



STORIES OF PALMWOODS

SUNSHINE COAST COUNCIL

JUNE 2014



Stories of Palmwoods

© Sunshine Coast Council (2014)

Compiled and edited by Helen Wilkinson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT OVERVIEW	6
DISCLAIMER	6
LIMITATIONS	6
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE’S CONNECTION TO PALMWOODS	7
PATHWAYS	7
AN ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND	8
A CHILD’S MEMORIES	8
<i>A cure</i>	9
<i>Soapbush</i>	9
<i>Boomerang</i>	9
HELP IN DIFFICULT TIMES	9
ABORIGINAL AND SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS WORKING ON THE LAND	10
PALMWOODS’ PIONEERING AND RURAL HISTORY - IN SONG	11
FARMING STORIES	12
CITRUS AND PINEAPPLES	12
SMALLCROPS, AVOCADOS AND MORE	13
BANANAS AND THE CYCLONE	13
WATERMELON STORIES	14
DAIRYING	14
HARD WORK	14
BANG!	15
ROYS – THE CITRUS FARMERS	15
THE END OF THE FARMING WAY OF LIFE	16
FARMING TODAY	16
THE TIMBER INDUSTRY	17
TIMBER CUTTING	17
SAWMILLS	17
THE SHUTES	18
SAWDUST STORIES	18
THE RAILWAY – CORE TO PALMWOODS HISTORY	19
THE RAILWAY - A TRANSIT HUB	19
A VERY SOCIAL TRAIN STATION	19
TOURISTS, TRAINS AND TRAMS	20
A BUSTLING RAILWAY YARD	20
THE PINEAPPLE CRATES	21
CHILDHOOD IN PALMWOODS	22
THE OLD BRIGGS PLACE	23
TOMMY BRIGGS	24
CHARACTERS IN THE COMMUNITY	24
STORIES OF THE TOWN CENTRE	26
THE MAIN STREET SHOPS OPPOSITE THE MEMORIAL HALL	26

<i>Isabel Bauman remembers...</i>	26
<i>The butcher's</i>	26
<i>Cafés</i>	27
<i>The grocery store</i>	27
FURTHER DOWN MAIN STREET	28
<i>Dot Young remembers...</i>	28
<i>Collin's Grocery Store, now the IGA</i>	28
<i>The baker's</i>	29
REMEMBERING A PALMWOODS BLACKSMITH	29
THE DELIVERERS AND CARRIERS	30
QUIRKY BUSINSSES IN TOWN	31
STORIES OF THE MEMORIAL HALL – THE 'HUB OF PALMWOODS'	32
THE SATURDAY NIGHT DANCES	32
<i>Fundraising for the community</i>	33
<i>The dances were "the" social event in town</i>	33
<i>Remembering the copper boiler</i>	34
SATURDAY NIGHT MOVIES	34
LES HERSE AND THE HALL	35
THE MEMORIAL HALL INTO THE FUTURE	35
DESCRIBING PALMWOODS TODAY	36
A COUNTRY VILLAGE	36
A HERITAGE TOWN	36
A TOWN REJUVENATED – VIBRANT AND ALIVE	37
<i>The Lane community / Homegrown Café / Renae's Pantry</i>	38
<i>Rick's Garage/Diner</i>	39
A GREAT LOCATION	40
THE PALMWOODS COMMUNITY	41
A DIVERSE MIX	41
OLD PALMWOODS CONNECTIONS	42
A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY	42
...THOUGH NOT EVERYONE FEELS CONNECTED	43
VALUING THE TOWN'S OLDER PEOPLE	44
COMMUNITY SPIRIT	44
LOTS OF CREATIVITY HERE	46
A SAFE PLACE FOR CHILDREN	47
CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE	47
A BEAUTIFUL WELCOME HOME	47
THE OLD TREES IN TOWN	48
THE JACARANDA ON CHURCH STREET	49
THE PICCABEENS	49
<i>Piccabeen Picnic (Nature meets art)</i>	50
TREE PLANTING	51
KOLORA PARK AND THE DUCK POND	51
WILDLIFE	52
FLOOD STORIES	53

APPENDICES	55
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWEES AND INFORMATION SOURCES	55
APPENDIX 2: FRANK JENKINS WRITES ABOUT HIS CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE CHEVALLUM / PALMWOODS / EUDLO AREA	57



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Stories of Palmwoods aims to provide a snapshot of stories and information about Palmwoods, its community, history and town centre. The information and anecdotes presented here are based on interviews with past and present residents as well as others who have a connection with Palmwoods, and a survey of locally available secondary sources. *Stories of Palmwoods* has been part of a broader Sunshine Coast Council engagement process with the Palmwoods community.

Our thanks go to the many members of the Palmwoods community and beyond who contributed their memories, historical knowledge, memorabilia, photographs and ideas to this project. A list of contributors can be found at the end of this document.

Join us as we explore and celebrate the *Stories of Palmwoods*.

DISCLAIMER

This work is not intended to be a complete or definitive account of Palmwoods' history, community and township, nor does it cover all areas of the Palmwoods town area. While all care has been taken in the gathering and compiling of these stories, this report may contain some errors of fact, and historical references may require further investigation for accuracy and comprehensiveness.

For a more definitive and thorough historical account of Palmwoods, see for example Genealogy Sunshine Coast's *Take a Walk around Palmwoods: A definitive history of some of the buildings and businesses of the township of Palmwoods*, published in 2010.

LIMITATIONS

Further engagement with Aboriginal community members is needed to further explore and expand stories of Aboriginal cultural heritage and connection to the Palmwoods area.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE'S CONNECTION TO PALMWOODS

There are strong Aboriginal connections and stories relating to many areas of the Sunshine Coast and Hinterland. However few stories relating specifically to Aboriginal connection with Palmwoods can be found.

Kabi Kabi Traditional Owner and descendant of Australian South Sea Islander people, Kerry Jones, says many in his generation are seeking stories but they are difficult to discover:

... a lot of old people didn't pass a lot of knowledge on, because in those days it was taboo ... because it mightn't have been such a good history for those people... The thing is a lot of our people were disconnected to country, and a lot of those old people ... were brought up on missions ... So a lot of our knowledge has been lost...

Historian Ray Kerkhove, who has done significant work on Aboriginal history in South East Queensland, suggests that the lack of Aboriginal stories from Palmwoods may be because it was dense rainforest and so would have been mainly an area of resources, like fruits, nuts, medicine, twine, and foods like eels and flying fox.

Long time Chevallum and Nambour resident, Frank Jenkins, was grandson to some of the first white settlers in the Palmwoods area. He carries memories and family stories of Aboriginal people in the Chevallum, Woombye, Palmwoods and Eudlo district. From his memory and the stories he knows, he believes there were only a small number of Aboriginal people in the Palmwoods area:

They would be along the creek, but not a big tribe. It wouldn't be a big tribe. It would just be small wandering groups probably. There's very [few] stone axes ever found in Palmwoods but there was in Chevallum... in Eudlo, and further over in Hunchy, and of course Mooloolah and down that area there's a lot of stuff... [But] not in Palmwoods, no. Nothing ever that even I can ever remember. (Frank Jenkins)

PATHWAYS

There are stories of Aboriginal pathways, or walking tracks, running through and behind Palmwoods.

... there were a lot of pathways through Palmwoods, especially from the hinterland Murries - they would come down [towards the coast]... When there wasn't much tucker up [in the Hinterland], all the tucker was down here on the coast. You know, oysters... fish, and a lot of those people could tell by what things are in flower... to come down this way and camp down here until those seasons were over... A lot of the pathways that European people travelled on were actually old pathways from the Aboriginal people. You know, what's the use of making a new pathway when there was one already there? ... (Kerry Jones, Kabi Kabi traditional owner)

I know there was a pathway through the Mooloolah Valley all the way out to Caloundra, and there's pathways ... even through Palmwoods there. You know, up in the hills up there. There's still caves up in there that that people had sheltered [in]... (Kerry Jones)

Frank Jenkins also remembers an Aboriginal pathway near Palmwoods:

[There was] one from Hunchy ... That went around the back of Palmwoods really. They probably walked up along the Paynters [Creek] because they kept along the creeks mostly, because that's where all the food was, but the forest people had a track that went all the way from Mooloolah, even near Eudlo. They started on a hill at Mooloolah ... There used to be a real hollow in the ridge where they'd been walking for hundreds of years. You could see the track - just near where the tunnel is, going south from Eudlo, there's a tunnel in the railway. It's just near there. They used to go over Mossy Bank and up Hunchy and along to Dulong, and some of the tracks are still visible, if you know what you're looking for. (Frank Jenkins)

Sean Fleischfresser, a Gubbi Gubbi man and descendant of some of the first white settlers in Palmwoods and Woombye, has been exploring his ancestry. He tells of a pathway along which people moved between the Coast and the Hinterland through the Palmwoods area:

It seems when they went to the Bunya fest, that [area] was on their pathway... (Sean Fleischfresser, Gubbi Gubbi man)

AN ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND

There was apparently an Aboriginal 'cemetery' or burial ground in an orange orchard in Palmwoods. Little is known of the location, but a story by 'Poultry Maid' of Palmwoods in 1932 tells of its existence:

There is a man who lives in our district who... [w]hen he was fourteen ... went to work for a man who owned an orchard about a mile from his home. The orchard was once an aboriginal's cemetery, and people said the aboriginal's ghosts danced between the orange trees every full moon.

(A Ghost story. *The Brisbane Courier*, 15 September 1932)

The story goes on to tell a humorous tale of the boy walking through the orchard one winter evening and being frightened by 'two white objects in among the trees', which turned out to be young people stealing oranges.

A CHILD'S MEMORIES

Frank Jenkins has memories as a young child in the 1930s and 1940s of encounters with the Aboriginal people around his home in Chevallum and his grandparents' home in Woombye. He shares some of his stories:

A CURE

When Frank was five years old he contracted Malaria. The doctors were unable to treat him because quinine at that time was only available for defence force personnel. His mother turned to the Aboriginal people for help:

Then my mother said, "Well, I'll go and ask them Aboriginals." We went up to my grandmother's place to meet this Aboriginal lady to bring this cure along, and ... finally she showed up and she said, "I can't find any [of the right trees] anywhere." Then she turns around and [sees] one growing in my grandmother's yard. So she cut a strip of bark about that long and that wide, green bark off the side of the tree, and she said, "Just cut about this much off and chew it every day." And in about five days I was cured.

Frank believes the tree that cured him was a Macaranga.

SOAPBUSH

Frank wrote this story of his encounter on the family's Chevallum property:

There was a large Red Ash tree (Soapbush), and after this had flowered the flower stems would drop to the ground and dry with a hollow at the centre. The Aboriginal[s] (sometimes 2) would sit and smoke these sticks. Sometimes I would go out the next day and they would still be sitting there. Once when I was about 8 years [old] I was offered a smoke. I thought he said good for throat. I was sitting smoking for about 10 minutes. Then mother called and no matter how hard I tried I could not move my legs. I had to be carried inside. My throat was sore for days, and I never smoked another Soapbush stick.

BOOMERANG

As a child, Frank remembers two boomerangs on the mantelpiece of the family home in Chevallum:

When my father... was 18 he met Um Dumbi, he was the last Aboriginal of Woombye... And he asked him to make him a boomerang, and if he could sit and watch him make a boomerang, he would pay him five pounds, which was a lot of money. Anyway, he sat there for three days while he made this boomerang, and he shaped it and he heated it over a fire and everything. Then my father tried to make one, which was this one, which won't fly, but the interesting thing about the story was that he told my father that they always made the boomerang out of this particular tree, and there was this giant Jacaranda growing on my grandparents' property and Jacaranda is a foreign tree. So that always intrigued me...

Frank has written other stories of encounters with the Aboriginal people of the area. These are attached in **Appendix 2**.

HELP IN DIFFICULT TIMES

The arrival of white settlers in Australia irrevocably changed the way of life for Aboriginal people. Many of us are familiar with the stories of Aboriginal people being removed or having to leave their native lands, or in many cases dying from

introduced diseases. There are stories still remembered of the early settlers in Palmwoods trying to help the local Aboriginal people in those difficult times.

[There] were a lot of white people around here that took indigenous people in and helped them out ... because they were in a pretty bad way at this time. In the 1850s and up, that was the time of the removalists ... a lot of white people probably hid a lot of the indigenous people on the properties, to stop them getting caught by the trappers... It was pretty good how families ... took them under their wing and helped them out ... (Kerry Jones)

When the protector came around, I didn't admit that I knew where an Aboriginal might be because my mother said never tell a policeman anything. If the Aboriginal wants to be found, they will be found. Don't show them where they are. (Frank Jenkins)

My grandparents used to tell me about how they tried to help the Aboriginals when they had mumps and measles and how they just died ... and [my grandparents] would be crying... They couldn't do anything for them. There was one camp on the Paynters [Creek] and nearly all the women and children died. The old men would survive, but the women and children would die just for simple illnesses... Hundreds of them... [My grandparents'] property had an Aboriginal camp on it... Just west of the railway line at Woombye. (Frank Jenkins)

ABORIGINAL AND SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS WORKING ON THE LAND

Kerry Jones, Traditional Owner and descendant of Australian South Sea Islander people, talks of Aboriginal and South Sea Islander people working on the farms and in the logging industry in Palmwoods during pioneering times.

