

Lorna Parke

Transcript from an interview by Liz Duell, for the Jindivick Progress Association, on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014 in Jindivick, Victoria, Australia.

### 1. How long have you lived in Jindivick?

81 years. I came here in 1933, when I was ten years old.

We lived in Melbourne where Dad, Lieutenant A.G. Pretty, worked in Historical Records with the Armed Infantry Forces. We spent about six months in Sydney in 1925 when Dad was in charge of shifting the Australian War Museum to Sydney. Later we went to Shepparton for one year in 1932.

Dad had a business with the catchy advertising line "Pretty the P man, pickles, pegs and pie mixture, peanut butter, puddings and paste."

My grandparents, the Petshack family, lived at Jindivick. We used to visit them, and then we moved to Jindivick to live on the family farm. Dad was a sharefarmer on the property. He also used to do the books for Mr Gillet who ran the Jindivick Store, and then he bought the business from Mr Gillet.

### 2. What are your earliest memories of growing up in this area?

The school residence was built in 1935. Prior to that the teacher lived on the edge of the town. Mr Rathbone was the Head Teacher. Their dog, Jacko, often came to school and ate the children's lunch out of their bag. Mrs Rathbone always replaced their lunch as she was very embarrassed. Her lunches were so good that nobody minded when Jacko helped himself to their packed lunch.

The school motto was: "Good, better, best, never let it rest until your good is better and your better, best."

We moved into the shop and attached residence in 1936, the same year that the Hall was fifty years old.

At the shop there were rows of boxes of haberdashery, including stiff starched wing collars and pearl buttons.

When electricity came to the town, Dad started to make iceblocks. These were very popular and sold for one penny each.

The store had a wide range of food, stockfeed, hardware, haberdashery and farm merchandise. Every day there were orders delivered to a different area, including all the way to Drouin.

On Wednesdays Dad drove the Dodge truck to Melbourne to pick up supplies. Other goods

were delivered to the Rokeby Railway Station to be picked up. This was mainly stockfeed, seed and so on.

That Dodge truck was used to transport other loads as well. On Saturdays the footy team all loaded into the back to go to the game. Later that day a cargo of young people would be picked up to go to the pictures in Warragul, or to a Masonic dance.

When Dad was out of the shop it was not unusual for some creative thinking to take place, for example we used to get boxes of "broken biscuits" which were a cheaper option than packets of biscuits, but if demand exceeded supply it was not unheard of for some packets to be broken up in order to fill the orders. Another customer always wanted the fat cut off their bacon.

The school was just one classroom for Year one to eight. When the pipeline to pipe water to the Mornington Peninsula was being constructed, the school enrolments swelled to seventy. New families came in to the district to work on the construction. Most of them moved away when it was completed but some remained. Families lost their farming land and buildings when the Tarago Reservoir was built. They were compensated for their loss.

We young girls in Jindivick always dressed up in long dresses for the dances. I was about fifteen or sixteen then. The dances were very popular and everyone danced all night. Everyone took a plate of supper. Mr Peel always had the job of slicing the bread to make sandwiches because he could cut the bread so evenly. I played in the tennis team, on the courts next to the Hall.

### 3. What have been some of the biggest changes you have seen in Jindivick over the years?

The coming of electricity would be the biggest change. It made a big difference in the store and in everyone's home.

Mail delivery also changed. People used to pick up the mail from the shop, then the Post Office was relocated, and finally daily roadside delivery became widespread and town mail boxes. School children used to come to the shop after school to pick up the mail and papers, and many of them were unofficial delivery agents for their neighbours, struggling to carry all the bundles.

The roads used to be very rough and rocky dirt roads. Now there are very good roads in most areas.

Changes within the town of Jindivick, particularly "Jack's" precinct with commercial businesses replacing what used to be a family home and outbuildings.

The former Presbyterian Church, which was next to the tennis courts, was sold to the Anglicans for one hundred dollars in 1975. The cost to move it to the present site was one thousand dollars and a lot of site preparation. The problem of a suitable toilet was solved when someone heard that Chairo school had a toilet for sale and it was transported here on a trailer.

Sunday School was very active. It changed from a "Sunday" school and became a mid-week after school activity, and then ceased in the late '80's.

#### 4. What are some of your favourite stories about Jindivick?

Mr Lyall was a teacher at the school over two periods of time, totalling twenty four years. Mrs Lyall taught me to make puff pastry. She did the most amazing afternoon teas presented on starched cloths, and the table groaning under the array of food.

I've been cooking since I was ten years old. I was in the Young Farmers Club. There was an annual Jindivick event where everyone entered their best produce, cooking, animals and so on, and there was a District Show as well. I won the "Most Successful" exhibitor in the Under 14 section in the District Show in Drouin. One of the categories was a "Pound Fruit Cake". It was hard work mixing all the ingredients by hand. One year I had just finished baking a Pound Cake and Mum said she would put it on top of the dresser to keep it safe. As she reached up the corner of the tray caught on the edge of the dresser and the cake flew through the air, landing split in two. I was devastated. We sort of pushed it together again and tied it up, but Mum said I had to make another one. The next attempt was the prize winner that year, but my "repaired" version came second!

#### 5. If a stranger asked you "What is Jindivick like?" what would you say?

Jindivick is a beautiful place, with rolling hills and views from every direction. The view from Kydd-Parke Reserve is spectacular. There are good meeting places, eating places and beautiful gardens.

It is a friendly place. Without involvement in the school, I sometimes don't get to meet new families who come into the area.