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**OH 692/12**

Full transcript of an interview with

**BRIAN AND DEVRON BOOTH**

on 20 February 2003

by Rob Linn

Recording available on CD

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**OH 692/12**

**BRIAN AND DEVRON BOOTH**

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OH 692/12 TAPE 1 - SIDE A

AUSTRALIAN WINE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.

Interview with Brian and Devron Booth at Lonsdale on 20th February, 2003.

Interviewer: Rob Linn.

Well, Brian and Devron, can you just tell me where and when you were born please? I don't care which order you do it in.

**DB: I was born on 30th August, 1941, in Reynella, and six years later we moved to Morphett Vale.**

And what about you, Brian?

**BB: I was born in the same place on Anzac Day in 1943, and then the same thing—Morphett Vale.**

Tell me a bit about your parents.

**DB: My Dad was the third youngest of nine children, and born on a vineyard at Reynella. I think he was born at home. I don't think he went to hospital. They had a nurse come around.**

**The Booth vineyard was acquired—the land—at the same time as Reynells in Reynella. Actually before that it was called Hurtle Vale. It was at Hurtle Vale, adjoining where Geoff Merrill's place is now. They had three sections there. My Dad is fourth generation on that place.**

Your Dad was Lindsay. Is that right?

**DB: Yes. He went to Reynella school and left at fourteen. He was pretty good at maths and arithmetic. That's what he used to tell us. He said that's all the education he ever needed. Then he started working vineyards for his father and his older brother doing share work. At an early age he started doing share-farming himself, growing garden peas and working jobs on vineyards. Then he gradually took on vineyards. He also worked for his brother, who had a couple of trucks. It was at the age of eighteen that my Dad had a very good crop of peas—like, garden peas. He picked them all in the rain. It was heavy rain so he paid people double money to pick the peas. Out of that he bought his first truck. That was in 1936.**

So when did he start carting for the wine industry?

**DB: About then. The first one he ever carted wine for was Mostyn Owen, who had the winery that Geoff Merrill is in.**

He was a Pom, wasn't he?

**DB: Yes. He had throat cancer, and he actually committed suicide because of the throat cancer. He was a real gentleman. All the Booth boys, as he called them—that's my father and his brothers—he classed them as his boys. They used to roam around the winery there, and the vineyard, and he gave Dad acres of land to grow peas in the early days. He treated them very well.**

**But anyway, the first was some barrels because you couldn't move wine because of the transport control restrictions, so Dad carted the odd load for him under a load of wood. So Dad used to cart a lot of wood out of those hills.**

**BB: That's where he started with the wood for the boilers and that sort of thing. Wood from the hills.**

Yes, I live up there.

**DB: They called it cord wood.**

So he'd come in and there'd be a pile of cord that woodcutters had cut

**DB: Dad had his own cutters and everything.**

So it would be Stringy or something?

**BB: That's right.**

**DB: Yes. [It was intended for] bakeries and wineries.**

**BB: He started share-farming, and then he asked for Stanley Clutterbuck, didn't he?**

**DB: Oh, that's a lot longer. He started with the Director of the Hunt Club. Just up there where -**

Not Morris Hunt?

**DB: No, no. Morris Hunt's way on further. This bloke is up at Glenelg, and he had the big vineyards. Where Jennybrook now is. This man was Mr Ern Luxmoore. He owned approx. 80 acres which includes Jennybrook Farm. He had a large vineyard here and another one at Morphettville near where the Morphett Arms is. He was very involved with the Adelaide Hunt Club.**

**BB: Not Hayward?**

**DB: No. Anyway, that's where Dad grew the peas, on this bloke's place. You know the place.**

**BB: Yes, I do.**

**DB: I'll think of him in a sec, anyway.**

**Then in 1938 he started working with Penfolds. He used to do a lot of grape carting. Carting was one of the main things. I don't know how he got on to**

**Penfolds but he was their grape carter from the south. So he started in 1938 carting a lot of grapes for Penfolds.**

This would've been down to the McLaren Vale winery?

**DB: No. To Magill.**

**BB: It would be from here, wouldn't it?**

**DB: Yes, around the Morphett Vale/Reynella area. But then they built this grape receiving depot—I'm not too sure when that was built—on the corner of South Road and opposite Adrian Brien Ford. Shepherd's Hill Road.**

**BB: They called it Burbank then.**

**DB: It was called Burbank. Shepherds Hill. Around the corner, on that corner. Opposite Adrian Briens.**

Opposite Adrian Briens? Where the Chrysler works is?

**BB: No, opposite.**

That's Edwardstown. St Marys?

**DB: No. Give us your pen.**

That's alright. I understand where you're -

**DB: There's the corner. It was called Burbank. This road comes down here.**

Getting up towards Eden Hills?

**BB: Yes. Right there.**

**DB: There's Adrian Brien there. That was Penfolds grape receiving depot. Because that was in the war—I think petrol was scarce and everything.**

So that's the south eastern corner.

**BB: South western corner.**

**DB: Yes. And that was called Burbank depot. All the grapes from Marion—see, Marion was a big grape growing area, which you've probably heard about. And also Clarendon. All those guys brought their grapes into that depot, and then Dad carted those grapes to Magill.**

**BB: Forked them off.**

**DB: Everything was forked, yes.**

**BB: Penfolds had trailers. They'd park them on this ramp, and they'd pull up, throw them on, and they'd have to throw them on to his truck as well. As soon as that was ready he'd take it to Magill. It was only a short trip. He shifted 100 ton a day sometimes.**

**DB: Oh, yes.**

So what was he carrying in each truckload? Three or four ton?

**DB: No. Twelve/fourteen. It was a five ton truck. Dad's motto was that he always had the smallest truck but he carried the biggest load.**

**I started off with a five ton truck and pulled fourteen ton, average. Then we went up to a seven ton truck and pulled an average of sixteen/seventeen ton. With no trailer brakes or anything like that. From McLaren Vale to Nuriootpa was four and a half hours.**

What are your first memories of your Dad and what he was doing?

**BB: My first memory was when we were living at Reynella and Dad bought this property from Stanley Clutterbuck. This was probably 1945.**

**DB: They bought that in '43. Stanley Clutterbuck by the way was -**

He owned an agency in Adelaide. Is that right?

**DB: Yes. City Motors. State Motors.**

**BB: And he got Dad in as a sharefarmer. He worked day and night, you know, so then he said, 'I don't need this vineyard any more, you can have it'. 'How much do you want for it?' He said, '£2,000'.**

**DB: £2,600. He said, 'I'll give you a chance. You work so hard that I'm going to give you a chance'.**

**BB: So that was down here in Morphett Vale.**

**Anyway, my first memories, we used to go down there as a four or five year old.**

**DB: You weren't even that.**

**BB: Dad had the vineyard there. I know, it was 1947 because Dad was building a house, and he built the house in '48.**

**DB: That's right. He moved in on New Year's Day in January '48.**

**BB: So I was four years old. Dad and an old bloke, who he used to have working for him, Albert Pight.**

**DB: He worked for Dad for fifty-five years. Wood chopper, vineyard worker, truck offsider.**

**BB: They were all Grenache. When Dad bought this property there was a house on it. But he cut off and sold 4 acres with the house which had been renovated.**

**DB: With the price of the house off, yes.**

**Tell him when he went to see Penfold Hyland, who I think was -**

Leslie?

**DB: Leslie Penfold Hyland. He asked him what grapes should be grow. And he said, 'Put all Grenache in. Can't go wrong. Put Grenache in'. So Dad finished up planting ninety acres of Grenache.**

How big was the property?

**DB: 160 acres. He put in 95 acres of Grenache.**

Because they would've been after good fortifying grapes.

**BB: Make anything.**

Sweet wine grapes.

**DB: Yes, neutral grape. Make anything.**

*(Couldn't decipher word/s)* good dry red grape.

**BB: Yes. And if you make white, too. They take them off the skins.**

**DB: He put all the Grenache in by hand, by the way. He used to be carting Penfolds wine for nine/ten months of the year. Can probably go back and say in Penfolds, about 1943/44, he bought a truck to cart wine from Penfolds McLaren Vale to Magill—a new International KS5 (a five tonner) They painted it all Penfolds colour and registered it in Penfolds name to get around the Transport Control Board. So he drove this truck himself. He wore three trucks out on this job. He started carting 2,000 gallons and then he got up to 2,600 gallons of wine.**

This is all in barrels?

