

# Old workers ham it up

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Dandy Bacon doesn't just live on with the neon pig sign on top of Dandenong Market.

It is still a byword with workers who created the revered rashers - even 35 years after the Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Company factory closed.

After all this time, more than 60 former employees will get together again for a much-anticipated reunion.

One of the proud organisers Stuart Wood said the factory was the "start of Australian bacon".

ing a job for more than 300 at its peak.

And it was iconicised by the giant neon 'Dandy Hams & Bacon' pig that dominated the Lonsdale Street vista.

Mr Wood says the sign should be heritage protected, being just as significant as the Richmond 'skipping girl' sign.

"I can remember when I came home from Pakenham with my father driving the car.

"I'd be thinking there's the Dandy pig, never thinking that I would be working there."

The sign was donated to the council, but came so close to being consigned to the gar-

Former maintenance worker Ron Chivers remembers spotting it in the tip, and telling the council: "You better get down here with a scrubbing brush."

Three years since the last reunion, Mr Wood has been hitting the phones to bring the old gang back together.

He's amazed that all of them still live on, even those into their 90s.

"It must have been something in the bacon," he quipped.

The Dandy Hams & Bacon reunion is at Dandenong Workers' Club, 52-70 Wedge St, Dandenong on 26 August. RSVP, Stuart Wood on 0450 781 699



Former Dandy Ham & Bacon workers Ron Chivers, John Roberts and Stuart Wood in front of the iconic pig sign. 183615

Picture: STEWART CHAMBERS

## DANDENONG

# Artisans to market creations

Stalls selling handmade original designs and global food

## Kimberley Seedy

IN THE market for some one-off handmade creations designed by local artists?

Check out the new Dandy Makers Market, Melbourne's newest handmade craft and artisan foods market.

An initiative of the Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre, the market will be held on the grounds of Dandenong Market on the second Sunday of every month, launching October 14, to coincide with the centre's Unity in Diversity festival.

SMRC chief executive Ramesh Kumar said the market was developed for new and emerging crafters and producers of artisan foods, providing the pathway for them to become economically independent through



business.

"It also provides a network of like-minded artisans to work together on a common mission and breakdown the walls of isolation due to language and cultural barriers," Mr Kumar said.

"The makers have diverse backgrounds but the commonality is their love for 100 per cent handmade.

"If it's handmade in Melbourne, you can sell it at the Dandy Makers Market. You can expect one-off creations

uniquely designed and made by the artisan who is holding the stall."

Items for sale will include lotions, candles, roasted coffee, preserves and condiments, homewares, jewellery and essential oils.

At the Unity in Diversity festival people can enjoy cultural performances, meet and speak to community groups and business stalls, and tempt their tastebuds with a selection of food from around the globe.

There will also be children's entertainment including amusement rides and a baby animal petting zoo.

The Unity in Diversity Festival will run from 10am to 4pm on the grounds of the SMRC at 39 Clow St, Dandenong.



Artist Hussein Zobeab with one of his pieces, jeweller Francine Umurerwa and clothes maker Mohsen Yousefi. Top left: Group of makers look forward to the new market. Picture: PENNY STEPHENS

## Bacon Factory Scheme

The outcome of a conference held at Dandenong on July 27 is that a company, to be called the Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Company, has been formed. A well attended and representative meeting in connection with the matter was held at the Cathedral Hotel, Melbourne, last week, over sixty delegates being present. Mr. Maher, of Mt. Eccles, occupied the chair, and the proposal to establish a bacon factory was enthusiastically received.

Messrs. Abbott and Hope (of Dandenong) were present at the meeting by invitation, and the former spoke on some of the subjects dealt with. The articles of association, which were adopted, contained provision for a capital of, £20,000, but delegates thought it wiser to increase this to £30,000 at least. This would mean a paid up capital of £10,000.

The question of a site was fully dealt with, but no decision was arrived at in the matter.

A proposal was put forward to restrict any dividend to shareholders to 5 per cent, with bonuses to suppliers, and it was stated in this connection that business people in the Gippsland towns would be expected to take up shares. On this subject Mr. Abbott pointed out that 400 or 500 shares (as was anticipated) could hardly be placed among townspeople with this condition attached, and in all probability this restriction will be excised. No doubt many people will take up shares under the latter condition. In Mirboo and other places many citizens subscribed largely for butter factory shares, and the present project will no doubt commend itself in each locality.

A proposal was made to sell the shares on a commission of 1/ per share, but Mr. Abbott said that, as far as Dandenong was concerned, he would canvass for their sale free of charge.

The directors of the company, which should have a successful career, are as follows:- Alfred Maher, Mount Eccles, farmer; William R. Jackson, Foster, farmer; D.T. Mackenzie, "Calrossie", Yarram, farmer; H. Halford, Kongwak, farmer; W. Helms, Stony Creek, farmer; C. Evans, Trafalgar, farmer; secretary (pro tem.), A. W. Wilson.

It was stated that by the application of co operative principles not only to the production of pork but also to the curing and marketing of bacon, the

promoters seek to do away with the fluctuations in prices in separable from the present system and to ensure to the farmer the full value of every pig raised. The quality of the pork produced upon the Gippsland farms is undoubtedly of the highest, and when properly treated is fit to be placed upon any of the world's markets. A keen demand exists for good bacon, and the differences between the prices paid by consumers and the prices received by the farmer affords a handsome margin of profit, which shareholders in the company who are supplying the pigs will share. In the State of New South Wales the co operative bacon factory has proved an unqualified success, and in Victoria the same result must follow if the farmers are loyal to their own interests. The promoters of the company are practical dairy farmers and pig raisers. The company is in no sense a proprietary concern, but is co-operative in the same sense as the various co-operative butter factory companies are. The number of shares fixed by the articles of association as the qualification of a director is 10. The minimum amount payable on application is 2/6 per share and on allotment 2/6 per share.

The preliminary expenses are estimated at £100; and the whole of the capital subscribed, less the preliminary expenses, will be reserved and used for working capital. The first business of the company will be the selection and purchase of a site for factory; several offers of sites have been received, but no contract been entered into.

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SB&MJ: September 8, 1910.

Correspondence.

**GIPPSLAND BACON FACTORY**

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir. -- My attention has been called to a letter appearing under the above heading, which was written by Mr. J. Macpherson, and as there appears to be a wrong impression in his mind. I desire if possible, to set the matter right. Mr. Macpherson is evidently appalled by the notice of the Company's intention to apply for permission to carry on certain trades, which, unfortunately, under the Public Health Act 1890, have to be described as noxious trades. I would point out, however, that those for which permission is to be applied for are merely the adjuncts to an up to date bacon factory, and, far from causing an offensive smell, or odor or disturbance, are meant to do away with those offences, and to eliminate absolutely any odor, smells, or nuisance, which could offend even the nerves of the most sensitive. The Act lays it down that if any of certain trades are carried on the permission of the Council must be obtained, and no matter how small the amount may be, the Company has to obtain the Council's permission before it can carry these on. Doubtless Mr. Macpherson has been led away by the number of trades mentioned, but these are all in connection with a bacon factory, and will be carried on in the smaller rooms attached to the factory, as part of the actual factory itself, and will not be separate from the factory, as apparently it is intended to convey by this letter.

The subsidiary trades are carried on under the most scientific and hygienic conditions. The by-products, instead of being allowed to remain exposed to the air and create a nuisance, are placed instead in a sealed digester and what is called a manure-drying plant, which works in vacuum, and from which all offensive odors are extracted and rendered odorless and pass off in the exhaust steam and water, and so highly has this particular plant been spoken of by the Central Board of Health, that one of its engineers reported "that the work of the dryer was eminently satisfactory, there was no escape of odor from the dryer during its use nor from the water or vapour drained from its jacket" Therefore do not think that Mr. Macpherson or any other delicately nerved individual need have any fear that the carrying out these trades will ever become a nuisance. Practically all the offensive trades which the

Company propose to carry on are concentrated in the digester and the manure-drying machine, and both of these are certified to by the engineer of the Central Board of Health as working without producing the slightest odor. Further, if any offensive odor does arise the Council have the power to order and compel its abatement, so that the people of Dandenong are perfectly protected in this way. Mr. Macpherson makes reference to the fate of Preston, but he does not say what the fate was. I am well acquainted with Preston and its surroundings, and I know it to be a perfectly healthy town and district in which to live. There are many small farms and fine houses, of which Dandenong itself might be proud were they erected there.

In conclusion, I can assure Mr. Macpherson that neither he nor any of the Dandenong residents need be the slightest bit afraid that "after a blazing time of heat and north winds the cool south west will come in with the spirit of offal on its wings." This might have occurred with an old time factory, but with the improvements in machinery and the hygienic conditions with which we are blessed in this present century, coupled with strict supervision of the Public Board of Health, such a state of things would not be allowed for a moment, nor could they continue if by any chance they were.

---Yours, etc,

**WM. FREEMAN NOTT,**

Manager.

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SB&MJ: February 15, 1912

### Bacon Factory Progress

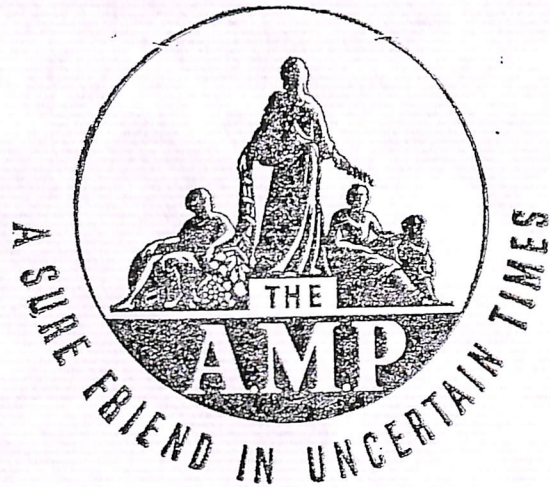
When the Dandenong Bacon Factory was about to commence operations a loud cry went up from a lot of croakers, "They will not be able to get sufficient pigs in Gippsland to keep the factory going." The lie direct can be given to this assertion from the fact that killing operations at the factory have been temporarily suspended (they will be resumed in the course of a day or two) because the farmers have been sending along pigs in such numbers that the factory cannot cope with supply. At the present moment the storage space is crammed with bacon just to the point of maturing, until a little time can be got to deliver this heavy stock to the Gippsland and Northern Selling Company (selling agent for the Bacon Company) the killing operations as stated above have been suspended. Friends (?) of the co operative movement describe this embarrassment of riches as the "closing down of the factory," but nothing is further from fact. In four weeks nearly 2000 pigs were killed at the factory, 6½d per lb being paid to the suppliers, instead of the half of it as obtained last year. Farmers, encouraged by the good price paid, rushed the factory, notwithstanding the instruction given them to moderate their supplies.

