

## **ACT Gold Awards Oral History Project**

### **Walter (Dick) Redman: background, notes on photographs and memorabilia, and timed summary**

**Interviewer: Mary Hutchison**

#### **History covered in this interview**

This interview with Dick Redman was conducted as an addition to one for the Retired Transport Workers Association (RTWA). It concerns Dick's arrival and early work in Canberra, aspects of his wife's work and family history, and the changes Dick has seen in Canberra since his arrival. It also includes the history of his house, 32 Paterson Street, Ainslie, and information about the First Canberra Scout Troupe and the Scout Hall in Haig Park. Details of Dick's life before coming to Canberra, his long service with the Department of Transport, and his voluntary work as a founder of the Police Boys' Club, are covered in the RTWA interview.

#### **Background**

Walter Redman, always known as Dick, was born in 1928 and grew up on the south coast of New South Wales. He was one of six children. As a result of the Depression his family lost their land in Orbost and moved to Cobargo where his father worked as a sleeper cutter. His older brothers served in the Second World War. Dick left school at 14 and worked on dairy farms and as a sleeper cutter. He came to Canberra in 1947, attracted by news of plenty of work. He has lived in Canberra since then.

Dick was first employed in Canberra as a member of the Commonwealth Government's labour force laying pipes for the new suburbs of Turner and O'Connor. He later joined the Transport Department where he was a conductor, a bus driver and finally an instructor. He married June Lamond in 1951. June grew up in Canberra and was a shorthand stenographer for Prime Ministers Chifley and Menzies. Both her family by birth and her adoptive family played a role in building Canberra. Her grandfather by birth was builder, Tom Boag, and her adoptive father was Foreman Painter, Bert Young. Bert had come to Australia from England after the First World War. He was a painter by trade and had worked on ships travelling between UK and Australia before settling in Australia. The house at 32 Paterson Street Ainslie was built for him in 1926. It became Dick and June's family home and Dick continues to live there.

#### **Notes on photographs and memorabilia held by Dick Redman**

- Photographs before, during and after the building of the Lake
- Photographs of 32 Paterson Street over time
- Early maps of Canberra and the region
- Photographic brochures of Canberra 1920s
- Ben Chifley's signature and other documentation relating to June's employment
- 'First full pay packet'

## **Timed summary**

**Interview one: 7 July 2010**

**Length: 0:51:06**

**Three tracks**

### **Track one 15:16**

- 00:02 Recording ID; arrival in Canberra, first work and accommodation; attraction of Canberra; wages for labouring; laying pipes in Turner-O'Connor.
- 05:22 Size of Canberra at time of arrival; migrant tradesmen; workmen's hostels; work in Queanbeyan and new job in Transport; later accommodation in Canberra and Queanbeyan.
- 10:12 Social life during early years in Canberra including sport and playing fields, dances and halls; transport and roads; meeting wife; early shopping centres.

### **Track 2 15:11**

- 00:00 Manuka Shopping Centre; June's work at Barton Offices and Parliament House; meeting Ben Chifley; June's background in Canberra; history of 32 Paterson Street.
- 04:55 History of 32 Paterson Street and neighbouring houses; Bert Young; Ainslie Maintenance Depot, Commonwealth Offices at Barton.
- 09:22 June's family background including Tom Boag's work as a builder in the 1920s, death of step brother in Second World War and death of her step mother; Dick and June's marriage; schools attended by June; transfer of Paterson Street to Redmans.

### **Track 3 20:08**

- 00:00 Paterson Street; Ainslie shops and other shopping centres; Dickson and surrounding area pre suburbs; getting around including buses and first car; leisure and weekend activities.
- 05:13 Involvement with First Canberra Scout Troupe; Scout Hall in Masson Street; fundraising for Police Boys' Club; Girl Guides Hall in Lister Crescent and June's role as Girl Guide Commissioner.
- 09:40 Voluntary activities; children's schooling; changes in Canberra since arrival.
- 14:56 River crossings before the Lake; photos before, during and after construction of the Lake; feelings about Canberra over time.
- 20:38 END