**DB: No. Bulk.**

**BB: First of all it was in vats—1000 gallon vats.**

Wooden vats?

**BB: Wooden vats. Standing on the truck.**

**DB: Then they went to railway tanks, 850 gallons each.**

**BB: He had two on each—did they?**

**DB: No, one on each truck and trailer. That was an International KS5 traytop and trailer.**

And Devron, when you say railway tanks, what do you mean?

**DB: They were just a demountable tank that they used on the rail to go to Sydney.**

Made out of what?

**DB: Steel, lined with emolite.**

And then waxed down as well?

**DB: No. The wooden ones had wax. The next ones were steel tanks but they had a coating that is called emolite which is sort of a painted -**

**BB: Penfolds had a number of these. A couple of hundred.**

**DB: Yes. Wolf Blass bought most of them actually.**

**BB: They put them on the train for their fortifieds to go to Perth.**

**DB: All over, yes.**

**BB: But what Dad did was that he just used a couple of them for his truck.**

**DB: When the vintage came, well, he'd take the tanks off and go to vintage for a couple of months. During vintage the truck and trailer had grape tanks. But when he was doing this he used to start early, so he'd go back and have two or three guys planting his vineyard. He'd be back early to plant vineyard until dark, and then they'd work Saturdays. Never work Sundays at that stage.**

And Brian, did you work in the vineyards?

**BB: Yes. I left school in '58.**

Where did you go to school?

**BB: We both went to Urrbrae for three years.**

**DB: Went to Morphett Vale Primary School.**

**BB: And then to Urrbrae.**

Morphett Vale. Is that the one on the side -  
Beach Road?

**DB: Yes, It's Blackwell's funeral parlour.**

Yes, I know the one.

DB: **Sixty-five kids went there. We learnt pruning at school. We started learning pruning in Grade 4.**

BB: **That was the lessons—pruning.**

DB: **Yes. We had pruning matches at Reynella with Happy Valley, Reynella and Morphett Vale. We'd have a pruning competition and then we'd kick the football and have hot pasties. It was bloody good in the winter time.**

And how did you find Urrbrae?

DB: **Good, yes.**

BB: **Only three years we were there.**

DB: **Dad, as I say, didn't encourage education much. He reckoned it was a waste of time. (Laughs) We didn't play any sport either. He didn't believe in sport either.**

BB: **When did you leave? Fifteen, we left school. Haven't been back since. Haven't done any study.**

DB: **I just rang a guy up today, just an old scholars' reunion. One of my friends saw it in the paper on the weekend, so I'm going to that.**

**Just getting back. We learnt to drive a tractor when we were no more than seven. We'd criss-cross the whole vineyard, you know. It's called cross discing.**

Your Dad had a pretty strong work ethic.

**BB: He didn't like sport either.**

**DB: Brian got run over twice.**

Are you serious?

**BB: Nearly, yes.**

**DB: He got run over by a bloody tractor. Dad ran over you twice. The Bedford and the tractor.**

**BB: I was pushing a truck -**

**DB: He was always running through the vineyard.**

**BB: But we were sort of experienced—or we thought we were. About twelve year old, you know.**

**DB: We used to drive the tractor. First of all, we picked up vine cuttings and that, which wasn't much of a job. We didn't like that much but you'd get sixpence**

**a row for stacking vine cuttings into heaps. Then we had to burn it. So we started burning when I was only 13 years old.**

When you say burning, was that behind the tractor?

**DB: No. Horse. We still had horses.**

You had a sort of a steel burner on wheels?

**BB: Yes. [It was a metal cart with a large bin pulled by a horse.]**

**DB: This thing here, that was on one wheel, and it'd hang back so the wind would go through it.**

Yes.

**DB: And then you had to burn one way. So we started that very early. Thirteen/fourteen, we were burning the cuttings.**

It's not such a nice job though, is it?

**DB: That wasn't a bad job. We didn't like picking up cuttings. And we used to drive the tractor. You were driving the tractor about twelve.**

**BB: Yes, well, like I'd plough the rows.**

Was that horse power?

**BB: No, tractor. We had a four/five furrow plough.**

Disc?

**DB: No, Harvey plough.**

**BB: Moldboard plough.**

Moldboard?

**BB: And then the bloke on the back on a sledge with a dodgem plough.**

**DB: I reckon we were no more than ten or twelve.**

So the dodgem would've been to get closer under the vines?

**BB: Yes.**

Up in the Riverland they used to use what they call French ploughs, behind a horse often. Just come right up and -

**DB: It's the same thing. A single furrow plough with a curved beam.**

Yes, that's it.

**DB: - bent thing. You just took it out. You get someone really good. Used to do it with a horse. Like, Dad or a couple of these blokes, the vine's there and they'd leave a little piece there. We had to go and spade it all that out afterwards.**

That's about a foot out?

**DB: No, he'd just skim it. He'd be an inch away from the vine stem.**

**BB: They were pretty good at it.**

**DB: They were really good. In the early days they put chain with a piece of wire through it, you know. So if you hit the vine, the wire would pull the wire safety release through. This spring catch, as soon as you hit something, she'd come undone. So with the limestone and that through there, and we had this fixed Moldboard, we had to know where all the limestone was. You had to sneak over the limestone. Dad would go berserk if we went too hard, or if you broke a vine. So we'd drive the tractor and those guys would come behind. So we started very early driving tractors like that. Then the grape picking would come, and then we'd be driving—we were thirteen/fourteen—bringing the grapes out and forking them off. We'd have all their trucks there loading on the weekends. Dad would have all the trucks carting—I'm jumping a bit. They'd have all the trucks working on Penfolds. We'd have one team of grape pickers working through the week, and on the weekend we'd get all these trucks there and we'd load seventy ton up. We'd have about forty/fifty grape pickers, which were the early Italians and the locals.**

This is off his 95 acres?

DB: **Yes.**

BB: **We had more than that. We had about 220 by then because another vineyard was owned by Hogg -**

DB: **Honeypot vineyard. That's where the first Grange grapes came from.**

Did he source his grapes from down there, did he?

DB: **I don't know who you've talked to but you talk to those Penfold guys—John Bird, Gordon Colquist—and they'll tell you where the first Grange came from. They came from Honeypots.**

Is that right?

DB: **And I'll tell you another one -**

*(couldn't decipher words)* old by then.

DB: **Oh, yes, they were. They were planted by Sammy Wynn back in about 1920. I know the old bloke, Levi Sparrow. He was the bloke that even did the work.**

He was a councillor, wasn't he?

**DB: No, not this old bloke. He's just an old vigneron bloke who smoked a pipe and that sort of thing.**

So he owned the vineyard?

**BB: No.**

**DB: Sammy Wynn, he planted a couple of vineyards in the area.**

**BB: One up here.**

**DB: Yes, one up here on the corner of Sherriff Road and South Road.**

Yes, I know.

**DB: He sold it to—what's his name? Harry Cox's wife. Alf Amos. Amos' had that place. I believe he got that off Sammy Wynn. He also planted this vineyard in Hackham—80 acres. I don't know, but he must've got into financial trouble or something because a bloke by the name of Hogg bought that block.**

**BB: Old English (*sounds like, gentleman*).**

**DB: Was he English? I don't think so.**

**BB: Oh, shit, yes.**

I've actually heard of him.

**DB: He married a Pom. He wasn't English.**

**BB: Oh, wasn't he English?**

**DB: No, his father was a doctor. That was Dr Hogg. I think that's right. You've got Doctors Road?**

Yes.

**DB: On the corner there was doctors building. Well, there was a Dr Hogg, and I understand this Hogg was an offspring of that Dr Hogg, who bought this vineyard. He had one on Doctors Road and he had this 80 acres down there, and he married a Pommy woman. Was it Mabel?**

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: So what happened was that when he died—Dad used to do all his share-farming, and Dad was a trustee of the vineyard. Finished up he sold that to the Housing Trust. The Housing Trust started buying out here in 1959/60. So Dad got that vineyard from the Housing Trust. So he rented it off the Housing Trust. And Clutterbucks had a heap of land over there, about another 40 acres, so Dad rented it off Clutterbucks. So he had about 220 acres of vineyards.**

**BB: It was all hand-pruned, the whole lot. In the meantime the Housing Trust sold all this land where we're sitting. Not here, but all the rest of it.**

*(Couldn't decipher words).*

**BB: No. They bought it. Tom Playford—the refinery. But then they didn't need it for a few years, and the farmers had plenty of money. They didn't want to work it. So Dad rented it off the Housing Trust. We had probably a couple of thousand acres.**

**DB: We also had sheep. We had fat lambs. And when I was fifteen I put 700 acres of barley in, first year.**

Malting barley?