The result is only what could be expected. There is a glut. The company was called upon to pay out £5555 for pigs sent in, and this largely used up the trading capital at the disposal of the directors. There is about £7000 of unpaid capital due in instalments, and the directors are anxious, so that the present splendid business may not be retarded, that shareholders should at once make their shares paid up in full where it is possible for them to do so. From the replies already received there is every chance of this money being made available almost immediately. As is well-known, a large portion of the company's capital is sunk in building and machinery, so that the extraordinarily heavy payments to suppliers have been of a drain on the company's finances, which in any case will be speedily relieved as the bacon matures and is given into the hands of the selling agents. The great rush to send in pigs is good evidence of the popularity of the factory among the farmers, and its ultimate success is assured.

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SB&MJ: December 5, 1912.

1959



CONGRATULATES

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Industrial Senior Superintendent — L. A. PALMER

**AUSTRALIAN MUTUAL PROVIDENT SOCIETY**

# \* "Dandy" grew up with Dandenong

In 1911 the Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd. was formed in Dandenong to provide a market for and encourage the Gippsland pig farming industry.

A curing factory was established at "Dandy" Park and was amongst the first factories to commence operations in the Dandenong area.

Right from its inception, the company ploughed a substantial

proportion of its profits to Gippsland pig farmers, and fostered the industry so thoroughly that Gippsland pigs became recognised as the best produced in Victoria.

In 1955, in order to provide for future expansion and to protect the interests of ordinary shareholders, the company was reconstructed and became known as Victorian Bacon Ltd.

In 1956, the company acquired the flourishing ham and bacon curing business, J. Lloyd & Sons Pty. Ltd., Frankston, and

operated that firm as a subsidiary.

To facilitate operating activities the rapidly-expanding business, Victorian Bacon Ltd., and J. Lloyd & Sons Pty. Ltd., a new holding company was formed in 1958, Australian Bacon Limited.

Managing director of Australian Bacon Ltd. is Mr. R. R. Meldrum, who has been appointed general manager of Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Co. in 1954, and who guided the company through its dangerous stages of reconstruction and increased trading activities.

**DANDY PRODUCTS IN GOOD REPUTE**

"Dandy" hams, bacon,

sausages and frankfurts are accepted all over Victoria as representing the highest standard in pure food production.

"Dandy" products are a credit to Dandenong and are a fine example of Victorian rural industry.

Some idea of the growth of "Dandy" can be judged from these figures:—In 1911 sales amounted to £40,000. Last year the amount was £1,750,000.

Appropriately enough, two staff executives of this pioneer Dandenong factory are members of Dandenong's first city council — Cr. M. G. Jarvis, who is sales manager of the company, and Cr. K. McKenry.

## A MILESTONE IN DANDENONG'S DEVELOPMENT

On a cold, bleak day, early in August of 1950, a small group of businessmen drove through the quiet semi-rural township of Dandenong and alighted half-a-mile from the town at the junction of the Prince's and South Gippsland Highways.

The surrounding countryside gave little indication of their mission, for as far as the eye could see the area embraced only mile after mile of farmlands dotted with the occasional homestead.

To the casual observer the visitors held little significance but to the surrounding districts of Dandenong the occasion was an historical one. For this was the beginning of an industry that over the next few years was to usher in a new era of wealth and prosperity for

tor of International Harvester Company of Australia Pty. Ltd., with spade in hand, turned the first sod for the construction of Dandenong's first major industry — International Harvester's motor truck manufacturing works.

What has happened since that ceremony on August 4, 1950, is today history, for many major industries have since followed in International Harvester's footsteps and any resemblance between the area of that day and

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# DANDY BACON

## 1910 ..... 1973

Until 20 years ago, residents of Dandenong referred to the manufacturing plant of Victorian Bacon Pty. Ltd., as 'The Factory' because for the previous 40 years it was the only factory in the town.

From 1912 the plant had been a dominant feature on the western landscape, and through the years many housewives used as a time signal, the sharp note of the factory whistle sounding over the adjacent hills.

With the phenomenal growth of Dandenong over the past two decades, and the coming of other industries to the region, the familiar whistle has been tempered; but the factory activity has not slackened.

## dynamic growth

Processes have been improved with the introduction of the latest equipment, and under dynamic management the Dandenong operations alone have increased four-fold.

Since 1958 there has been a rapid expansion of the business to NSW, Queensland and South Australia.

To view this progress in some detail one can go back in time to the quiet days of 1910.

Around this period Gippsland pig farmers were highly dissatisfied with the unstable and low returns on pigs sold for bacon curing.

Prime quality pigs were selling at the unprofitable figure of threepence per pound and there was a general feeling that united action was necessary to improve the returns.

Arising from this situation, meetings were held at Dandenong Town Hall during 1910 and the belief developed that the operation of a farmer's co-operative bacon factory would yield higher returns.

Co-operative factories had been operating successfully in the dairy industry — with which pig raising had been so closely allied — and it was a natural feeling that similar success could be achieved in the bacon industry.

It was considered also the pig industry could be expanded by developing markets abroad, and this could be well handled by co-operative factories as

had been done successfully by co-operatives in Denmark.

A company under the name of Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd., was registered in 1911, and more than 60 farmer shareholders from all Gippsland centres attended the first meeting, in April 1910.



### Same site

The newly appointed board of directors bought Hepburn's 21-acre property adjoining the railway station of £1,800, and the present site retains practically the original boundaries.

A local advisory committee comprising Messrs. Abbott, McLean, W. A. & E. P. Walker was formed to assist the directors in promoting local interest.

The first buildings were begun in early 1912, and the factory was opened for the receipt of pigs on October 14, 1912 with a work force of 30 men.

Land and buildings had cost £16,000 and plant approximately £9,000.

In the first six months 6,917 pigs were handled for an average price of 5.137 pence per lb.

During the early years there was a constant struggle to get the co-operative established firmly.

There were problems in manufacture and the competitive pressure of private curers was obvious. In the twenties the drive for increased sales was stepped up.

The famous 'Dandy' brand and trade mark, so closely associated with Dandenong, and later to be synonymous with excellent quality products, became established.

Steady progress continued and during the Second World War the factory operated at a high tempo in supplying pigmeat exports to Britain and large quantities of bacon to the armed services in Australia and the Pacific areas.

The pig population of Victoria was inadequate, and to gain easier access to interstate supplies, a Queensland co-operative company with a large Brisbane factory was taken over in 1958.

Australian Bacon Limited became the name of the public company, to denote its wider outlook, and the general administrative and financial structure at Dandenong was re-organised.

Activities were extended to Western Victoria with the acquisition of the George Farmer bacon factory, which began as a family business in Ballarat during the gold era of more than a century before.

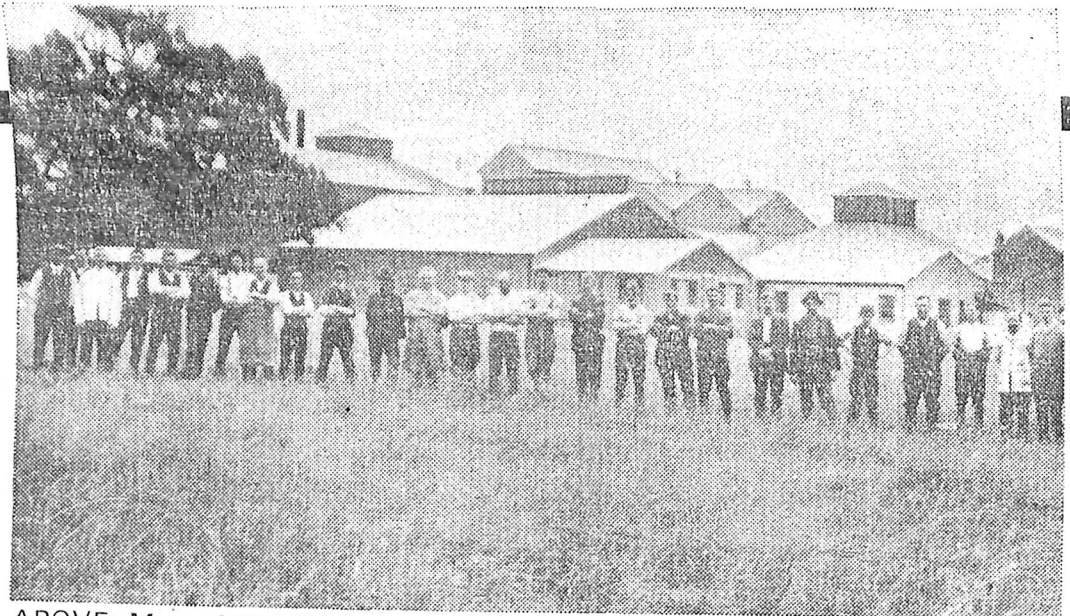
Moves into Sydney were made in 1959 and 1960 with the purchase of two old-established factories.

### From 1962

Momentum was maintained, and Dandy products became known over wide areas of Queensland and Northern NSW. Small plants and sales depots were opened at several important centres, ranging from Casino to Townsville.

In 1967 the operations in NSW were doubled with the acquisition of Anderson Processed Foods Pty. Ltd., possessing two Sydney factories, and distribution depots at Newcastle and Canberra.

During 1968 a distribution depot was opened in Adelaide and later in the year negotiations with W. Jacobs Limited — the largest bacon and smallgoods firm in South Australia — were successfully concluded and this enterprise, dating back to



ABOVE: Men of 'The Factory' — then Gippsland Cooperative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd. — pictured on February 19, 1913, outside the plant. There's still a familiar look about the buildings, but there have been vast changes over the years . . .

## The expansion years

The expansion years — 1955 to 1961 — saw the co-operative company more than 40 years old and many original farmer shareholders were no longer associated with pig raising.

