Senior Technician at Wokalup Research Station. In 1976, Ken Simes retired and I was fortunate enough to become the next Manager of the Station.

The focus on dairy was very strong and many feedlot trials, grazing trials were carried out but the one that stands out is the Somatic Cell Count trial work carried out by George Olney has proved very valuable today. A second dairy was built in 1980 was named as the “New Dairy” and I saw the dairy staff increase to 4 plus Technician. I suppose the only headache with the dairy operations was trying to implement a fair “Dairy Roster” for weekend work by the farm staff - fortunately a record of who worked what Public Holiday was kept because it seemed that everyone worked Christmas last year when the roster was released!

The Beef Genetic Trial was in full swing when I took over as Manager, most of the hill country had been cleared in the early 1970’s. A lot of fencing was carried out in my time, not only maintenance but construction of new internal fences, laneways, etc were carried out each winter to meet the requirements of the Trial.

The highlight of the Beef Project was the collecting of embryos in 1984. There was a hype of activity with Mick and Patrick organising the show - and the media coverage received was overwhelming. There could be a lot of stories told of Beef Calving time and Rudolph Sprivilis’ Milk Ability Trials each year.

Sheep were introduced to Wokalup with the drought stricken lambs being sent over from Salmon Gums. Geoff de Chaneet conducted a Trace-Element Deficiency in sheep trial and then the “Blowfly” crew of Nick Monzu, Peter Mangano and Ernie followed. Construction of the Shearing Shed went ahead in about 1982.

The Dairy, Beef and Farm Advisory Committees were formed and these committees met about three times a year.

One can’t forget the attempts from Private Enterprise and other Organisations to utilise this wonderful place, first it was the Cheese Factory and then the Zoo, in the 1980’s.

One of the funniest moments in Ken Simes’ time was when a person rang from Perth looking for a job, one was going at the time so Ken told this guy to jump on the train and he would meet him in Harvey at the Station. When he arrived, he came with nothing, so Ken gave him $50 (a lot of money back then) to buy some food then took him up to the SMQ. Next day, at 7:30 am Ken asked me to go up to the SMQ to pick this guy up and bring him down to the workshop. Yes I said, but when I got up there, the guy had done a runner! Ken was left without a worker at $50 short in the pocket!
Another moment was when Bob Elliott found an orphaned calf in Camdens paddock one morning and felt sorry for it as the foxes had eaten its tail off. Bob being Bob, brought the calf back to the dairy and raised him. Of course, everyone who knew Bob Elliott knows that he named all of his animals so the orphaned steer became better known as “Fred”.

One day during the hay season we were down in paddock 58S picking up the square bales. Warby (John Warburton) was driving the truck, I was on the ground lining the bales up and Bob and Ian (I think) were on the back of the truck. Well, all of a sudden, there was an almighty scream from the top, Warby thought that the boys were telling him to drive faster but what it was when one of them were throwing the bales to the stacker from the bale elevator, to his surprise he found a big fat tiger snake coming up the bale elevator as well!

I still have the toy tractor that was presented to me on my Retirement Night in 1985 in my desk!

In concluding, Marj and I have many fond memories of Wokalup Research Station and have been fortunate to have kept in touch with so many of the staff members since my retirement.
Richard Seaward  (Manager 1986 to 1999)

Within one week of commencing work at Wokalup Research Station in January 86 the local newspaper had a front page headline of Wokalup to be used for a zoo. Not only did this leave me bewildered but also set the tone for the rest of my working time here. My experiences at Wokalup were not only related to agricultural activities, but also agro-politics which involved downsizing and a number of proposed sales of the Research Station to apparent solvent entrepreneurs of the day. The associated correspondence, either internally or in the press added a unique flavour to my duties at Wokalup in comparison to the other Research establishments of the Department of Agriculture. Another significant non experimental highlight was the bankruptcy of Harvey Fresh Dairy to whom we were supplying milk. It was a rapid introduction to corporate financial ruthless management by people who were well aware of the situation and were prepared to exploit less informed people.

The most significant agricultural activity event was the closing of the dairy and transfer of the dairy cows to Vasse Research Station. This action isolated Wokalup from the dairy community and was the beginning of the decline of agricultural research at Wokalup. It in effect removed dairy research activities from Wokalup. Since the early 90’s research at Wokalup was then associated to the following enterprises; beef, sheep lice control, sheep footrot eradication, establishment of a Redglobe table grape industry in the SW and a viticulture germ plasm block. Besides trial activities the Research Station made a significant contribution to assist in the establishment of the WA Vine Improvement Association.

