

BMC – Leyland Australia Heritage Group

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWEE : Owen McDonald

TAPE NUMBERS :

INTERVIEWER : Jennifer Cornwall

BMCLA JC19 & 20

INTERVIEW DATE : 20th January 2002

NUMBER OF TAPES : 2

RESTRICTION ON USE : (as stated in Release Form)

INTERVIEW TAPE LOG

This interview took place at: Owen McDonald's home at
29 Hocking Ave, Earlwood, NSW

on 20th January 2002.

This log was prepared using a Sony Stereo Cassette-Corder TC – I46A recorder by N. Prescott.

This interview is part of the Oral History Project of the BMC – Leyland Australia Heritage Group.

Tape Log.

| Tape : BMCLA : JC19, Side A | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| COUNT | SUBJECT | NAMES & KEYWORDS |
| | <i>(Note error in tape referring to it as JC18 in lieu of JC19)</i> | |
| 0 50 100 | Born Earlwood, Sydney 1933. Apprentice with Email, Zetland as draughtsman. Then employed at Email, Auburn. Describes job. 1958 started at BMC as Time-study Engineer under Frank Holmes and Bob Bull, Chief Time-study Engineer. Describes job. Was also part way through part-time Engineering degree at Uni. of NSW. Describes example study of fitting car seats. Assembly was a mechanical handling problem. Mechanisation rather than automation. | Email Frank Holmes. Bob Bull Time -study |
| 150 200 | Describes conveyors, on-line and off-line and Assembly tracks. Skills needed in design of fixtures. Assembling 3 or 4 types of car on one track. Aim for minimum walking-time by operators. No more than 1 minute per cycle. | Conveyors. Assembly-Tracks. |
| 250 300 | 1959/60 appointed Planner for CAB under Vic Williams. Describes job and differences between Product, Works, Manufacturing and Planning Engineering functions. Comparison of fixture costs and salaries. Planner responsibility for Building Manual covering Stores instructions, conveyor loadings, work procedures, tools and parts needed. Describes Planning Dept. organization, tool design and prototype building. | Vic Williams. Engineering functions. Planner function. Build-manual |
| 350 400 | 1960/61 moved to Fisher & Ludlow Planning for a year during which he completed his Mechanical Engineering degree which led to his later appointment as Assistant Mechanical Superintendent in Works Engineering, where he served for 4 years. Describes Fisher & Ludlow operations as a Body-builder and manufacturer of conveyors. Describes UK operations of F & L, Austin, Morris and Pressed Steel Co. Also other Body-supply Companies to Vauxhall and Ford in UK. | Fisher & Ludlow. Austin. Morris. Pressed Steel. Vauxhall. Ford. |
| 450 500 | Describes influence of F & L in Australian Body production. Expertise also brought in from GMH Pagewood – Les Alterator and Tom Green. Describes early history of GMH assembly at Marrickville and Five-Dock. Describes his feelings during time at BMC till leaving in 1971. Satisfaction with challenges and opportunities to apply knowledge from University to a practical situation. Examples – building a boiler-house and an electro-coat paint shop. | GMH. Les Alterator. Tom Green. University v. Practical |
| | End of Side A. (continued on JC 19, Side B.) | |