To revise the shareholdings and to obtain fresh capital for expansion, changes were made in the corporate structure of the business and in 1955 the co-operative was replaced by a public company.

Under progressive management, operations were increased and in 1955-1956, the old-established business of J. Lloyd and Sons, at Frankston, was acquired.

At this time it became increasingly difficult to obtain sufficient pig meat to cope with the demand.

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1900, became part of the national group.

This expansion added to the large range of excellent bacon, ham, smallgoods and other meats including delicacies well-known in parts of Europe and growing in popularity in this country.

Last year a step in diversification was taken when a North Queensland co-operative bacon factory with a beef processing capacity was taken over.

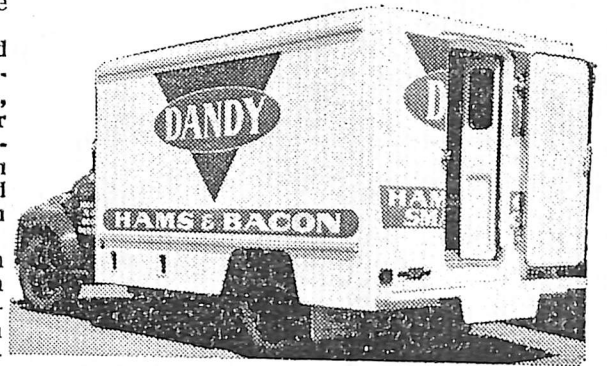
From this move it is planned to upgrade the standard of the works to obtain a beef export licence permitting entry into the overseas beef trade.

### The present

During this past decade of progress the methods of production in the various plants have been continually improved with the introduction of the very latest machinery.

These advances — arising from the visits of company executives to USA, Europe and Japan — have ensured consistent high quality in Dandy products.

Improvements to premises are constantly in progress so that the high standard of the products can be maintained with greater efficiency.



The way it is now . . . 'Dandy' has come a long way in transport methods since 1912.

New pig slaughtering floors of export standard have been built in Queensland and South Australia and these are considered to be the finest in the country.

Vans used for distribution are designed to preserve the appearance and freshness of the products carried.

Many vehicles have in-built refrigerators.

Exports have been increased, and in a recent year a Commonwealth Export Award was given for the volume from the main Queensland plant.

The present scene at Dandenong shows on one hand a very active group of companies organised and controlled by the parent company, Australian Bacon Limited; and on the other hand

the subsidiary, Victorian Bacon Pty. Ltd., operating the original factory, established by the co-operative farmers two generations ago, now extended and altered for modern conditions.

The well known 'Dandy' trade marks have been expanded in recent years with the addition of the elegant 'Dandy' pig, although many people in Victoria will always know Dandenong as the home of good bacon.

Sir Robert Menzies, when Prime Minister said at a meeting at Dandenong Town Hall, "He knew Dandenong as a place famous for its hams."

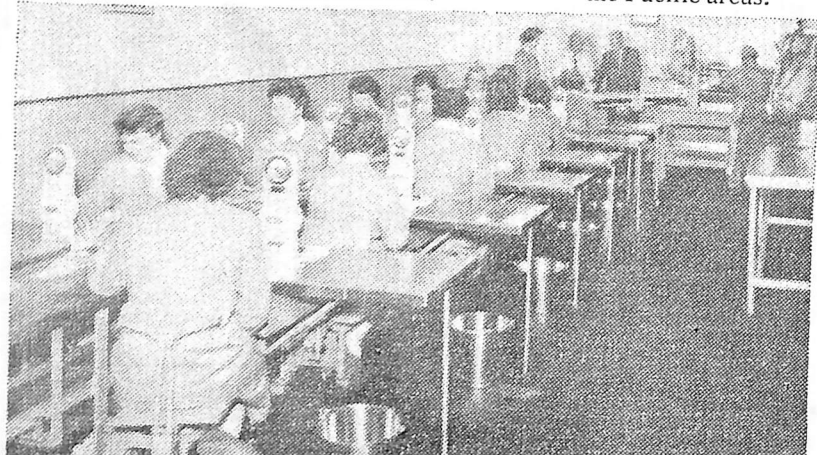
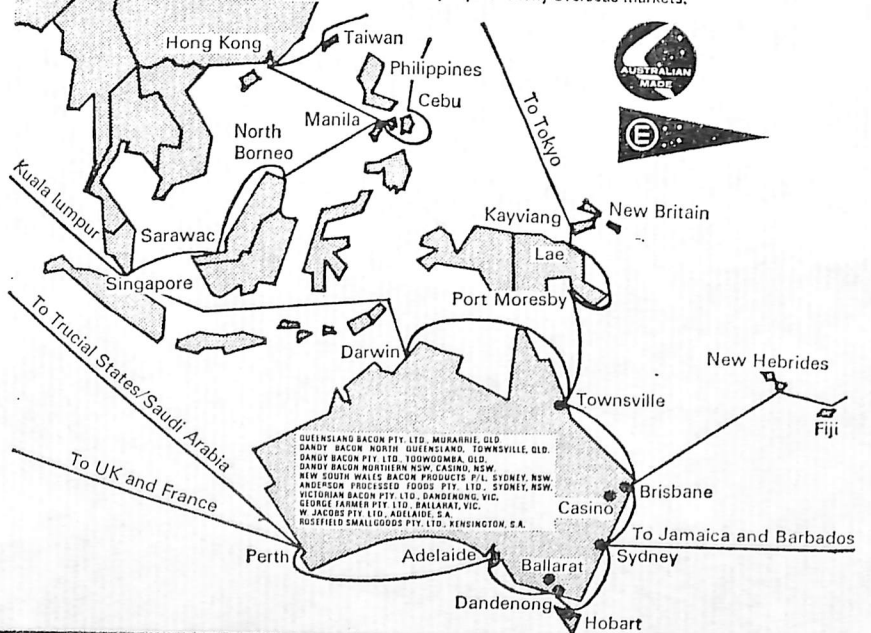
And that goes for millions of other people as well.

## DANDY Winner Australian Export Award

Dandy Bacon is the only Australian hams, bacon and smallgoods manufacturer to win the coveted Export Award, presented by Aust. Gov. General — Sir Paul Hasluck.

To win the award in the face of intense competition in its field, Dandy has demonstrated the wide acceptance of its products in many overseas markets, on the basis of keen prices, highest possible quality and presentation, and the ability to fulfil overseas orders speedily and efficiently. This achievement is the result of strict quality and hygiene control, rigidly adhered to by the Aust. Bacon Group of Companies —

To gain experience in the very latest techniques in production, plant and packaging, leading executives of the Dandy organisation make frequent study trips to many overseas markets.



The bacon packaging line at 'The Factory'. Clean work in pleasant surroundings . . .

# ENTERTAINMENT Food & Music

Calling all Dandy Bacon workers

IT was when he attended the late Mairie Jarvis' funeral last year and was re-acquainted with many of his former colleagues from the Dandy Bacon family that Rod Chivers got the idea of having a reunion.

Mairie, thrice mayor of Dandenong, was the man when he retired and company's head sales-dipped-off by the mid-1970s.

They decided to set up a cooperative, following the example of the dairy industry both here and overseas, in places like Denmark.

It wasn't easy at first. Dandenong, the farmers did not have financial structures, yet they managed to scrape together 10,000 pounds - a fortune in those days - set up their business.

In the first working year the factory took in \$772 pigs. By 1920 the company was renamed for its high quality bacon and pork, and by 1935 the intake was 38,000 pigs.

When World War II arrived the company's fortunes flourished. The Americans couldn't get enough of it. They offered to take over the production, and hand it back to the co-op after the war. But the company turned down the offer, something it may have later regretted.

The co-op went through a number of name changes - Victorian Bacon Limited in 1958 - and set up a number of subsidiaries throughout Australia.



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Co was campaigning in Dandenong town hall in March 1911. In May the co-op bought a 22 acre property next to the Dandenong railway yards with its own side-riding light on the bog. It had updated its plant in 1965 of nearly 150,000. But in the 1950s Dandenong was no longer a town of commissioners to tower 'commissioners' who were more sympathetic to his cause than his ex-colleagues. In fact, the commissioners learned that the old site was no longer available because it was on private property.

So the pig was re-installed to the delight of all at Dandenong Market in 1996.

Ron and his former workmate, John Robertson, have organised a reunion of former Dandenong Bacon employees at Dandenong RSL Club for Sunday afternoon, February 15, from 10 a head, tea, coffee and finger food will be provided.

John worked for the company as maintenance electrician from 1968-1989 and Ron from 1969-84.

"It was a good firm to work for. Everyone got on well together. I senior management to those in the floor. It was like a big family," John recalled last week.

"The product was very good. Our hams and straws and kabanas were so sought after that they were rationed."

"I'd say that if the company were without workers went without staff managed to sell all the ham and bacon that was taken home by the staff the place would still be going," Ron joked.

Former Dandy Bacon staff who wish to attend the reunion should call Ron Chivers on 9792 4618 or John Roberts on 9791 5216 or 0407 055 168.

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Fairfax Community Network

# ol' days at factory

As a push to have the Dandy Bacon sign heritage-listed gathers momentum, MARG STORK reminisces as former employees hold one of their regular reunions.

The "oldtimers" who met to reminisce on Valentine's Day included former factory and office workers, sales personnel and relatives of others.

Guests travelled to Dandenong from as far afield as Bairnsdale, Tocumwal, Yarrawonga and Waragul.

In its heyday there were 400 employees at Dandy Hams and Bacon. When it closed on April 29, 1978, there were 159 employees.

Much of the conversation at the reunion centred on the Dandy Pig symbol, which the City of Greater Dandenong Council wants on the heritage list (see story on page 1).

The neon sign, now at Dandenong Market, was earlier perched on top of the then cycle shop in Lonsdale Street.

Two former bacon factory employees who have been the driving force behind the factory reunions are Ron

Chivers of Dandenong West and John Roberts of Dandenong.

Mr Roberts has lived in Dandenong since 1965. He was plant electrician at Dandy Hams and Bacon. Ron Chivers has resided in the city since 1956 and was the factory's maintenance carpenter.

As social secretary at the factory Mr Chivers can remember entertaining 400 children and the families of staff members at the Christmas party.

