

Albert Winstanley

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Interviewer: Margaret Cook

Assisted by Bevan Kathage
Heather Winstanlay
participated



My name is Albert John Winstanley. I first started when my Dad got the position of Manager at Collinsville State Coal Mine in 1946. That was an experience going from Bowen to Collinsville it took 12 hours. It was after the floods and the lines were washed out and you'd go so long and the train would stop. Then you'd go a bit further and stop. At one stage the driver was shooting roos. It took 12 hours to get to Collinsville.

I started as an apprentice in the State Coal Mine which at the time was operating with contract miners. The miners lighting was by Carbide lights and they were allowed to smoke underground. To work underground you had to be over 16 years. After I finished my apprenticeship, I suppose it would have been about 3 or 4 months, the Chief Electrician left and they appointed me Chief Electrician, a temporary position. At the end of that year I got my mine ticket and they appointed me Chief Electrician there.

We stayed there until 1956. In that time there was the disaster. I was on holidays when it actually happened but I was involved in recovery when I came back. In itself was something you wouldn't actually believe. Where it blew out it made a dome in the roof.

Bevan Kathage: It was an outburst of coal caused by gas.

The gas was Black Damp CO/2 and it blew back approximately 100 yards against the flow of the ventilation and covered the coal cutter and killed the mine workers and the horses. When we first went there after the flood, just after the war years, they mined pretty close to the surface and it had fallen in and caught fire. It was like looking into a furnace. The pillar of coal was blood red. I had never experienced it before.

Bevan Kathage: It was just like a coke oven.

Just like a coke oven it was. The water flowing through that and the seam had

a lot of sulphur content. They had a lot of trouble pumping the water out. They ended up using stainless steel pumps and bitumen lined pipes. The Collinsville seam had a lot of inherent sulphur in it. That is how fast it ate the cast iron away. I remember one time they were opening up a new bord and they only had a cast iron centrifugal pump to get the water out. It was all installed on a Saturday morning and the Monday morning the Deputy came to start the pump and it was full of holes. That's how fast it was.

Scottsville mine, 3 miles further on, used wooden pipes on their pumps. That's how bad the water was. The Derreck seam, which was one of the top seams, it wasn't working while I was there, you could see the yellow on the side of the tunnel entrance. It was unreal.

We left there in 1956 and I got a job at Caledonian Colliery at Walloon. Engineer electrician was the position. I had to do everything myself.

Interviewer: So you were in charge?

In charge of myself!

It was all pick and shovel. The thing that surprised me, was that at Collinsville we were working a 15 feet, 16 feet seam. All coal. If they got a little band of stone a few inches thick the pair of miners would go on deficient. They only had to fill 7 wagons between two of them and then go home. At

Walloon they were brushing the roadway to five feet. If they had no room to stow away the goaf where they were working they would fill it in the wagons and send it to the surface. These miners were on contract, they worked hard.

Bill Harth was the Manager there but Tommy Howells was the Under Manager and he ran the day to day operation. Tom was a really good Under Manager.

Caledonian had a lot of water. It was a reasonably flat seam and it had a lot of pockets. There were heaps of pumps, scattered around the place. You might have one pump with about 6 pipes off it with valves on and all different holes. You start the one nearest and get it pumping. Then you'd open the valve on the other and bleed it through. Then you'd shut it down. Then you'd get it all out. In other places they'd put a sump down and make a little well and put one pump on it.

One time they had an inrush of water. They had struck an underground stream. It flooded a whole section. They were pumping for a long, long time to get it out. The other thing I struck there that I had never seen before was a white, chalk dyke. It was only about 2 feet thick but you could write with it. It was complete chalk.

Bevan Kathage: White clay it used to be. We got it out of a dyke at Aberdare East at Cessnock. We filled for one night shift and

pulled 15 cars out and didn't get through the dyke. It just kept falling.

This was completely white. One interesting thing at Cally (*Caledonian*) was that they used to have a lot of mice and rats underground. Somehow we inherited a cat on the surface and the cat went down and cleaned up all the mice. Then we got an influx of cockroaches. I have never seen so many cockroaches in all my life – completely white. Bill Harth came up with the idea of letting go some smoke bombs and getting rid of them all. He said watch for the smoke coming out! In the end they got the pest bloke out to come and spray them.