In Palmwoods there were a lot of small crops out there. That's the way [the pioneering] people survived back in the day... but [there were also] Aboriginal people [and] South Sea Island people that worked a lot of the farms too... It wasn't just farming, it was also logging. My great uncles did a lot of logging here because that was the only means of putting tucker on your table, because at that time a lot of the land was getting cleared and Aboriginal people were getting removed off their land and their means of food source was disappearing pretty quickly...

... [in] Palmwoods, Woombye, there were a lot of Islanders out there, in the 1880s and even into 1901. There's documentation of big mobs of South Sea Island people out that way working the land ... [They were] cheap labour, working for nothing, probably for a bit of flour, a bit of sugar, a bit of tea and a bit of mutton. I've got to say the South Sea Island people were treated very harshly... (Kerry Jones)

Historian Ray Kerkhove's research also shows that Aboriginal timber-getting teams worked in the area that is now Palmwoods in the late 1800s, and that Aboriginal people from missions further south were hired to clear rainforest in the early 1900s.

PALMWOODS' PIONEERING AND RURAL HISTORY - IN SONG

Palmwoods Progress

- Sung to the tune of 'Botany Bay'

When we were a young lad and lassie
We went out to Palmwoods to stay
We dug and we hoed and we seeded
We carried our goods in a dray.

Chorus:
Singing Palmwoods my ladies and gentlemen
Singing Palmwoods for ever and aye
Singing Palmwoods my ladies and gentlemen
We carried our goods in a dray.

We built our first home in the piccabeens
Rough slats and tin roof and dirt floor
Soon children all laughing and playing
Who could ask for anything more.

Chorus

Singing Palmwoods my ladies and gentlemen
Singing Palmwoods for ever and aye
Singing Palmwoods my ladies and gentlemen
Who could ask for anything more.

We planted our pines and our citrus
We nursed them by night and by day
Then came the bananas and strawberries
And Palmwoods was well on its way.

With motors and spray plants and "know how"
We maintain the work we have done
Our houses come straight from the factories
We have our own place in the sun.

Last chorus:
Singing Palmwoods my ladies and gentlemen
Singing Palmwoods for ever and aye
With trucks and with diesels and forklifts
We don't carry our goods in a dray.

This song was sung at the Combined Ladies Social Day Oct 12th 1972 (Thursday)

(Source: Noelene Sawrey)

[Note - Slight edits have been made to correct minor errors in the original].

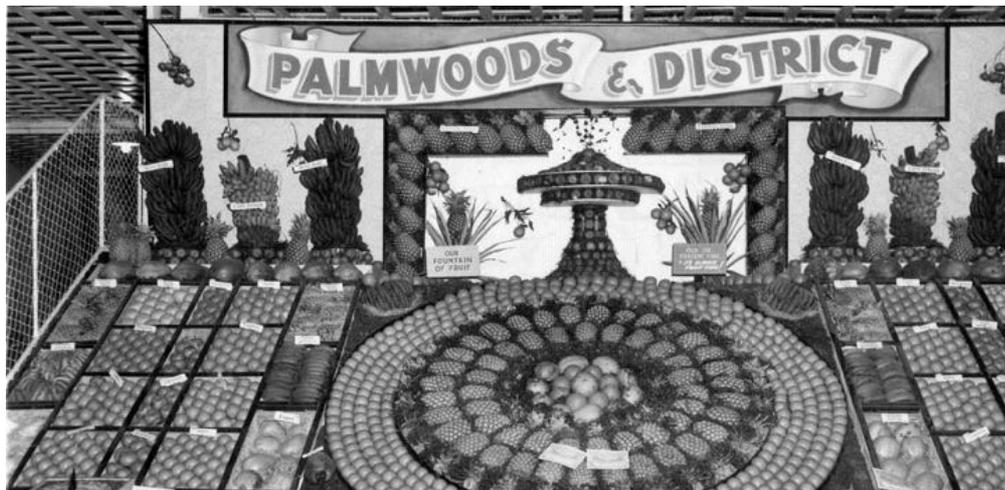
FARMING STORIES

Long time Palmwoods residents remember a town and community that were built around farming. This is one of the strongest stories of Palmwoods: its past identity as a farming town. While most of the farms have now gone, most older community members have strong connections with this aspect of Palmwoods' past.

Everybody in the town in those days, almost everybody, was either farming or related to farming in some way... It really was a rural town. (Athol McMullin)

Yes, from the Montville area and all through this valley and all around the Woombye area, they had literally hundreds of farmers. (Neville Lingard)

Palmwoods was very much a farming area, lots of citrus and pineapples, avocados... strawberries... Pretty much everything was growing in this area. 'The salad bowl of the Sunshine Coast' they called it. (Marjorie Murray and Wendy Southam)



Palmwoods fruit display at the Royal National Show, Brisbane, 1958
Picture from State Library of Queensland

CITRUS AND PINEAPPLES

Citrus and pineapple farming were the mainstays in Palmwoods for many years. People remember farms covering the landscape 'as far as the eye could see'.

...[T]here were pineapples on just about every hill you could see, especially between Palmwoods and Woombye School, that whole area on the left hand side going up the hill there was pineapples. (Wendy McMullin)

From here you could look up and you could see them... many, many acres and some of the best pineapples in the area ... You could actually see the farms from here ... [Also] from here you could look out onto Roy's orchard, and over in the back here more citrus orchards. Everywhere you looked over that way, citrus orchards, out towards the school. It was much the same

through here to Woombye ... [And] all that area opposite the Woombye School, it was just pineapples, pineapples. (Neville Lingard)



M&D pineapple cannery, Palmwoods
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

SMALLCROPS, AVOCADOS AND MORE

As well as pineapples and citrus, many other crops were grown in the area.

... we used to pick beans from April to September. About 30 acres we would plant, not all together, of course... We planted a bag at a time, didn't we? ... A bushel of bean seeds at a time, every nine days we'd plant a bushel... We used to send 30 and 40 bags [of beans] a day to Sydney. (Jack and Rita Herrick)

Where I live now was originally my father's small crops farm... they used to farm pineapples in some areas, paw paws in others, but the thing that I remember most as a child was that we used to have a very large bean patch, or zucchini patch, which we spent every single Sunday in, picking ... (May Young)

[In the] 60s and 70s they started with the avocados and it got bigger and bigger and bigger. (Neville Lingard)

[We grew] tomatoes, and cucumbers, marrows, everything. (Jack Herrick)

BANANAS AND THE CYCLONE

A cyclone in the 60s is remembered for its damage to local banana trees.

We had 11 acres of bananas, just ready to cut for the markets, and the cyclone came. We lost all of them. I have photos of Jack cutting them up ... [they were] no good. Then there was a little pocket of them left in the gully and believe it or not two or three days later a whirlwind come and took them. (Rita Herrick)

... my brother bought the top half of the farm, he grew bananas until the cyclone wiped that out... it would have been ... early 60's. So that wiped the bananas out and from there on he grew pineapples. (Lorraine Clarke)

WATERMELON STORIES

Sweet childhood memories of the watermelons that grew around Palmwoods evoke a time of innocence and freedom for children.

Tommy [Briggs] was the farmer, he grew watermelons and beans and stuff and as kids we would raid the watermelon paddock on the other side of the hill there. It was good because you could sneak under the fence and into the paddock and just roll them down. Sometimes they would end up right down in the creek so that was really, really good... because you could eat and have a big watermelon fight... We never got into trouble. (Neville Lingard)

I can remember walking up to Hunchy, or even walking to Montville, and there'd be a few kids, and I can remember raiding Flossy Spackman's watermelon patch on our way out... No one minded in those days if you raided something... [It was] on our way, so we took the watermelon up there with us. We didn't take it very far, mind, it was very heavy. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

... at summer time [Uncle Tommy would] put a patch of watermelons in. And then he would have to sell them, so he'd take his ute down on the Maroochydore Road and expect someone like us to sit there and sell them... 40 cents each, I can remember, 40 cents each. (Lorraine Bertram)

DAIRYING

While most farmers grew fruit and smallcrops, some made an income from dairying.

We used to milk sixty cows, with the machines of course. You'd take the cream up to the top of Dulong Road there. Another carrier would pick them up there. Archie Mackay his name was and he used to take the cream to Nambour. From then on it went to Eumundi... They used to make butter of it ... There was a factory there at Eumundi, Cooroy, Pomona, everywhere. Caboolture, too, there was a big factory there... There was a lot of dairies around here once but they have just about all gone now. (Jack and Rita Herrick)

HARD WORK

A strong theme of all who remember farming in Palmwoods is one of hard, hard work.

Well it was hard work ... The main pineapple crop used to come off in February/March and it was as hot as hot, and it used to rain and rain and you were [often] bogged... you were either wet from sweat or wet from rain. And of course they're prickly things, pineapples, so you had to wear long sleeves, long trousers and gloves. It was just so hot, and hard work. (Athol McMullin)

It was long, hard work. We started as children... at the time you didn't realise it was hard work because it was a way of life... you just did what was expected,

everybody pulled their own weight. Everybody had a job and we all did it. But I wouldn't give it up for anything. (May Young)

I think of the orchards that were here, the pineapple farms, the abundance of fruit. And to see the old farmers out there bending over and harvesting. That really was earthy, even though it was so close to the coast and everything, those people worked very hard. (Leo Van de Vorst)

BANG!

There were dangers to pineapple workers that we couldn't imagine today.

They used to gas the pineapples to make them bear at the time of year we wanted [them] to. Those days we used to start off with carbide, and they'd drop these bits of carbide in the watering can... They'd go along and pour a little bit down the heart of the pineapple... In the early days the smokers were always blowing themselves up because they had the carbide gas on their gloves. They'd go to light their cigarette, BANG, no eyebrows. (Athol McMullin)

ROYS – THE CITRUS FARMERS

The Roy family ran the biggest citrus farm in the area. Their farmland is now residential estate and home to many Palmwoods families.



All the estates that are around the school now were farms... Opposite the school, which I think is Paynters Pocket now... that was Roy's Orchards. And then where the Old Orchard Estate is, was Roy's Orchards as well. (Wendy Southam)

The Roy farm, it was between us and the school, it was a big hub in Palmwoods... Where the fruit juice factory is now... from the tennis courts right through to the estate on, past the school there, their farm went right through, and they were the big producers of Palmwoods... (Jill Fing and Lorraine Bertram)

... the Roy family, they used to produce juice and of course their land was just up near where the present school is and their juice was known quite worldwide. (Geoff Littler)

Inside Roy's citrus packing shed

Picture from 'Palmwoods Centenary 1881-1981: Supplement to "The Palmwoods Story"'

THE END OF THE FARMING WAY OF LIFE

Over the last 20 or so years, farming has all but disappeared in Palmwoods. For many who worked in farming this is felt as a sad loss, both personally and for the town.

As I look out the window now it is wall-to-wall trees, but only as little as 20 years ago it used to be wall-to-wall pineapples... For about a three kilometre radius, every single farm here... were just pineapple farmers... But now, [in] that same three kilometre area, other than one farmer... nobody else in the area has pineapples. And that is what Palmwoods was, it was such a rural area, and Hunchy as well, but it's all gone, it's no longer here. And that is sad. (May Young)

Roy Senior had a farm out on Roys Road, off Landershute Road. Once that went, I think the impetus or the drive amongst the farming community deteriorated. I think people saw that as a nail in the coffin for farming. And in fact I heard a councillor say once, "We can't make a living on farms in Palmwoods these days, they're too small"... I was very upset... I didn't like the thought of housing pushing out the farmers, which is exactly what happened. But the truth is from the farmer's point of view, his land was more valuable to put houses on. And I think that's a sad state of affairs. (Lorna Spackman)

FARMING TODAY

There are a still a small number of farmers in Palmwoods, though only very few compared to the hundreds who were here not that long ago.

[I] lived in Hunchy with my mum and dad on a pineapple farm... They still sell pineapples, not mum and dad obviously, but pineapples are still sold at the top of the hill where we lived. (Lorraine Clarke)

[We grow] ginger and have been farming strawberries, it's not terribly lucrative... I can name a few strawberry growers, particularly in the Chevallum area... I did know one ginger grower in Palmwoods, I don't think they're growing ginger anymore... I know a few people who have a few small patches of limes... People have learnt to diversify and if that means either growing something else or getting a part-time job elsewhere, that's what they have to do. Avocados are still grown. I know some people down towards the Big Pineapple who grow avocados... (Lorna Spackman)

THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

Like much of the Sunshine Coast region, the earliest industry in Palmwoods was timber. The area was heavily logged for years, with timber-lugging bullock and wagon teams a common sight through town and the busy railway full of timber waiting to be transported.