With the reduction in staff numbers and changing research activities the staff that remained were constantly being required to change their work habits, for some, this was a challenge and to others it was very frustrating. Despite declining resources the staff defied the negative trend to make significant contributions to research programs.

The largest trial conducted on Wokalup in my time was the Beef Genetic trial, which in the Department of Agriculture Administration’s view was a monster, (it took the toll of a few geneticists, quite a few staff and a lot of money) and in the current economic rational of a cost benefit analysis the trial would probably never have been started. Besides the normal results expected from an experimental trial it has also generated a large amount of data and DNA material (stored in frozen blood). It is ironic that after Agriculture WA closes Wokalup Research Station this trial could possibly produce a valuable unique research tool for future molecular genetic research, a purpose that would probably not have been considered at it’s inception.

The natural environment of Wokalup Research Station is second to none. There are not many establishments in WA where one can go the top of a hill and obtain a near aerial view of a farm.

Over all, I appreciated the challenges (good and bad), and to have had the opportunity to have worked in a glorious environment.

Richard Seaward
Manager 1999
**Bill Anthony**

I worked at the Wokalup Research Station for approximately four years as a General Farm Hand in the mid 1970’s. I lived next to Norm Barrett and had many good memories of my time at WRS.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the Reunion tonight as my time has been taken up with the timber problems here in Manjimup.

Best wishes for a good evening.

Bill.

**Kerry Barrett**

I worked at Wokalup Research Station in 1976/77. I mainly carried out clerical and laboratory work for Bill Fulkerson in the office on the hill near the cattle yard.

I was also the Office cleaner for a short time.

**Norm Barrett**

I started working at Wokalup Research Station in 1960 and later on transferred to the Bunbury Office in 1985.

I worked in the Dairy for many years and then transferred to farm duties as the years went on.

My family and I lived on the Research Station in House No 7 (later renamed No 6). Our family saw many people come and go from the Single Men’s Quarters and the other houses along the hill - many stories could be told!

WRS had its own *Snow White and the 7 Dwarf*

- *Maurice Cullity* - Snow White
- *Ken Simes* - Sneezy
- *Bill Blechinden* - Grumpy
- *Bob Ettridge* - Sleepy
- *Bob Elliott* - Noddy
**Geoff Blinco**

Commenced at Wokalup in November 1969 and transferred to the Herd Recorder Unit in Waroona in December 1972.

I was a General Farm Hand and spent much of my time in the workshop utilising my trade skills. Also relief Dairy Hand.

I lived in House 5 (fourth house up the hill). Both our daughters were born while we lived in this house.

I have fond memories of my time at Wokalup. The only nickname I recall is Bob Elliott being referred to (not to his face) as “Noddy”.

Our eldest daughter, Kaye, still responds to the nickname “Smiley” bestowed on her by Mrs Barrett.

Our absence tonight is a result of my interest in Dairy Goats which was started when I inherited a goat from Des Elmslie. We are in Adelaide where I am to Judge the Dairy Goats at the Royal Adelaide Show tomorrow.

**Dawn Blunsdon**

I commenced at Wokalup in October 1990 as Clerk/typist and left in July 1996.

It was when I started the Clerical position went from full-time to part-time employment.

Memories of my Wokalup days was Matt’s legendary office clean outs when Richard was on leave. Richard would return after a month to a near empty office, Matt had either thrown everything out or stored it in the archives!

**Ian Church**

I commenced at Wokalup Research Station from March 1974 and left in March 1989.

I was employed as a General Farm Hand and became Farm Foreman when Ron Wilson retired and involved in general farm duties and the Beef Genetic Trial.

We lived on the Research Station in house 4.
**Bob Ettridge**

I started work at Wokalup in August 1958 and was transferred in July 1965.

I was a General Farm Hand working in the Grass Garden, Drying Room, Trial Plots, calf rearing and milking.

I lived in the Single Mens’ Quarters I enjoyed meeting people from many countries that stopped in the Quarters from time to time.

I remember one very hot day, it was over 38 degrees C, and I went down to the old Homestead to see Frank Brickeman who was the Research Officer at the time. He was in his office with the electric fire going, it was like an over, asked why the hell he had the fire on, he replied, "to light my cigarette as I am out of matches". He was smoking one and another burning in the ashtray!

