

KALAMUNDA & DISTRICTS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ORAL HISTORIES

A MEMOIR

HARRY HONNOR





HARRY HONNOR

About age 16, circa 1912



HONNOR FAMILY

L-R (adults): Harry Honnor, Unice (Netta) Honnor (n.Ames)

L-R (children): Maxwell Honnor, George Honnor, circa 1923

An interview of Mr Harry Honnor was conducted by an unknown interviewer, October 1967 on behalf of the Kalamunda and Districts Historical Society.

This summary of the original interview was prepared on behalf of the Bill Shaw Oral History Group



Boonooloo Orchard property (11 acres) Orange Valley Road, Kalamunda was purchased by John Honnor in March 1916, (the house in this photo is where 10 Francis Road is today), circa 1916/1917. The Honnor family lived here from 1916 to approximately 1928

Born 13 November 1896, Harry was a frail child and referred to as 'the Kalamunda Squib.' By age seventeen he had built strength and worked with his father on the horse and dray.

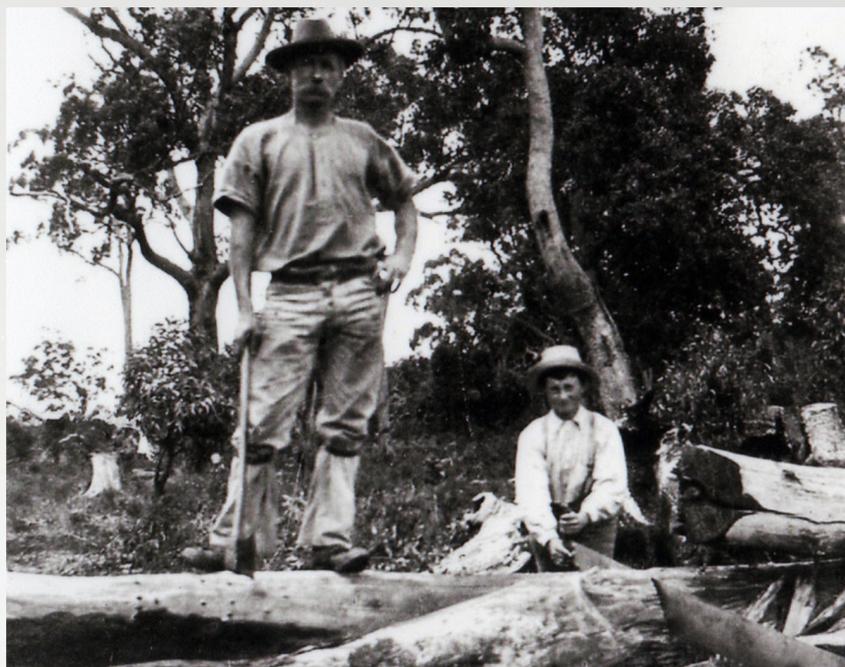
Harry and his parents originally lived near the train station. His dad simply picked a spot and built a humpy out of upright slabs of bush timber. Nobody ever questioned why it was there.

The Kalamunda Sunday school was held in the bush alongside Boonooloo Road before it was moved to the first church built in Central Road. The first school was located in School Street, Green Gables. When it was demolished the school moved further down the road. Harry attended school with 45 children who were taught by two teachers.

The schoolmaster was a great teacher but ultimately sacked because of his problem with alcohol. He once told Harry "You can learn if you want to but you're too darn lazy". He even offered to teach Harry and his two friends at night school but because they kept turning up late he stopped helping them.

Harry picked wildflowers and sold them to train passengers on Sundays. Once he sold a bunch to Sam Burkhardt who mistakenly gave him a sovereign instead of sixpence. When he told Sam of his mistake he was given an additional sixpence for his honesty.

Harry said Sam was not a man to be reckoned with. When Stan Hummerston threw a cricket ball that went down Sam's chimney, landing on eggs he was cooking Sam went looking for him at the pub. Stan's father, the publican, took Sam by the seat of the pants and threw him out and onto the road. Sam was unable to return to the pub again so would ask Harry to go and buy his whisky for him.



L-R: Henry (John) Honnor, standing on log, Harry Honnor, with saw Kalamunda, circa 1909



Harry Honnor (carrying log) with younger brother, Jack Honnor, collecting wood in Kalamunda bush, circa 1927



L-R: Unice (Netta) Honnor (n. Ames), Harry Honnor Kalamunda, circa 1935

PEOPLE AND PLACES IN THE EARLY 1900'S

There was a hundred acres all told from Lewis Road up to Lawnbrook with only three houses built there.

Built around 1872, Villa Maria was bought by Billy Haynes for 750 pounds. He bought it off a postcard and it was considered very expensive for a house that size. Mr Haynes sold it to Mr Sanderson around the time the Duke and Duchess came to WA in the early 1900s.

Dick Brady and Mr Wheelwright had a boarding house for men at the back of Villa Maria. Mr Wheelwright made jam and called

on Harry to stir the jam when his teacher was having one of his 'drinking' days. The Church took over Villa Maria after World War II and it was finally demolished in 1967.

Miriam Lodge on Canning Road was originally a private house owned by Bill Wright. It was turned into a boarding house by Mr Matthews and later taken over by the Girls Friendly Society.