Timber at the Palmwoods rail yard
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

TIMBER CUTTING

Some in Palmwoods have stories of the past timber cutting industry.

After the cyclone we had in 1954, Stan Hardingham never used his saw to cut a tree down for almost twelve months. He carted all the windfall timber to market. (Les Herse)

I have photographs of [my husband's family] cutting timber, with the pieces of timber, you know, the wedges, in. And they also were good on the crosscut saw... (Lorna Spackman)

The regrowth on my block are 55 years old, the trees. That's the last time it was cut. And a lot of that timber went to the railways. The good bush poles went to Brisbane to build the Queenslanders where they needed stumps, timber stumps, and things like that. (Leo Van de Vorst)

SAWMILLS

Palmwoods had its own sawmills for many years. There are personal and sometimes tragic stories of people's connection with these mills.

[The sawmill was] as you go out of Palmwoods towards the school, it was on the left-hand side when you went down the first hill... And in later years there was one over the other side where Turner's Transport [is]. (Lorraine Clarke)

... one of my ancestors had one of the first sawmills down where the doctors' surgery is here in Palmwoods. (Neville Lingard)

I moved here in 1957 and married my first husband, Cecil Young... And the sawmill was then owned by another brother, Steve Young, and then later on ... Walter Young took over. So then it was always known as Young Brothers Sawmill... [T]he timber was cut and they made ... pineapple and banana cases and all that sort of thing. And then when the cases out of wood went out and the cardboard cartons came in, they then went to making pallets... And of course they also cut timber for different houses... (Dorothy Young Fruscalzo)

Tenth of July 1972 [Cecil] got killed in the sawmill. He was bringing a big log in to the Canadian for it to be cut up, and it was hooked onto the old blitz as they used to use ... [They] said his foot must've slipped from the brake onto the accelerator and that caused the truck to lift up with the big load at the back, and it tipped over and crushed him to death. Nineteen seventy-two. (Dorothy Young Fruscalzo)

THE SHUTES

Moving timber down from high in the range was a labour intensive process involving a series of natural falls or shutes.

I think the stories of logging and how the trees were felled in Palmwoods is a story in itself. You had what they called shutes, and Landers Shute is quite a well-known name, and Landers was a man who lived in the hills behind Palmwoods and he used to shoot the timber down the shutes, and eventually they were picked up by bullock trains and taken to the... rail and then sent off to wherever they went to for milling. (Geoff Littler)

... they used to mill it, say up in the range up there, and then it would come by ox and cart to Remington Shute... and then they'd shute the logs down ... and then the ox and carts would take the logs to Landers Shute and then the logs would be unloaded again and shot down the hill. Then they'd pick them up again and take them to Lower Landers Shute, which was another shute, and then they'd shoot logs down... [to] the ox and carts that would take the logs out to the Maroochy River and then float them out to sea. (Leo Van de Vorst)

SAWDUST STORIES

Sawdust, a remnant of local sawmilling, is strong in the memories of some in Palmwoods. People tell sweet stories of using this innocuous material for cleaning and in children's play.

There were two butchers' blocks in the butcher shop and they were from big, big trees. That's what they used to cut up the meat on. In the afternoon, they used to put sawdust on that block and scrub it with a wire brush. That's how they cleaned it... Sawdust, it was good. It was actually cleaner than some of that stuff they use now. (Stephanie Sawrey)

They used to call it Les Herse's Hall. He'd go to clean up after the dance the night before. He'd put some sawdust in bags, the kids used to sit on the sawdust and they'd go round and round on the floor because Palmwoods had a

beautiful dancing floor. The kids used to sit on these bags and he used to pull it around, to make the hall nice and clean, got all the dust off. The kids were always there of a Sunday after the dance. (Vera Herse)

... when we went to the sawmill with [my father]... when he was buying new pineapple cases ... we used to play on the big castle of sawdust. Run up and down ... It's a bit like a huge sandcastle and you got all itchy from it. (Lorraine Clarke)

THE RAILWAY – CORE TO PALMWOODS HISTORY

The Palmwoods Railway Station is central to the economic and social history of Palmwoods. The beginnings of Palmwoods township, then known as Merriman's Flat, was originally further west than the current town centre. When the railway opened on its current site in 1891, people began settling and opening businesses close to the station, and so began the township of Palmwoods.

THE RAILWAY - A TRANSIT HUB

For a long time, Palmwoods Station was the northern-most point of the rail line and so an important changeover point for people travelling to the coast or up the hill into the hinterlands.

[Palmwoods] was a stop off spot for people going to Montville. There was a coach service to Montville, lots of guest houses in Montville in the mountains... And also there was a bus service to Maroochydore before the Maroochydore road was built off the Bruce Highway down here. I think they were the main things for people stopping off [in Palmwoods]: there was a tramway, the guest houses at Montville, and perhaps a seaside holiday at Maroochydore or Mooloolaba... (Wendy McMullin)

A VERY SOCIAL TRAIN STATION

The station was also once a social drawcard, with a visit to the railway providing an exciting social occasion.

It used to be a pretty popular social activity, I suppose, to come for every train that came in and watch the people getting off and on, wherever they were going to. There's a lot of stories about that, they used to sell strawberries and they had a book stall for people wanting books... (Wendy McMullin)

When the troops were going to go to New Guinea, my father loaded up the [truck] ... with pineapples to give to the troops. So we went into the railway and parked and waited for the troop train to come in. And they came in, and all the little town urchins all run over and they were trying to get them to throw money... (Frank Jenkins)

One of the popular entertainments for years was to walk to the station especially on Sunday evenings to be one of the crowd watching the train go through. ('The Palmwoods Story')

TOURISTS, TRAINS AND TRAMS

Tourists used to come on special train trips to Palmwoods and also visit via the popular Buderim-Palmwoods tramline.

I have read in the paper that they ran excursions here, and what on earth they came on an excursion to Palmwoods for when it was just the railway station and perhaps the grocery shop, which would have sold hot water, I suppose, for a cup of tea... It was virgin bush... 60 or 70 people turning up on a train to a little place in the middle of nowhere, so to speak... I'm amazed at that story... all these people in their probably long white dresses and dressed up in suits traipsing all over Palmwoods. What did they do till the next train went home? (Wendy McMullin)

[There] was a cafe which was built about the same time as the hotel, and they always advertised, when the tram line came down from Buderim, "Get off the tram, come over here and have a cup of tea before you go", whichever way you're going, north or south on the main line. (Wendy McMullin)

[The tramline] was also a tourist attraction. A trip in the tiny carriage behind trucks of fruit, overswaying the trestle bridges, was an experience one did not soon forget. ('The Palmwoods Story')



Palmwoods terminal on the Buderim-Palmwoods tramway, 1924
Picture courtesy of Sunshine Coast Libraries

A BUSTLING RAILWAY YARD

People talk of the Palmwoods railway station as once being a bustling hub of activity for the local farmers and, earlier, for the timber getters of the area. The railway was central to the economy of the town.

... everything got packed into crates and off it would go down to the Palmwoods railway yard and from there it would be taken by train to Brisbane... You look at [the train station] now and it is nothing to what it used to be. All the back of the IGA [back] then ... there were wagon trains sitting there,

everything would be loaded onto them and then shunted into place to be taken [to the markets]... It was a thriving industry ... (May Young)

It's a bit hard to explain to people today just what Palmwoods was like, how big a farming area it was... No one can understand just what amount of fruit was put through this station. One of these days I'll get the returns and see just how much there really was. Because I think at one stage there were about 60 trains going through this station a day... I'm not sure if that's correct or not, but yes, there were a lot of trains. (Wendy McMullin)

I used to love going with dad when he took all the pineapples into the railway. (Lorraine Clarke)



Fruit train at Palmwoods Station loaded with pineapples for the southern markets, 1955
Picture courtesy of Sunshine Coast Libraries

THE PINEAPPLE CRATES

A strong memory for some are the pineapple crates stacked up at the Palmwoods Station, for years a symbol of the thriving fruit industry and the importance of the railway in transporting fruit to market.

[Dad] would have to pick up the empty crates. They'd send the pineapples off and the other crates were stacked up in the railway grounds ... and we'd play, hide and seek, in amongst these great stacks of crates while he was doing that, or loading fertiliser onto the back of his truck from the big sheds. (Lorraine Clarke)

Down behind the shop there, the IGA shop, that used to be all pineapple bins... [They were made of] wood, timber, and you used to grab them and fill them up and put a tonne of pines in them... Well, see, they're all gone now from here... There was hundreds here at Palmwoods and they're all gone now. (Jack Herrick)

CHILDHOOD IN PALMWOODS

Stories of growing up in rural Palmwoods in the 1940's and 50s offer a glimpse of childhoods spent outdoors and a lovely sense of freedom.

... we grew up in Palmwoods, and it was a great little place, it was quiet. Everyone knew each other, we'd walk from one end of the town to the other, and for kids it was great.... We had family all over the town, you could go visit this one and that one, and it was just easy.... Easy place to grow up, yes. (Jill Fing)

... we ran pretty free all around the ridges and the paddocks. We went over the back, we called it 'over the back', over through other properties, which linked up with Blackall Range Road which came out from Woombye, and you'd go through other people's properties over there to the top of Petrie Creek... and we learnt to swim in the creek, as a lot of people of my age did... (Lorraine Clarke)

Our favourite place was here in the paddock behind there, with a beautiful creek to swim in, a beautiful big swimming hole. The farmer that owned it had a couple of cattle as well as a couple of old draft horses so we used to round them up and ride them. And spend most of our weekends down there making cubbies and swimming [in the] beautiful big swimming hole. (Neville Lingard)

We had push bikes, we fished the mullet, cat fish, and we used to get a feed most times, and the only trouble was they tasted a bit muddy, but we didn't care just as long as we caught them... we used to ride up half way up Montville, on our bikes and then come down the range ... The thing was you had to touch your brakes as little as possible and we used to get quite a bit of momentum up, but having said that we did touch our brakes because it got a bit scary. We used to ride horses too. I played a lot of sport. Sport was a big thing back in those days. Played tennis in the winter time and cricket in the summer time, rugby league. That's what we used to do. (John Moore)

Our home was all farming families but sometimes some of the school kids came out and we'd meet up. They'd hike out to our place, which was three miles from the school, and that school was a mile from the town. They'd come up the hills and meet up and we would then hike up through Hunchy and up the mountainside through somebody's banana patch, up to Montville and hike over to the Bon Accord Falls they were then, it's now Kondalilla Falls.... Yes. It was steep as anything ... It was a big day out when we organised that, you knitted beanies especially for it because beanies were the fashion. Fancy wearing a hot beanie to go hiking, your jeans rolled up and your checked shirts, a bit country looking, and then we had to have a beanie with a pom pom, I don't know why. It must have been the thing of the moment. (Lorraine Clarke)

THE OLD BRIGGS PLACE

The site of Sundale's 'Palmwoods Garden Village' was once the home and farm of the prominent Briggs family: brothers Tommy and Edgar and their sister Nell. Their property was a hub in the town and the centre of many a story.

The brick house on the top of the hill, it was on the top of Briggs' hill... there were two brothers and a sister, and they were bachelors and Nell was a spinster... Edgar, he had the dairy. Tommy ran the farm, the oranges and the pineapples, and Nell looked after the house and all that sort of thing... We spent a lot of time up at the Briggs', and that's where they had the tennis court, up at the Briggs'. And it was a real social hub up there, and a lot of kids went up there, and they had the dairy up there, and everyone used to go up there to get the milk, and Nell would bring the milk down in buckets. It was old fashioned, it wasn't these modern day things. Edgar, young Edgar, would milk the cows by hand, and then Nell would go up to the dairy and separate the milk and then bring the milk down in buckets, and it would go out onto the side veranda, and then people would come up with their own buckets and the milk would get ladled out for everybody. That's how it was. And then the tennis court was there, and there was social tennis played there every weekend, and that was always good. And the men were always down on the farm, and a smoko always went down, it was always a "Cooee" at the top of the hill and it was always pineapple sandwiches and billy tea that went down. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

It's like when the Briggs were farming up there, when it was citrus picking time, there'd be Edgar, Tommy, that's the Briggs'. There would be a chap by the name of Doc Ward, another chap by the name of McIntyre. There would be six or eight men all similar age, elderly people picking down there. Nelly would be picking but, come smoko time, Nelly would head up to the house... she would come [back] with scones and cakes and teas and everything... [W]e would all sit around the tree. But when they were picking it was classic. There were some with bad hips, some with bad legs. Some would stand on crates, some would stand on ladders, some would stand on the side of the trailer. It would be like taking a car to the the retirement village and getting your recruits... And this was all just voluntary work, they were all helping. They weren't paid, they might have taken home some oranges or lemons or mandarins. It was just all voluntary. They would all come to Briggs place. (Neville and Thelma Lingard)

The Briggs family that owned a large parcel of land which is now where the retirement village is, they had the farm behind our house and we figured out as kids, if we took a little bunch of flowers up to Miss Briggs, she'd send us home with an orange or a pineapple or a little bag of lollies. We used to walk up there and do that a bit. (Wendy Southam)

TOMMY BRIGGS

Tommy Briggs himself is well remembered by some long time residents as an important character in Palmwoods.