| Tape : BMCLA : JC19, Side B | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| COUNT | SUBJECT | NAMES & KEYWORDS |
| 0 50 | Describes F & L facilities – mechanical hands, conveyors between presses, under floor scrap conveyors. Re-layouts for new models. Describes reason for leaving BMC was P76. Plant needed changes to take larger body. Shortage of funds limited action taken. Caused 100% reworking. John Wallis inherited problem. | Press-shop technology. John Wallis |
| 100 150 | Fewer panels in P76 meant cheaper to make and a lighter car. Problem was lack of “fine-tuning” into production. Refers to toolmaker skills shortage. Moved back to Planner for CAB 1& 2 in 1965. Describes whole Planning Dept, under Wallis, including Ron Moss, Geoff Mortimer, George Deeley, Peter Davey and Ray Ephraim. | Toolmakers. Ron Moss. Geoff Mortimer. George Deeley. Peter Davey. Ray Ephraim. |
| 200 250 | Describes other sources of skills. De Havilland people – Frank Holmes, Andy Devine, Vince Cummins, Cloyd Carter. Describes material handling system. Commonwealth Aircraft people – Eric Rodham, Kern Bigwood, Crawford Watson and Tom Jessop, Master of Apprentices similar to the Longbridge Apprentice system which included Dave Beech, Bill Robinson and Norm Prescott. | De Havilland:- Frank Holmes, Andy Devine, Vince Cummins, Cloyd Carter. Commonwealth Aircraft:- Eric Rodham, Kern Bigwood, Crawford Watson, Tom Jessop. Longbridge:- Dave Beech, Bill Robinson, Norm Prescott. |
| 300 | Email also provided Phil Pierce, John Buckley, George Robbins, Bob Bull and Ron Bitmead. Describes Buckley and Robbins collaborative association. Tells story of Factory-floor Quality Control, Fred Stuart, relationship with Bitmead statistical management approach. | Phil Pierce, John Buckley, George Robbins, Bob Bull, Ron Bitmead, Fred Stuart. |
| | GMH provided Bill Abbott, Bill Serjeantson and Reg Fulford. Story of Abbott’s interest in steam-locomotive performance. Chrysler supplied Jim Brothers, Ian Lovegrove and the Hardy brothers Graham and Peter. Story on different stature of Lovegrove and Graham Hardy supposedly influencing body designs. | GMH:- Bill Abbott, Bill Serjeantson, Reg Fulford. Chrysler:- Jim Brothers, Ian Lovegrove, Graham and Peter Hardy. |
| 400 500 | Describes evolution of Manufacturing Engineering appointments. Cliff Vincenti, Works Engineer returned to UK. Phil Pierce, Norm Humphries, John Wallis and Dave Beech. Story of Owen McDonald, Ron Moss and Peter Davey working relationship as Factory Planners under the Wallis management regime. | Cliff Vincenti, Phil Pierce, Norm Humphries, John Wallis, Dave Beech, Owen McDonald, Ron Moss, Peter Davey |
| | End of Side B. (continued on JC 20, Side A.) | |

Tape Log.

| Tape : BMCLA : JC20, Side A | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| COUNT | SUBJECT | NAMES & KEYWORDS |
| | (continued from JC19, Side B) | |
| 0 50 100 | Describes the status of a Planner as a craftsman. Anecdote re a job appointment involving Frank Grant, George Deeley and Stan Bryant. Description of Unit Plant equipment and technology. Anecdotes involving working relationship of Jim Hill and Bill Robinson. Also on the Charles Wilkins and Norm Humphries relationship. Details of job functions and specialists sent from UK to build factory. | Frank Grant, George Deeley, Stan Bryant. Unit Plant. Jim Hill, Bill Robinson, Charles Wilkinson, Norm Humphries. |
| 200 | Describes the assembly of Clearing 144 Presses in F & L by Lou Elliott. Also installation of Paint Shop by Carrier Engineering and Assembly tracks by King Conveyors. John Buckley first joined Company in the Unit Plant. Describes the Plant hierarchies. | Clearing 144. Lou Elliott. Carrier Engineering. King Conveyors. John Buckley |
| 250 | Describes the organization and personalities in Plant Maintenance – Dempsey, Underwood and Summerfield. Further description of the problems with the John Buckley management style. | Dempsey. Underwood. Summerfield |
| 300 | Describes the extensions made to the Press-shop, CAB Paint-shop and Engine Assembly. Also building a new Boiler-house and the new Office Block on Dowling Street. | Extensions. Boiler-house. Office Block |
| 350 | Left BMC in 1971 and returned to Email working on large freezer equipment. Records satisfaction in time with BMC, particularly with jobs on boiler-house and installing extensions. Describes emergency projects with Rankine & Hill and Sydney Steel. Also another critical task, completing a new wheel-paint oven in time for production start. | Rankine & Hill. Sydney Steel. Wheel-paint. |
| 400 | End of Side A. End of interview. | |