**DB: No, you couldn't plant malting, but you planted barley. The top grade's malting, then milling and feed, so depended on the grade. You planted the crop and then you harvested it. A couple of agents would come around and do samples of all the bags, and they sent the samples away.**

Any oats grown around here?

**DB: No. Very few oats.**

**BB: A bit of hay. Hunts had hay.**

**DB: Yes. There wasn't much wheat here. Mainly barley and field peas.**

My earliest memory of this area was exactly how you described it. And going down to McLaren Vale, too. They did have oats down there.

**DB: Yes.**

It was really a mixed farming area, wasn't it?

**DB: It was.**

And very, very good agricultural land.

**DB: Oh, yes. Top land. You didn't get many failures here. See, we were the biggest sharefarmers in the district.**

When did your Dad stop for lunch?

**BB: Not very often. (*Laughs*)**

**DB: We used to be out there with Dad right from the early days. He'd say, 'Go and get me a cup of tea'. So we'd go right across the vineyard and make up a billy of tea. If Mum was there, she'd make it. So we'd grab a billy and we'd bring that. Mum would usually make some scones. So always had heaps of scones in the morning. So we'd go and get the scones and the billy, and we'd take that right across the vineyard and have a billy of fresh tea and the scones. And in the**

**afternoon it was the same. We used to like that for rest, and sometimes we'd kill a bit of time coming back.**

I didn't ask, what were your Mum's Christian name?

**DB: Gwen.**

**BB: Gwen Thomas.**

**DB: That was her maiden name. Christian name's Gwen—Gwendolyn. Hard worker.**

**BB: She was from Marion. Dad met her somehow. I don't know how.**

**DB: Met her on the Brighton jetty.**

**BB: That's right, yes.**

**DB: But she worked(?) bloody hard. We never stopped. Right? We'd start from January—you'd just finished harvest. Then we'd have to get the grape trays painted and ready, and all the trucks ready for the vintage. So we'd get all the trucks all painted up ready. New clothes—everything—we had. Dad was always on [Max] Schubert's back. He always wanted to get the grapes as early as he could. Him and Schubert were always arguing when the grapes were ripe. *(Laughs)* So, anyway, away we go. We were usually fairly early in the season.**

**BB: About the first week of February we'd pick the Shiraz.**

**DB: Yes, Shiraz would start. That's right. It'd start a bit slow and then in the finish you sort of wind up, and then we'd start picking our own grapes. We'd have all our own trucks loaded. We had four trucks then. We'd go through at four or five o'clock on Monday mornings, through old Reynella up to Magill. So we blocked the whole of bloody Magill up for half the day while we were unloading Dad's trucks. You'd have all the river grapes lined up as well.**

So how old were you fellows at this stage?

**BB: Sixteen.**

**DB: Fifteen when I started as an offsider.**

**BB: First day we got a licence, you did a trip on your sixteenth birthday. I had to wait a day because I was on holidays.**

**DB: I went to town and got my licence. Actually the next day I was carting wheat from Edwardstown Railway Station to Acklands. There was a chaff mill [a grain and fodder merchant] down in Edwardstown. Dad had the contract. We had a truck down there all the time carting chaff and bran and pollard around and all that sort of stuff.**

That chaff, just tell me where was that.

**DB: By Dick Martin's. Do you know where Hills Industries are?**

Yes.

**DB: Just opposite there.**

Near where Dairyvale was.

**DB: Yes, just down the road.**

**BB: The other side.**

Yes.

**DB: They also had a place on Brown Street, which is down Morphett Street. Dad used to cart chaff up there. That was before we remember.**

**BB: Dad farmed some land there at—you wouldn't believe! You would. He had a tractor down there, didn't he, doing some farming.**

**DB: That was where the Castle Inn was.**

**BB: That was Ackland's, wasn't it?**

**DB: No, I don't think it was. Some other guy.**

BB: Was it?

DB: Yes. That was where the Castle Plaza is. That's before my time but I can remember it. We used to farm a lot of land from the Housing Trust on Duncan's. Remember Duncan's?

BB: Yes.

DB: Just around the corner on -

BB: Seacombe Road.

DB: Sturt Road. Then we went on Seacombe Road, where the school is. We farmed all that land there. Then DeRose's. You might've seen that bloke talking on the paper this week—Gordon DeRose. Well, we used to farm all out there. Dad had that right from the early days from this old Gordon DeRose. That's one of his first share-farming customers.

BB: What was his father?

DB: Fred DeRose. His son was Gordon. Anyway, he used to grow garden peas. Then just through the valley, my uncle—they were farmers too. Not so much sharefarmers but all that valley there, they had 100 acres of garden peas in.

This is heading back towards Sheidow's?

DB: Yes. Between Flagstaff Hill Road and South Road where the Flagstaff Hotel is—Behind (east) of the Governor McDonald Hotel, the four brothers – Goof, Donald, Keith and Lindsay Green – grew garden peas.

BB: And they had the bulk of that forest—those pine trees.

DB: That was canning peas though. That was a few years apart. See, he had the garden peas early days before frozen peas came in. They had the garden peas here and then Port Pirie had garden peas. In the early days garden peas were big business. Dad and three of his brothers went together on these garden peas, and my Dad and his older brother used to cart the peas into the market and sell them in the market. The other two brothers used to organise all the pickers. They had heaps of pickers. They made good money out of that. I don't know how long that lasted.

Then the canning peas, just on the top of Tapleys Hill, which was Gardener brand, but we started off with—wasn't Gardener brand. I can't think of—they're out by Scotty's Motel. Anyway, they had contracts—Glen Ellen—on all the canning peas around the place. And Sheidow was right in it. And McDermott. McDermott owned this land behind the Governor McDonald Hotel.

The first year, I was only fifteen, and I was cutting all the pea straw waste out of that place, and old Alan Sheidow, that's Jimmy's father—oh, you know about the Sheidows—he came up in his Studebaker and told me where to take the peas. I had to go across that road to Hallett Cove, nearly down to the bloody sea. Can't miss bloody peas, you know. And it's bloody steep going down there.

Yes, it was an interesting time, but we were always out meeting people all the time. On farms or in the vineyard. We know every winery.

**BB: Dad also had the contract from Tarac to cart marc from all around here at those times. And we'd do that as well. All fork on.**

**DB: Then we converted a grain elevator. You know, used for loading barley, for bulk barley, and then we had front end loaders after that.**

TAPE 1 - SIDE B

You were saying that you knew all the wine people. Tell me a bit about some of the people you met at places like Penfolds at Magill, or down at the Vale. People who you met along the way.

**BB: McLaren Vale Penfolds—first memory—was Tom Sexton.**

**DB: He had a bit of a drink problem.**

**BB: He was very much a gentleman. You know, like how he spoke and that, but he seemed to hit the brandy or something and he'd get a bit moody. We used to have to go and weigh the marc off, and that was the only weighbridge around the town. You'd have to go to his house on a Sunday morning, or Saturday afternoon,**

to get the key and you weren't sure what sort of reaction you were going to get.  
*(Laughs)*

DB: His wife, Madge Sexton, started off the kindergarten there, and he had brilliant kids. I think they're top scientists.

BB: Then there was real old gentleman, Bill Luders.

DB: He ran the place really.

BB: He was, like, assistant manager, but most of the time he was the manager because Tom wasn't always up to it.

DB: They'd get the message that Jeffrey was coming down, or Jeffrey Penfold Hyland was coming down, and they'd have to get Tom out of the way and make some excuse why he wasn't there.

BB: Yes. He didn't seem too bad. But then in those days they seemed to be tyrants to us. Like, you had Jim Ingoldby—old Jim Ingoldby.

DB: Just finish about Penfolds.