Well I guess from the old people who lived in Palmwoods, [the one] that came to mind was Tommy Briggs. He had his property where the Sundale development is now and he used to go to the hotel every day and have one very small nip of beer and then come home and have a rest... He was a character of Palmwoods and a veteran from World War 1 and it was just nice to know a man like Tommy. (Geoff Littler)

Tommy was a bit of a character in the town, from what I've heard... He was well known... because he was a part of the bowls club, and he opened [the sports club] ... and he was the first president there of that tennis club. So he had a lot to do socially with sporting places. And of course the donation of the Briggs Park down from the property. So he was a well known character. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

We had that house there at the back and Tommy Briggs had all oranges there... he donated the sports ground to them for nothing, I think Tommy Briggs did. (Jack Herrick)

CHARACTERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Some important Palmwoods characters have already been mentioned in the stories presented so far. Below is how people responded when asked specifically about important or memorable characters of Palmwoods past:

I can remember Peter Roberts riding his horse through the pub. One night there were a lot of characters down at the pub ... and the doors flung open, he came through one door and out the other, that was just another night at the pub back in those days. (Rick Jamieson)

My father-in-law lived with me... and when the boys were going to school he'd walk them up to the top of the hill from where we were on Main Street, and there was a little old bus and George Humphries used to pick them up in this little four wheel drive bus and drive them to the Palmwoods School. And he had his two or three little dogs that came with him and followed him all the way, pick up the children and take them out to school. He was an old identity, Humphries. (Dorothy Young Fruscalzo)

Hank Stephens was a very prominent person in Palmwoods. He used to be in charge of the fire brigade and I used to belong to the rural fire brigade when he was here. (Fred Tornabne)

Ivy Garrad probably comes up in your stories. Ivy Garrad played the piano in a dance band... (Lorraine Clarke)

Well, the Roys were a big part, and the Briggs', and the Spackmans... They were probably the main ones that our life centred around. (Jill Fing and Lorraine Bertram)

There was the Rudd family and the Herse family. Arthur Scott, who was one of the original lifesavers, he used to ride his bike or walk over to the coast to be part of that movement. He's recorded over there as one of the original members of the Life Saving Movement. Pretty much most of the community groups' history involves those names... Yes, the Bailey family... Spackmans. The Herses in particular, were pretty much on every committee going at the time. They're very dear friends of ours and they're still here, still living at the retirement village, in their 90's, well into their 90's, with great memories too... The Collins family were very much involved. There's a memorial to Peter Collins down in Kolora Park, so they were very much involved in everything in the community too, so they're recorded in our historical books as well. (Marjorie Murray)

Les and Vera [Herse] were very community minded. They just lived down the road in Hobson St at that particular time. Les was the one that used to keep the weather and the rain gauges and used to put the flags up at special times or have it half-mast when somebody in the area had passed away. And Vera used to help out at the dances and CWA. She was very, very involved in CWA. (Thelma Lingard)

There's an old gentleman that lived across the road from me, Arthur Scott, and he brought lifesaving to the Sunshine Coast. He bought a lot of things to the Sunshine Coast. He even went to the schools every year at Anzac and talked to the children about... The Boer War. He would often tell the children about the Boer War and I just found him fascinating... he died at ninety eight, I just miss him so much. (Vox pop interview respondent)

Yes we certainly did have some great people. One of our long time [Bowls Club] members here, a guy Jack Ross, he had been a banana farmer at Eudlo for many years, joined this club I think in nineteen seventy-one. Ended up he had two artificial knees, two artificial hips, and he was always the first person to volunteer to help with anything. He was one very special guy. He died unfortunately a couple of year ago. He was just on ninety. (Graham Goode)

His name was Vic Pearce, he used to own the Q.F.S. [Queensland Fruitgrowers Society] across the road there... Vic is no longer there but he was so helpful. We didn't have any grass on our front lawn and he went to his paddock and dug up carpet grass for us and bought samples in and we put that down. Just little things like that he went out of his way to help us which was lovely. The nicest man you could ever know. (Sheri Ann Fitzpatrick)

STORIES OF THE TOWN CENTRE

Unless otherwise stated, the source of information for Stories of the Town Centre is Genealogy Sunshine Coast's publication, "Take a walk around Palmwoods".



THE MAIN STREET SHOPS OPPOSITE THE MEMORIAL HALL

The historic stretch of shops in Little Main Street, opposite the Memorial Hall, began over a hundred years ago. A thorough listing of buildings and their history is found in Sunshine Coast Genealogy's recent book, "Take a walk around Palmwoods". Here are some memories of just a few.

ISABEL BAUMAN REMEMBERS...

Isabel Bauman remembers as a child in the 1930s living in Hill Street and walking down to Main Street to go to the shops:

There was a little shop just down the bottom of our hill, it's where the jeweller was... It was a little bit of everything shop. Miss Doherty owned it. If you wanted to buy anything for a present or something, that's where you went... She used to sell little vases, and anything for gifts... There was a newsagent, my sister and I used to go down and get our comics on a Saturday night, with my father walking a few paces behind us to see that we were OK... There was the baker's shop, and the café at the bottom... Pages had it first, I don't remember Pages. Reeds had it I think... Reeds are the one I remember most of all ... The dentist, which I hated, I couldn't walk past it because I could hear that dreaded drill going... And then the butcher shop...

Picture: The shops in Main Street opposite the Memorial Hall
Source: Helen Wilkinson

THE BUTCHER'S

Near the top end of this stretch of shops was once the Hobson family's butchery.

This was the butcher shop... I remember the old chopping block, which was just the stump of a tree, the rails, the metal rails with the hooks on, the cold room, I remember that. I knew the people that ran it fairly well, because they'd been there for so long... (Wendy McMullin)

The butcher shop, Grandfather had that. He had his two sons working there.... Dad was Harry Hobson. Cecil was Cecil Hobson... They're brothers... They were the butchers. (Stephanie and Noelene Sawrey)

All our babies got weighed on those scales... If you wanted to know how heavy your babies were you put them on the butcher shop scales. (Stephanie and Noelene Sawrey)

We used to walk there from pre-school, for an excursion to watch them making sausages in the butcher's shop. (Wendy Southam)

CAFÉS

At the other end of this stretch of shops, where the Eumundi Medicine Man is currently located, was for many years a café. The original was Pages Café, and then over the years there were incarnations such as Bertram's Café, Ballard's Café, Reed's Café, the Laguna Café and others.



Pages Café

Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

THE GROCERY STORE

The site of Homegrown Café is one of the oldest business buildings in town. From very early 1900s through to the 1980s this was a grocers' shop.

[The grocery store was] Moore's... It was a little grocery shop just along that line of shops, just in the middle, just a little one... And Dad was the grocery man... It was an old fashioned grocery shop. I can still remember they had the old fashioned big cheeses, and that when you bought cheese ... a big slice was cut off... Nothing was packaged... I can still remember Dad to this day... everything wasn't sticky taped up, the parcels were wrapped with string... they used to roll it round somehow and it then it would break the string, he used to always do that.... He'd just go flick, and away it would break. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

[It] wasn't a supermarket where [you] self-serve... You fronted up to a counter with your list, your order, and there was somebody behind the counter that disappeared into the different corners of the shop to get the things that you had on your list... It was just across from the hall, but I don't remember the name of the people who owned it when I was a child. Ken Moore owned it

*later. Ken Moore was there, he would have been there at the time when our children were born, [the] 60's and I don't know how far before and afterwards. My uncle, Uncle Herb, worked on deliveries for that original grocery store.
(Lorraine Clarke)*

FURTHER DOWN MAIN STREET

The other original shopping hub in Palmwoods was nestled close to the railway station down towards the Palmwoods Hotel. This hub contained some of the town's original businesses.

Again, Sunshine Coast Genealogy's "Take a walk around Palmwoods" provides a thorough history. Here are locals' memories of just a few of these buildings.

DOT YOUNG REMEMBERS...

Dorothy Young Fruscalzo first came to Palmwoods in 1957 and, with her first husband, Cecil Young, built a home in Main Street. Dot remembers some of the businesses in Main Street at that time.

... the house was down in Main Street, along where the railway line is, and there was the ES&A Bank. Next to that was the butcher shop, which was owned by McKillops, and then there was the parking area and the bank, and the hotel. Along from there, there was a corner... up the road was the church and then down from there was the big store called Collins' Store, and opposite was the baker shop.

COLLIN'S GROCERY STORE, NOW THE IGA

The IGA building is one of the town's original buildings. It has always been a grocery store and is most commonly remembered as Collins' store.

This building has always been a grocery shop. It was built... in about 1910 ... When I remember it, 50 years ago, it was run by two brothers... of Collins & Co. They had the grocery shop on the right hand side, no wall between... On the left hand side was the drapery shop, so you could buy material, shoes, clothes, men's and ladies, children's clothes, anything that you wanted, haberdashery, wool, anything like that. (Wendy McMullin)

...this was our local drapery. The Collins family were very much involved. There's a memorial to Peter Collins down in Kolora Park... we could buy pretty much anything from their store... That's down where the IGA is now. It hasn't changed much either, looking at it from the outside... (Marjorie Murray)



Collin's Store
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

THE BAKER'S

For at least 70 years, the old shop opposite the IGA was a baker's shop. This building again was one of the original shops in town. The son of one of the bakers remembers:

I am currently getting close to seventy... I've been in this area for probably sixty years... When we first moved here my father, Marty Moore, [was] well known in the area at that time and even now as the baker. We had two bakeries in this town at one time. One was opposite the IGA and the other one was next to the police station up on the hill, on it might be Hill St up there. And at that time the bakeries used to supply Buderim, Montville, Nambour, Eudlo, and Mooloolah. Monday, Wednesday, Friday. So it was a busy period for us. [That] would be in the fifties I would think, yes. We ended up selling out those bakeries. I basically stayed here and I've lived here ever since. (John Moore)

REMEMBERING A PALMWOODS BLACKSMITH

Blacksmithing was an important trade in the early days of Palmwoods and through to at least the 1950s. Horses had to be shod, wagons required wheels, and Dutch hoes needed blades for chipping pineapples. Palmwoods resident and music teacher, Isabel Bauman, remembers her father, Harry Meder, the town blacksmith and an "icon of the town" according to 'Stories of Palmwoods'.

My greatest memory was going down to the blacksmiths shop... Dad used to shoe horses and my greatest thing was to go down and annoy him and say I wanted to walk through the shop, so he'd have to come out and stand with his back to the back of the horse... so I could walk past... Well I was frightened to walk past the horses because they were so big. I was only little then.

... I used to think I was helping him. I got to the stage I knew a lot of the tools by name, and I could pass them to him when he was working. I used to love to watch him make things on the anvil.

When he went out one day I thought I'd make a fire in his forge. And I was watching what he did so I pulled the handle a bit far and I blew the whole fire out, so I was not the most popular person there... I spent a lot of my time there.

Harry Meder's blacksmith shop was in Margaret Street. The building is no longer there, but a big old mango tree remains on the site.



Harry Meder's black
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

THE DELIVERERS AND CARRIERS

The carriers and delivery people once had the important job of transporting goods and produce throughout the area during the times when roads were bad and/or people did not have their own transport. Some carriers picked up fresh produce from local farms and delivered it to the train station for transport to Brisbane. Others were deliverers of everyday items like milk and meat to households around the town.