The late Maurie Jarvis, a former mayor of Dandenong, was a popular sales manager at Dandy Bacon and the late Clive Boote designed the Dandy Pig symbol.

**Mr Roberts can be contacted on 9791 5216, Mr Chivers 9792 4618.**

Prepared by Dandenong Historical Society 21/6/2011

### **The New Public Place**

Located north of the Dandenong Railway Station at Robinson Street.

The Dandenong Bacon Factory, formed in 1911, was a 22½ acre site bordered by the railway line and Cheltenham Road (formerly Brighton Road). The entrance to the factory was from Brighton Road and along a dirt track. This large property was formerly named 'Acacia Park' and owned by one of Dandenong's first timber merchants.

From the Pickett Street side of the railway line, workers took the pedestrian subway beneath the railway line and cars crossed at the railway gates that operated at the end of Pickett Street.

Given 'Acacia Park's' close proximity to the proposed 'New Public Place', located north of the Dandenong Railway Station at Robinson Street, we believe that reviving this property name 'Acacia Park' would recall the atmosphere of the early natural bushland within this vicinity and link it to the birth of our industrial development. The Dandenong Bacon Factory, was one of Dandenong's first industries, and began as the Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co Ltd, to provide a market for, and encourage the Gippsland Pig Farming Industry. The company grew from 60 share holders needing a process facility for their pigs - to become an international exporter of pork products.

The pigs were off-loaded on a railway siding specifically created for the co-operative.

Local residents set their clocks by the lunch whistle and again at the late-afternoon change of shifts. The factory ran 24 hours a day and employed, during its long lifetime, hundreds of local workers.

The Bacon Factory closed around the late 1980s.

Photos and more detailed information can be supplied. Contact Carmen Powell 9796 2456



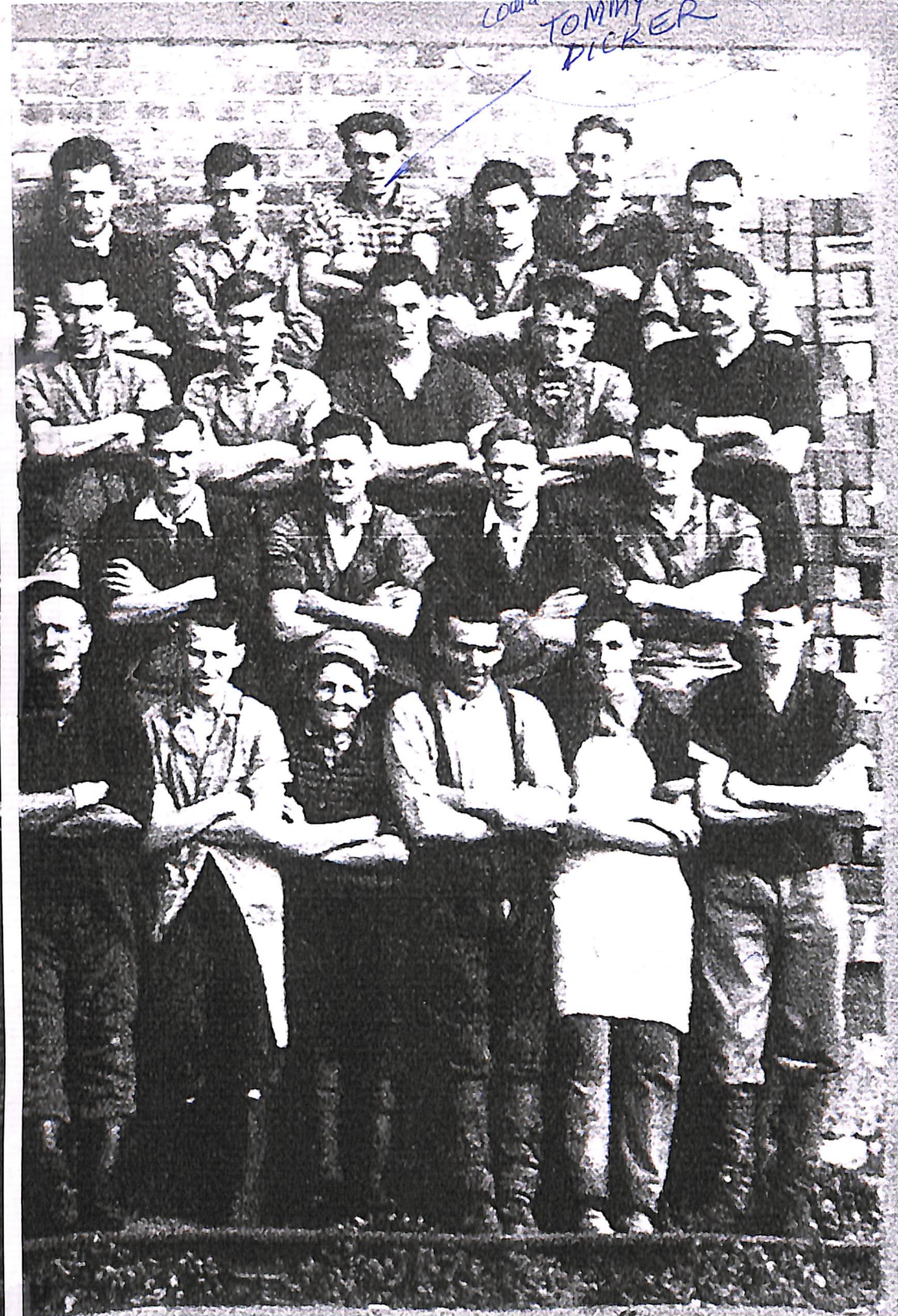
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67



EMPLOYEES of GIPPSLAND CO-OPERATIVE BACON CO.  
JUNE 1939.



ED CO-OPERATIVE BACON CO.  
1939.



could be  
TOMMY  
DICKER

With the Compliments of "THE AGE" and "THE LEADER"

See original in "Extra Large Items" box - FRAGILE ITEMS - NEWSPAPER ROOM,

Dandenong Bacon Company



# Snippets

in this issue, "Education In Dandenong's" is based on just a few random extracts from research notes, this is by no means the full story of the history of State School Dandenong. It is fortunate in having a remarkably full history of Dandenong's first State School right at its heart which contains a wealth of personal information about the pupils and school organisations as well as the local background details. It has been well-looked after that it is carefully preserved. It would be an interesting exercise to do an up-dated inventory of the records we have about local history --of which there are many.

\* \* \* \* \*

As a matter of interest to those who are interested in family origins in the U.K. we publish in this issue "Census Searches--Lord and Lady Teviot". The author, established her genealogical practice in 1970 with her husband, Lord Teviot, who was made a member of the Society of Genealogists in 1975. Your members will be interested to learn of the services we offer. This is given to Lady Teviot's own County of Devon where so many Australians emigrated in the 19th century. We have recently acquired the latest edition of the International Genealogical Index (1984). This is a valuable guide in tracing lost ancestors. Your members are invited to send full details of research they are doing and an estimate of costs can be given and a trial membership." The address is 12 The Priory, Sussex BN6 8DA, England.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Personalities Behind The Headstones" will appear in the next issue.

\* \* \* \* \*

When the Miniature Rifle Range occupied the present Fire Station at the corner of Walker Street? Arrangements had to be made for its removal in 1930 to make way for the new brick fire station. At the time the "Advertiser" reported that the building was expected to be started "in a few weeks" and would be a 2-storied building. But evidently the ground and storey were changed.

## The Dandenong Bacon Factory Story

The industrial face of Dandenong has undergone many changes, even in recent years, and lately we have seen several old-established manufacturing industries that figured in Dandenong's early industrial development, fade out of the local scene --Dandenong Butter Factory, The Ordish Firebrick operation and the Dandenong Bacon Factory, to mention a few of the better known firms. The Bacon Factory was originally the Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd. but this was changed to Victorian Bacon Ltd. in the re-shuffle occurred when the threat of an unwanted take-over loomed on the horizon. But to locals it was always known as the Dandy Bacon Factory. Recently (in 1983) following the acquisition of the company by the Adelaide Steamship Co. in 1982 the manufacturing role of the company in Dandenong ceased after 71 years operation. Today the works have become a distributing centre for the company's products, with a consequent drop in local employment.

The story of the Dandenong Bacon Factory is an interesting part of Dandenong's industrial history, and we were recently fortunate enough to have one of our members, Mr. Albert Bramley, who was employed by the company for 40 years, give us a talk on the subject of the 75-year-old firm. Albert commenced work there in early 1936 as a salesman, and later became Credit Manager & Paymaster, with a pay-roll of 240 employees. When he retired in 1976 the factory still provided employment for a lot of local folk, with others travelling from as far away as Moonee Ponds when jobs were scarce.

### THE BEGINNING:

In the course of his talk Albert recalled that the first meeting of a Provisional Board of Directors of the proposed Co-operative Bacon Company, consisting of seven well-known Gippsland farmers, was held in the Dandenong Town Hall on the 27th. of July, 1910. Other meetings followed in August and November of that year, and during the first three months of 1911.

These meetings arose from the dissatisfaction of many farmers in Gippsland with the unstable and low returns on pigs sold for bacon curing, and a growing belief that the

THE DANDY BACON FACTORY STORY (continued)

formation and operation of a farmers' co-operative would yield higher returns. It was also felt that the pig industry could be expanded by developing markets abroad, and this could well be handled by co-operative factories.

As the movement gathered support, in August 1910 the name of "Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd." was adopted.

Sales of shares was commenced in the spring of 1910, but difficulty was encountered and because the canvassing was carried out when farmers were busy milking and harvesting, the minimum number of shares, 10,000, necessary to register the company had not been secured. In February, 1911, the provisional board appointed Mr. A. Maher, the chairman, as general organiser and canvasser to travel throughout Gippsland during the month.

On 27th. March, 1911 a company, Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd. was incorporated with a nominal capital of £15,000. The first meeting of shareholders was held in the Dandenong Town Hall on 21st. April, 1911, when more than 60 shareholders from all the agricultural centres of Gippsland were present. At this meeting the Board was empowered to inspect sites for the factory. In the "Age" of 8th. May, 1911, it was reported that the Board had decided to purchase the property known as "Hepburn's", adjoining the Dandenong railway station and to erect thereon an up-to-date factory. The report added "the property comprises 22½ acres and a railway siding is now within a short distance of it. . . . It is anticipated that the factory will provide wages of about £100 a week."