BB: You finish it.

DB: You go to Penfolds, you had Bill Luders. He was a really nice, easy-going sort of bloke. Different to a lot of the other blokes you're just going to talk about in a minute. But you had Seaman, another bloke who lived by the—where the almond train is. All these old identities would load the trucks.

I remember the smell of the place. The smell of all the beautiful wine. It was always painted fresh and in immaculate condition. So Dad would go down and he'd put on his grey dustcoat and load the wine and talk about football and all that sort of thing. There was a great camaraderie about that sort of thing.

But Penfolds, a big solid organisation, we remember going in there. All those spiral stairways on the concrete tanks.

We had the run of the place. We had the run of every winery. No oc health and safety or anything like that.

Another thing, Dad used to go into their excise officer—they were dictators those blokes. But they'd have to lock the vat up and take the key into the excise officer. I don't know what else he did all day but, anyway, he put the key to the tanks and the truck in an envelope, put the wax on and sealed it and all that sort of thing.

You carry on.

BB: So then we had Bob Hagley at Hardys.

He was pretty tough, wasn't he?

BB: He ran it like an army camp. There was Cud Kay. He was always a good bloke. And we had Ben Chaffey. He had his days on and off sort of thing. He wouldn't put up with any messing around. And then there was Jim Ingoldby—old Jim.

At Ryecroft.

BB: Yes, Ryecroft.

DB: I've got to tell you a couple of stories about, firstly, Ben Chaffey. We didn't work for those wineries, we worked for Tarac. And Ben's trying to demand that our father [do work for him]—the old man was tired and he'd been working since bloody daylight. So he [father] fired back and put Ben back in his bloody box.

So then we get to see Jim Ingoldby there one day—this old Jim. He drove a Rolls Royce. I think he drove a Rolls Royce then.

BB: He did.

DB: I think he'd had a bad day. He might've been a bit pissed or something. Anyway, we were weighing a truck off on his weighbridge, and he came, 'What the hell are you doing here?' He got into Dad, and Dad said, 'Oh, just weighing the bloody marc'. He said, 'You shouldn't do that'. So Dad said, 'You can jam your weighbridge up your arse'. *(Laughs)*

So a couple of weeks later—it might've been a week later, it was Easter time—we were going to go down to Southern Vales, which is the old Penfolds, to weigh the truck. Next thing, old Jim said, 'Where are you going?' Dad said, 'I can't use your weighbridge'. 'Oh, yes, any time. Just use it any time'. So that's what—but they were nice old guys.

I spoke to Jim two weeks ago.

DB: **This is young Jim.**

Oh, this is his old man.

DB: **His father, yes.**

BB: **Young Jim was a good bloke. They both were.**

DB: **I've got to say that all these old guys—oh, Ben Chaffey. He met Dad over in London—air club. It was a few years later and they were the best of mates.**

**The other one was Bob Hagley. So Bob Hagley used to go to the pub with the old man. And then Bill Vanderluer, the publican—that's in the later years—he used to stand at the door and everyone would be sort of scared of him, but he helped us there. He had another side to him, too.**

Bob Hagley did?

DB: **Yes.**

BB: **The other winery there when I first started was Tatachilla.**

DB: **Crocker.**

BB: **Bill, wasn't it?**

**DB: Bill Crocker.**

This is Stephen Smith & Sons, the old winery?

**BB: Stephen Smith, that's it. I think they had a tie up with TST at Nuri, but we were carting Shiraz.**

**DB: That's later though.**

**BB: Later, was it?**

**DB: Yes. But we did start carting them up before that.**

**BB: When were we carting Shiraz?**

**DB: That was after we started carting out at Kalimna. That would be two or three years after I started carting there.**

**BB: That's 1960.**

**DB: How old were you then?**

**BB: Not very old.**

**DB: See, when Schubert started carting the stuff out of Nuri, well, Tolley started doing a bit too. Go on.**

**BB: We were carting Shiraz from TST at Nuriootpa. They'd throw them on your truck, we'd bring them down to Tatachilla, unload, around to Penfolds, load Shiraz again—their Shiraz—and take them back to Nuri.**

You're talking manufactured wine?

**BB: I'm talking grapes.**

**DB: Picked grapes. (*Laughs*) It's what they're doing now. We carted them both ways.**

**BB: Only it's bulk.**

**DB: What Penfolds used to do—the Pedro grapes. Pedro are very big, you know.**

For sheries and things.

**DB: Yes. They didn't crush any Pedro out at McLaren Vale. They only handled all the reds there. So we'd cart all the Pedro—all the white grapes we'd cart through to Magill. And bloody Pedro, they're that juicy.**

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: You'd go over that Stump Hill, that little hill out of McLaren Vale -**

*(couldn't decipher words)*

**DB: - and grape juice would run out the back.**

The road doesn't go up Stump Hill any more, does it?

**DB: No. See, we had little trucks, with about seventeen ton on a seven ton truck. That's a steep little hill, I tell you. You didn't miss a gear. (Laughs)**

What about people like Johnstons.

**BB: Oh, yes, Johnstons. We had Digby.**

Digby and Alex.

**BB: Lex.**

**DB: Alex we call him. Lex was the old man.**

Digby and Lex were brothers.

**DB: Yes.**

Alex is Lex's son.

BB: Yes.

DB: **We knew Alex and Digby. They're the blokes we dealt with.**

BB: **Old Lex, he used to come around now and again, didn't he?**

DB: **We used to cart the marc there—on the western side—and it was always bloody heavy and juicy.**

BB: **They were always good to get on with.**

DB: **Anyway, they'd come down—I was with my uncle a lot, Dad's brother, and he was a top cricket player—and they'd be talking bloody cricket and all that sort of stuff, which I didn't understand.**

What about Magill? Did you have much to do with Max Schubert?

DB: **A lot, yes. We remember him coming in. Remember his laboratory. Gordon Colquist worked for him, and Gordon Colquist always wore a white coat and everything. And Max, he had a moustache, would come through. He was a pusher, you know. But, anyway, he'd come in there and -**

BB: **He was always in a hurry.**

DB: - he was always in a hurry. He always had his hair cut nicely and everything. He put 9,000 ton through that winery in 1957 or something, the most that's ever been through the winery. He had bloody grape juice running down Magill Road.

BB: We were only going to school then, but Dad carted a load of grapes in there in the morning and he was taking it to Nuri at night as marc. *(Laughs)* How good's that?

DB: Anyway, they'd be working out where the grapes were going to come from, and Dad was always talking to those guys about what grapes had to come, and working out the day to day stuff. So quite often Max would come and have a brandy or a drink. Quite often we were in the laboratory with Max and the old man. This could be pretty late at night. We'd have a ginger ale or a soda. That's all that was there to drink. Bloody soda water!

We got water down here at Morphett Vale. Dad put a couple of bores down. Anyway, [the water] doubled the crop which diluted the colour. Didn't Max go right off about that! Dad had a few arguments with Max over the years.

BB: When was it that Chris Hancock started there?

DB: Chris Hancock went to school with me, and Chris started as understudy to Max.

Did Chris grow up down there?

DB: No.

**BB: Chris went to Urrbrae. Like, his (*couldn't decipher word*) class.**

**DB: He went to Pulteney or somewhere after that I think.**

**BB: He was a bit of a hotshot.**

**DB: Hang on! Chris was the first Roseworthy guy into Penfolds.**

Into Penfolds?

**DB: Yes. John Bird was the last Penfold trained winemaker.**

**BB: Murray Marchant was there.**

Yes, Murray Marchant. That's right.

**BB: He went to Hamiltons after that.**

*(Sounds like, Poor fellow).*

**DB: Schubert was pretty respected by all the people there I think. He used to drink a fair bit.**

**BB: They all did, didn't they?**

**DB: Yes, but he was a bit progressive. We carted all his bloody machinery up to Wybong. I carted all that in 1968. So he was sort of a big man then. Oh, just (*couldn't decipher word*) into Penfolds. When I started to cut these grapes that I was telling you about from Nuri—do you know Magill? Been into Magill?**

**They used to have the weighbridge—the weighbridge is still there. Just up from the weighbridge, on the next corner, they put a wooden barrel inside there. Yes, they put a wooden barrel inside and it went through the grate, straight in. Straight off the truck into this, and they trod it by feet.**

**BB: His experiment.**

Little wheels underneath it, or what?