One of the early carriers to Palmwoods over the aptly named Razorback Road from Montville, was Mr. Woof, a one-handed man. Driving his four-horse team down the precipitous range, he would, with nonchalant showmanship, roll the reigns around the brake, put his foot on it, bring forth the 'makings' and roll a cigarette. The consternation of his 'first time' passengers can be imagined. ('Stories of Palmwoods')

A truck carrier used to pick up things and take them to the market, like pineapples ... Trevor Carter used to pick them up at Montville, bring them to Palmwoods and put them on the train... Also Don Verrall used to take the cream into Nambour... and they'd take it to Eumundi... Yes, [it was] definitely a very important [job]. (Jack and Rita Herrick)

I'll tell you the ones that were good were the carriers... Yes, if we were out of salt and butter, two things that you really need, he wouldn't even write them down. You'd tell him what you wanted and he always brought it on the next trip (Rita Herrick)

Dad was the grocery man. He worked in the shop and he... hand delivered all the groceries round the town... It was great, on his runs, you'd go in and go with him and meet all the people, and it was just a great social thing. They all knew Bob... Unless you lived in the town, groceries were always delivered, hand delivered then, to the outer families. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

Cecil did two runs [from the butcher's] ... I used to have to have the book ready for him and a sheet of paper with all the names and their order... Sometimes they took a bit of meat or bone for the dogs, so they wouldn't get bitten. (Stephanie Sawrey)

QUIRKY BUSINSSES IN TOWN

Local artist Kari remembers some of the 'sweet, interesting' and 'quirky' businesses that have come and gone in more recent times, over the last 20 years.

When the lady who sold the handmade chocolates closed I wept. She sold all sorts of things... Each chocolate was decorated differently. Wept tears when that closed. As I have wept tears when other things closed down. The music shop, when that closed that was really sad... That's well over ten years ago, maybe fifteen years ago ... [It] was ... in what is now the supermarket ... She had guitars in there and I could go and buy my clarinet reeds and guitar strings and doodads and knickknacks, she had interesting drums and lots of records and recordings. It was great... [U]pstairs what is now a pizza shop, that was the little bookshop and the newspaper and the bank. It was all in one shop. The upholsterer, he took old furniture and redid it. He was in one of those little heritage shops up when you had to climb the stairs to get inside... It might have even been the Home Grown shop or the one next to it. And there was the seamstress down the edge where the Café Orient is now. Prior to that it was like a little craft shop, and the seamstress got it and painted the floor white and the walls white. She had all her home made one-off clothes on racks and you could go in and order clothes to be made. She had fabrics and haberdashery, I loved her. I could go and buy a zip or a button or a reel of cotton. I loved that... (Kari)

STORIES OF THE MEMORIAL HALL – THE ‘HUB OF PALMWOODS’



Palmwoods Hall c.1926
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

The Palmwoods Memorial Hall sits in the centre of town and was for many years the heart and centre of social activity for the community.

... I think the hall was the hub of Palmwoods. It made the place. (Les Herse)

It's a way of life that today's people would just never even dream could have happened, but it was such a social hub ... the hall was such a community place that everything was done in that hall ... the hall was everything. (May Young)

It was a big part of our lives, the Palmwoods Hall. We saw that go from a little church-like place to the hall it is today. We worked hard to get the money to extend, that's why it's such a nice hall now. (Les Herse)

The school concerts were there, any concerts were held at the hall. (Lorraine Bertram)

... the Memorial Hall. That's where most meetings have been over the years actually. I was involved in the Youth Club, what they call the Police Citizens Youth Club... And in the hall we actually had a boxing tournament which involved boxers from New Zealand, that was one of the highlights of the Police Citizens Youth Club. (Lorna Hardingham)

THE SATURDAY NIGHT DANCES

The Palmwoods dances on a Saturday night were major social events that brought almost everyone in town together, young and old. They were also important fundraisers for the town's community groups. Many of Palmwoods' community facilities were funded through the hard work of the community at the Saturday night dances.

FUNDRAISING FOR THE COMMUNITY

... the Ladies Committee decided, during wartime, because we had soldiers stationed just out of town, to start dances for them to come to. And that was the beginning then of a huge avenue of income for a lot of the local community groups. They ended up being rostered on to run dances and made thousands and thousands of dollars because dancing was such a big activity then. (Marjorie Murray)

... we used to raise money for everything and the biggest fundraiser for all sporting bodies within Palmwoods used to be the Palmwoods dance. It used to be held every single Saturday night and it would be every single body, sporting body, or Progress Association, they were all rostered a dance or two dances a year, depending on their demand, and from there you could raise anywhere up to a \$1,000 for the night, which was a lot of money in those days to be able to build [maybe] tennis courts or [go towards] the hall itself at Palmwoods [which] cost lots of money to maintain. (May Young)

How we raised money was that we would supply the supper... you'd have maybe 15 volunteers out in the kitchen, cutting sandwiches, and people had cooked and made scones. Everything was homemade, nothing was bought. And then people would pay their entry fee to come in and dance ... [and] depending on the crowd, you had two sittings of supper, or if it was a really big crowd like New Years Eve it would be three sittings of supper. And we would walk around as children, as little girls and my brothers and that, we used to carry the trays of sandwiches down these little aisles of all these people sitting and then the adults usually came behind pouring the cups of tea or the cups of coffee. (May Young)

THE DANCES WERE "THE" SOCIAL EVENT IN TOWN

Thousands of feet must have danced on that hall floor. (Wendy McMullin)

It was my only social life as a child... they were magnificent. I mean it, you had to be there to see it. (May Young)

Mum used to whip a few skirts up for us out of curtain material, and it would be flouncy, you know, like the rock and roll, flouncy, and we thought they were just amazing. (Lorraine Bertram)

... when we were just kids, we went with mum and dad when they were going [to the dance] and we'd be in the back of the truck, and dad would park the truck along beside the dance hall so we could see in from the back of the truck in through the window, and we'd have our bed made up in the back of the truck there. And when they had a ball, they used to decorate the hall and all the balloons would come from the ceiling and dad would pass a balloon out to us through the window. (Lorraine Clarke)

They were old time dancing, waltzing.... Gypsy Tap, Pride of Erin, barn dance... Everyone went... All the kids and later on, when we were married, we'd take

our own kids and they'd be sleeping on the floor. (Stephanie and Noelene Sawrey)

... mum was a pianist for the band that played with many of the dances, so we got to come up a fair bit and help out and walk around with a big tea pot ... (Wendy Southam)

REMEMBERING THE COPPER BOILER

[At] the original dances, all of their supper was made in a little tiny room under the hall. There was a big copper boiler there that people would get going, to make their big pots of tea and that sort of thing. (Marjorie Murray)

There used to be a Mrs Krebs, she was a real old Palmwoods lady, and she used to bring the linen [cloth] she used to put the tea in and then tie it up and drop it in the big boiler of water. Anyway, this day Mrs Krebs didn't turn up... And we couldn't find the piece of cloth ... And one bloke said, "That's alright, don't worry about it. I took my socks off and put the tea in the socks." He had socks that were woollen socks. You can imagine the size of the socks when they came out of the water! We didn't tell anybody what they had been drinking. (Vera Herse)

SATURDAY NIGHT MOVIES

As well as the dances, Saturday night movies at the hall are remembered with fondness.

Later in life when we grew up, it was the thing we had to go to: the pictures on Saturday night... The pictures were shown in the hall and then at interval you'd all rush across the street to the café to get something. That was a big deal for us, because we weren't near shops... You'd go buy a drink or an ice cream or some such thing, yes. It would be exciting ... (Lorraine Clarke)

There was a cinema on a Saturday night... most kids used to go, and especially in the winter, you'd have your pyjamas on under your clothes, and it was canvas seats in the theatre. (Lorraine Bertram)

Movies used to be in the hall... we all used to go... [I remember the] old lovers' seats... Two people could sit in this canvas seat. They were scooped... We'd all be sitting down the front and sitting with a boy [then] you'd hear dad's cough [and think] 'Well dad's here' ... You'd just slide down a bit. (Stephanie and Noelene Sawrey)

LES HERSE AND THE HALL

The hall used to be referred to as 'Les Herse's Hall' because of the amount of time and energy the now 99-year old Les has contributed to developing and maintaining the hall since the 1950s.

I joined the hall committee in 1954. I used to do a lot of cleaning in the hall. The dances we used to have brought in the funds that made the hall what it is today. It's a big hall now to what it was. I used to enjoy working for the hall. I'd go after the dances, at daybreak, and clean up. Anyhow, they put an addition at the front of the hall, a brick addition, and somebody asked the carpenter what they were doing. They said, "Putting up Les Herse's bedroom." Because I used to always be over there. (Les Herse)

THE MEMORIAL HALL INTO THE FUTURE

The Memorial Hall Association today sees the hall as remaining a central focus of Palmwoods into the future, playing an active role in building and maintaining community.

It's still very much an important part of town as it was [in the past]. Of course, not the same events are run here but we're quite passionate about preserving the hall. It's such a strong part of the local heritage and we're passionate as far as keeping it important to and for the community. And we're trying to set in motion lots of the activities here that bring the community back into the hall. (Marjorie Murray)

The hall [just hosted our big Christmas party] and we involved all the local businesses as well, so it brought everybody in together, working together and just bringing focus from the community back into this facility, to say it's here and we can use it for so many different things, and refocusing our community on community... so many families now have lost that community connection and that's something we're very passionate about as a family ... and as a committee to reintroducing that. (Wendy Southam)

DESCRIBING PALMWOODS TODAY

Palmwoods residents today describe the town as being vibrant and alive, with a country village atmosphere and valued heritage buildings.

A COUNTRY VILLAGE

People enjoy Palmwoods' country atmosphere, village feel and relaxed pace.

It's still got that country atmosphere, that old atmosphere, somehow that's been retained even though the population growth has happened over the years. Somehow, we're still country. (Leo Van de Vorst)

The good things, I believe, will always stay the same in these little country towns and that's the good old fashioned country values. I often see people riding their horse into town. It's really funny. They get a latte from Rick's and then they ride out on a horseback with a latte. Now that is the old and the new isn't it? (Mike Burns)

Country town. It's the only way you could describe it, very slow, very easy to live in, very quiet. (Bill O'Brien)

... I think it's still retained what used to be a small town kind of feel ... It's a peaceful place to live. (Graham, Vox pop respondent)

A HERITAGE TOWN

It is easy to get a sense that what makes Palmwoods 'Palmwoods' for many in the community has a lot to do with the heritage buildings in the town centre. Preserving the town's heritage is spoken of by many as being important for the future of Palmwoods.

It's one of the few towns on the Sunshine Coast now that actually has so many of its original buildings, and I feel that I couldn't imagine what it would be like if they're all taken away. (Wendy McMullin)

I really think these buildings... helped to make the town. They're not only historical... they're static identities ... (Lorna Spackman)

I think people really appreciate the atmosphere as it stands with the historic buildings and the smaller community, not [like] the big developed towns like Maroochydore and Mooloolaba are. I think that's what's special about Palmwoods. I love all these shops around here. When they have refurbished, them they've kept them in a way that reflects the historic aspect of Palmwoods. (Mayra, Vox pop interview respondent)

... they're a beautiful, rare, string of shops. There's not many places left in Queensland like that and we've got that on good authority. So, we want to keep that and people love going there because it is old and quaint. (Lynden Thomas)

A TOWN REJUVENATED – VIBRANT AND ALIVE

There is a sense in Palmwoods that the town centre is experiencing a kind of renaissance, driven by the vision of a number of local businesses.



Vibrant Palmwoods
Picture courtesy of Sunshine Coast Council

Now, I would say [the town] has life again... [Until] 12 months ago, you could drive through Palmwoods any night of the week and the only place you would see with anything going on was the hotel on Friday and Saturday nights. Pretty well after 8 o'clock you could, as the saying goes, put a bullet down the Main Street... Now... between The Lane and Rick's Garage, through til 10 o'clock at night, there's an atmosphere, there's places to go. There's lots of dining areas in Palmwoods through night time as well as during the day time... If someone had told me three years ago that you could have three coffee shops in Palmwoods operating and making a good living, I would have said no. But now they're there, they're all running beautifully, they all have good businesses and are thriving... Palmwoods has managed to boom in the last 18 months [and] the town itself it back on its feet again ... I think it's attributed to Rick and Lisa from the Garage and Renee and [others] down at The Lane, with their forethought, and good on them... It takes one person's dream to make something out of it and they've done it and done it very well. (May Young)

There were a lot of empty shops for a while but recently in the last year or so there's been a huge renaissance of local people opening more quirky businesses. We've got beautiful food, lots of lovely cafes, the Home Grown / Pantry kind of partnership with the Laneway opening up. It's really bought huge life into Palmwoods. And Rick's making another drop-in place with a garden and a tree... So there's some great things reinvigorating the Palmwoods township... And these new energetic businesses are [making people think] "I don't have to drive out of Palmwoods to go out to eat or to buy some fruit or whatever." There is a lot more interest locally... [There's] people saying this is a groovy place to be, it's a lovely place to hang out. (Kari)

Of a Friday night the place hums, it bumps along. There is activity all up and down the street, which is great. We have a number of different venues that give life to the village. (Brian, vox pop interview respondent)

It's becoming much more vibrant now ... you've got Rick's here, it's got a lovely atmosphere with the gardens here. We've got The Lane going down there and lots of people come into The Lane, it's a really environmentally friendly setup. Yeah, I think that's really good to see... it is much more vibrant now. (June Tornabne)

THE LANE COMMUNITY / HOMEGROWN CAFÉ / RENAE'S PANTRY

Once a delivery lane for the old Moore's grocery store and Hobson's butcher, The Lane is generating a new energy in Main Street. Saturday morning rummage markets, locally made fashion, handmade markets, organic and locally grown produce, Friday night's carnival atmosphere. The Lane and its associated businesses (particularly Homegrown Café and Renae's Pantry) have become a social hub that draws together people from in and around Palmwoods who value café culture, sustainability, craft, locally grown produce, organics and a family atmosphere.