The land was purchased for £1800.

SALE OF SHARES IN DANDENONG

On June 27th. issue of the "South Bourke & Mornington Journal" an extract from a report read: "Now that it is resolved to build the factory at Dandenong the directors of the Gippsland Bacon Curing Co. naturally expected that a great many more shares would have been taken up locally." "A local advisory committee has been formed to assist

"The Dandy Bacon Factory Story" (Continued)

Walker, E. P. Walker. This body met Mr. W. Freeman Nott the secretary of the company and after the conference it was arranged that Mr. E. Nicholls be appointed to canvas the district to place the balance of the shares.

FACTORY BUILDINGS TAKE SHAPE

In June 1911 the architect submitted sketch plans of single and double storied buildings, estimating the cost of either building from £8,000 to £10,000, complete with a machinery and fittings. But when tenders were called, the lowest tender was more than double the architect's estimate and a compromise plan was requested. A contract for the erection of the compromise building was signed in December 1911. Early in 1912 the first buildings were commenced but because of scarcity of workmen, plan alterations, delay in the shipping of refrigerating equipment because of the coal strike in Britain, the building and plant were not ready for use until October.

The factory was opened for the receipt of pigs on October 14th., 1912.

LAND and buildings had cost £16,000, and plant approximately £9,000.

In December, 1911 the nominal capital was increased from £15,000 to £50,000.

INITIAL OPERATIONS

For the first six months ended April, 1913, 6,917 pigs were handled for an average price of 5.137 pence per lb. The number of employees was approximately 40 --and a new industry was under way --but not without difficulties.

During 1913 the shortage of working capital became acute and the various local committees and canvassers intensified their efforts to sell shares. Because of the lack of working capital it was not possible to take advantage of the very favorable export market for pork and bacon.

FIRST COMPLETED TRADING YEAR

For the year ended April 30th., 1914, the annual intake was 8,772 pigs, for an average price of approximately 5 and threequarter pence per lb. Sales totalled £28, and paid . . .

# The Dandenong Bacon Factory Story.

(Concluding the "Story of the Dandenong Bacon Factory" as told by Society member, Albert Bramley, in a paper presented to a recent meeting of the Society)

Post-war years 1946-1955. The inflationary trend and the introduction of the 40-hour week, reflected in rising costs, coupled with the need to extend the plant, made it necessary to seek additional capital from the shareholders. The nominal capital was increased from £65,000 to £100,000 in 1948, and in the next three years 35,000 Preference shares were allotted.

With a decline in the Victorian pig population the number of pigs handled dropped. It became necessary to purchase pig meet interstate to meet the demand for the company's quality products. In 1952 pigs handled fell to 28,279, and sales turnover reached £639,818. The export market to Britain withered away due to adverse prices.

## EXPANSION YEARS, 1956-1961

These later years saw a tremendous expansion in the factory's operations, based on the firm foundations laid down by sound management over the earlier years. By drive and foresight the operations were stepped up, and under progressive management the weaknesses in the capital structure were strengthened by placing the old co-operative company in liquidation and by forming a new company, Victorian Bacon Limited, to take over the business as from May, 1955.

During 1955 J Lloyd & Sons Pty. Ltd., Frankston, was taken over as a subsidiary.

These figures reflect the buoyancy of the company's trade about this period:

Year	Sales (£)	Pigs handled
1956	40,664	40,664 pigs handled.
1957	39,518	39,518 pigs handled
1958	47,178	47,178 pigs handled
Sales (£)	1,163,241	1,694,066
Sales (£)	742,019	

## INCREASE IN CAPITAL, AND STOCK EXCHANGE LISTING

By 1958 paid up capital had reached £1,163,241

## THE DANDENONG BACON FACTORY STORY (Continued)

### QUEENSLAND EXPANSION - 1958

To strengthen the supply intake and to expand the outside the State, a Queensland Co-operative Bacon Company was taken over in 1958 under a re-constitution of the general administrative and financial structure based on

### AUSTRALIAN BACON LTD. - 1958

A holding company, Australian Bacon Limited, was set up at Dandenong to control the Queensland subsidiary and Bacon Pty. Ltd., and the Victorian subsidiaries Victorian Bacon Pty. Ltd., operating at Dandenong, and J Lloyd & Sons Pty. Ltd., operating at Frankston.

### BALLARAT & WESTERN VICTORIA, 1958-60

During 1958 also a half interest was acquired in the Ballarat area, and a new company, George Farmer Pty. Ltd., was formed to operate the Geo. Farmer Bacon and small factory founded in Ballarat a century ago. Due to stringent selling price controls imposed by the Government in the forties this old-established factory had production in 1949.

In late 1959 an existing, long established bacon smallgoods business in Ballarat (J. C. Ford & Co. Pty. Ltd.) was acquired by George Farmer Pty. Ltd.

### N.S.W. EXPANSION. 1959 - 1961

To provide a steady sales outlet in Sydney, and to step up the operations in the Queensland factory, an established bacon factory at Homebush, conducted by Bacon Pty. Ltd., was acquired in November, 1959. In 1960 another established smallgoods business operated Cambridge Delicacies Pty. Ltd. at Redfern, was taken With access to the Sydney market, operations were increased under progressive management, and the two factories were raised to a volume close to that in each of other two States

THE DANDENONG BACON FACTORY STORY (Continued)

QUEENSLAND EXPANSION - 1958

To strengthen the supply intake and to expand operations outside the State, a Queensland Co-operative Bacon Company was taken over in 1958 under a re-constitution of the general administrative and financial structure based on Dandenong.

AUSTRALIAN BACON LTD. - 1958

A holding company, Australian Bacon Limited, was set up at Dandenong to control the Queensland subsidiary, Queensland Bacon Pty. Ltd., and the Victorian subsidiaries, Victorian Bacon Pty. Ltd., operating at Dandenong, and J. Lloyd & Sons Pty. Ltd, operating at Frankston.

BALLARAT & WESTERN VICTORIA, 1958-60

During 1958 also a half interest was acquired in the formation of a new company, George Farmer Pty. Ltd., to re-open and operate the Geo. Farmer bacon and small goods factory founded in Ballarat a century ago. Due largely to stringent selling price controls imposed by the Government in the forties this old-established factory had ceased production in 1949.

In late 1959 an existing, long established bacon and smallgoods business in Ballarat ( J. C. Foord & Co. Pty Ltd.) was acquired by George Farmer Pty. Ltd.

S.W. EXPANSION, 1959 - 1961

To provide a steady sales outlet in Sydney, and further step up the operations in the Queensland factory, an old-established bacon factory at Homebush, conducted by Barnes Bacon Pty. Ltd., was acquired in November, 1959. In mid-60 another established smallgoods business operated by Cambridge Delicacies Pty. Ltd. at Redfern, was taken over. With access to the Sydney market, operations were rapidly increased under progressive management, and the two factories were raised to a volume close to that in each of the two States.

DANDENONG BACON FACTORY STORY (Continued)

79,797 pigs were treated for £3,005,025 in sales. 96,714 pigs for £3,763,693 in sales, and in 1961 100,000 pigs were treated for £4,150,793 in sales.

to provide further finance for expansion in late 1960 Victorian Bacon Ltd. issued Convertible Notes for a total of £4,150,793. The issue was fully subscribed.

to consolidate and improve the control of the factory at Frankston was closed and its operations transferred to Dandenong. From 1961 onwards were consolidated.

OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS, 1961-64

Due to outbreaks of Swine Fever in N.S.W. in 1961 severe restrictions being imposed on the movement of pigs and pig meat products between States, created operational problems for management. These restrictions remained to some degree until early 1964.

1961

In December, 1961 Victorian Bacon Pty. Ltd. acquired a half-interest in George Farmer Pty. Ltd., making it a wholly-owned subsidiary.

N.S.W. OPERATIONS

On 3 January, 1963, in an effort to minimise the loss of pig outlets, endangered by restrictive measures imposed to control swine fever, the bacon and smallgoods factory was transferred to Grafton Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd. at Grafton, and operations at Grafton, and later also at Frankston, were commenced.

The following figures, showing the combined value of the operations, highlight the growth of the company:

1962	144,413 pigs,	Sales	£4,954,854
1963	154,279 pigs	Sales	£5,719,378
1964	133,927 pigs	Sales	£6,091,895
1965	155,844 pigs	Sales	£6,906,483

The present scene, in 1965, shows on the one hand a very large group of companies organised and controlled from Grafton by Australian Bacon Ltd., and on the other hand

THE DANDENONG BACON FACTORY STORY (Continued)

the subsidiary company, Victorian Bacon Company Pty. Ltd. operating the original factory established by the co-operative farmers, now extended and altered to meet modern requirements.

The famous trade name, "Dandy", has been expanded in recent years with the addition of the now well-known elegant "Dandy" pig. Many folk in Dandenong, Melbourne and suburbs, and Eastern Victoria will always know Dandenong as the home of Dandy Bacon.

Since 1912 the Dandy Bacon plant has been a dominant feature on the western Dandenong landscape and down through its 71 years many used the sharp note of the factory whistle as a time signal. During the war years, in the event of an air raid the factory siren was to be the official air raid siren.

There have been many changes in the company's administration over recent years, the most notable being the acquisition of the company's interests by the Adelaide Steamship Company in 1982.

In the early days of the Company, bacon was transported by horse-drawn wagon to the city depot at 70 King St., the return trip taking two days.

Mr. Nancarrow, who was manager at Foggitt Jones factory at Bendigo in 1919, was manager at Dandenong from 1920 to 1943, and a very successful one.

It may not be generally known but the steam boilers used in the engine room came from the old paddle steamer, "Hygeia" which journeyed between Melbourne and Sorrento and was a popular pleasure boat in Port Phillip Bay for many years.

One of the interesting photos produced by the speaker during his talk was of a photo of the company's fleet of delivery vans in 1934 -- very different from today, when goods are transported by a fleet of modern walk-in refrigerated vans.

Manufacturing at the Dandenong plant ceased in 1983 and now all products are made in Sydney and Adelaide and brought here daily by refrigerated transport.