I have memories of many good times spent at WRS.

**Dennis Gilpin**

I was at Wokalup in 1980 in the area of general farm work.

My memories of Wokalup was riding the half broken-in mad mares and the Police horses.

*I am sorry that I am unable to make the Reunion on 3rd September. I work in the country at this time of the year. I hope you all have a good time that night.*

*Regards,*

*Dennis*
Kerry Hawley

My time at Wokalup Research Station was in 1964-65 for approximately 8 months.

I was an Agricultural Adviser (Dairy) filling in for vacant technical position. Acted also as Manager when he was on leave.

I resided in the single persons' quarters.

Memories of my Wokalup days included:
1. Blotted my copy book at buck's party!
2. Lived with chickens.
3. Steers became bits of skin.

Trevor Henderson

I started at Wokalup in November 1974 (Ken Simes was looking for casuals for hay season one night at the Woky Pub) and left in April 1988.

I was a general farm hand and did plenty of fencing in the hills, haymaking and spent a lot of time with the beef trial.

I can remember having to cart “Fred” the steer to the Agricultural Shows week after week one year - it was a bit sad when Richard decided Fred had to go!

Cyclone Alby in 1978 would have to be one memory, seeing lit up cow pads flying past you, the wind, the raging fires .. at one stage, I wondered how I would get out of this alive.

I suppose the biggest thing that changed my life during my time at WRS was marrying the office girl at the time, Karen.

I go past Wokalup Research Station as I travel to Worsley to work each day and I still quite often wish that I was still there working on the farm, the work that I really loved doing.
Karen Henderson (nee Maughan)

I first began working as Clerk/Typist at Wokalup in December 1980 and left in 1990 to take up the challenging career of “parenting”. In August 1996, I resumed working at WRS in a part-time capacity and at that stage it looked as though it would only be for 3 weeks to finalise the Administration side of Wokalup. Well in that time I have signed many three month contracts with the Agency and even though I have spent the past twelve months in the Harvey District Office, my position is still at Wokalup. This will all come to an end in October!

Most scariest moment! I had only been at WRS for a week and it was Payday for the wages staff. 11.45 am the guys would all file in one by one…phew, everything went off well! Went to town to do the banking, mail, etc and the first of many fortnightly fish ‘n’ chips and when I got back, who was sitting on the chair waiting for me … Norm Barrett … I had underpaid him his Annual and Long Service Leave!! Fluster, fluster, heart pumping fast…I can remember nervously saying „I can’t understand how I got it wrong, Leah worked it all out before she left, so all I had to do was copy it into the book and write the cheque”. On the back foot, Norm replied “Oh, if Leah worked it out, it must be right” and went off happy. It made me grow up from a school girl to ‘Oh! you’re in the real world now’ all in a matter of 15 minutes.

I have good memories of the social events - the cricket matches, ten pin bowling nights, the Christmas Dinner bus trips and the kids Xmas tree with a BBQ at the Brennen’s house afterwards - it was great watching the Woky kids get a buzz!!, “Alphabet Horses” competitions, the footy tipping and the Melbourne Cup…Bob Jones would come in and pay his money, then tell me with his cheeky grin that he’ll be back to collect his winnings, sure enough, if he didn’t come first or second the bloody horse would come last and he’d still get his $1 back!

But my most memorable moment at Wokalup was in January 1982 - I was doing the daily mail run just after 10am to the drum on the corner and I saw the John Deere tractor come up the hill. The tractor stopped and Trevor Henderson got off and nervously asked me out on a date (ten or so guys were all looking at us from the workshop, so I thought it might have been a dare!). My name today says the rest, Trev and I were married in 1985.

Geoff Howell

I worked at Wokalup Research Station from 1982 to 1991 then transferred to Vasse Research Station.

I was the Sheep Technician to start with and then in 1984 took over from Phil Moyle as the Dairy Techo.

I lived in the Single Mens Quarters from 1982 - 1984, moved into the old brick house (House 1) from 1984 to 1988 and in 1988 Sue and I moved into Phil’s old house (House 7) and lived there until 1991.

A sad time for me was when “they” sold the Dairy Herd in 1991.
**Terry Hynes**

I worked at Wokalup Research Station from 1970 to 1976.

I was a Field Assistant and my work involved recording of Beef Cattle. In the seven years 1000 acres were cleared and fenced for Beef Cattle.