Homegrown Café and the Lane
Picture: Helen Wilkinson

I really love what they're doing in Palmwoods now with The Lane here. Just getting the community involved in lots of different ways like providing fruit and vegetables to sell, having the markets here, doing hand craft markets and just showcasing what Palmwoods can do. Very community minded. Family orientated and community minded I think. (Mayra, Vox pop interview respondent)

What's happening here in Palmwoods and this little laneway is that a few small businesses are trying to source their materials from the local area. And I think ... that's a terribly important thing for a small community. It's also a social hub, which is also another very important thing. (Vox pop interview respondent)

... Friday night's more the carnival atmosphere... That's most likely how I would describe Friday nights at The Lane. Everyone brings their children, they bring their families. I've got friends that come from well out of town that I didn't even know would have been down here, but they come from as far up as Noosa and they come down to The Lane because they just think it's lovely. So that's got to be a benefit for everybody that we're attracting new people to the town. (May Young)

Palmwoods is a great little community these days because of The Lane and the Home Grown coffee shop. It's brought lots of people together. I just drove through in the past, now I call in for a coffee or lunch, come to the market. It's changed the dynamics of the village. I just drove through Palmwoods before the coffee shop and The Lane was opened. This creates a reason to stop and become part of this community. (Sue Neil, Montville)

RICK'S GARAGE/DINER

The other business spoken of as helping to revitalise the town centre is Rick's. Once a working garage, Rick's Garage/Diner has become a social hub for the community as well as attracting car and motorbike enthusiasts, and other tourists, from far and wide.



Rick's Garage/Diner
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

Rick's Garage... We bought this probably twelve years ago as a working garage and over the years it's been through various things as the community's changed... We changed into a video shop, general store and our little fish and chip shop, and in time it's now evolved into what it is today and that's our full-on diner, and we still have our workshop out the back where we restore old cars and do just general servicing.... We looked very carefully at how it should evolve and maintain that village atmosphere. We wanted to maintain the history so we worked on the garage theory ... we turned it into this rock and roll diner as a result of that`...[We] get a lot of old bikers and car clubs and just old guys that are passionate about maintaining history ... We've built the garden out the side ... we felt that a garden would be a nice place for the locals to

come to and that's turned out to be right. We feel that Rick's Garage is not our garage personally or our diner personally, it's the community's. (Rick Jameison)

It's absolutely incredible, having known of Rick's Garage where we used to go and get petrol for the vehicles, today it is quite an icon, and not only just in our region, but also in the broader Australia. (Cr Jenny McKay)

Rick's a mastermind... [He's] got this wild vibe going on that's all old cars ... And actually there's a lot of outsiders that come in there, a lot of... motorbike enthusiasts or vintage cars... I love that it's happening and it's full every Saturday and Sunday. (Clare Archer-Lean and Ant McKenna)

Every Thursday night we have what we call Moonshine Cruise. It's just a thing where everybody brings their cars and meet, talk... and you get a lot of other people that just come in with their family and the kids. [They] come and look at the cars. And you have the band playing in there. It's a good night, a really good night... You get a lot of regulars but you get a lot of other different cars. ... They come from Brisbane, up as far as Hervey Bay. I have had some come down from Rockhampton, all over the Coast, Caboolture... I think it brings a lot of people into Palmwoods. (Vox pop interview respondent)

A GREAT LOCATION

Palmwoods' location close to Brisbane and other areas of the Sunshine Coast is valued by many in the community.

I like it because you come home and it's quiet but, if you want to go out, it's not very far to the coast [or] to Brisbane. If you want to go bush it's not very far either way. It's like a good central point and it's nice and clean and tidy. (Thelma Lingard)

I love the proximity to the Coast, only an hour from Brisbane, half an hour from Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, and Caloundra.... I particularly like Palmwoods for where it is because it's so close to everything but far enough away from everything as well. It's a lot quieter than most places around the Coast here. I just like Palmwoods for where Palmwoods is. (Phil Jenns)

I sell a lot of property here obviously and people coming from different parts of Australia, that's their comment: it's got a great feel, it feels like a country town, yet we're literally 15/20 minutes [from] Cotton Tree or the Sunshine Plaza. So it really is location. And five minutes and you're up to Montville. I guess that's one of the attractions is the proximity to everything but still having those good old country values here in a small community. (Mike Burns)

THE PALMWOODS COMMUNITY

According to Census figures, the population of Palmwoods has increased more than tenfold in the last forty years and has more than doubled in the last fifteen. So who are the people of Palmwoods today? Who make up this growing and vibrant community?

A DIVERSE MIX

From the stories people tell, Palmwoods today is a diverse mix of young families, retirees, professionals, people who have come from interstate for a lifestyle change, people interested in sustainability and living an 'alternative' lifestyle, and older people with connections to the old families and farming days of Palmwoods.

I think it's vibrant.... Vibrant, growing, family.... And a great mix.... There's a very wide range of types of residents here from the elderly right down to young families, old families, new families.... (Wendy Southam and Marjorie Murray)

It's a large diverse range. I think you have your old people who have been here for a long time who care for Palmwoods deeply and the way it was. And I think you have the new people that come in that would like to see it grow and survive. (Andrew Diggins)

Palmwoods has actually got quite cosmopolitan these days. There are people from all over the world that live and base themselves here. It's got a really cosmopolitan feel about it. (Brian, vox pop respondent)

I know we're all from everywhere, from Melbourne, Sydney, and we all end up making Palmwoods our home. (Vox pop interview respondent)

With the newer residential developments, a lot of professional business people live here now. They live here but work elsewhere. So I think that's quite a big makeup of the town now. (Richard, Vox pop interview respondent)

Currently [in] Palmwoods, the major increase in population is basically people living here as a dormitory suburb. They all work outside and live here because it's a nice area to live in... (Graham Goode)

[Palmwoods is] slightly alternative these days... [It is] a focus for some alternative businesses it seems to me, like ... the Eumundi Herb Man... The Lane... Homegrown, we've got organic markets around, there seems to be that kind of focus... I would [not] say the majority of people who live in Palmwoods are necessarily people who identify themselves as hippie or alternative lifestyles but they're people who really do appreciate that. (Clare Archer-Lean)

Predominantly a produce town, but now it's a blend of almost urban professionals and people who want to live off the land, perhaps on a smaller scale, not necessarily profit making... those folks that want to grow their own veggies and chooks and have kids run a bit free and enjoy that country lifestyle. (Mike Burns)

I think we have a diverse bunch of people here. My sense is there are lots of families because there are lots of schools in the area. And we have a lot of the more of the retired end as well and I think that's great to have a mixture...

(Theresa Ashford)

OLD PALMWOODS CONNECTIONS

Many people interviewed for this project were related in some way to a core of old Palmwoods families. These include the area's early pioneering and settler families – Kuskopfs, Fewtrells, Bendixens, Remingtons, Shurvells, Tutins, Lingards and Dunnings – as well as other families who came in the early 1900s and set up businesses and farming enterprises. The web of old family connections through the community is strong.

We're talking about being here a long, long time... It must be in excess of a hundred years that a Lingard has been going to the Palmwoods School. (Neville Lingard)

Grandfather Hobson came to Palmwoods in 1916. That's where they stayed until we sold the butcher shop... [Our] great-grandparents on the other side, the Fewtrells... came in the 1800s... (Stephanie and Noelene Sawrey)

Tommy Briggs ... he opened this [sports club] 60 years ago ... he's got nephews, the Bertrams are here today, Ronnie Hall, so you got families that have been here a long time, the Spackmans, the McMullens, too many to name everywhere. (Wes Johnson)

[My husband Ken's] grandfather and family arrived in 1906... [T]hey were early, early members of the community. (Lorna Spackman)

Other long time residents came to Palmwoods in the '40s and 50s from other parts of the country to take up farming.

Nineteen-forty-nine, it was. We came to Palmwoods... We went up to Montville, dairying up there, and then, from then on, we went to Dulong, dairying, and Blackall Range-Woombye on bananas and pineapples and small crops. (Jack Herrick)

We came here in 1950 from Beenleigh area and my husband bought a pineapple and citrus farm. (Vera Herse)

A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Many in Palmwoods speak of experiencing a strong sense of community connection that they feel is unique to the town.

I personally love that I still know a lot of people here. So, to me, I can still walk down the street and meet at least one person that I know and have a conversation and a connection. I love that my children are now developing that as well, with local families and families of families that I grew up with. (Wendy Southam)

I love getting home from work, jumping out of the car and a mate from across the road comes over and says, 'How are you going... do you want a beer?' And ... when our kids were smaller here, we would wake up on a Saturday morning and the kids would already be outside... on the street playing, and that's never happened anywhere else for us. There's not too many places it could happen. (Ant McKenna)

We've lived in Palmwoods for probably eighteen years... Generally people are so friendly because wherever you go you can say hello and you get a smile back ... so it's good. Palmwoods is a small community really, big enough to be worthwhile but small enough to get to know people. That's why it's such a pleasant place because you get to know people as against being in a big capital city and you're just a stranger amongst everybody else. (Col Gilmore)

So many of the business owners are still living in Palmwoods, there's a lot of other towns they don't... And we consider them to be friends too, not just business people, but they're friends. (Marjorie Murray and Wendy Southam)

Sometimes me and my brother will bike down to the Palmwoods basketball court nearby the school and we meet up with people we don't know and they ask for one-on-one and later we're friends. I just think everybody pretty much we meet in Palmwoods is just really, really nice. It's a really nice community. (Gavin Ashford)

...THOUGH NOT EVERYONE FEELS CONNECTED

While many in Palmwoods relish a sense of community connection, some older, long time residents have a different experience of the community.

Palmwoods used to be one of those places where everybody knew everybody... but now it's grown so much that I wouldn't know anybody. And that's not like the old Palmwoods that we knew. (Interview respondent)

What I have loved over the years is [that] we were a laid back little country town, everybody knew everybody in those days. You could never ever go and buy a loaf of bread and get home under one hour because you used to meet so many people downtown. Now, 74 years later, I can get a loaf of bread in one minute because I'm the stranger in the town. (Interview respondent)

There is a different type of people [moving here now]... Being a small community virtually everyone knew everyone in the early days. Lots of relations and cousins and inter marriages ...we knew everyone within a twenty kilometre radius... But I find now, if I go out to the shops, I get out of the car and someone is there and [I say] "Oh how are you?" they look at you [as if to say] "Oh I don't want to know you" The town is not our place. I've felt like that for the last ten, fifteen years... Palmwoods isn't ours although we've lived here all our [married] lives. This house is my home and the street's mine but the township is somebody else's. (Interview respondent)

I think that we do get people who don't wish to be part of the community. In fact I'm wondering why they sometimes choose Palmwoods. I think perhaps because it's close to the railway line or something and they go away to work, or whatever... I was fortunate, I worked at home... We worked and we were still part of the community. (Interview respondent)

VALUING THE TOWN'S OLDER PEOPLE

Palmwoods older residents are spoken of by some as important carriers of Palmwoods' stories and are respected for making Palmwoods what it is today.

... there are a lot of very old retired people here. I love them, they've got so many stories to tell, so much history ... You find all the older residents at the bowls club. And they're all really happy to open up and talk, teach you how to bowl. I just love that... I would say the elderly are still the people of Palmwoods. A lot of them would probably be in a retirement village now but they're our backbone. I really think they're the backbone of Palmwoods. (Vox pop interview respondent)

I do see a lot of people that are retiring and people that have been here for a long time and talk about the good old days... There is a lot of history here in the town, both in logging and farmland ... [A] lot of colourful characters and there's still some[of those] people here. The guy whose father was a butcher here, another guy, his grandfather was a stationmaster here. I do meet a lot of people that are retiring but they really are kicking and screaming when they've got to leave Palmwoods and go elsewhere. And, of course, they talk about the wonderful times here, raising their families, and big families, and [living] through tough times and times of depression and the war years. But they very much call Palmwoods home and they're very proud of the heritage here. And it does have that pride, you know, that small town and I think that will always, hopefully, remain. (Mike Burns)

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

There are many stories illustrating the town's strong community spirit back in the days when Palmwoods was a smaller farming town. Some of these have been recounted earlier: for example, fundraising at the Saturday night dances or people helping one another on the farms. Here are two more stories of community spirit from the past:

I can remember one time in that there was a fire down at Eudlo. Half the cricket team and a lot of the people out of Palmwoods Pub, down we went. I don't know what we were going to do when we got there but we went down there. We had a few wet bags and put out a few flames. I can remember the guys in their white cricket gear coming back to the hotel. They hadn't done a lot but they were black and sooted from top to bottom. They were there. They were ready to help out. (Neville Lingard)

The kindergarten, we started [it] in the early 1970s, and no money of course, not a bean. So we had to start from scratch with that. We were lucky enough to have the use of the Church of England Hall, which we used for a couple of years,

and then when they wanted it back again we said, "Right, this is the opportunity to build a new building". So the Council ... allowed us to build on a piece of Crown land, where the kindergarten still stands. There it is, it's still going. And [it's] a very social organisation I might say. We're indebted really to the local community, because they supported us in everything we did. (Wendy McMullin)

For many in Palmwoods today, that community spirit is still alive and well.