They also had a “stay in strike” there. Where *Caledonian* was they used to shift the coal from there to the washing plant and there was a tractor built up as a locomotive. There were two of them. They used to take the wagons across. It was about a mile and a half.

Cally is out at Walloon. They used to run back down to the railway line to unload their wagons. It was the line out west to Rosewood.

When I first went there they had a picking belt there. Then they invested in a washing plant. I supposed it was one of the earliest ones in the Rosewood area. They had them down here.

I left there in 1962 to go to Aberdare.

Interviewer: was it still pick and shovel when you left?

Yes still pick and shovel. After I left there I think they got a scraper loader to try out. I don't know how it went.

Bevan Kathage: They ended up opening Caledonia No 6. back towards Haigslea. I thought they had a shuttle car in there. We looked at it at one stage when I was at New Hope.

It could have. I don't know. Initially Tom Howells and I had to put down the drill to find the coal over at No 6. By hand. When you get down so far you undo the coupling and put another piece of pipe on.

I went to Aberdare then – they had coal cutters and shuttle cars. They were looking at putting in a new tunnel with a conveyor belt to bring the coal out of the mine. At that time they were bringing it up with skips using a haulage rope. There were problems because it was steep and the couplings connecting the skips together were breaking. A three line track was put in with tommy dods, which the rope runs around to change the angle to allow the skips to come out to the steep where stop blocks were placed in the middle of the upward two rails and would allow the skips to pass over them, but if the coupling broke would not let them run backwards. The conveyor belt tunnel was driven both ways and there was very little between them when connected up. The belt went to the

Rob Roy seam and a shaft connected to the strip seam for the coal to go out on the belt in the Rob Roy seam. It all worked automatic.

Bevan Kathage: This was Aberdare No 8.

Yes we also had Aberdare No. 9 below Whitwood. We had a washing plant and Jones' tunnel and the Whitwood. That was all in the group.

Before the flood we had a creep there. It is interesting. You go down and there is the pillar of coal and about three feet just peels off, then the cycle starts again. The next lot of three feet just peels off.

Interviewer: What causes it?

It is caused by too many seams and the pillars not on top of one another and it loses strength.

Bevan Kathage: The weight coming from the strata above has to be held by something. So if you put the pillars on top of each other, you have a pillar of coal to the top to hold the roof up. But if you misplace them then the weight pushes it down and starts crushing.

I think it is a bit hard there were about 7 seams they had worked. It dropped Bundamba Racecourse about 5 feet.

Bevan Kathage: You can't stop a creep. They used to try and build pigsties and cogs out of timber to try and hold the roof up to stop the weight being thrown further back but you end up retreating to where there are bigger pillars.

And it chokes itself off.

Interviewer: The mine just collapses?

Yes. I went and saw the racecourse. The running rails snapped or had a big bend in them. It was about 5 feet it dropped.

The story is that the horses went out of sight as they went down the dip and came out the other side. It is pretty close.

Interviewer: What did they do after the creep? Do they just abandon that part of the mine?

They had to. Where it choked itself off they came back to there and they drifted down to the bottom seam on the other side of the fault which was the Rob Roy again.

We then followed it along Brisbane Road up past the police station and branched back to the left down Booval way. We had lots of problems when the Manager changed it to full dips. He always blamed the motors which were only 25 horsepower each where at other mines in the district they were 40 horsepower each.

Bevan Kathage: The seams were fairly steep and if you go down the dip it was always harder to come back up. It is easy to drive the cut through between the pillars. If you cut the grade you get easier grades both up and down and better both ways. That pit got up near Sacred Heart?

Yes up near the police station.

Bevan Kathage: Up Cothill Road and that starts over on the other side of Bundamba Creek up near the High School. You know where Ingram's joinery used to be there – just along from there.

There was a big fall there and you could look up about 80 feet. I didn't think there would be as much as that between it and the surface. I was always expecting a hole at the top but it never happened. It more or less ran out of coal and got gravelly. I think that was the main reason that it finished as well as economics.

Bevan Kathage: I remember going down there. It was interesting that pit for a number of reasons. You actually travelled in the return. The belt was in the return.

That was one of the problems.

Bevan Kathage: It must have been the end of 1973, I was just up here, and I saw the miner operating as far in as they got. The place was working all the time. There must have been a lot of stress on the place as they had a lot of timber up and a lot of roof support. It was always creaking, cracking, dribble, dribble.