**DB: No. It was a fairly big vat.**

**BB: It was a shit of a job.**

**DB: He would've had five ton of grapes in there.**

**The other thing that he set up was, up the top, he had this white cellar. He was the bloke that did the white cellar.**

**BB: I thought it was Chris Hancock.**

**DB: No. Schubert started it off at the very top corner. The bloke that used to run it was a jovial sort of a bloke with bib and brace overalls, you know. Jack Modra.**

**BB: Oh, Jack Modra?**

Yes.

**DB: Any rate, so here's the south western corner. He put this white wine cellar in for refrigeration. About the same time as Guenter Prass did it at Orlando. So Schubert was experimenting and put in these bloody overhead tanks that wouldn't work, and then he started carting must. We were carting all this Riesling and Semillon in for his white stuff. You've got to handle that bloody much up the Barossa. So then they probably get so much oxidation, so they started carting in bulk. So we did the first must, put it in tanks, and then we got down here—because all the must floats. So then we'd have to bloody stir it up all the bloody time to pump the stuff into these bloody must tankers. You remember that?**

**BB: Yes.**

So where did you fellows meet Frank Sheppard?

**DB: Frank Sheppard started his apprenticeship at Penfolds Magill. He worked for George Limb, the father of the entertainer, Bobby Limb. Did he tell you that?**

Yes.

**DB: Dad was carting for Penfolds, and Frank was working in Penfolds workshop.**

**BB: As an engineer.**

**DB: And his mate was—probably been told about this—Ken Ward.**

Ken Ward, who's down at Coonawarra.

**DB: He's Frank's best mate. He used to drop him off. He'd drop him off at Romalo, just on the corner, and Frank would come and work up here.**

**So next thing, Sammy Wynn wanted to cart this wine from Romalo to Melbourne, so he offered it to my uncle first. That was Geoff Booth, who used to do all the—they bought the ex Amos vineyards down here on South Road. So he used to deal with Sammy Wynn. So he said, 'Do you want this wine?' My uncle didn't want it so he asked Dad if he wanted it. They didn't want to go interstate, so they, Wynns, set Frank up. He started Frank off to cart through to Melbourne. Frank's probably told you the whole story about that.**

Yes, he has.

**DB: I first remember Frank Sheppard—not to talk to—when he had these trucks. You know, these green trucks. And Dad was saying how these blokes cart to Melbourne. So I remember the trucks early days, and I remember seeing Frank around Penfolds.**

BB: **1952/53, wasn't it?**

DB: **Probably way back. I was still going to high school and that sort of thing.**

Frank was very good with his hands and thinking out engineering stuff. Is that right?

DB: **Yes.**

BB: **And Barbara was good at office work.**

Yes, *(couldn't decipher word)* said that.

DB: **Frank was getting bigger and bigger. For instance, he had two or three trucks and rapidly increased then to 10 trucks.**

BB: **Between that, we wanted to go interstate, didn't we? We went on a few interstate trips. Dad didn't want to do interstate.**

DB: **Actually we started through Frank not being able to handle it.**

BB: **That's right.**

Frank had too much in the end, did he?

DB: **Yes. He got behind with Penfolds.**

**BB: A bloke called Paul Richter.**

**DB: He was three weeks behind, so Paul said how about doing—that wasn't Paul. It was Ed Fletcher then. It was Paul Richter's predecessor.**

**BB: Who was first?**

**DB: Ed Fletcher. Anyway, he said, 'I need spirit into Griffith'.**

This is in the , is it?

**DB: 1963 or '64. You did the first load. No, '64 it was. Because I just got married.**

**BB: I did the first load from Auldana to Sydney.**

**DB: Yes, but you did the first load of spirit, didn't you?**

**BB: I could've. I think I did.**

Was it a different ball game entirely, that interstate move?

**DB: Oh, yes, it was.**

**BB: Certainly was. You know, the trucks weren't that good. They were a bit slow. The roads were a lot of dirt roads then. And you were away from home a fair bit.**

**DB: Frank's trucks only did 35 mile an hour then. Once we got interstate, Frank was our opposition. He didn't like us being in there either. So we got into Penfolds and you started carting because—we started to do some work with Griffith, and Dad said, 'Well, how about some other work?' So you started carting for Penfolds Melbourne, wasn't it?**

**BB: I went to Melbourne, yes. I'll tell you who loaded me, it was John Davoren. And his sidekick was -**

Clem Adams?

**BB: No. A winemaker. I think he died. About the same age as Gordon Colquist. He was assistant winemaker there.**

**DB: At Auldana?**

**BB: Yes. Anyway, I can still see him there. Sandy coloured hair, he had. Loaded the wine to Melbourne, to Victoria Street.**

**DB: Did you come back**

It wasn't Lang, was it?

**BB: No, it wasn't Lang.**

**DB: I can't remember that bloke.**

**BB: He went across to Magill after. Was there for years.**

**DB: Wasn't Murray Marchant, was it?**

**BB: No. He was at Magill.**

**So then the next load I did was to Minchinbury. We swapped around.**

**DB: Brian and I drove the same truck between us. We got a new truck then. The other truck was very slow. So we had two trucks. Frank had about eight or nine trucks and he couldn't handle it. So Frank came down one day, and first of all he said—did he say he was going to push us out?**

**That's right, he saw Dad down at Freighter Trailers, and Frank said, 'I'll push you off the bloody road'. Dad said, 'Well, I've been there before you even bloody started'. So anyway, next thing Frank came down and said, 'I'm that bloody pushed, can you give us a hand?' So we said, 'We'll hold Penfolds and Gilbeys, and we'll help you where we can'. So we started carting into Lindemans then, Marrickville. So we started carting for Frank, and we finished up having five trucks working for Frank. Actually Barb used to give us our orders. So we'd do our work and then say that we can spare a couple of those trucks.**

**So tell me about Barbara. That's Frank's wife, for people that don't know. She was a very good organiser.**

**BB: They had a depot at Brahma Lodge.**

**DB: She was a school teacher, wasn't she?**

**BB: She must've been I think.**

**DB: She was a school teacher?**

I think she might've been.

**DB: She acted like a school teacher. She was very good, wasn't she? She had a brother working there, Brian Green. Her maiden name was Green. Anyway, they'd ring up on Sundays, because they didn't work Saturdays, and say, 'Right-o, we want this truck ready, and that truck ready'. So then we'd have to call in and get our paper work and whatever, and then she'd give us all the rules, where we go into the places and all that sort of stuff, and we just did what we were told. She was very good.**

Did Frank create one of the first stainless tankers?

**BB: Yes, I reckon he did.**

**DB: I don't think he did actually. I think the first stainless tanks were McWilliams—that old Foden truck in Hanwood. I think that was older than his. But anyway, he's right there. Did he tell you it buggered up, too?**

Yes, he did. He had to redesign.

**DB: That's right. He was right there, but I think -**

**BB: Hang on! Did Penfolds have two tankers? They were pretty early.**

**DB: I reckon Dad had the first stainless in '59.**

**BB: But Penfolds had those Fodens.**

**DB: Yes, yes. No, they came from Melbourne. They go back further. They'd be '53 or '54.**

**BB: Everyone had their own trucks. You know, Seppelts and all them.**

**DB: I reckon that one of McWilliams was about the same era as those Penfolds ones. So they get way back. When did he start with Wynns, did he say?**

Yes, he did.

**DB: '52?**

Might've been.

DB: He was one of the pioneers. Yes, you've got to hand that to him.

BB: He was very innovative.

DB: Blokes making tanks and all that sort of thing. Actually we bought some tanks through him. We used to move demountable tanks, and he supplied us with tanks. 1968, Frank was stretched pretty well, and he wasn't paying too well, so we decided to pull up stakes and go by ourselves.

BB: He was at Wynns. You know, started with Wynns. We couldn't get paid.

DB: And we couldn't progress.

BB: Dad rang David Wynn, because he said, 'I've got good grapes here'. He said, 'Oh, have you?' 'I need a bit of transport'.

DB: It was after that.

BB: Was it?

DB: We didn't get that -

*(couldn't decipher word)* your Dad's bargaining *(couldn't decipher word)*.