Naturally I no longer know everybody in the town... but it still has a great community spirit. The school is absolutely beautiful, I've watched it grow over the last 30 years, working there, and it never ceases to amaze me every time we have something being held at the school, the amount of community spirit, the amount of parents and grandparents participation. We have new teachers come into the school and they just are so amazed because they never have experienced that in larger areas and larger places. Even though Palmwoods has tenfold grown in size it still manages to have the ability to draw people together and work as one. (May Young)

I think it's evolving back around to focusing more on [being together and working together as a community] because people want more for their families than just existing as a 'sleeper village' where you stay the night and then leave to go to your work and leave to socialise... And that was evidenced with the huge turnout we had at our inaugural Christmas street party [where] we had a huge turnout and people were so grateful and happy and enjoying the occasion so much that it really refocuses how important it is for us to keep that community spirit alive. (Marjorie Murray and Wendy Southam)

One thing to me that is extremely important for Palmwoods and Palmwoods community is our community spirit. We had a great spirit when I arrived in the late 70s and today that spirit is still well and truly alive... It's the overriding community spirit that will keep Palmwoods a very special place. (Cr Jenny McKay)



The community turns out for the 2014 Christmas Carols event
Picture courtesy of Sunshine Coast Council

LOTS OF CREATIVITY HERE

Local artist Kari tells of a rich artistic community in and around Palmwoods.

I think a lot of old people in Palmwoods are sewers or knitters or crochet, those old crafts, and they're having a renaissance again now... there's a lot of old families here who still practice the quilting, the dying, that sort of thing. And there is actually a Palmwoods arts and crafts group that has a little venue at the bowls club... They share a lot of traditional skills and then they get teachers in to teach them the extension of those skills... That group has been very proactive in seeking out extensions of all those traditional skills and finding an artistic medium for it... (Kari)

...There are a lot of other artists around town... There are jewellery makers and a lot of wood workers, crafting, above and beyond the usual bits of home furniture, creating art work out of pieces of timber. Clay, there are a couple of clay artists around. Painters, there's a lot of painters, a lot of people painting. Quite a few people down at the retirement village are artists... [And] musicians too, there are a huge number of very talented musicians around... Then there is a drumming group who use to meet down at the duck pond. I'd hear them, I'd hear this djembe drumming. There was an African drumming class in the hall for a while... Tango, there were tango classes in the Palmwoods Hall run by one of Australia's best tango teachers... [It's] very creative. (Kari)



Musicians at the 2014 Christmas street party
Picture courtesy of Sunshine Coast Council

A SAFE PLACE FOR CHILDREN

A sense of safety - of being comfortable letting children walk around on their own - was commented on by some as being a feature of life in Palmwoods, both in the past and now.

I remember just being able to ride my bike to the corner store to get a little bag of lollies and then ride home. I always felt safe, never felt threatened because everyone was just so friendly, so lovely. I think that makes it different to being in other towns. I never worried at a young age riding all the way here. (Jess, Vox pop respondent)

I'm happy with the safety... My daughter gets off the bus just before the IGA ... and walks... up the hill to the church to do dance ... I would never let her walk three blocks like that... in Brisbane. Or even at the Coast I don't think I would let her do that. It's nice. (Clare Archer-Lean)

Yes, it has been very positive that way ... people can live in Old Orchard, send their children to school, they can walk to school in safety, they can go to the shops in safety and it's just a nice place to live. (Geoff Littler)

CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE

One of the strongest themes spoken of by many in Palmwoods is a connection with the natural environment.

I've always loved living in the bush and the fresh air and the creeks and waterfalls that I've got running through my place. That's why they'll never get me out of there. My feet are buried 20 feet deep. (Leo Van de Vorst)

A BEAUTIFUL WELCOME HOME

Driving through the tree-lined entry roads coming home to Palmwoods is a special experience for many in the community.

I love coming through that corridor of trees there. Just before you come underneath the railway I think is a special place. (Theresa Ashford)

I think the trees on approaching Palmwoods are the things that attract people to the town. (Fred Tornabne)

When you drive in here it's the palms... that have been there for a long time, and the park there as you come in, Kolora Park, surrounded by palm trees ... it's like a little oasis here in the middle of the Sunshine Coast. (Mike Burns)

... every time I drive into Palmwoods, the drive from Woombye to Palmwoods down the hill, you go along the ridge of the valley, it's this amazing open vista on the right hand side leading up to Montville, it's such a beautiful valley. And then the actual drive into Palmwoods through the overhanging trees as well, it's really great. (Ant McKenna)

We've got some camphor laurels, they're probably about 80 years old and then some rubber trees next to them... they cover the entire two lanes of road. So, you're driving in the shade when you drive through there, it gives you a bower that you drive through and it cools you down, it's lovely. You know you're home. (Leo Van de Vorst)

THE OLD TREES IN TOWN

Some in Palmwoods have special connections with the old trees throughout the town area.

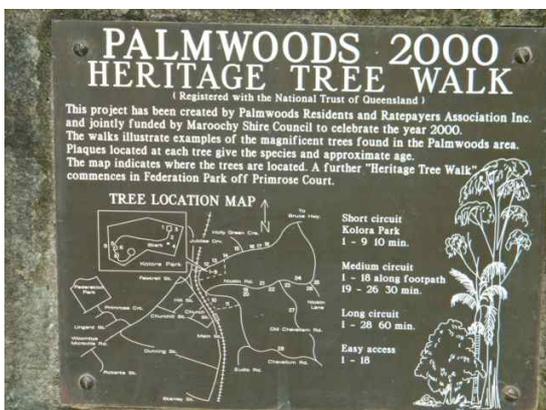
I think some of the old trees [make the area unique and beautiful]. Because it is a pioneering area we've got some old trees, like the jacaranda tree, which I have the privilege to look at every day. And I haven't seen a bigger Macadamia Nut than my tree ... and my mango's huge too. (Lynden Thomas)

There's still a lot of cedar trees around that change colour during the year. They're beautiful... There's not as many as they were, but they're still around if you look for them. (Leo Van de Vorst)

Residents and Ratepayers set up a Heritage Tree Walk and nominated different trees to be preserved ... [There's] a good few of them still around and they've got plaques on them showing that they're part of the Heritage Tree Walk... (June Tornabne)



One of Palmwoods' heritage trees, probably around 200 years old
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast



Palmwoods Heritage Tree Walk
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

Somebody has taken a lot of time and put names on different trees and it's a walkway. So you walk down and you come down for instance to a big cheese tree, and there are turpentine trees and it's got flooded gum, and it's like people went out of their way, they're proud of their area and [wanted] to make people aware what's in there. I would walk around in awe. (Vox pop interview respondent)

THE JACARANDA ON HILL STREET

Lynden Thomas tells a story of the old jacaranda tree in her street.



The Jacaranda on Hill Street
Picture: Helen Wilkinson

I love the jacaranda that's on the corner of Hill and Churchill Streets. There's a lot of jacarandas around here, but it's probably the biggest in the whole area. Down in the Queensland Art Gallery there's a beautiful painting by Godfrey Rivers and apparently he worked in the Botanical Gardens, and the ships would come to near there from South America and he would get all sorts of seeds, and he got the jacaranda seed from a South American boat [He's] painted this beautiful jacaranda, having a cup of tea with his wife under it, and apparently that is the first jacaranda in Queensland and all the jacarandas must come from that... [well] not all of them, but for a long time all of them would have come from that parent tree. And I'd just like to find out how old this one on the corner is... So, I've got the desire to paint this one next time it's flowering and to find out whether it is, I'm sure it is, connected to this one that's in the Queensland Art Gallery. I've got an intuition about it. (Lynden Thomas)

THE PICCABEENS

Palmwoods was named for the Piccabeen (or Bangalow) Palms that were once thick in the district before being felled by the early settlers. Now only a few Piccabeens remain.

This whole valley was dense with Piccabeen Palms. All along our waterways would have been Piccabeen heaven, all the way along it. There are very few left that were originally there. That little stand at the duck pond where there's that little path that goes around to the bowls club, that little stand of Piccabeens is original and local and belongs there and has always lived there... they're the only ones I think left from that original forest of them all through the

Palmwoods Valley... or the babies, descendants of the original valley of Piccabeen Palms. (Kari)



Palmwoods Piccabeens of the past
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

PICCABEEN PICNIC (NATURE MEETS ART)

Local resident Kari tells of a community effort to reconnect people with the important Piccabeen.

When I first moved here I found a little brochure that someone put out, "Plant more palms in your garden because we live in Palmwoods." And there was this plethora of golden cane and cocoa palms getting planted, and [I thought], "Hang on a minute, not just any old palm tree" ... So I instigated a little project some years ago... It was called Piccabeen Picnic and it was about a family picnic to celebrate the Piccabeen... [We] planted a new stand of Piccabeen Palms out at Federation Park... [T]he craft group ... had a Piccabeen craft project that happened down at the Duck Pond where the ladies of the group made all these pieces that responded to the Piccabeen theme. And then they ran a day for the school kids down at the pond where they had this little treasure hunt... where they'd hidden pieces in the forest there, artistic pieces, and the children had to go and find what was real and what was created. So find a real mushroom and then [find] a felted mushroom. And they found... a hanging weaving which was all trunks right next to the real tree trunks. These women did this extraordinary treasure hunt for little tiny tots... That was really significant, and then they had an exhibition in one of the empty shops... [For a] few weeks all those pieces that had been in the forest were then hung in a gallery setting and people could go back and visit those pieces and admire them for the art in them. It was an extraordinary project... (Kari)

TREE PLANTING

The Palmwoods community have actively cultivated the green aspect of Palmwoods' town centre and parks.

We did a lot of, or helped, with a lot of planting down in Federation Park... We've been involved with most of the street planting in Palmwoods ... The trees outside here, the trees over there, the trees along the railway line over the side, there was nothing there and we organised a tree planting, or a couple of tree plantings, there... (June Tornabne)

My husband and I organised some of the people we knew who love tree planting ... to plant trees along the railway fence line. Now if you go there it's this mini strip of forest and the trees are hugely tall now. ... They're all native. Some were donated by a nursery ... We also planted several Blue Quandongs that were donated by another Palmwoods man, Pat Keating who used to own the house behind the pub... Then after that, local nurseries started donating local species... So there is a several metre strip right along the fence line [with] a multitude of species... and at dusk now if you go down and hang there you will hear the cacophony of parrots who come in to roost on the strip of trees now. It's amazing. And it's been amazing watching them grow and people think it's the extension of the duck pond and don't realise people planted that. (Kari)

KOLORA PARK AND THE DUCK POND

Kolora Park is spoken of as an important community space in the heart of Palmwoods.



Kolora Park and the Duck Pond
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

The duck ponds are lovely in Palmwoods, great to take visitors there for a barbeque, great to take the kids there to feed the ducks. That's a really special place... (Sheri Anne Fitzpatrick)

... it's just so relaxing. People use the parks down there... We would go down to the park and there are ducks in the park, the kids are playing. That's how friendly it is, it's wonderful. (Vox pop interview respondent)

If I'm ever in need of a friend I just go to the duck pond and someone will turn up who will be significant in my life. (Kari)

Many may not know the duck pond's history...

One of the best things that happened was the lagoon, the Duck Pond some like to call it... it used to be a rubbish dump... On a Saturday afternoon, the Progress Association, a few of us... cleaned it all out. We had a few pounds in the bank. And we approached the Council to give us a bit of assistance, and they came in... they built that wall, [put in an] underground pipe outlet, and see what it is today... Building that lagoon made the surrounds [what it is]... so many people use the park, picnics and everything. It just goes to show [what] a few people [and] a bit of foresight can establish... (Les Herse)

Geoff [Littler] was ... our councillor when the block of land behind Kolora Park was put up for sale. Everybody thought it was part of the park anyway but our local agent over here ... notified us that it was actually private land and it was up for sale, which would probably mean that it would be cleared for a house. And so, we [Residents and Ratepayers] got a petition going to try to get Council to buy that land and Geoff organised that and we did buy it, so it's now part of the park and that bushland is now protected, hopefully. (June Tornabne)

The duck pond has a whole lot of historical significance that I've heard... [One] of the wars, the Second World War, they used to gather there and it was a watering stop. (Kari)

A lot of people come to Palmwoods and they say... how special it is because it has a really old history because of the railway. [It's] because of the lagoon, which people refer to as 'The Duck Pond', that's why Palmwoods was chosen to have the railway station. Because of the steam trains needing ready access to water. So that's the only reason the line came through here originally, because of the lagoon... (Lynden Thomas)

WILDLIFE

An important aspect of people's connection with the natural environment is a love of the area's wildlife.