They had some experts there to work out what was the problem. I think they wanted to make it narrower. They couldn't with the machines. That belt going up the return. We used to run a pull wire inside because they worked on one side shovelling. The manager directed that the pull wire be taken off

the off side of the belt, which we did. They seem to wear a different hat when they become Inspector of Mines.

Interviewer: How many electricians were at Aberdare?

About 5.

Interviewer: What was your position?

I was Chief Electrician.

Interviewer: What sort of hours were you working?

As required. (Laughing). After the floods I worked nights and days but when I left there were about 5 electricians – one for each shift.

I liked working at Aberdare. They developed Union problems. I had all the electricians on staff.

Bevan Kathage: We did at New Hope as well.

They were on staff. It was ideal. We had no problems.

Interviewer: What was the union problem?

They wanted them to join the electrical trades union.

Bevan Kathage: The problem was that the staff electricians were using the tools.

It was over tools.

Bevan Kathage: We had the same problem and we were taken to the courts.

Same at Aberdare.

Interviewer: They were meant to be in the Union?

Bevan Kathage No. We lost the case and they had to join the union.

We lost. We claimed it was customer practice which is was.

Bevan Kathage: I could have shut down the power generation industry in Queensland one Friday if I had made the wrong decision. I had to abide by it and accept it or the power would go off. So I was told by the Coal Board. That was the way it was sometimes— stand over tactics.

Same thing happened at Aberdare. The ETU representative threatened to turn off the power to my home.

Bevan Kathage: The important thing to mention is that it wasn't the pit blokes. It was the officials coming in like seagulls. It was about big noting themselves not solving things.

To make it worse I was a Union Official on the Staff Union.

Interviewer: So there are different unions working in the pit?

There used to be. There was the ETU.

Bevan Kathage: There was a Miner's union, an Electrician's union (ETU), Fitter's Union

and Staff Union. There were no Deputies in Queensland in a separate union. They were part of the Miner's Union.

Deputies in NSW were staff. That caused a problem too. We got through it.

Interviewer: Was there an electrician at the mine at all times?

Normally there is if they are working.

Interviewer: What were your work responsibilities at Aberdare?

I was the Chief Electrician for the whole group. I was trying to keep the place going and making sure the standards are right.

Bevan Kathage: It is a statutory position to ensure that the electrical side complied with the law.

Tests were done.

Interviewer: You are testing, maintaining, repairing?

They opened the Whitwood tunnel again, it had been a hand mining operation many years earlier. They must have just been after all the large coal and all the slack was to one side, which was a bonus. They used pitch forks to put the coal in the wagons.

We had a unit down there - a miner and shuttle cars and conveyor belt. This was where we put the first miner in. We got

to the end and there was no more coal. It just cut out. We also joined up with Whitwood shaft. They open cutted part of Whitwood shaft mine. They bulldozed all the trees into a heap and set it alight. The seam underneath caught fire. It wouldn't happen today but you would go through the doors into the Whitwood shaft area and you could see a little flame on top of the coal. Today it would be shut.

It shut eventually. I left there and it was just the open cuts. They started the open cut after the flood. I think they were one of the first in Ipswich to open cut?

Bevan Kathage: Not sure Box Flat and New Hope had open cuts.

I think they were first.

Interviewer: Was Aberdare No 8 affected by the flood?

It got flooded. The tunnel at Aberdare itself was well out of the floods. But because they were all inter-connected with no 6 – it had a shaft on the roadway.

Bevan Kathage: That was on Mining Street at Bundamba beside the creek. No 6 tunnel was on the right hand side.

So when the floods came it had nowhere else to go and it got flooded out. That was the end of Aberdare. I don't think it would have lasted much longer because of the dip and it was

getting gravelly. There was nothing on the right hand side.

Bevan Kathage: The right hand side goes into the Booval anticline or something. The coal is gone and it is replaced by other stuff.

There used to be a mine on Brisbane Road not quite as far as Mining Street.

Bevan Kathage: There used to be a pit up near Duce's joinery. A railway line went into it. There was a chimney there at Braeside.

Interviewer: Where did you go after Aberdare?

I went to New Hope in 1975 as Chief Electrician. I have been a Chief Electrician all my life.

Interviewer: How many electricians were there?

About 20.

Interviewer: That would have been challenging.

There weren't enough hours in the day and eventually you would have to come home.