DB: Oh, yes. When we first broke off from Frank, we didn't have anything. We had Rhinecastle, we had Bleasdale, and D'Arry Osborn stayed with us. So we'd

**have 500 gallons of wine to go to Melbourne tonight, and that's all we had. So we'd go down and get general freight and try and make up the load, and we'd be there in Melbourne or Sydney getting the wine off, and she went from there.**

**BB: Who did we have at Reynells? Haselgrove wasn't there, was he?**

**DB: No.**

*(Couldn't decipher word/s).*

**DB: He wanted to be the big manager. The bloke was Crosby. Then he went to Gilbeys.**

David Crosby?

**DB: Dave Crosby. He was at Gilbeys when I knew him—Gilbeys, Horndale.**

That's correct.

**DB: He used to work at Reynells.**

Do you remember people like Morgan Yeatman?

**DB: Yes. We know Morgan Yeatman since—who got lost? You got lost.**

**BB: No. It'd be Lindsay our younger brother I reckon.**

**DB: Some of the kids got lost. Morgan Yeatman used to live down here. He's a gentleman, that bloke. Anyway, someone got lost. A kid's sister or something. Anyway, he was out looking for her.**

**BB: Who was there? There was John Guinand.**

**DB: No, no.**

**BB: Who was the manager then? It was Guinand, wasn't it?**

**DB: Sorry. Guinand's the first. Can we go back one before that? It was Haselgrove before that, wasn't it? Yes, we knew Guinand.**

At Glenloth?

**DB: No. Emu.**

Emu. That's correct, yes. Haselgrove was involved with that.

**DB: Yes. Colin Haselgrove went from Reynells down to there.**

He was also on Hardys Board at the same time.

**DB: He was on the Board, was he?**

Yes.

**DB: Guinand lived in doctors house on Doctors Road. He had a '60 Chev that he smashed up—a brown Chev.**

Emu had all that beautiful vineyard, worked beautifully. And this old guy, Fred Grohs with his white horse and red cart used to teach pruning for the students at Morphett Vale School. It wouldn't have a weed in it. You'd prune the vines, burn the cuttings, and then you'd plough it and spade it out, and do all your snail baiting. All his work was perfect. Then Guinand came down from the river, and he went to do the river and he saw—he wrecked the vineyard actually. He stopped all the ploughing. The vineyard was a total mess when he came down.

**BB: They pulled it back together after.**

**DB: Yes.**

**BB: And Gillard, he was at Reynells, wasn't he?**

**DB: That was before our time.**

Gillard. Was he dead by the time you would've been there?

**DB: Probably was I suppose.**

**BB: Roy Paddick used to talk about him.**

**DB: We didn't know him. Don Hughes was the winemaker. Reg Turner was in charge of all the bottles. We used to cart a lot of bottles, too. We used to cart bottles by hand from AGM to Reynells and Glenloth. So Don Hughes was the winemaker.**

Don Hughes, yes.

**DB: He had war neurosis.**

**BB: Brian Walsh.**

**DB: Brian Walsh came later, of course. He's our age.**

Walshy was at—where was he first? He was at Reynella.

**DB: We're talking about Reynells, which is now Hardys.**

Yes.

**DB: It's out along the road to Glenloth. And then Bob Robbie owned it.**

Robertson, yes.

**DB: And Morgan Yeatman was the winemaker there afterwards.**

Jim Irvine had actually been there for a short time, too, as a kid.

DB: **Where?**

At Glenloth.

BB: **He was at Hardys.**

DB: **So did Alan Hoey at Glenloth.**

That's right.

BB: **Pam Dunsford.**

Yes, Pam was there.

BB: **Old Robbie, he used to run it like an army camp.**

And Walshy ended up there, too, later on.

DB: **Wolfy? Did he?**

Walshy.

**DB: Wolf Blass used to be at Normans.**

**BB: The first time I met Wolf Blass he was at Woodleys.**

**DB: Oh, yes. We used to do Woodleys, too. Miss Hill—Betty Hill.**

Who was he helping there? Tony Nelson?

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: That's when he first got here.**

**BB: He was probably only twenty-five then.**

Did you know Wolfy was brought out by Ian Hickinbotham at Kaiser Stuhl to make pearl wine?

**DB: Did he bring him out first?**

Yes, he brought him out first. '62 he went -

**BB: Yes, '62. And he worked for Tolleys, didn't he?**

No. That was later. He was the first contract winemaker probably, I reckon.

**DB: How long was he with Kaiser Stuhl?**

About four or five years.

**DB: Oh, that must've been after he worked for Woodleys and at Normans.**

**BB: He had wine all over the shop.**

**DB: We just saw those blokes like Wolfy—I remember him early days I think at Normans, but not really. Just sort of see him there. Then a little more at Tolleys, but we didn't have that much to do with him.**

**BB: We did. We carted a wine into Nuriootpa.**

**DB: Oh, when he got to Tolleys we did.**

**BB: Greenoch, he had wines. He's probably told you the whole story.**

Yes. He was Tollana though, wasn't he? Not Tolleys.

**DB: TST. Yes, that's right.**

**BB: Andrew Garrett used to be the boy at DA Tolley. Used to ring him up.**

**DB: Kym Tolley used to be a Penfold winemaker. Kym's mother was a Penfold-Hyland, a sister to Jeffrey I think.**

**BB: At Nuri, wasn't it?**

**DB: No. Magill. Kym was there -**

**BB: Chris was at Nuri as well.**

**DB: Was he? Okay.**

**BB: Chris Tolley. They must've done their apprenticeship.**

**DB: They were related to a bloody Penfold though, weren't they?**

**BB: Penley Estate.**

*(Couldn't decipher word)* first wife, I think, was a Penfold.

TAPE 2 - SIDE A

NATIONAL WINE ORAL HISTORY.

Interview with Brian and Devron Booth on 20th February, 2003.

Interviewer: Rob Linn.

You're talking about these names as if—obviously you just worked with these people year in/year out.

**DB: That's right, yes.**

You're probably in the industry the only ones that did.

**DB: I think why we got to know them was because we were with Dad as little kids, like five years old, and he'd be talking to Max Schubert or whoever, so we were always there. So we just sort of knew those guys.**

**BB: Brand new memories.**

**DB: Another guy is Jeffrey Penfold Hyland. He's a gentleman. We'd be unloading grapes in those two crushers down in number three and four crushers—and old Jeffrey Penfold would walk through, always dressed very**

dapper, 'Good morning, boys', all that sort of thing. And his nephew would come down, Derek Jolly. He was a racing driver and he got smashed up over in Europe at one stage, but he was always thinking about something else. You know, he was preoccupied. But Jeffrey was a great guy. He always got on very well with his staff and they thought the world of him.

You're talking about all these really quite fascinating people. You know, the Hagleys and those sort of people. When did the big changes start occurring in the industry where it became much more, well, this is the way we're going to do it?

DB: 1970 I reckon.

BB: Yes, I reckon it was like a management change that came over quietly like the seasons. Bob Hagley, Ingoldby, Tom Sexton, Bob Robbie, they ruled with fists type people, and then the new guys came in. Like a relation change.

DB: Also, what I think, a lot of the families had been battling, you know. The Penfolds, the Gramps and the Seppelts, they'd all be going fairly well, but all of a sudden—see, the grapes picked up in the 60's. Like, in the late 60's the baby boomers came on line.

BB: The big thing was the Common Market, wasn't it?

DB: Yes. They used to export—just fortified—then all of a sudden they had to do their own labels. They had to gear up bottling lines—all this sort of thing.

BB: '60 whatever it was.

**DB: No, '60, Common Market.**

Yes, that's when a lot of the -

**DB: Killed the export. Full stop.**

Yes. So the fruit and the peas and the stuff from (*couldn't decipher word*) all went, didn't it? The export stuff.

**DB: That's right.**

**BB: And Emu Wine.**

**DB: So what these boys had to do was get themselves up. Like, D'Arenburg had to get his own label. It all cost money. But because they spent a lot of money getting all this up, that's my opinion, they were getting pretty stretched by the 70's. So the next thing they all started to go. They all started to sell out.**

Orlando -

**DB: Yes. That was Reckitt and Colman. Penfolds was Tooths. Glenloth and Ben Chaffey, first it went to Siegers(?) and then it went over to Tooheys. Wynns went to Tooheys. Who else was there?**

**BB: Seppelts. Who did they sell -**

Saltrams went.

