

ALOIS MIKULA: BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Alois Mikula was born in the village of Dupesy, Czechoslovakia, in 1919, son of Ignac Mikula, a farmer, and his wife Maria. After completing school he was trained and employed in the Bata shoe factory in Czechoslovakia, before being sent to work for the firm in India. In 1941 he joined a Czech Battalion with which he fought at the Egyptian border, and then in a Anti-Aircraft unit at Tobruk and El Alemein. He was then sent to Britain and fought at Dunkirk in 1944. On his return to Czechoslovakia he taught English in Prague before fleeing to Germany in 1948, where he again taught English before being accepted by the International Refugee Organization for resettlement in Australia. He arrived in Sydney on the SS Anamapura on 20 October 1949 and was sent to work in Canberra, arriving on 1 January 1950. He was housed initially in Air Force barracks at Canberra Airport, then shared accommodation in Ainslie. He completed his two-year work contract with the Department of Parks and Gardens as a tractor driver, then worked until his retirement in 1984 with the Bureau of Census and Statistics. He and his wife Vanda moved into their house in O'Connor in 1952, and still live in that suburb. Alois was a foundation member of the Scouting Movement in O'Connor and helped establish the O'Connor Scout Hall in 1959. He currently Secretary and Treasurer of the ACT Branch the Rats of Tobruk and editor of its newsletter. He is a skilled worker in stained glass and has repaired windows in a number churches in Canberra and its region such as St Joseph's Catholic Church O'Connor, St Luke Anglican Church, Captains Flat, St Michael's Catholic Church at Kaleen, as well as churches at Carwoola and Hoskinstown. He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1996 for his services to both the Australian Scouting movement and the Australian Veterans Association, and the Centenary Medal in 2001 for his many years of service to Scouting in the ACT.

PERSONAL ARCHIVES: Mr Mikula is custodian of the records of the 13th O'Connor Scouting Group of the ACT, and of the ACT Branch of the Rats of Tobruk Association. He has a photograph album of family photos taken in the 1950s and 1960s, some of which have in their background Canberra landmarks (eg the Commonwealth Bridge in 1963 with the as yet unfilled lake underneath it). A copy of a photo of him taken in 1950 with the old Airforce Barracks at the Canberra Airport is attached.

ALOIS MIKULA INTERVIEW 30 JULY 2010: TIMED SUMMARY

Session 1

TIME	TOPIC	KEY WORDS
00.00.01	Early life in Europe, family, school, work in Bata shoe factory.	Czechoslovakia, Moravia, Dupesy, Ignac, Maria, Uh, Hragaste, Zlin, Tomas Bata.
00.06.25	War Service, Second World War.	India, Lamela Libya, Rommel, Tobruk, Sikorski, El Alamein, Montgomery, Dunkirk.
00.15.48	Escaping Czechoslovakia, becoming a displaced person in Germany	Czechoslovakia, Prague, Germany.
00.18.45	Teaching English in Germany, International Refugee Organization,	Neuburg am Donau, International Refugee Organization.
00.20.10	Arrival in Canberra, camp at airport, work for Department of Parkes and Gardens.	SS Amanapura, Sydney, Canberra, airport, Parks and Gardens, Corroboree Park, Northbourne Avenue, radio station firebreak, Ainslie, Lennox Crossing, Mr Dynes.
00.26.32	Wife's arrival in Canberra, her work as translator with CSIRO Forestry School, Yarralumla.	Vanda, Mr Dynes, Bonegilla, Good Neighbour Council, Mr Krippner, CSIRO Forestry School, Yarralumla, Riga, Latvia, Augsburg.

00.31.24	Canberra 1950, on-arrival accommodation at airport, describes Civic, employment at Bureau of Census and Statistics, studies in Economics at Canberra University College.	Arrival in Canberra, Ainslie, Civic, Sydney and Melbourne buildings, Hotel Canberra, J.B. Young's, Post Office, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Census and Statistics, West Block, University.
00.36.50	Main buildings in Canberra 1950s, suburbs north and south of Molonglo River, anecdote about working in garden of Anglican Bishop's residence, Mugga Way, bridge across Molonglo, Lenox and Scott's Crossings, old Hospital.	War Memorial, Old Parliament House, Campbell, Reid, Ainslie, Turner, Daley St, Haigh Park, Northbourne Avenue, East and West Block, Manuka, Kingston, Catholic Cathedral, Red Hill, Mugga Way, bridge, Lennox Crossing, Scott's Crossing, old hospital, Parks and Gardens headquarters, (Lindsay) Prior.
00.43.45	Travel difficulties when Molonglo River flooded, view from front of Parliament House.	Queanbeyan, Parliament House, War Memorial, Mt Ainslie, market garden, East Block, Barton wooden buildings, Manuka, St John's Church, Campbell.
00.47.55	Commonwealth Department in Canberra 1950s, population size, two types of Government houses.	Treasury, East Block, West Block, Foreign Affairs, Bureau of Census and Statistics, Employment,

		Immigration, population, O'Connor, Narrabundah, Lyneham, Yarralumla, Deakin, Department of the Interior, Department of Housing, Ainslie, Mr Dynes, Hakia Crescent, O'Connor, Canadian prefabricated houses.
00.56.05	End of Section 1.	
Section 2		
00.00.18	Migrants in Canberra.	Migrants, Narrabundah, O'Connor, migrant hostels, Holding Centre, women's hostel, Vernon Circle.
00.08.22	Church, anecdote about walking from O'Connor to St Christopher's Cathedral for midnight mass, Christmas 1954, O'Connor Catholic School convent and church, funding church building 1965, stained glass windows, repairing them.	Churches, St Mary's Civic, Favier House, St Christopher's Cathedral, Manuka, Merici College, O'Connor Catholic school and church, Sullivan's Creek bridge, Macarthur Avenue, Sydney Opera House Lottery, Father O'Shey.
00.19.36	Public transport 1950s, cycling to work,	Public transport 1950s, routes, cycling.
00.22.15	Entertainment 1950s, anecdote about Mr Dynes riding on horseback to Albert Hall, Mr Guard's service in WWI in New Guinea.	Entertainment, Albert Hall, Manuka cinema, Mr Dynes, Cox St, Ainslie, Mr Guard, New Guinea, Bismarck Islands.
00.26.57	Describes first house and garden in O'Connor 1952.	O'Connor house and garden, chickens, Jim Anderson, Ginninderra

		Drive, wheat farmer, Archibald St.
00.34.09	Furnishing his O'Connor house, milk and mail deliveries.	Furnishing house, Mr Guard, furniture auctions, milk and mail deliveries.
00.38.12	Medical services, Canberra, retirement from Bureau of Census and Statistics	Medical services, Canberra Hospital, retirement, Bureau of Census and Statistics.
00.40.08	Origins of Scouting movement in Canberra, anecdote about transporting Scout Hall from Kingston to O'Connor 1959, its heritage listing, opened by Governor General Sir Dallas Brooks.	Scouting, Singapore, Burma Railway, Travis Taylor, the Pines, O'Connor Scout Hall, Kingston dance hall, Scott's Crossing, Governor General, Sir Dallas Brooks, Heritage listing, Martin and Co.
00.54.23	ACT Branch, Rats of Tobruk foundation, membership numbers, Sir Thomas Daley	Rats of Tobruk, ACT Branch. Sir Thomas Daley, Vietnam War.
00.56.44	His stained glass window making, repairing St Lucas Anglican Church Captains Flat.	Stained glass work, St Luke Anglican Church, Captains Flat.
00.59.54	End session 2. END OF INTERVIEW	