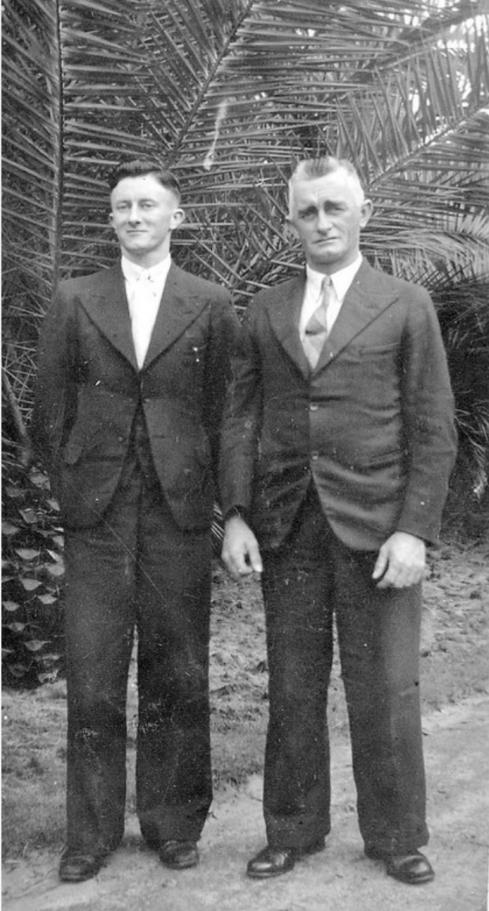
James Murray worked at Guppy's Mill, probably located along what is now Stanhope Road. He had a serious accident with the circular saw, cutting himself from his forehead almost down to his nose. As there were no doctors or cars they put him in a sulky and drove him down to Guildford for help.

The mill closed in 1917.

L-R: Harry Honnor, Unice (Netta) Honnor (n. Ames) Kalamunda, circa 1938

Harry Honnor with tiger snake Kalamunda, circa 1948





L-R: Maxwell and Harry Honnor, circa 1945



Lesmurdie Falls, circa 1920



Harry Honnor, Kalamunda, circa 1952

HARRY THE LARRIKIN

Harry was a self confessed larrikin and played many practical jokes on unsuspecting people.

He once overheard a man say that if a tiny stone was to hit a man on the head from 30 feet, it would hurt. He tested this theory by dropping a stone three times bigger on his father's head while he was working down a well.

He also set his father's hair alight to save him going to the barbers. He tried to singe the hair with a candle while his father was laying lino in the humpy. His father challenged Harry to try and hit him with a Shanghai Pouch but regretted this when Harry got him on the ear.

There was a pensioner by the name of Ned Green who was a tough old man. When Ned got too full of drink he'd go to the railway line and sleep alongside a couple of logs.

Harry found Ned's pipe one night and mixed manure with the tobacco. Ned put the pipe in his mouth upside down so the mix fell out and Ned discovered Harry's trick. He nearly knocked Harry's head off.

Another time Harry found Ned's pipe on the window sill and thought he would try again. This time he placed a pinch of gun powder in the pipe to see what would happen but Ned refused to smoke his pipe and put it in his pocket instead.

Harry never found out if Ned smoked it and what actually happened.

L-R: Peggy Honnor (n.Locke), Wendy Weir (n. Honnor), George Honnor, Janice Honnor, Thomas Weir, Harry Honnor, 23 Patricia Road, Kalamunda, circa 1967





L-R: Harry Honnor, George Honnor In Harry's orchard/vegie garden harvesting Canadian pumpkins, Orange Valley Road, Kalamunda, March 1972

ALL IN A DAYS WORK

Harry worked for many years on the stones which were quarried from wherever they could be found. He earned three shillings a ton for gravel, four shillings for soft stone and four shillings and threepence for hard stone.

Sometimes he would find gravel and just pick it, other times he would have to use the hammer and gavel to break down the stone. To be sure he met timeframes he had to work flat out. It was then shovelled into the railway trucks and sent down to Perth, Belmont or Claremont.

He also worked in the pits using his horse and dray. He would pull down a ton of stone and shovel it into the dray, take it to the truck, shovel it into the rail truck and be back in the pit in an hour. It was hard daily toil but he seemed happy doing what he considered good, healthy work.

Around 1930 Harry moved to wood chopping using an axe and carting the wood with his horse and dray. He changed jobs because there were no stone orders at that time.

Harry had an orchard in Orange Valley Road, Kalamunda. He dug 650 holes, five foot long and two foot deep to plant his fruit trees.

Each hole was filled with bones acquired from the butcher and used as fertiliser for the trees. He managed to get around ten bags of bones a week. Sometimes it was a hundred degrees in the sun when he was digging those holes, it was pretty hot.

During the depression he decided to sell his small house and seven acre property for 650 pounds. A prospective buyer from Perth thought the property was too far out in the bush and said that Harry would never be able to sell it.

In the 1960s some of the quarter acre blocks were bringing 7,000 each.



Harry Honnor with wood cut and ready for delivery, Kalamunda, circa 1940s

Four Generations of Honnors



Back row, standing, L-R Eliza Honnor (nee Rich), George Honnor, Peggy Honnor (nee Locke), Maxwell Honnor,
Front row, L-R, Harry Honnor, John Honnor holding baby Wendy, February 1944



HARRY
HONNOR

CELEBRATING HIS 94TH
BIRTHDAY

ARMADALE

13 NOVEMBER 1990

Cover photo: Netta Honnor (nee Ames) and husband Harry Honnor
in Hackett's Gully, Kalamunda, circa. 1935

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Readers of this memoir should bear in mind that
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