THE DANDENONG BACON FACTORY STORY (Concluded)

A FAMOUS SIGN

For many years road travellers from Gippsland way were greeted by the distinctive "Dandy Bacon" sign which flashed against the sky near the corner of Lonsdale and Foster streets. It featured the eye-catching mechanical pig that effectively promoted the famous Dandy Hams and Smallgoods.

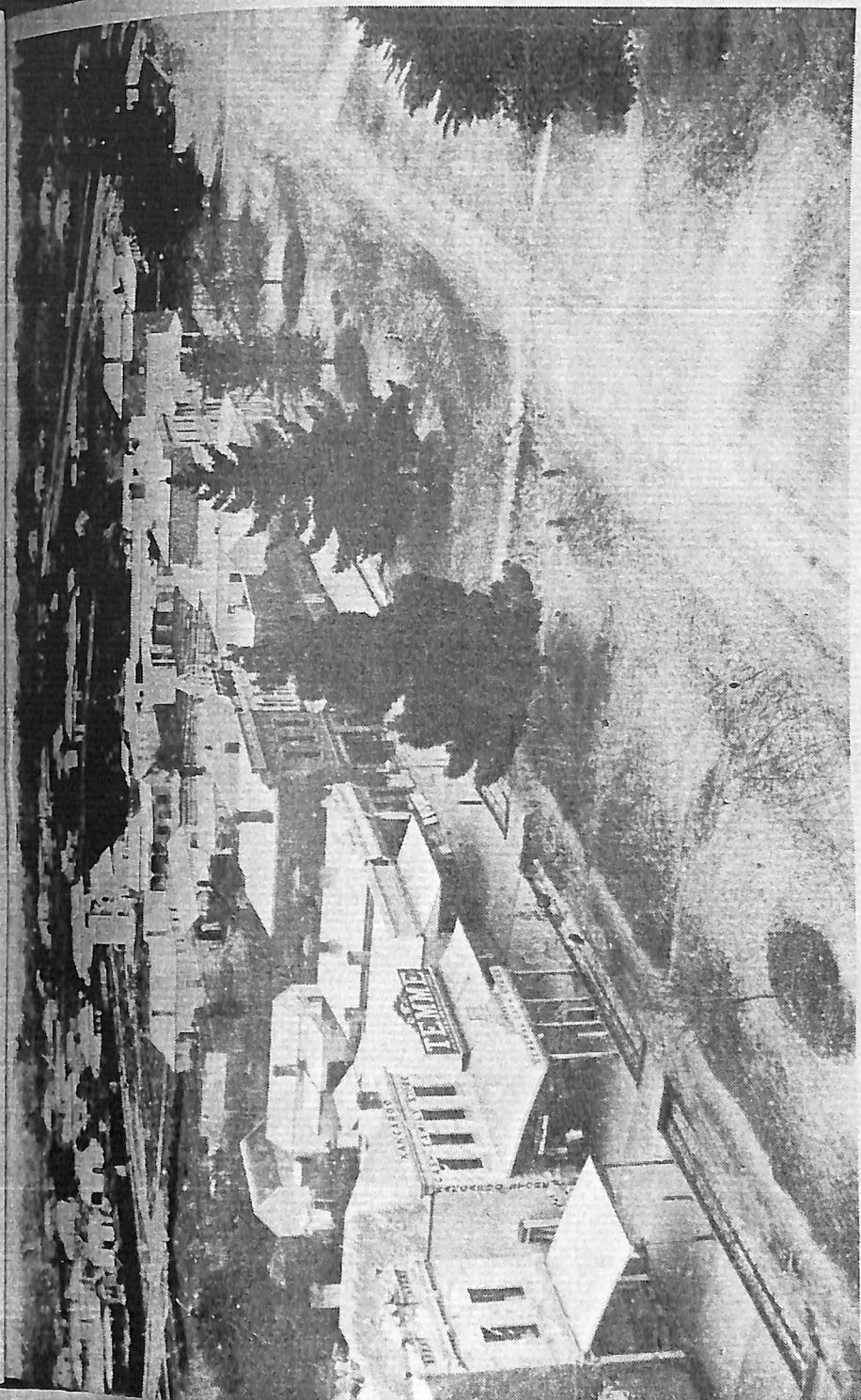
Like the famous "Skipping Girl" neon sign at Abbotsford, the sign became such a part of Dandenong that when it was removed, there were general expressions of regret and there was talk of having it re-erected on another conspicuous site.

Mr. Bramley concluded an interesting review of the company's history by recalling a couple of robberies from the factory -- once when Mayne Nickless were to pick up cash there about 1972, and about 1978 when cash bags were taken from the office by an employee and later recovered under a mattress at the People's Palce in Melbourne. He also told a number of amusing anecdotes of happenings over the years, and produced samples of Christmas gifts that the management used to give customers in the old days.

\* \* \* \* \*

SHADES OF THE OLD CABLE TRAMS!

Guest speaker at our November meeting, John Semmens, not only gave us an insight into the history of moving pictures, but in doing so he took us through the modest early developments, until in the 1880's all the elements were brought together to make moving pictures; another big step forward came in 1889 when Eastman developed the cellulose roll film. In the 1920's the Frenchman, Pathe, brought movie making into the home, and Cine-Kodak added to this in 1923. He showed a film relating to the popularity of the 9.5 Millimetre film, and recalled the emergence of the Talkies in the mid-1920's. He capped his talk with two nostalgic early silent films of Melbourne - one probably taken in the early twenties, and the other, "Around Melbourne in 1930". They revived memories of the old cable trams, and of the days when horse-drawn traffic mingled with Model T. Fords and early motor transport. It was a most enjoyable and inform



On our front cover of Volume 12 we showed a photo of Lonsdale St., Dandenong, looking south, taken before 1890. Above is a photo (circa 1893) of the west side shopping centre, looking north, almost certainly taken from the elevation of the newly built Town Hall (1890). Scott St. can be identified from the Flour & Corn Store sign on the

Received 26/2/2014  
2 Gilja Court  
Cranbourne West, Vict  
3977

DEAR Ms.

I WAS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE REUNION  
LAST SUNDAY, FOR FORMER DANDY BACON CO. EMPLOYEES  
MY INFORMATION FOLLOWS -

MY NAME WAS DOROTHY McGRATH - NOW LYONS.  
I WAS EMPLOYED IN THE OFFICE AS A ACCOUNTING MACHINIST  
STARTED NOVEMBER 1967 - LEFT END OF JULY 1970.

OTHER LADIES IN THE OFFICE AT THE SAME TIME WERE

CATH CORBETT - OFFICER MANAGER

PAT MUSGROVE

SYLVIA TUREBOR

GLAD EDIS

JOAN HARRISON

VALDA Mc DOWELL

CASSIE CHRISTMAS

HOPE THIS INFORMATION IS USEFUL

REGARDS

DOROTHY LYONS

# Dandy Bacon Co

The Dandenong & District Historical  
Society

Is

Interested in collecting your

Memories

Of

Working at this

**Local iconic factory**

*Dandenong & District  
Historical Society*  
*Established 1963*

Rooms open  
Wednesday 11am - 2pm or by appointment

The Houlahan Centre  
Dandenong, Vic. 3175

**VICTORIAN BACON PTY. LTD.**  
SUBSIDIARY OF AUSTRALIAN BACON LIMITED



ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO  
P.O. BOX 42  
DANDENONG, 3175

Phones: 792 0504, 791 8833 - Telegrams and Cables: BACON, DANDENONG

CRJB/LE

Registered Office:  
BRIGHTON ROAD  
**DANDENONG**  
Victoria, Australia

2nd April, 1973.

Mr. I. Jones

Dear Ian,

Once again I would like to express my personal appreciation of your attitude towards the recent works stoppage we encountered, and express also my deepest thanks for the unstinted effort you personally put in to counter the effect of the strike.

Without such attitudes and efforts such as you gave we would have been in a sorry plight, but, as previously shown, the "blow" was much less than would have been the case had you, together with other members of the staff not immediately "jumped into harness" and carried out duties which were quite foreign to those normally carried out by you.

Ian, I am deeply grateful for your efforts and loyalty to the Company and ask you to accept the enclosed as an expression of the Company's appreciation.

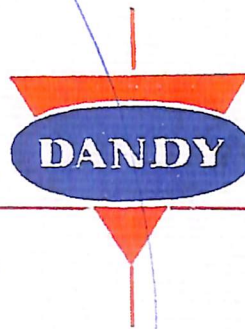
It would be appreciated if you would keep this letter and the amount of money strictly confidential.

Yours faithfully,

C.R.J. BOOTE.  
GENERAL MANAGER

# VICTORIAN BACON PTY. LTD.

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P.O. BOX 42  
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Phones: 792 0504, 791 8833

Telegrams and Cables: BACON, DANDENONG

Registered Office:  
BRIGHTON RD.  
**DANDENONG**  
Victoria, Australia

16th September, 1976.

The Manager,  
South British United Insurance Company,  
50 Queen Street,  
MELBOURNE. VIC.

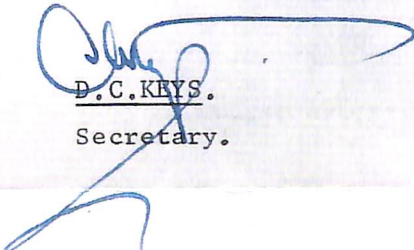
Dear Sir,

Re: MR. IAN R. JONES.

With reference to Mr. Jones of 13 Waratah Drive, North Dandenong, we certify that he was employed by this Company from 1955 to August, 1976, and during the past 3½ years he has been in possession of a Company car.

In this latter period of responsibility, Mr. Jones has been free of car damage.

Yours faithfully,

  
D.C. KEYS.

Secretary.

# DANDY BACON FACTORY

Dad Shearer. Three Sons

DOB. 22/08/36

After our last "Back to Dandy Bacon" function, held at the Dandenong Workers Club, I was prompted to put pen to paper.

Ian Jones is my name and I started at Dandy Bacon on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1954. I was 18 at the time and had a drivers licence. I had just moved down to Dandenong from Mulwala, a little country town on the Murray River. I was home sick for the country and when I noticed a position vacant for a Trainee Van Salesman at Dandy Bacon, I rang and got an interview with the very popular Sales Manager Maurie Jarvis.

Railway Hotel.  
Bairnsdale.