Dorothy and I lived in the second last house (formerly used as an office) next door to the Barrett family.

Humorous remarks were made by Norm Barrett on my arrival first day wearing smart shorts, long white socks (at the insistence of wife Dorothy). The remark was "I'm a toff" but I soon changed into gum boots and overalls!! to the reality of the conditions.

Nine thirty one night (Mr) Ken Simes arrived at our house with a couple of bottles of "medication" and a cooked chook and drinks and lollies for the kids - Mrs Simes was away for a few days!

Another adventurous journey, in a very slow gutless truck for Chapman Research Station with a load of cattle, but was refreshed after a long trip by a few lagers to give myself and Ian Church the energy to drive home again.

I regard my memorable years at Wokalup as the happiest time of my working life.

*I am sorry I am unable to attend the Staff Reunion but my best wishes go out to all.*

*Terry Hynes and Dorothy.*

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**Leah Jones**

My years at Wokalup were from April 1973 through to December 1980 as the Clerk/Typist.

Memories of my time at Wokalup would have to be *mushrooming in the hills.* "Duty" was to drive Mrs Simes around the hills in the Suzuki 4WD to collect them. Memories of Mr Simes - never being able to please him, of him having to go to town and do the mail at 3 pm (via the Bowling Club). However, I have remained in contact with the Simes. From Mr Brennen’s time I remember the “family” type association with most of the staff - Christmas Parties, etc.

Wokalup R.S. was my first job and as it was more a “GIRL FRIDAY” type one gave a good grounding in future jobs since then!
**Ron McTaggart**

I worked at Wokalup Research Station December 1964 to 1966.

I was a Field Technician in pasture research, seed production and distribution, grass garden, drying and weighing samples for other Dairy Project Officers. Sometimes Acting Manager.

I lived at the single Mens’ Quarters - top level, end room.

Memories of living on the Station were:
- Smelly water supply
- Thanks to Angell for supply of TV!!
- Milk based diet and free pork ribs from E.G. Green Butchers in Harvey (from Whistle).
- Bifurcated dairy herd and La Becquetterie Jolie - the best Jersey in the World!

Memories of my time at WRS were:
- Kerry Hawley’s Bucks’ Night at the Woky Pub, then Simsies house in January 1965 - Wild!!!
- Ken Angell’s frypan - legendary.
- Guiness Book of records - pile of crabshells in Quarters after crabbing at Australind with Andy Rechichi (Woky Pub).
- Filming of plastic liners in Paddock 17 - Irrigation trial with Cullity and Ken Cole. A farce better than Keystone Cops!!
- Bob Elliott was known as “Noddy”, Ken Angell - the “Angel”, Ken Simes - “Simsie”.
- Someone sleeping in the bath overnight (Ken Angell ??). Henry/Warby alarm services!!

*Sorry that we cannot make it to the Reunion, we are on holidays for the next fortnight. Have a great night and please take photos for the Ag Brief!*

**Henry Mippy**

Henry worked at Wokalup Research Station in 1982-1983 under the Aboriginal Training Scheme. Henry became part of the team almost immediately especially when it came to fielding a team in cricket, both traditional and in-door cricket - Woky went from fielding a mediocre team to a very competitive one!

Henry is now in Geelong and when he received his invitation to the Reunion he immediately contacted Seymour Palmer and sent his apologies, however, he did try very hard to justify a trip back to “Woky”! Henry keeps in touch with Seymour and Bob Jones on a fairly regular basis.
Marilyn Mirabella (nee Wade)

I worked in the office as Clerk/Secretary and it was my first job in 1971/72 (I think). The work taught me a lot. I hope that Mr Simes is still alive - he was my Boss at the time!

I remember watering the garden when this huge snake came out at me. I screamed which brought all the other staff out. Someone picked up a shovel and killed it. It's something I'll never forget.

Phil Moyle

I commenced at Wokalup Research Station in February 1979 and in 1996 transferred in to the Harvey District Office.

I replaced Bob Elliott as the Dairy Technician and spent 5 years being involved in the dairy research, animal husbandry and Artificial Insemination. In 1984 I transferred to the beef side of the Station and became the Beef Techo and mainly involved in the Beef Genetic Trial and associated trials. The Embryo work would have to be one of the most memorable parts of the job!

Cheryl and I lived on the Station where we lived in House 8 from 1979 to December 1985 when we were asked to move to House 7 due to House 8 being designated as the Manager's house. In 1988 we purchased a property west of Harvey and vacated our house at Wokalup.