Interviewer: It was a big concern?

Bevan Kathage: It really only started to become a big concern after 1977-8. We were driving no 6 tunnel in 1974-5.

I finished in 1988/9.

Bevan Kathage: New Hope started in 1953 at No 4 tunnel. They started no 5 tunnel in the mid 1950s. It got mechanised in the late

1960s. It was bought by a NSW company in about 1970. In 1973 it had 4 miner units basically. By 1977 or thereabouts we started no 7 tunnel and we started a series of open cuts. April Fools Day 1979 we lost no 5 tunnel with the heating. We bought Southern Cross at the same time. About 12 months later bought Haigmore and then Rylance. Come 1982 we had New Hope Nos 5, 7, 21, 23; Southern Cross 9, 11 and 14.

You had Desi's tunnel.

Bevan Kathage: 4A. We had open cuts at New Hope; 2 big open cuts at Southern Cross; open cuts in North Ipswich and one at Rylance (which became Jeebropilly); the 3 washing plants at Jeebropilly, Tivoli and Rylance 1 and 2 as well as Southern Cross and New Hope.

Interviewer: That was its peak?

Bevan Kathage: In Ipswich. It was about 450 people. It produced about 2 million tons of raw coal a year. Not much these days but in those days it was a big operation.

Interviewer: Were the electrician's based somewhere and moved around or were they allocated a mine? How did it work?

We had a mine electrician at Jeebropilly. Merv Stumer. He also looked after Haigmore until it finished. Ray Dickfos was at Southern Cross. Graham Jackwitz was at New Hope and I was in charge. That was near the end.

Interviewer: Were you all on call?

More or less.

Bevan Kathage: It just cascades up. If you can't fix it you ring the bloke above you as he is supposed to know more until you eventually get to the top. This was also the time that we started to go electronic with a number of things.

That is another story. I was more or less not brought up with a lot of electronics. We put the new washing plant up at Jeebropilly and Wilf Radcliffe (the contractor who built it) said to me we can go with electronic controls. It hasn't been proven yet, I said, so let's put in relays up there.

You have a motor and that motor is operator by a contactor. To operate the contactor you have a relay which has a low voltage control which goes to switches etc outside the main control panel (like switches).

You have to have relays because you can't have high voltage going outside – it is the regulation. You have to have low voltage outside. The relay operates at 32 volt.

Bevan Kathage: You have a low voltage switch that throws the high voltage switch that starts the motor.

He had put one in in New Zealand and he came back to me and said you must have known something because we have had all sorts of trouble. It has improved a lot.

Bevan Kathage: They walk around with a box like your recorder and plug it in anywhere in the washplant and find out what is going wrong and where they go to fix it.

They can also short it out. If something goes wrong with a circuit than can short it out and get the plant going again while they fix it. It has its advantages but you have to have the knowledge and the spare parts. It is trial and error a lot because electronics today are out of date tomorrow.

Bevan Kathage: You can't tell what is going on inside the black box. With the hard wired relays systems you can work your way through the system to find the fault.

Interviewer: So technology is changing all the time?

Even conveyor belts and speed controls are a long way ahead of where they were. They used to have two stage starters years ago. It was on and then full speed. Now it gradually comes on.

Bevan Kathage: They had also got to the stage that on a very long belt, some kilometres long, 3 or so, they can have two separate drives along the belt. Those drives will talk to each other electronically to make sure they have the necessary torque in to make sure they don't fight against each other and break the belt.

A lot of things years ago were man handled and now they have all these machines and tools to help them. The old Scheifelbein stick has gone out of date.

Bevan Kathage: Has it? That is a reference to the bloke who was the Under Manager at New Hope – Roy Scheifelbein. He is still alive. The story was that if you gave Roy a long enough piece of timber he'd be able to move the earth.

It's true. Today they don't move anything unless they have a machine to do it. The advancement I suppose.

Interviewer: Could we talk about the credit union?

It actually started at Aberdare Colliery. It was Fred Fowler and a chap at Tivoli Colliery – a clerk out there with one leg. Eric Keller. They got together one day and decided to form a credit union in about 1966. It was a heap of chaps at the start. They used to give out loans – about \$100 in those days. It wasn't very much. It might take six weeks or two months to get that \$100 together. I became a Director in 1966 at the first annual meeting. I had 32 years there as a Director.