I think I was the first person Mr Jarvis had employed, and the interview soon got around to fishing and duck shooting, as I was from the Murray River area and these were my hobbies, so I think this had a big bearing on me getting the position.

At this stage Dandy was growing and they had to increase their coverage of Victoria. Rail was our main way of distribution to the country areas, mainly Gippsland, so a van to cover East Gippsland was a start. The company purchased a new 160 International truck, and employed Stan Edward to get this area up and going. This was where I came in, I was his assistant. Stan Edward was one of natures gentleman and I was very fortunate. I was 18 years old and could have gone either way, but Stan made sure I was on the right track. Stan's general attitude to work and customers was second to none; his book work was always perfect and correct.

During this period Dandy were operating eleven (11) cash vans, covering Melbourne and Metropolitan areas, also Geelong.

Club Hotel  
Lakes Entrance.

## To my knowledge the Sales Team consisted of;

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Maurie Jarvis  | Charlie French |
| Ken McKenery   | Cec Cant       |
| Gus Goronne    | Albert Bramley |
| Fred Jones     | Wally Charles  |
| Dave McFarlane | Reg Jarvis     |
| Fred Haelbish  |                |

Sam - Load the Truck Tam Start

In those days Gippsland had a chain of grocers, one in every town. Pervis stores traded as **Pervis for Service**, as it turned out Stan's brother Jack Edwards was General Manager of the Pervis chain of stores, he was based at the Head Office in Moe. I do think this gave us a leg into the Pervis stores. This was the first van to stop out overnight; we didn't have refrigeration in those days so in the summer we carried blocks of ice. We left the factory early Monday morning and stopped in Bairnsdale that night returning to Dandy the next day, reloaded Wednesday morning and returned home Thursday night. Friday was our day off but Stan would go into the office to tidy up any loose ends to get ready for Monday morning.

\$9 pounds → . \$13 pounds  
3 months

*The towns we covered in that time were Drouin, Warragul, Moe, Yallourn, Morwell, Traralgon, Sale, Maffra, Heyfield, Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Bruthen.*

*Small towns between Lakes Entrance were serviced every fortnight in the off season and weekly in the summer.*

*I spent the first 2 years with Stan and in that time we covered 100,000 miles in the van and Stan was very proud. The truck had never had a break down or a mechanical fault.*

*When I was 20 I was called up to do National Service, so a replacement for me was found, he was a local boy Gordan Morgan, he and I grew to be very good friends.*

*Maurie Jarvis as Sales Manager was very busy extending our coverage of Victoria. The sales staff had increased to give us a better service to the ever growing customers.*

*By 1956 I returned from National Service and was given my own round, it was a metropolitan area but I soon found my way around Melbourne.*

*In those days Dandy road was a single lane road and the first set of traffic lights between Dandy and Melbourne was Warrigal Road Oakleigh.*

*Things continued to grow at Dandy, the sales vans increased to 28 over the next few years, we had a large turnover of van salesman, but I will try to remember the ones that helped most to keep the Dandy name up front.*

Ray Keast	Bill Perry
John Lilley	Bob Kennedy
Ken Wearne	Ron Bennett
Allan Brereton	Hughie McWilliams
Allan Wills	Ernie Crew
Morrie Tanner	Ron Chalmers
Glen Binstead	Jack Jardine
Joe Phillips	Norm Holland
Jock Duncanson	Rup Drury
John Van der Hayden	Paul Jones
Geoff Govers	Peter Spence
Graham Bill	Mal Wangman
Max Young	Don Freake
John Gwyne	Dick Townsend
Ian Bryant	
John Fisher	Geof McKegan

*Who we lost to cancer in the prime of their lives*  
*HIS*

*In those days the Dandy name was enough to sell the product; you didn't have to be a great salesman. These men were successful because they were **Reliable & Honest**, the customers could depend on them which was a big thing in the small goods industry.*

*In the early years we opened a depot in Kings Street in the City, but as we increased our coverage of Melbourne by putting 2 vans in the city, the depot was no longer necessary and was closed.*

*By the mid-60s we had a good coverage of Melbourne & Metro but Victoria's Nth East and Western district was not covered, so depots were setup in Moama NSW and Wangaratta to cover these areas. These depots were successful to a degree but hard to control from Dandenong, and running cost was very high.*

*As the years moved on the old factory was costing a fortune to maintain and operations and health regulations were becoming a major issue. In my view, we were not using the rail link for live pigs, so the position of the plant was not so important. The factory should have been closed and we should have purchased 5 acres in Frankston Road and built a new factory.*

*At this stage of our operation we seemed to be spending too much time and money on interstate ventures and the Dandy name was suffering. With increasing opposition's price cutting and the continuing demands of the Supermarkets, life was very difficult.*

*Dandy produced a **Top Quality product**, but top products cost money to produce, so continued price cutting was killing us, union intervention was making it hard. They had closed Huttons and Mayfair, great companies in the industry, good clean opposition.*

*With change of management on a regular basis the **Great Company** in my opinion was struggling. The name Dandy didn't have the same pull as it once had.*

*In 1974 after 20years I had a very good position with the company but chose to have a break from Bacon & Small Goods. After 2 years I was approached to return to the sales team but it was not the same old Dandy Bacon. After another 7 years and many disagreements with so called sincere members of staff, I decided I had enough and left the company.*

*Clive Boote, Maurie Jarvis & co would have been very disappointed with the way the factory was being run.*

*On the lighter side of things I can remember the days when we tendered for Government contracts and in most cases were successful. On a regular basis we supplied our products to King Island via the Moorabbin airport.*

*Pigs liver was a product we had no market for, so we packaged them in 10lb containers and exported them to England. Our lard was considered the best on the market; it was rendered on the premises to a very fine lard. Pampas Paste was a very big customer for this product and **Pampas Paste** was considered the best.*

*Another line we produced was canned hams; these were packed at a canning factory in Queensland. The package was very attractive, blue with the Dandy Red, White & Blue emblem on it, looked good! We didn't kill the market with them but they did sell. Mayfair had controlled the canned ham market for years.*

*I would like to mention some people who did make Dandy Bacon tick, starting with the main office. We had Ron Meldrum - Managing Director, Doug Keys was the ever popular Company Secretary, Allan Parker (also very popular) was the Company Accountant.*

*Allans helpers were Stan Adams (who went onto bigger things) and Steve Robinson. Other office staff that I recall were tops in their positions were, Ruby Atkin, Cath Corbett, Esme Jones and Glenise Patching on the switch board. Cath Corbett always amused me; she could operate a calculator at very high speed without looking at the keyboard.*

*In the factory we had Clive Boote as a very firm but popular General Manager, Maurie Jarvis (my boss), as Sales Manager, Gus Goranne, Ken McKenny & Don Freake were his team of helpers.*

*The factory consisted of Allan Guntson - Factory Manager, Sid Holling Production Manager, Tom Bonner - Small Goods Manager and later Les Parker took over as Tom Bonner retired. Sandy Perkins was Works Manager; followed by Don Scown. Don was a very firm but fair Works Manager.*

*Another man that I think needs a mention Clarey Sadler; he controlled the Bulk Despatch and Smoke Houses. Any others that need a mention you would have to talk to Don Scown. In despatch after Stan Edward retired was Ross Ward and his helper Lorraine O'keefe.*

*We serviced our own vehicles at our garage, with a staff of about five men. The garage staff were, Eddie Woolard, Laurie Casey, Ian McMasters, Kevin Hussy, Fred Pianelli and Wally Farmer. Our truck fleet consisted of a mixture of makes; Morris Commercials, Bedfords, Austins, Dodges and one old Federal that they carted pigs with very early in the operation.*

*In the 60s we acquired Lloydes Factory in Lang Warren and closed it down. From that plant came Don Scown, Don Freake, Harold Lomax, Stan King, Rup Drury, Peter Wicks and others. Then George Farmer in Ballaret was part of our empire they had a depot in North Melbourne, I think Steve Woods was the only one from there, as he managed the North Melbourne depot.*

*On our maintenance side was our very popular and hardworking carpenter Ron (Chippy) Chivers, Electricians Corry Cann and John Roberts. Bill North and Beau Lambert were our Engineers.*

*In my mind the 50s, 60s and 70s were the Golden Days of Dandy Bacon, and I consider myself very fortunate to have been part of that team. I did then, and I still do now, look up to the ones I worked with.*

*I hope these memories of the past will help some people to recall some of the names and things that happened in the **Golden Years**. If I can help feel free to contact me on 03 5997 5544*

*Give my Regards to Everyone*

*Yours Sincerely*

*Ian. R. Jones  
6 Ferndale Court  
Lang Lang Vic 3984*

S Heatherhill Rd

Frankston

Don Freak

3199. 9783 8760

**Glen's Dandy Hams**

0452 264 580

donny.good@hotmail.com

My first encounter with Dandy personnel was in 1969. At that time I was driving for "Red Gem" potatoes of Gembrook. Every Wednesday I would make a delivery to "S.E. Dickens": Box Hill (now Coles). I would often have to vie for parking in the loading dock with the Dandy truck driven by Allan Brereton. We got chatting about general wages and conditions, which seemed pretty good at Dandy, so I put my name down on a waiting list for an interview. At that time you virtually had to wait for someone to die before you got an interview. That happened in June 1969 and I started driving immediately.

As a relief driver, I covered other drivers' holiday leave. It was a bit of a nightmare, especially in the city. In the Shell building the Canteen was on the top floor, I opened the lift door and put the delivery in. Next thing the lift shot off. It came down again, thankfully with the load still intact, but accompanied by two men in suits that advised me, "Deliveries are around the back, in the tradesmens' entrance."

After three weeks, the Gippsland cash van driver's run became vacant so I put in for and got that area which stretched from Traralgon to Lakes Entrance.

Local area cash van salesmen and drivers would come in each morning at 5am, then go home for breakfast before starting their run, whereas country drivers had to leave at 5am. I would leave home at 4am on a Monday, stay overnight at Traralgon, get back around 6pm on Tuesday, then leave home at 4am again. On Wednesdays I would stay overnight at Lakes Entrance, then return home between 6-7pm Thursday. On Fridays, I would go into the factory to do the "books".