I have many very good memories of Wokalup, especially the early days. There was so much social activity happening and WRS became a community in itself. The “Social Cricket Club” stands out - the many Sundays we travelled to play cricket against other Agency teams and even CALM. The women became involved in the fundraising side of it so the social atmosphere was great. We fielded a pretty strong indoor cricket team as well!

I would have to say the most funniest moment was the day that a beef cow chased Don Vass (local Vet) down the hill and he landed face first in a soak - Don didn’t see the funny side of it but Bob and I did! He earned his money that day!!
**Kerry Offer**

I started at Wokalup in November 1974 and was there until June 1978 (I think the dates are right, it’s not easy remembering dates back 25 years!).

I was a general farm hand with expertise in fencing, cattle trial work and hay making. Pet hates were the dairy roster and grass trials.

I lived at WRS - second house from the end on left (House 5) with wife Maureen and 2 children. My neighbours were Ian Church and Norm Barrett.

**Memories of Wokalup** - generally happy family and working days.

**Nick-names** - Ken Simes - Sudsy  
     Ian Church - Scroodge  
     Roy Callaway - Fat Cat.  
     Bob Elliott - Noddy.

**Highlight** - One was staying alive up the back of the hills and then during Cyclone Alby!

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**Seymour Palmer**

My time at Wokalup Research Station was from 1973 to 1986.

I was employed as the Welder and in my time a lot of construction went ahead - the New Dairy and feedshed, Shearing Shed modifications, cattle yards to name a few.

There were many good memories at Wokalup but the one that stands out is in 1984 when Wokalup Research held their own “Mini Olympics”! Also, good times were had wrestling with Shayne Cullimore.

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**Alan Piper**

I came to Wokalup in November 1984 from Chapman Research Station.

There had just recently been a shuffle with the Technicians and I filled the vacant position of Sheep/Horticulture Technician. There were many trials with the horticulture - tomatoes, sweetcorn, melons to name a few however horticulture at Wokalup expanded to include the tablegrapes and citrus.

We felt a bit like the “Travelling Wilbury’s” whilst living on Wokalup Research Station. When we first transferred down here, there were no houses available so Sue and I lived in the SMQ’s for 8 months. Some interesting times were had! In late 1985 the Barrett family were leaving so we moved into House 6 as soon as it became available and I lived there for 6 years. In 1991 House 7 became available (a 3 bedroom house) so we made another move and remained in House 7 until we left in 1996.
Ted Rowley

I worked at Wokalup Research Station in 1971 as a Ag. Cadet. I lived at the Single Mens’ Quarters.

Memories of my year at WRS:
- I drew the map on the back wall of the office.
- Camped next to the Barretts’ and watched the girls come and go. (Norma Barrett became my future wife!).

Bill Russell

My association with Wokalup Research Station in 1977 from the Harvey District Office and still remains today from the Bunbury Office. Worked carried out involved Dairy, Irrigation pastures, Beef herd and OIC Harvey.

Matt Summors

“When the position of Senior Technician became available in 1977 at Wokalup, I was lucky enough to get the post and join Jim again after being with him in the Bunbury Office from 1970-72. I was there from 1977 - 1995.

Memories of Wokalup? There are hundreds. First there was the horrific effects of Cyclone Alby in 1978. Jim & Marj were in Perth on leave and we were left fight raging fires and save what we could of the place.

Being involved in all aspects of helping to run the Station was very satisfying and the we had while carrying out any job was very rewarding.

Our many social functions with the Bunbury Office - pool, darts, cricket are legendary. The social cricket matches on Sundays very enjoyable - especially the ones at Balingup.

Barbeques on Sundays with Phil and Cheryl; trapping wild pigs with Ian; marroning with Alan (plus some very nice Galway Pipe port!!); listening to Roy’s dog “Dennis” howl its head off all night long when they were not home; chasing bush fires at all hours of the night - not ours of course; rounding up cattle off the road/railway line (again at night) are just some of the memories.

Best of all were the many friends Glennie and I made over the years we were there. A piece of history is passing now the Station is closing but we will never let it be forgotten.”
Donna Scott

I worked at Wokalup Research Station from 1985 to 1987 as a Farm Apprentice. I lived in the Single Persons House during my time at Wokalup.

What comes to mind first is locking my keys in my car - first day on the Job, they stayed there for 3 days.