Interviewer: Was it for miner's? Was that the idea?

It started for the mining community. It had no links with the Union. That was the initial part of it and when it got to the stage that we couldn't get any more growth it then became other industries. It had a name change for the other industries. After that it became Ipswich Credit Union. Then it became Discovery Credit Union when they took over the Tax Credit Union in

Brisbane. Now it has been taken over by Queensland Credit Union.

Interviewer: Where did the initial capital come from?

You became members and it cost \$10 to be a member and you could have a savings account and you got interest on your savings. That is how it started.

Interviewer: How many Director's were there?

Originally there might have been 8 or 9. I can't really remember. When I left I think there were 7. I think with the takeover there may be more. When we took over the Tax Credit Union we had some of their Director's coming in so we had too many. At the next election so many had to go.

Interviewer: Did membership build quite quickly?

It was steady. I think we had an asset base of about \$32 million when I left. I suppose big is better.

Interviewer Did people go to Fred Fowler with the idea or did he perceive a need?

I don't know that part. I think it was Fred's ideas and he and Eric Keller talked about it and did it. It did alright.

We had some bad debts too when people didn't pay which is a shame when it is an organisation like that. It went for many years before anyone got paid. Then the Director's got a

travelling allowance of 5 shillings a meeting.

Interviewer: Was it a fair bit of work for you?

We used to meet once a fortnight and go through all the correspondence. It took a bit of time but it was interesting.

Our office was at Station Road, Booval. We met under Eric Keller's house in the early stages. Then we went into the old Alpha Theatre and had an office there. Jean Bray was the first employee. Then we employed June Temme.

Heather Winstanley: Jean Bray was Mayor out at Esk.

Robert Greazley's daughter. He was at Tivoli. When they pulled the Alpha Theatre down and built the UFS Dispensary there we moved opposite Bremer High School to the hairdressers (Curry's).

We bought a house down near Aldi's in South Station Road. We found out the foundations weren't good so we bought a house where the credit union is now. That is where we built the building eventually. We built it as two stories. It has the foundations for three stories. The other place we sold. They have a hardware warehouse or something there. Apparently there are streams down there.

Bevan Kathage: That used to be Kathage land. My father sold it. Aldi's carpark used to be a foundry.

We also took over the Credit Union at hardboards. They had a little credit union but it ran into trouble. That was before the Tax one. It is a good thing for working people if it is run properly.

And I was involved with the Colliery staff association. I started as a Councillor at the Queensland Branch in Collinsville. When I came out of my time and I joined the staff and I was a branch councillor until I left. I came down here and I wasn't involved for a while at Caledonia. I eventually got involved and I ended up on the council. Over about 37 years I had been a Councillor, Secretary of the Qld branch and Vice President of the Qld branch. I spent a fair bit of time there. It used to be interesting going to court cases. People don't tell you the right things too and you try to represent them.

It doesn't help. One case a bloke had a crook back and he couldn't do anything. I found out he was handling outboard motors and was out fishing. It all comes up in the end so why don't they tell the truth in the first place. I think it is the same with owners.

Bevan Kathage: I think it has changed now. The big companies the BHP, Rio Tintos etc. The people making the decisions have no idea about the people who work beneath them. The days here when they were relatively small companies and the owners were often working at the mines, the problems would be sorted out on the spot. They were fixed there and then otherwise it was a waste of time.

Sometimes when one union gets something they know it will go to the other unions but they won't give it to them.

Their theory is that if we just give it to them then we can't get an increase in the price of coal. That is theory they work on. Whether it is right or not I don't know.

Interviewer: Was your main job to work between staff and management?

I suppose you call it that.

Bevan Kathage: In Ab's case he was part of management.

That was another problem. In some cases it was but you just have to do it.

Interviewer: Someone suggested that being staff was a problem.

I think that depended on your personality. I never had any problems. If you meet them you talk to them.

Bevan Kathage: I saw Mick Powell the other day. He was an electrician at New Hope and a bit of a stirrer.

He was a real union fellow.

I think he changed when he got smashed up riding his bike at Box Flat and I think he was appreciative that we gave him his job back. That was a problem as he had lost some mobility but I more or less felt obliged. I came

to an agreement with the union that he could be in the workshop all the time. The problem was that if something went wrong in the workshop I had to take him out and he had trouble getting up the steps of the washery as he had a wooden leg.