... that's another reason why I like Palmwoods, because we get a number of different birds around this area, which makes it really, really pleasant. You can hear them during the night. They're talking to one another [in the] early morning and during the day... Yes, I like it here because it's so open and you see the nature and it's absolutely fantastic. (Thelma Lingard)

The birdlife we get here is extraordinary... We get all sorts of birds flying through here and sheltering. Sacred king fishers and cat birds, hundreds of bird species... the blue crane wanders through the front yard [and] eats the fish out of the pond. (Kari)

The wild life that is up at Palmwoods is incredible. I still have koalas come through, they came through the other night, and the koalas have been there all the time that I've been there. I've followed that family through, with the one white male [which] was a little baby with a white patch on its bum, now it's the dominant male. And bush turkeys... and the goannas, there's a good family of goannas up there. They've been there ever since I've been there. The snakes are still there, they've been there long enough to respect you and I respect them. I've lived with a red belly black snake that, when I first got up there, she was probably about 600mm long, now she's over 2 metres long and we still go the opposite way when we see each other. But it's great and they're all healthy, which means something's right in the area and that's what get's me back there. The birds know my favourite music and they all sing along to it. (Leo Van de Vorst)

FLOOD STORIES

The waterways of Palmwoods flood with a regularity that residents take in their stride. Almost everyone has a flood story...



Flooding under the rail bridge, 1981
Picture courtesy of Genealogy Sunshine Coast

Just where we lived, down on Old Bowling Green Road, there was a creek and a bridge that used to always flood... We were the only kids in town that could still get to school, I'm sure... Everyone else used to get flooded out... It was

normal. We used play out in the rain and build mud walls up the road. (Lorraine Bertram and Jill Fing)

We've paddled a canoe underneath those pine trees. (Lorna Spackman)

The sporting facilities, the football fields and cricket grounds that are down Jubilee Drive, were a major part of my childhood because Palmwoods is a flooding town and it becomes like a little island, and we used to, as kids, go up when the floods were onto the sports fields and rescue animals that came floating past. We once had a major egret hospital set up in our cubby house. (Wendy Southam)

We used to have heavy rains and floods... When we had to get beans and things to the markets, somebody would row a boat across ... and somebody at the other end would have a truck waiting to take it to the markets. (Vera Herse)

We used to ride our bikes up to the top of the hill down into the floodwaters, which was very dangerous but it was fun. [There was talk] of elderly residents even getting on surfboards and things and riding through the floodwaters, they don't do that these days. (Wendy Southam)

We continually have vehicles getting stuck under the railway bridge and congestion with traffic... when there's a bit of a flood or water under the bridge there. (Neville Lingard)



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWEES AND INFORMATION SOURCES

Interviewees

Theresa Ashford	Geoff Littler
Gavin Ashford	Cr Jenny McKay
Clare Archer-Lean	Ant McKenna
Isabel Bauman	Athol McMullin
Lorraine Bertram	Wendy McMullin
Mike Burns	John Moore
Lorraine Clarke	Marjorie Murray
Andrew Diggins	Sue Neil
Jill Fing	Bill O'Brien
Sheri Ann Fitzpatrick	Noelene Sawrey
Sean Fleischfresser	Stephanie Sawrey
Col Gilmore	Wendy Southam
Graham Goode	Lorna Spackman
Lorna Hardingham	Fred Tornabne
Rita Herrick	June Tornabne
Jack Herrick	Lynden Thomas
Les Herse	Leo Van de Vorst
Vera Herse	Dot Young Fruscalzo
Rick Jamieson	May Young
Kerry Jones	
Frank Jenkins	Vox pop interview
Phil Jenns	respondents Graham,
Wes Johnson	Mayra, Brian, Richard,
Kari	Jess and others whose
Neville Lingard	names were not
Thelma Lingard	provided

We acknowledge the many other community members who were interviewed out and about in Palmwoods but whose comments do not appear in this document.

All interviews were conducted by Alieta Belle and Helen Wilkinson on behalf of Sunshine Coast Council.

Secondary sources

Aborigines as Scrub-Cutters (1907, August 10). *Queensland Times, Ipswich Herald and General Advertiser* p. 4.

Back to Palmwoods Committee (1972). *The Palmwoods Story*. Compiled and edited by Mollie Krebs, Isabel Livingstone, Harry Krebs and Peter Collins

Census data sourced from: Centre for the Government of Queensland (2014). *Queensland Places – Palmwoods*. Retrieved 9 May 2014 from <http://www.queenslandplaces.com.au/palmwoods>

F.A.O. (1947, May 16). Fishing – Lures and Dangers. *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* p. 6.

Genealogy Sunshine Coast (2010). *Take a Walk Around Palmwoods – A definitive history of some of the buildings and businesses in Palmwoods*. Compiled and edited by Carolyn Slade and Wendy McMullin

Kerkhove, R. and Walker, M. (2012). Trees and Vegetation of Indigenous Significance on Buderim pp. 15-16

Palmwoods Centenary Committee (1982). *Palmwoods Centenary 1881-1981: Supplement to 'The Palmwoods Story'*. Compiled and edited by Mollie Krebs and Harry Krebs

Palmwoods Progress (1972). Song words provided by Noelene Sawrey

'Poultry Maid' (Palmwoods) (1932, September 5). A Ghost Story. *The Brisbane Courier* p. 8.

Thanks to Ray Kerkhove for his historical suggestions, information and references to useful secondary material.

Photographs

Pictures were provided by:

Genealogy Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast Libraries

Sunshine Coast Council

State Library of Queensland

Helen Wilkinson

Palmwoods Centenary 1881-1981: Supplement to 'The Palmwoods Story'

We acknowledge the helpful community members who provided photographs that informed this document but were not published.

APPENDIX 2: FRANK JENKINS WRITES ABOUT HIS CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE CHEVALLUM / PALMWOODS / EUDLO AREA

Encounters with the first Aussies

Around age 5 and 6 I had malaria, and as quinine was for defence use only, my mother met an Aboriginal woman at Woombye who gave her the bark of what I believe was a Macaranga tree, to chew. In a short time I was cured.

A year later, while at my Grandparents' place at Woombye, an elderly Aboriginal man asked my name and then, pointing to his chest, I thought he said him dumbi. At other times people seemed to call him dumbi or dummy. I asked my mother why people were so rude to him and she said that was his name. He lived on the bank of Paynters Ck., and I now believe he was Um Dumbi. He died about 1946.

When we first moved to Chevallum, there was one particular Aboriginal who we saw quite often watching us working around the farm. He was very interested in us working horses, and some days he would stand just watching for most of the day.

There was a large Red Ash tree (Soapbush), and after this had flowered, the flower stems would drop to the ground and dry with a hollow at the centre. The Aboriginal[s] (sometimes 2) would sit and smoke these sticks. Sometimes I would go out the next day and they would still be sitting there. Once when I was about 8 years [old] I was offered a smoke. I thought he said good for throat. I was sitting smoking for about 10 minutes. Then mother called and no matter how hard I tried I could not move my legs. I had to be carried inside. My throat was sore for days, and I never smoked another Soapbush stick.

One day around the same age, I heard sounds outside. I pulled a chair up to the bathroom window to look out. I soon saw 2 young Aboriginal men emerging from the bush about 80 metres away and walking along the ploughed field parallel to the house. I called my father, and he said we must talk to them. We raced to the front of the house to meet them at the barbwire fence. When they first saw us they looked scared out of their wits, and they were having great trouble getting through the barbwire fence with their lap laps. They calmed down when they realised dad was trying to help them through the fence. One spoke a little English. One had fresh initiation cuts on his chest. By now my mother had arrived and was concerned about the badly festering cuts. Both the Aboriginals became agitated when she tried to approach the one with the wounds. From the bit of English that one of them spoke, Dad realised that the Aboriginal who was being initiated could not be touched by a woman. When dad asked would they like some tucker, they kept licking their fingers. This was deciphered into sugar. We offered them flour, tea and sugar and all they took was tea and sugar. As it was cold weather, mum said to wrap it in a blanket. The bundle was handed to them and they set off. When they had gone over the ridge, I followed. They were sitting in the hollow beyond the ridge eating the sugar. When they had finished the pound of sugar they set off, leaving the empty packet and the blanket behind. I retrieved the two items and returned home.

There were some Geebung trees about 100 metres up the hill from our house. At times Aboriginals could be seen collecting some. The fruit from these trees is ready to eat when the fruit falls from the tree. The white flesh of the fruit reminds me of oyster flesh, but the taste is something to get used to.

When I was about 11 (1949) I heard noises coming from the Aboriginal pathway that was across a gully about 80 metres from our house. We raced out the front of the house, and from 10 metres away watched the procession emerge from the bush. First came an assortment of 5 dogs, mostly part cattle dog but one small white Fox terrier. Next came a young Aboriginal woman wearing a polka dot dress. She had a full grown wallaby draped across her shoulders. About 10 paces behind her came the hunter with his back almost as straight as the spear which he carried upright at his side. They seemed not to notice us standing there watching them, and the dogs just kept looking back expectantly at the wallaby. The next day we were next door with Mrs Dickson and she said she had given the polka dot dress to the young Aboriginal woman, hoping she would cease walking around naked.

At times when I was working in the bean or strawberry patch, I would look up and see a black face watching from the bush. When I approached they would always run away. Sometimes when working in the forest area, we would find where the centre of a cabbage palm had been eaten.

The Dickson family moved to Joe's father's place on the Eudlo Creek around 1950 and we would often visit there. I would wander along the creek looking for eels, mussels etc. Sometimes I would catch a fleeting glimpse of an Aboriginal couple who lived on an island in the Eudlo, but I never made direct contact with them. I was very surprised when Mrs. Dickson came one day to hand a large seed to me. She said that the Aboriginal couple had decided to go to Cherbourg and the woman had asked her to give the seed to the young boy who sometimes wandered along the creek. She told Mrs Dickson that she normally carried a seed to a new camp site, where she would plant it. They then used the seeds to make a bread. I planted the seed in the garden a short distance from the house. The tree grew rapidly and soon produced large bean pods, similar in size to a Black Bean. It looked like [it had] thorns on the stem of the tree but it was only coarse hair. The leaves were shaped like the local Flame Tree, but were dull and hairy. In all the years that I worked in the forests I have never seen this tree again, and to this day I have not been able to find the name of it, but there is a photo of my sister Fay with the tree in the background. (Could it be a Kurrajong?)

Around 1956 I noticed signs of Aboriginal activity in the area (resin drains in grey gum trees, foot prints etc.) I set out on a moonlight night to find their camp. This was not difficult as my little dog soon picked up a trail. As we got closer, noises could be heard in the wattle scrub. I saw about 5 young Aboriginal men hunting possums. I was unsure how they would react if I approached them at night. The next day around 10am, I returned to the area with my dog. A short distance from the road there was a large fallen tree elevated above [the] ground, and under this I could see a sleeping Aboriginal. I approached about 3 metres away and then said 'hello'. He jumped up with a terrified look in his eyes and let out a yell. With this, another Aboriginal leapt up from a position in the grass on my right side. Then they

took off running and were out of sight in seconds. As our neighbours' house was only 50 metres away, I walked over and told them there were Aboriginals in the area. He had no idea. Later in the day we found a ring of stones where the cooking of possums had been carried out. No further contact was made with this group.

In 1958 I was working on the farm. I looked up and saw a white haired Aboriginal male watching me from the lantana about 20 metres away. I walked towards him to make contact, but when he realised I had seen him, he took off. I followed him up a heavily timbered valley in Zerners' property. Timber had been logged in this area, but there were still palms, tree ferns, quondongs, etc. in the area. About half way along, the stream broke into a number of deep gullies with a lot of fallen logs that had been left by timber getters years before (too hard to get out). There was no trouble following him as he left a clear trail: broken branches, disturbed leaf litter etc. I was beginning to think he was deliberately doing this. I came to an open area where the stream had formed a pond, and bare footprints could be clearly seen in the sand. I followed these to the base of a tree which leaned to about 3 metres from the sandstone cliff at the end of the valley. Along the cliff about 4 metres up, I could see a small ledge about 500mm wide. He must have leapt from the tree to the ledge. I never tried to do the same.