Within the next three years, my run was extended from Sale to Orbost. This meant I would be away Monday morning to Thursday night. Fridays I would go into the factory to load up for the following week. The manager was Michael Boot and the Sales Manager was Maurie Jarvis (he was a City Councillor and in turn the Mayor of Dandenong). There were three supervisors: Gus Garoyne, Malcolm Wangman and \*\*\*\*. The Dispatch Clerk, Albert (Alby) Fiedler, had everything well organized (even his own funeral) down to the last detail. Mechanics (NAMES\*\*: Laurie) would come to Bairnsdale with any parts necessary to make the repairs and keep me on the road. If I could get home, they would do it over the weekend. There were blacksmiths, electricians, a carpenter and four mechanics.

The pig buyers were Brian Wright and Les Lloyd (from Lloyd's Bacon who had sold out to Dandy). They were on the road constantly. If pigs were a certain grade then the farmers got one or two shares in the company. This meant that a lot of Gippsland farmers were shareholders and all had their own "swill" from the dairy farmers. We had our own railway siding for the livestock to be delivered.

There was also the slaughterhouse, which made Blood & Bone fertilizer. This often caused a "pall" and smell, which blew over the highway. The man who was in charge of the smoke house, named Stan, checked each load of saw dust as it arrived. He refused it if it wasn't the "right" kind of wood dust. This was because the flavour of all of his produce depended on the "right" kind of dust.

Trucks had to be filled by attendants before we went on to be dual fuel (petrol and LPG). Later on, all the trucks were converted to diesel. The Dandy factory covered approximately 1 acre, not including the

garages, canteen and work shops. All in all, there were 97 lines of "product". The bacon was covered in cheesecloth, all pre-weighed, either in bulk, sides, middles or legs. Sausages, frankfurts and saveloys came in 50lb cans and so had to be weighed out for each customer individually. There was an allowance for "shrinkage" of 4lb in each 100lb. Anything more than this came out of your wages. Cheese, Nuttlex and rendered cooking oil were also carried out of the factory. Packaging came in later on.

There was a factory outlet open 2 days a week for direct purchase.

There were 22-27 drivers who were actually cash-van salesmen.

Our wages were made up of our base salary, plus commissions. The commissions were only paid if you went over your budget, which increased every year. If you didn't take sick days then you would receive 8 days pay which was included in your holiday pay.

A driver could carry up to \$10,000 a week in Night Safe bags. One day someone dressed up as an Armaguard security personnel and signed in as "C. Mutton", fooling a dispatch clerk. He got away with thousands. The empty bags were found by the railway line, but the stolen money was never recovered.

Because we worked more than 50kms from the Depot, our log books were kept meticulously due to weigh bridge load checks as well as tax purposes. We all had CB radios so we knew when "Santa was on the BBQ" (the weighbridge) so had to allow extra time to be checked.

Later on the company moved from handwritten dockets to hand-held computers. There were many hiccups whilst we were all learning how to use the new technology. I received a weeks tuition on how to use the hand-held computers and then in return had to instruct the other drivers in their usage. At first each van had its own printer in the back, no one realizing that refrigeration and batteries did not mix. The printers were then kept in the passenger's seat in the front of the truck. With computers, it was necessary to stock take every week. Any shortfalls came out of your wages. "Use-by" dates became a nightmare – sometimes we had to re-date the produce in the truck, as we had the machine to do this. Cryovac and smoked products were a farce when it came to the "use-by" dates.

We served the oil rigs in Bass Strait (from the early-to-mid 1970's). The orders came from Melbourne to Lakes Entrance. We then packed them at night and took them to Bullock Island. "P.T." army boats were used to transport the goods and crew out to the rigs. As they had to be kept running 24 hours 7 days a week (the engines couldn't cool down) the whole of Lakes Entrance would shake from the idling engines.

At Christmas raw hams would be sold to customers. A wooden label would be attached with the customer's name on it, then taken back to the factory to be cured. Up to 200 hams came out at a time from being cured. You had to sort through them to find "your" customer's ham for return delivery. There was always "shrinkage" due to cooking the hams and sometimes the customers would complain: "It isn't the same ham," but after explanation it would be okay. One lady, who lived in Bruthen, would only accept a "left hand" leg!

Over the 6 week Christmas holiday, my wife Jan and our children Dean and Kim stayed at Lakes Entrance in our caravan. It was cheaper than motels and allowed us to have Christmas together. Jan did the van banking in Lakes, whilst I was "on the road".

GreenWays Transport brought up the orders from Dandenong. They arrived anytime between 11pm to 3am but you could hear them coming.

I kept the truck overnight at the Lakes Entrance IceWorks because it was the only place that had 3 phase power to "plug in" for the refrigeration and transferred the Greenways loads

Because I had the trust of my customers I was able to make up the order by myself, as about 90% of them were friends. As a Cash Van salesman you had to be trusted otherwise it was very hard to keep sales up. The Manager of the motel at Lakes Entrance shouted Jan and me a lobster dinner on our anniversary every year. At Christmas time, the main deliveries of ham were too big to fit on the truck, so I would make special runs on the weekends by special arrangements with the customers. Sometimes I would be invited to stay for Sunday roast. The six weeks around Christmas were crazy times and some customers, if they were short on products, would leave orders on the table outside our van under a rock for me to deliver when I got back to the van.

I spent my first 16 years at Dandy as a cash van salesman learning all the tricks. Then in 1985, I was offered the opportunity to be the Van Supervisor which I did for the next 7 years at Dandenong and then at Clayton ? years.

The Dandy plant ceased production in 199?

The warehouse moved to Cleelands in Clayton. Everything came down from Sydney in refrigerated vans.

Dandy still had the logo but we all became Metro Quality Foods – they had the EXPORT license and had acquired Jacobs S.A. Smallgoods, Mayfair, George Farmers and Presto.

I had to sit down with four other supervisors and divide areas into districts for Victoria and part of NSW.

Drivers were forced to purchase their own trucks. The company retained and leased back the refrigerated section of the van. Quite a few drivers just walked away because they couldn't or didn't want to have to run their own businesses .

When Presto took over production, their recipes were used but were not the same standard as Dandy. Supermarket chains were only willing to pay a certain price for this new product. Supermarket orders were taken by phone with contract drivers making the deliveries. Cash vans only delivered to small outlets. The country cash vans retained their business due to the distances.

As one of three Clayton depot supervisors, if a country truck broke down I would have to take another truck there. At night, the load would be transferred then I would arrange the truck to be towed back to Clayton.

There were many humorous and difficult people and incidents, both good time and bad, over the years. Yet I can look back with thanks and gratitude for the time I spent at Dandy.

The "Pig in the Top Hat and Tails" neon sign of Dandy was a well-known landmark and a sign post on a foggy night for many drivers, before the present day traffic lights and improved road works.

It should have heritage listing in the same regard as the Skipping Girl at Hawthorn, which has been restored and put back in the same site as before, due to lobbying by locals.

Glen Binstead.



## Dandy Bacon Factory in the 1930's and 40's

Thelma Keys (nee Rendell) started at the "Gippsland Bacon Curing Company" affection called Dandy Bacon in 1937 aged 16. She was employed as the Tea Girl and learnt all the mechanical devices including a Manual typewriter. She worked from 8.30am till 5pm 5 days a week. Thelma started on 15 Shillings per week and her first promotion was 9pence. Thelma rode her bike from Perry Rd Keysborough every day. She also had to ride from the factory on Cheltenham Rd into the post office each night after work hours to post the mail, and then ride back to Keysborough.

Doug Keys's desk was opposite and all office workers ate their lunch (brought in from home) at their desk. Thelma used to throw Doug an orange and say "if you peel it you can have half". That was the beginning of their relationship.

Thelma remembers the Manual Typewriters well. There was no delete button and sometimes letters would be changed three times. This meant that one letter could have been retyped up to four times before it was sent out. You had to be very careful not to make any mistakes as it would mean retyping the whole letter.

Mr Nancarrow was the Manager at the time until 1943. Doug Keys started when he was 18 yrs during the depression and continued to work at the "Factory" retiring as Company Secretary some 40 yrs later.

Thelma continued to be promoted and eventually was the Switchboard operator and receptionist. She handled Sexual Harassment by threatening the person with the Pig Stabber.

In 1941 Thelma Rendell married Doug Keys while he was on leave from the AIF after returning from the Middle East. Thelma left the Factory pending the arrival of their son Peter in 1942, never to return to the workforce. I arrived in 1949.

As a child growing up in Dandenong I remember the whole town knew the Factory Whistle that sounded at 12 noon each day indicating lunch time.

I used to earn my pocket money each year to use at the Melbourne Show by stuffing Annual Reports into envelopes. It was a great event when I got taken to the Factory after hours. I still remember the smell of the office and the strong room with its thick walls and heavy door where all the Accounting and Ledger books were kept each night. Later I remember seeing the Dandy Bacon sign up near the corner of Foster & Lonsdale Sts and thinking we are nearly home.

Speech C. Keys. at switching on the  
Pig sign at the Market 2013.

**ORDER.**

To M

*Korleston Korleston*

No. 925

Dandenong, *4/10/27* 192

PLEASE FORWARD the undermentioned Goods, per \_\_\_\_\_ to Dandenong, and charge to the

**Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd.**

*Bundee newspapers*

*59 lbs*

*[Signature]*

Please supply Invoice immediately on forwarding Goods and quote Order No.

Manager

**ORDER.**

To M

*Korleston & Co*

No. 787

*Journal*

Dandenong, *2/6/27* 192

PLEASE FORWARD the undermentioned Goods, per \_\_\_\_\_ to Dandenong, and charge to the

**Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co. Ltd.**

*1000 cucumbers reprinted from Journal*

*[Signature]*

Please supply Invoice immediately on forwarding Goods and quote Order No.

Manager

1/5/50  
15/2/2\*

comp / for machine 1 1/4 hrs

**PIGS**

**PIGS**

**PIGS**

**PLEASE NOTE**

A Truck of Pigs will be Consigned to the  
**GIPPSLAND CO-OPERATIVE BACON  
CURING CO. LTD., DANDENONG**

Leaving..... Station on (day).....  
(date)..... at.....

**SHAREHOLDERS ARE REQUESTED TO HAVE THEIR STOCK  
FORWARD AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**

..... Forwarding Agent  
**SUPPORT YOUR OWN COMPANY**