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Fares Please! Retired Transport Workers' Oral History Project

Interview with Ed Carnall
Biographical Notes and Timed Summary



HMSS 0367 "Fares, Please!", Retired ACT Transport Employees Club Oral History Project

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Interviewee: Ed Carnall

Occupation: Bus driver (commenced 1955), recipient of Order of Australia for public service, particularly with the Commonwealth passenger transport service.

Year of birth: 1924

Name of Interviewer:... Barry York

Date: 18 December 2009

Restrictions on Use: None

Biographical summary: Edwin (Eddie) Carnall was born at Queanbeyan, New South Wales, on 10 February 1924. The family moved to Canberra the following year. After schooling at Ainslie Primary and Public schools and Telopea Park and Canberra high schools, he worked at Manuka Pool, then did a carpentry course at Canberra Technical college, and was called up into the Army in 1942. His father, Keith, was a prominent local sportsman who worked at the Kingston Depot. After the War, Ed Carnall drove buses in Sydney before returning to Canberra where he worked as a security guard for the Commonwealth Police and then drove buses for Quadling Brothers, a Queanbeyan bus company connecting Canberra and Queanbeyan. In 1955, he joined the Transport Section of the Department of Interior in Canberra. He retired from the Department of Administrative Services in 1984. In 1985 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for public service, particularly with the Commonwealth passenger transport service.

Counter (time)	Subject matter
00:00	Introduction by interviewer; personal/family background; sporting achievements of his father Keith in the ACT; father's employment (storeman in Transport Section, 1939); father's role in the Retired ACT Transport Sick and Benefit Fund (1939), fund-raising at Kingston Depot for Royal Blind Society.
08:20	Ed's entrance into transport industry in Canberra; family move from Queanbeyan to Canberra; memory of first bus terminal on North Side (Corroboree Park); fascination with buses and desire to be a bus driver from a young age; father's work in Queanbeyan (Hayes and Russell's); other Transport Section employees came over from Queanbeyan from Hayes and Russell's; more about family and other connections to Kingston Depot.
14:59	Ainslie Primary and Public schools; catching bus to Telopea Park; Canberra High School (walked or cycled to school); memory of first using buses; Barton's (Queanbeyan) buses terminus at Patterson Street, Ainslie; father worked in workshop at Kingston Depot; dress code (uniform and cap) for bus conductors; changes to dress code standards later on; anecdote about dress code; drivers became known to the community in early years.
20:57	More about dress code/uniform; interest in buses while at school; first job on leaving school (cashier at Manuka Swimming Pool); bus stops at Manuka and Kingston.



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27:00	Recruitment into Australian Army (1942) during World War Two; course in carpentry and joinery at Canberra Technical College (c1939-42); service in Pacific during war; secondment to Royal Military College, Duntroon, on return from Pacific.
31:12	Obtained driver's licence in 1946 (aged 21, legal age); marriage; moves to Sydney with wife after War (work as carpenter); worked on buses as driver in Sydney; work on time-tabling in Sydney; hoped to make a career of driving buses in Sydney; return to Canberra; anecdote about removal.
37:10	Work as security guard for Commonwealth Police in Canberra; says many drivers and conductors came via Commonwealth Police; circumstances surrounding departure from security work; works for Quadling Brothers (Queanbeyan buses) c1949/50; how he obtained the job with Quadling Bros.; "great company to work for, everybody was friendly"; mechanical servicing of buses at Queanbeyan depot; Quadling's linked Queanbeyan and Canberra; Quadling's time-table and route in Canberra; reference to former service run by Dawson's.
46:05	Recalls how buses were "packed out, people didn't have cars in those days"; more about Quadling's (time-tabling, school runs, washing of bus, repair work, the "public service run"); popularity of Queanbeyan as a shopping centre for Canberrans; type of buses run by Quadling's.
52:28	End of session of 18 December 2009 Interview continued on 8 January 2010)
00:00	Session of 8 January 2010 (TRACK ONE) Identification; Mr Carnall talks about obtaining job with Department of Interior's Transport Section in 1955; working three years on buses as a conductor; recalls initial training; recalls job interview; work in office as Transport Officer; promoted to position of Senior Transport Officer.
06:15	Talks more about being a conductor; first day on the job; describes conductor's pouch and ticket machine; role of the bus conductor; relationship with passengers.
11:50	Work shifts and drivers; joining the Transport Workers Union; reflections on the TWU; parliamentary sessions and the 'Car Section'; anecdote about driving politicians.
19:32	Dealing with difficult people on the buses; school children; cost of fares ("penny-halfpenny tickets"); longest bus route back then; working hours and breaks.
24:30	"Cashing time" at the Kingston depot; the Regal buses.
27:35	The old Ainslie depot; memories of Ted and Robin Tormley; more about old Ainslie depot.



34:09	Kingston bus depot.
36:36	End of track one (session of 8/1/10)
00:00	Session of 8 January 2010 (TRACK TWO) Continues talking about Kingston depot; training; Cowper Street shelter and facilities; absence of other staff facilities along routes back then; post-war migration.
06:30	Women in the industry; camaraderie among the workers at the Kingston depot; in 1960 Ed and his father honoured with Life Membership for raising funds for Royal Deaf and Blind Society at Kingston bus depot; Transport Section 'Sick Fund'; father's retirement from Transport Section in 1966; father's role in the 'Sick Fund' and Ed's role.
10:55	Rates of pay for drivers and conductors; qualities needed to be a driver/conductor; discipline and punishments within the Transport Section; examples of misdemeanours.
17:22	Responds to question 'How did the buses change (over time)?'; one-man buses; time-tabling; "very little turnaround time today".
22:29	Worked in office from 1958 until retirement in 1984 (responsible for Commonwealth cars and buses); Commonwealth cars move to Fyshwick in 1977; recalls various jobs in the office; organisation of drivers (use of "spares" to ensure no bus ever without a driver).
28:00	Continues talking about his work in the office; "camaraderie not the same today"; became Senior Supervisor (buses and cars) in 1962; problems of catering for growing population, especially school runs.
32:37	Problems with the TWU; more about the system catering for population growth.
36:34	End of track two (session of 8/1/10) (continues on TRACK THREE)
00:00	Session of 8 January 2010 (TRACK THREE) Reflections on how Canberra changed as a city; description of the old Canberra.
09:00	(Old) Parliament House and early Canberra; recalls his parents' attendance at opening of the provisional parliament house in 1927 (his father was an usher there – Ed attended as a three year old but no detailed recollection of it); more description of the old Canberra.
14:52	Flooding and problems for bus runs; "Bundy keys" (Bundy time clock); anecdote about keys being thrown into Molonglo River; punctuality of buses back then.
19:01	Stopping for passengers who nearly missed the bus ('different today'); diverting from official route (catering for individual needs of passengers); accidents; other modes of transport in old Canberra (horse and cart); some bus drivers began as ice, bread and milk carters; horses' knowledge of routes; recalls names of drivers who started off as carters.
26:42	Recalls drivers/conductors who started as Commonwealth Police; talks about retirement in 1984 (aged 60); awarded Medal of Order of Australia in 1986; recalls origins of the Retired ACT Transport Employees Club; inaugural committee members; the Club has gone "from





	strength to strength"; Clubhouse in Campbell (had to move from Kingston depot); acknowledges role of his wife in the Club's formation and development.
35:32	End of track three (session of 8/1/10) END OF INTERVIEW



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