Worst nightmare - Churchies (Ian) driving up the hills!!
Funniest thing - Churchie GETTING DIRTY!! Ha ha!!

Horror sights
1. Watching Matt Summors riding a motor bike!!! (need I say more)
2. Seeing Seymour having a swim in the irrigation channel with nothing but his big white Y-Front jocks on (The Chip ‘n’ Dales have got nothin’ on you Babe!)
3. Poor Alan Piper falling through the grid mesh at the Shearing Shed - made a nice mess of that leg!

Being An Apprentice at Wokalup!! Was one of my lifes little experiences. It was hard - not being an Apprentice, that was the easy part, but being a GIRL entering into a mans domain - as they say.

Me and nine or so of them. I don’t know who got the better deal - me or the guys. But yes I had a lot of fun and laughs. I had the privilege to work with guys who have different personalities, ideas, annoying habits, and various different bodily functions, which I will leave you to ponder on.

And “hey” they got me!

P.M.T. or P.M.S. (which ever came first) and the Red Hair! You choose!

In all fairness, I don’t think I could have worked with a better bunch of guys.

As we all leave, I don’t think any of us can deny that a piece of Wokalup goes with us.

We have all mended a few fences, driven a couple of tractors, milked hundreds of cows, planted some seeds, stacked mountains of hay, and yes, watered MATT’S ‘BLOODY TREES’.

Those couple of years of fun, laughter and memories
Will Last a Lifetime.

Thanks Wokalup!!

Love Donna  xxx
**Bert Van Zonneveld**

I was at Wokalup Research Station from April 1978 and left in October 1980 and was employed as a general Farm Hand.

It was very good working at WRS and have many good memories.

**Fred Venables**

I was at Wokalup Research Station from 1978 to 1980 and was employed as a Technician.

I suppose there are many memories of my time at Wokalup, but I think I’ll be remembered by the Christmas Eve car accident that I had in 1978 and others had to cover for me whilst I recuperated!

**Margaret Watkins (nee Furze)**

I commenced at Wokalup Research Station in January 1979 and left in September 1980 and was the Beef Technician.

I never lived on WRS but lived at the house on Jetto’s place. Didn’t spend much spare time there - I was always driving to bloody Jerramungup!!

Do I have memories of my days at Wokalup? Now, that’d be telling!!

I think my nickname was ‘Miss Piggy’ - couldn’t get away with that nowadays!!

**Highlights:**
- Rendering a charging cow unconscious with a well aimed rock! Earned me a few points with the ‘boys’!!
- Fred and I getting the Suzuki stuck in a creek while taking a short cut! (I never did tell anyone!)
- Spending 4 hours looking for 1 cow in a 40 acre paddock - Matt too! Mr B found it in about 5 minutes.
- Being send a cattle ear tag for my first born!!
The Folk from Wokalup

The Mick Carrick edition

with apologies to Banjo Patterson, deep apologies to all those insulted herein and most abject apologies to those I may have, through feebleness of memory, forgotten to insult.

There was movement at the station, for the word has passed around
That the cattle beasts from Wokalup were on their way,
They would join the wild bush cattle - they were worth a million pound,
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray.
All the tried and noted thinkers from the stations near and far
Had mustered at the homestead overnight,
For the thinkers love hard thinking where the silly whimsies are,
And the cattle dog snuffs the battle with delight.

There was Jimmy Brennen, whose wisdom flowed when Jack Neil ran the show,
The old man with his smile as soft as now;
But few could think beside him when his blood was fairly up—
He would go wherever "cyclone Jack" could go.
And Matthew of the Somers came down to lend a hand,
No better thinker ever worked the brains;
For never idea could throw him while Glenfiddich lasted out,
He learnt to think while roaming on the plains.

And one was there named Patrick from the Donnelly tribe of fame,
With a brain so tough and hungry that it ate his hair clean off,
When harder thoughts were needed, 'twas to Patrick that we came
And to him still, do many their hats, doff.
Mick was there as well, to worry about the numbers and that stats,
And to try to get a control herd just in case;
But Farran and other lofty experts said no to this small plan,
So back to hard thinking went the crew.

But maybe a slight and weedy herd, one which had the power to stay,
On ice for many years would be the go on Wokalup
So there gathered a great team to bring the first frozen control herd to play,
Jim Shelton from the ANU and Roy Casey from near by!
Helped by Phils Brett and Moyle and Trudy and more
Ian and Alan and their team brought the cows to the shed for Al,
While Chris and Mick and Alison and Lindsay along with John as well,
Searched and found four hundred of the tiny critters, more alive than dead.