Bevan Kathage: That was the sort of thing that would happen locally. A bloke would be hurt going home from work and action would be taken to employ him. He had to make an effort too. He had to make an effort and do something useful to progress themselves back to doing something.

I never had any problem. It worked out pretty well.

Interviewer: Can we talk about the workshop?

The only decent workshop I ever worked in was Collinsville and it was brand new. It was huge.

Caledonia never had a workshop. They had a workshop – a forge for the blacksmith, A little area for the carpenter. All I had was a cupboard and a bench. Aberdare had a reasonable workshop. I had a fairly big area for the electrical side.

Interviewer: It was a big shed?

Yes. The mechanical side had a fairly big area and so did the blacksmith. New Hope could have done with a new workshop. It was cluttered. There wasn't enough room.

Interviewer: There were a lot of men working in it?

No only one or two. The rest were underground. When you are working three shifts the same thing happened. There wasn't a lot of room there.

Bevan Kathage: We got to the stage that we used to send a lot of gear off site. The miners. We didn't divert our resources to overhauls.

It would have taken years.

Bevan Kathage: It would never have got done.

Interviewer: Where was it? Can you still see it?

Bevan Kathage: No it was all bulldozed. You'd never know it was there.

It was just down from the bathroom. At the end of the workshop you could see the main drive head for No 5 tunnel with the washing plant just over from it. It was all together.

The only thing that ever happened that I was disappointed with was I lost an apprentice there (Ken Barclay). The thing that disappointed me was that he went to the electrician with his problem and he couldn't find it. I wasn't there at the time.

The only electrician I ever lost. One of the phases was connected to the box as the earth wire which made the box live.

Tape 3:

Bevan Kathage: Part of that story was that Paul Hardy, another apprentice electrician was beside him. He tried to revive him.

He was doing ambulance work at the time.

Bevan Kathage: The damage was done.

It damages the heart muscles as it passes through the body and in this particular case it was 415 volt. If you grab on to live parts you cannot let go. I got caught at Aberdare on the haulage on the rotor section. We had three fibre glass tanks that we used to pump the water through. It had a saline solution in it. The rods used to come down into the tank.

Bevan Kathage: It is resistance to change the speed of the motor.

We used hydraulics to lower the rods and as we got further down the speed increased. They had little pieces of pipe out of fibre glass tanks that the rubber hoses connected to. The solution circulated through from a large tank outside of the haulage room. I put my hand on one of the pipes to see if it was circulating and I couldn't let go. The haulage was going and the muscle froze up.

It is not so bad now with trip meters.

Interviewer: Can we talk about the people you worked with?

Mrs Winstanley: What about the man who contacted your last year after 50 odd years and told you he stole one of your tools and he sent you a cheque to pay for it.

This is when I was at Collinsville. He was an electrician and he stole a tool.

He is a born again Christian. He sent me a letter and a cheque for about \$80. I sent it back saying I'd forgotten about it and it was water under the bridge.

Mrs Winstanley: There was an inquiry at the time it was stolen. He thought he was stealing it from the mine and by the time he realised it was personal property it was too late. He was only a young man then and he and his wife rented half of my father's house. They were newly married and he didn't stay long.

He came there after mechanisation. That was another thing about Collinsville. If they signed on a footballer we had to give him a job at the mine. We ended up with two as labourers in the electrical section. You couldn't do much with them. This is in the 1950s.

We decided to put in a new earthing pit for the power station as they generated their own power. It was 7 or 8 feet deep. It took them nearly the whole time they were at Collinsville.

Bevan Kathage: Do any of your family work in the mines?

My father and me. My brother-in-law, John, worked in the mines at Collinsville in the office. Then he went to Aberdare in the office and then he went to Fox manufacturing and then he finished up a storeman at Box Flat. My other brother-in-law worked in the mines in NSW. He was a Deputy and then he was he was an Assistant Under Manager. He never got his Under Manager's ticket. He was in charge of a section. He spent his whole life in one coal pit. There was no other family in the mines. My Dad came out from England when he was 9 with his uncle and aunt. Dad's uncle worked in the mines. That is probably how Dad started. He started as a trapper. He opened and shut the door for the horses coming through.

He became a surveyor, then an Under Manager, then a Manager and then a Superintendent.

Interviewer: Your children didn't follow you?

I had three girls.

Bevan Kathage: Not a problem these days.