**DB: Yes, Saltrams went to Dalgetys. Then at the same time Dalgetys took out Rossettos. All that happened in the 70's. And, of course, Reynells. Reynells sold out to Rothmans. So it was a big sell-out time then. Then as you see in the 80's, it happened again. They sort of rolled it over again. And it's happening again now, too, isn't it?**

Did it affect your business at all?

**DB: We were still carting up to the 60's and then we saw that expand very quickly about 1971/72. We were very inexperienced, coming off a farm, never had any books or anything like that. So we nearly came undone. I took over in 1968. Brian came home in '69.**

So when did your Dad retire? '68?

**DB: Out of trucks, yes, effectively. He still owned half the trucks. He didn't want to have anything to do with them. He always said that we'll go down. He said, 'You'll never do any good out of trucks'.**

Anyway, so we effectively ran it. We treated it as if it was our own, but there was nothing formal. Anyway, it looked like going bad so a bloke, Brian Flynn, came from All Trans TNT and talked to us, and he said, 'How're going? You look pretty good. All your trucks look good. Interested to sell it out?' And we said, 'Bloody oath we would'. When he looked at our books he said, 'You're not going too good. I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll give you an accountant for a week or so and show you what you

should be doing'. So we had an accountant. He showed us how to get a profit and loss out every month and so on. So we cut our fleet back and we struggled on from there.

*(Tape restarted)*

DB: So, yes, we got ourself back. It was 1971/72 when Alltrans came and -

BB: Frank Sheppard sold in '70, didn't he?

DB: Was it '70 he sold out, was it? Or '71 or '72?

BB: Somewhere there.

DB: We thought we were going to go too, but we got ourselves straight and then we kept going. In '75—we knew what we were doing by that time—we then had another hard period. What we did then—we should've gone into tankers. But, anyway, we'd come from -

*(Tape restarted)*

DB: So we started off with two interstate trucks in 1964, and we had about twenty-five/thirty by 1975. So we had about thirty.

BB: We didn't really have our office work up to scratch.

**DB: No, I told him that.**

You can blame that on your Dad, can you?

**BB: Oh, yes. *(Laughs)***

**DB: We did some things that some people say you couldn't do, but we just did it because we didn't know we couldn't do it.**

**BB: We did the coal-face stuff. Like, Southern Vales when they wanted to take tanker wine to Sydney. One tank's only quarter of a load—like, straight away. We'd grab it. We'd never say no. Never ever say no.**

**DB: Probably didn't make any money out of it, but we got a good name out of it.**

**Also we covered insurance. We didn't know we couldn't cover insurance. *(Laughs)* We had that on our insurance. The insurance company was a bit naive as well.**

**But what happened when Frank sold out? They bought McGlashans and Sheppards and bought a couple of milk transport companies. This is United Transport. Their manager goes into Leo Burings, which is part of Lindemans—we hadn't done much work for them, only for Frank.**

This is up at -

**DB: John Vickery [at Burings]. He didn't like—Sheppards weren't fussy enough with their tanks, so he got us in. He would only use Booth.**

BB: To Sydney.

DB: So we had to get our tanks immaculate. He was a perfectionist.

BB: Actually that's right. 1972, who was—Phil Laffer, wasn't it?

DB: Yes. In Sydney.

BB: And he would say—there'd be no mucking around—'I want forty loads in from Corowa'. Or something like that. And bang! Hang up.

DB: Yes. This bloke would ring us up and say, 'I want seventeen loads out'. 'Okay, okay'. We had all demountable tanks, and we should've bought tankers then. But then we were struggling. We'd go to Sydney and we'd lift all the tanks off and put drums on, which did us good in the long run. We started getting our general freight built up. So 1975 we were going pretty rough. We had twenty prime movers, didn't we?

BB: Something like that.

DB: To finish up we pulled half off the road, and we couldn't sell them, so we finished trading twelve on seven brand new ones. So we kept new trucks and we used subcontractors. So that helped our profit no end. So we kept working through -

Did you say that the 'subbies' were the drivers themselves?

**BB: No. Say you've got twenty trucks and you've got forty loads, you just get subcontractors. Ring an agent and say that you want twenty trucks. They might bring a load in from Melbourne for other companies.**

**DB: And then you've got some blokes who work for you every week.**

So you only kept a few of your trucks?

**DB: Yes.**

**BB: We're still the same today. We've still got 'subbies' today.**

**DB: We've got blokes who'll come every Tuesday or whatever, and they'll load— see, you'd have more going one way than the other way.**

In 1982, what happened then was that Sheppards bought McGlashans from Mildura, and this Tom McGlashan started straight off with another company, Nangiloc wine tankers, with his daughter and son-in-law, pretty well immediately, and they built up another seventeen wine tankers. And they took Lindemans and Orlando. People didn't like the monopoly of Uniteds having all the wine, so we got a bit. And then Nangiloc got this prime -

What was their name?

**DB: Nangiloc. McGlashans.**

**BB: There's a town called Nangiloc.**

Oh, yes, I know it.

**DB: Anyway, they got that one. So they carried on until 1982. And Lindemans had just got Karadoc going. So they moved all this wine to Sydney. Nangiloc was pretty bloody shrewd—I reckon that he knew what was going on. So next thing they sell out again to Uniteds. They bought them out again, and about less than twelve months later they closed the bloody place in Sydney. Anyway, when they bought Nangiloc out again, Sheppards got back about 80% of the wine, didn't they?**

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: There was Cinzano going in from Griffith to Sydney. Penfolds. Nangiloc. Wynns. Seppelts. All these big people you know. So the next thing, they sell out and they went to Orlando. United said, 'Up go your rates 20%'. So this is Mark Tummel. Anyway, Mark didn't like being told that, so Mark Tummel got on to us. He said, 'Come in, I want to talk to you'. I said, 'We can't cut that price'. He said, 'You can do it this way'. And he encouraged us and got us going with Orlando.**

So did you go into tankers at that point?

**BB: Tankers in '79—the first one.**

DB: '79? I thought it was '77, the first one. That white one—the Cummins(?).

BB: It was '77, was it?

DB: I think it was '77 or '78. It was '77.

BB: Number one it was.

DB: Ran one tanker around for a couple of years.

That was a stainless?

BB: Still going, yes. Oh, we've modified it. *(Laughs)*

DB: We've got Frank's tankers still going, too.

BB: Anyway, what we did was -

DB: By 1982 we would've had half a dozen tankers. Then Tom Fitzgerald from Sheppards jammed the rate up on Orlando, on Mark Tummel. So Mark got us in and he gave us a bloody percentage to get some opposition. Then away we went. So we started at Orlando.

BB: Adsteam bought Penfolds.

That was Adsteam?

BB: Yes.

DB: Course, Wynns changed. We used to do Wynns Nunawading. We got all the Wynns back. We had the Wynns for years. We got back with them about 1970, so we've been with Wynns a long time. And we did Seppelts soon after.

BB: From Rutherglen.

DB: We did half of Seppelts. All these companies gave us a share to keep Sheppard honest.

We carried on into the 80's, and then, as I mentioned earlier, Cinzano decided to pull—everyone pulled back and centralised their bottling lines. Besides that Penfolds, the Southcorp group, which is about twelve companies with about twenty-five bottling lines, came back to three bottling lines. So everything was contracting. And Sheppards let their good manager go. That was Tom Fitzgerald. He knew the job. They put him somewhere else and got another manager. But, anyway, they couldn't come down but we were coming up, so it was very opportune. So 1988 we bought six tankers, a million dollars worth -

BB: No, more tankers than that.

DB: Anyway, we bought a heap of tankers but we were pretty stretched. We didn't want any more tankers, so we thought Brian would have to go and see United.

BB: About this time in the season we had a lot of work on. We didn't have enough tankers. I was in Melbourne and I saw other tanker blokes to hire tankers. No, they're all too dear. So I thought, oh, bugger it, I'll ring up Geoff Sunstrom. He was the manager in Melbourne for Uniteds up here. So I rang him up and said, 'You haven't got any tankers to hire, have you?' He said, 'Come around and see me'. Oh, shit, this is okay. I went around and saw him, 'How would you like the whole lot? Depot up at Tanunda, and everything?' I said, 'I'll have to have a think about it'. *(Laughs)*

DB: Biggest deal we ever did.