All this time some mighty cattle bred in the slopes of Wokalup.
Where the hills are twice as steep and twice as rough,
Where a horse's hoofs strike firelight from the flint stones every stride,
The beast that holds its own is good enough.
For the Wokalup mountain cattle were getting bigger every year,
Until Big Blue arrived - the biggest of them all;
We had seen full many cattle since we first commenced to roam,
But nowhere yet such a beast as this was seen.
Bloody, Bloody, Bloody

Special Bunbury edition by Mick Carrick

The sunburnt bloody Patrick stood,
And in a dismal bloody mood
Apostrophised his boss’s buddy
This bloody Court is no bloody good
Couldn’t earn his bloody food
Bloody! Bloody! Bloody.

The bloody news had bloody come,
That all the bright and all the dumb
Have to go to Bun-bloody
This Monte House is a bloody bum
Couldn’t please his bloody men
Bloody,! Bloody! Bloody!

But Patrick faced the challenge well,
And said with a mighty bloody yell,
His face all flushed and bloody ruddy:
Come Barb we’ll take this bloody dell
Even if we live in a bloody hostel.
Bloody! Bloody! Bloody!

Perth’s bloody loss was Bunbury’s gain
A bloody great brain drain
Nor reversed by bloody study,
Of bloody pollies in party room pain,
With new bloody theories - the old ones slain.
Bloody! Bloody! Bloody!

And the bloody Donnellys, never forget
Have conquered fields much farther yet
Of Chemistry and Maths and Theologicuddy
So Patrick bloody smiled, as South they went
I’ll be bloody mayor of Wokalup yet!
Bloody! Bloody! Bloody!

Thanks for the invitation to the Wokalup reunion but I will be unable to be there.
My best wishes to everyone for an enjoyable evening reminiscing. Thanks Wokalup!

Regards,

Patrick Donnelly
So big he wouldn't fit in the crush or in the race and only mated a couple of years
Before his size did him in and he was sent to a back paddock to rest.
One day Richard gave his orders, 'Boy's, get rid of that old Blue,
He doesn't earn his keep; so off to Harvey he must go to join the other meat'.
Now, Patrick caught wind of this on that fateful morn in Perth,
'They want to kill Big Blue', he yelled over his shoulder as he flew -
For never yet was driver that could the man in sight,
Once Patrick decided that it was a go to save Big Blue ere night.

The slaughterman's gun was poised and ready when Patrick to him yelled:
'Hold hard, you murderous swine, do not that wondrous beast knock off!'
And the determined glint in his steely eye told the gunman to hold hard.
So Big Blue was saved from the kitchen knife and the biggest of all Macs.
But this was only a minor stint against all the threats we weathered.
As Patrick and Mick and Richard and Phil tailored its plan to the years,
First a cheese factory was mooted, then it was the zoo,
Then the breed society decided they didn't like their names.

So another round of embryos was bred at Wokalup; these to grow them faster
Up to weaning weight and then, to end the long experiment
A little earlier than before, the MOET champagne genetics led the way once more.
Many old faces were there again but others were new to the scene.
Tony Martin joined Roy Casey and then Richard (head) Hall to flush the critters out,
And in the lab were Gail and Loren along with Andras and Jonathon
Making rude remarks about our embryos of these great cattle beasts,
One was even heard to call them "Tiny beef snackettes" - Dear God.

Through all the years Greg Sawyer studied and regulated their reproductive organs,
In such a way that all the calves we needed were there when we needed them.
And Rudolph measured more of their milk than any other had every dreamed of
To make a mass of data; food for many years of thought.
But the information that we bred may outlive the cattle now,
And though some is analysed and published, there is a great deal more to come.
Farewell to the Wokalup project and thank you old cattle for all you have done,
For the cause of science and the spirits of us as you grew so wonderfully in those hills.

And thank you Wokalup Folk who helped this along over many a year
It was a joy to be with you then and we will think of you again
As we delve into the data of twenty years of weighing and measures
And hope the statistical methods to deal with them continue to grow.
I know some have been neglected here, but not forgotten as Mick runs out of rhymes.
Iona and Linton we remember and Allan's small cup still bring a cheer.
The cannon bones rose again to be most useful to predict
The mature size of newborn calves - ain't life grand!