BB: We got it, and it wasn't much, was it?

DB: 750,000.

BB: And the property. I rang him back—I felt a bit guilty—and I said, 'There's a full crop of grapes on there ready to pick'. 'Oh, no, don't worry about them'. It was about thirty grand—straight off. Just put them straight in and got the money.

DB: What happened was the United group—you know, everything's happening in the 80's. And these guys are going to do a management buy-out for about thirty million I think. I think it might've been even less than that. They thought they had it in the bag I think. So I think they got a bit of sour grapes. *(Laughs)*

BB: Well, we had 80%, just like that.

Really?

**BB: 80% of the wine in Australia.**

**DB: Went from twenty-five to fifty tankers in one afternoon.**

**BB: Brian Hahn had sold out previously, and he just had one or two tankers, didn't he?**

**DB: Yes. Had he started then, had he?**

**BB: Remember we were going to buy his tanker? He didn't have any work at that time.**

*(Couldn't decipher words), did it?*

**DB: No. That's the best deal we ever did. And then we bought another thirty-seven secondhand tankers off them since then.**

**BB: And fixed them all up. They looked like brand new ones. Got them for thirty grand.**

Did this coincide with the growth in table wine, do you think?

**BB: I was just going to go back to that. In the 60's it was red, wasn't it?**

**DB: No, no. Was it red first, or white first?**

**BB: And then did it go to white in the 70's?**

**DB: Hang on! I reckon it was white first. Riesling and all that sort of stuff. Because you had Semillon from there, and then Guenter Prass was in all that. Then the red came in in about '68 I reckon.**

**BB: That's right, yes. And then we had—I'm not sure of the order—champagne. When did that come in?**

Early 80's.

**BB: And then the coolers. Were they big!**

**DB: The coolers were back in '75.**

No, no. Coolers were early 90's/late 80's.

**DB: Is that right? Okay.**

**BB: And then that dropped off.**

**DB: The coolers were huge.**

*(Couldn't decipher words)* overnight just go basically?

**DB: Yes, disappeared. They still do a lot of cooler though.**

**BB: And the reds, they were grubbing the vines out in the 80's.**

'85.

**BB: Paying you to grub them out.**

What did you do with the block that you inherited from United that had the grapes on?

**BB: Still got it. It's still there.**

Where's this? Tanunda?

**DB: Yes, Tanunda. Pull more vineyards out to put more tanker parking there.**

**BB: How many acres?**

**DB: Seventeen acres.**

**BB: And we planted some vineyard two or three years ago, and now we've had to grub some of the old ones out. There is a tank farm on there but that belongs to A & G.**

**DB: Simeon and A & G, which is -**

Ron Potter.

**DB: No. The other bloke.**

**BB: Ron Potter, isn't it?**

**DB: No. His partner.**

**BB: The pilot bloke?**

**DB: What's his partner?**

I only know Glen (*couldn't decipher name*), the manager up there.

**DB: No. This is Ron's partner.**

**BB: I was talking to him the other day.**

**DB: Is it Neil? Noel?**

**BB: Previous to this United thing, we owned a depot up in Nuriootpa and we had it at Tarac. And the manager—now our manager—was the manager at Sheppard United, and he came across to us because he'd had enough of them. And within**

twelve months of him leaving, he was back in the same office that he was twelve months ago, with all the drivers and everything. So he only left temporarily.  
*(Laughs)*

Since that time when you took over United's block up there, has it just been growing for you?

DB: All the time. We look back as far as 1968 and we've had at least 10% growth every year. Sometimes bigger.

BB: But wine cartage is still only 34% of the turnover—oh, when was it we bought the milk carting?

DB: '92.

BB: '92, we bought another company in Deniliquin.

DB: I'll tell you why. See, the vintage is February/March/April, and we always had a lot of trucks stopped—we still do. 50/60 tankers stop. You know, they're used just for vintage. They might get used—part—through the year, but then October/November/December that's the peak on the milk. We always try to get in the milk, to just get another three months of heavy going.

Anyway, looked to this guy in Deniliquin for about four years. He had four single tankers, going to Sydney. Looked at him, and we couldn't do any better than what he was doing so we applied for a B-double permit to that area, and when we got the B-double permit we went and bought him. So to finish up we had eighteen B-doubles carting milk—100 million litres of milk a year. And now it's

**deregulation it's just come back again, so you've got about the same volume back again haven't you?**

**BB: Now, though, it's slack, so they're on to the wine.**

**DB: So we've got a depot at Deniliquin now.**

So you just cross clean them and -

**DB: Yes. Now the winery wouldn't have in-place cleaning for years, and now they've accepted in-place cleaning—like, milk. I don't know why but for years we couldn't use—they weren't interested in spray balls left in the tankers. So you're still working on that steadily down there, putting in-place cleaning in tanks.**

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: I've retired from the wine. I've sold that to Brian.**

Brian, you've thought about in-place cleaning. What does that actually mean?

**BB: It means you've got spray balls in place all the time.**

**DB: In each department.**

**BB: And when you come to your cleaning place, you just hook a hose on to the one point, turn the taps on and that just cleans them without—if you haven't got**

**it, you've got to manually put balls in at each manhole. So then it just drains out. Twice as quick.**

**DB: We used to use a caustic solution. Now we use a high pH.**

What's the biggest change you fellows have seen in the wine industry over the many years you've been involved? Is it that move to the more corporate structure?

**BB: I reckon.**

**DB: And centralisation. Penfolds, Hardys, Seppelts, they all had bottling places at every town. So they've brought that back to centralisation. Quality(?) control.**

**BB: Yes, they had bottling in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane.**

**DB: Now you've got the big fellows like Hardys going twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We do a lot of two-way loading, which will probably change again I think this year. Like, to Rosemount in the Hunter, and we go to de Bortoli in Griffith, and then we bring Orlando back from that way. So we've got two-way loading. Oh, we do Wolf Blass up to Mildura and come back with Orlando. A lot of two-way loading. It's pretty good the way it's worked out.**

**BB: Similar to when we were carting those Shiraz. (Laughs)**

*(couldn't decipher words)* when you were very young.

**DB: Then we cart big loads. Like, B-double loads, as everything's coming through—39,000 litres and all that sort of thing. Compared to the early days—9,000.**

**BB: Now they even get wine from Perth. We never used to do that. Go over and bring it all back.**

This is across the Nullarbor?

**BB: Yes.**

**DB: They're very fussy. They're very fussy on control. You know, the control of the wine. The other one is insulation. Penfolds had black tanks when we first started. Then it was a lot of white tanks. You see all these developments. What else can I say?**

**BB: The last few years the export's been the big thing. We're supposed to be doing fifty containers every day from here to Port Adelaide/Outer Harbour for BRL.**

**DB: Five B-doubles, yes.**

Fifty containers a day?

**BB: Only done that a few days. It's back to thirty/forty a day. But when you work it out—like, each container's got 20,000 litres in it.**

**DB: 23,000 litres I think.**

**BB: No. Pallets.**

**DB: Sorry.**

**BB: 1200 cartons—about 16,000 litres. You take fifty of them, is 3 to 400,000 litres of bulk has got to come in here every day. So we bring that in as well.**

You were saying, Devron, that you sold out to Brian.

**DB: Yes.**

And Brian, you've got your boys all involved.

**DB: That's right, yes.**

**BB: Oh, they've been involved since they left school. That's sort of taken over, you know.**

**DB: We've got half a dozen warehouses around here, including the big barrel warehouse at McLaren Vale. So we built all those. Actually I sort of built them on—so I've just sort of taken all that section. And I've got the barrel warehouse at Hardys, and I've got a lot of warehouses here. My son does a safety rail system**

**for tankers—you know, the hand rails. So we sell them. I just go around selling them for something to do.**

So who's got the easy job?

**BB: He's got less worry. At this point of time. I've got to worry about the fuel, you know. That's going up enough.**

**DB: The winery's paying that.**

**BB: Not quite yet. (*Sounds like, But what's she going to do?*) They're on a weekly price. Only went up one cent for next week, thank Christ.**

I just want to say thank you very much to you both for talking to us. It's been excellent.