

History in forest names

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ABSTRACT: With the passage of the Forests act in 1918, management of Western Australia's hardwood forests was to be based on a series of Working Circles. The basic or 'minor' Working Circle covered an area thought to be sufficient for a small sawmill in perpetuity under sustained yield principles. Later amalgamations of these areas created 'major' Working Circles with specific Working Plans, and the 'minor' working circles became known as Forest Blocks. Blocks were named to differentiate them from the numbered State Forests.

Researching the names has provided considerable historical data on the Forests Department, the sawmilling industry and the South West. Over 500 block names have been tabulated and their history recorded. Their origins range from convict to Prime Minister, from exploration to exploitation, to honouring life and remembering death.

Changes to Acts and relevant Departmental philosophy have put at risk the continued use of forest blocks and even the names themselves. Some examples of block names and their supporting histories are given in this paper.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Western Australia, State forests dedicated under the Forests Act of 1918 were identified by number. They varied considerably in size, from a few tens of hectares up to many thousands. Lane-Poole, who had drafted the Act and became the first Conservator under it, did not see a State forest as a basic management unit. Instead he chose to develop a series of 'minor' and 'major' Working Circles. These were to be contiguous areas of forest, of similar condition and similar proposed treatment, for which a Working Plan was to be prepared, approved at a high level and then implemented over time. Originally conceived as an identified area sufficient to service a small sawmill under sustained yield principles, and nominally about 4,000 hectares in extent, the 'minor' Working Circle area when mapped was given a name. These areas eventually became known as 'forest blocks' and became the basic unit of management and locality reference. The blocks were subdivided into 'compartments' for more detailed management and recording.

For many years the names were selected locally, essentially on the whim of local staff, with virtually no interference by the Departmental hierarchy. The resultant names show a wide spread of name source. Not until the 1970s, when the Forests Department created a Nomenclature Committee, was a managerial role in name choice promulgated, though nominations were still generated locally. The Committee formally recorded information on the choice for the first time.

Over time the concept of discrete Working Circles became less relevant and blocks were primarily used as locality names for forest areas ranging in size from about two to ten thousand hectares. The blocks with their names were used as such until the early 1980s when considerable areas of State forests were being converted to National Parks and it was deemed desirable to remove that trace of the former ownership. This decision was later reversed under the Department of Conservation and Land Management. However, continued changes in tenure from State forest to alternative forms of reservation suggests these naming arrangements must be seen as having an uncertain future.

In initiating his system of forest sub-division, Lane-Poole inadvertently bequeathed to us the opportunity of developing a substantial historical record of the South West of Western Australia based on the names. The names of over five hundred blocks have been recorded, together with their historical origins, in Sclater (2001). This paper describes a few of those diverse histories.

2 THE ORIGINAL BLOCKS

Following the assent to the Forests Act in January 1919, Lane-Poole wasted little time in establishing the first Working Circle. The choice was directly related to the perceived need for protection and management of the Mundaring Catchment, threatened with salinity when ill-advised ring-barking was done in the early 1900s to improve run off into the dam. Working Plan No.1 for the West Australian forests was for Working Circle No.1, which encompassed the jarrah and wandoo forests on the Goldfields Water Supply Catchment above the Mundaring Weir. The Working Circle was subdivided into three named forest blocks, Western Australia's first. These were **Barton**, **Helena** and **Karragullen**, after a sawmiller, a river and a township respectively. The first was named for John Alexander Barton who built a sawmill in 1902 at Carilla near Pickering Brook. When the area was cut out, it was found easier to shift the mill to the timber than to shift the timber to the mill, a practice followed for many years. Helena is no longer used as a block name.

Each of the first three blocks was subdivided into numbered compartments with the numbering being continuous over the three blocks thus: Helena 1-74; Barton 75-145; and Karragullen 146-217. This was later amended to starting the numbering sequence from 1 in each block.

An integral part of the Working Plan for each Working Circle was the compiling of maps of various scales. One of these became the standard operational map for the Forests Department and, known as the '80' at a scale of 80 chains (1 mile) to the inch, became the every-day working map of the forest. The 80s eventually covered the whole State Forest area in WA. One of the most practical and useful tools of forestry, these maps continued in use for the next 50 years, until all maps were converted to metric scales. The map of the area covered by the first 3 blocks was issued in November 1921 with the title "Forests 1/80". When reissued in 1924, the forest block boundaries and names were depicted in red.

Early dedications of State forest in the Collie area were to protect timber supplies for the coal-mines and this became the objective of the second Working Plan. This saw block names **Cardiff** and **Westrallia** derived from the mines of that name, **Muja**, the name of a major open-cut mine at Collie and also the name of a block was given in 1925, long before the first open-cut was created in 1943. Muja is the native name for the Cabbage Tree or West Australian Christmas tree, *Nuytsia floribunda*, very common in the area. All three of these blocks were shown on the Forests 5/80 map, published in 1925. From then on however, the 80s were given names, broadly based on the area they covered with 5/80 becoming the Collie 80.

3 NAMING CONVENTIONS

No record of any instructions from the Forests Department's Head Office as to the choice of block names has been found. The great majority of the names was generated locally, by the officer directly responsible for the area, and was his personal choice as to what he saw as important, relevant or interesting at the time.

While the Forests Department acknowledged the existence of a State Nomenclature Committee, it apparently never felt it necessary to consult it in decisions on block naming. Only a handful of references to this Committee have been found as, for example, when it was quoted as the source of the explanation of the name **Tallanalla**, an Aboriginal word meaning ‘place of many trees’, applied in this case to a now dismantled Forests Department settlement, and currently to a large pine plantation in that vicinity.

However Conservator Stoate had to cooperate with the State Nomenclature Committee to allow the change of name of the East Kirup locality to Grimwade in mid 1949. The East Kirup to Grimwade change was made when Stoate wanted to recognise the services to forestry of Sir Russell Grimwade. East Kirup was the site of a township built in 1910 around a very large hardwood sawmill owned by Millars Karri and Jarrah Company Ltd. The mill operated from 1910 to 1928 with a break during WW1. The name **Grimwade** was then applied to the Forests Department occupation of the old townsite and to a major *Pinus radiata* plantation.

The change does however illustrate the possible loss in historical continuity when names are changed. In this case the connection is maintained with a nearby hardwood block named **East Kirup** and the nearby **Warner** Block, which got its name from an East Kirup Mill bush boss. However the main road past the settlement has a new name. Formerly Bekin Road, a “made” name from abbreviating the Balingup/East Kirup/Noggerup Road, it is now just Grimwade Road.

It was not until the early 1970s that the Department created its own Nomenclature Committee. From then on, while name generation continued to be from the field, the final decisions on acceptance lay with the Committee whose decisions, and in most cases with an explanation for the choice, were formally recorded.

Listing of blocks in hindsight suggests that there are apparent themes in the naming, but differences in the location of the blocks and the time of naming suggest that with a couple of exceptions this was never adopted as a method of generating names. One exception appears in the Dwellingup area. There, there are six blocks with names of definite Eastern States origin: **Bombala**, **Nowra**, **Pascoe**, **Taree**, **Torrens** and **Urrbrae**. (**Urrbrae** currently spelt with only one ‘r’, was found, through the 1928 Forests Department Annual Report, to have been originally spelt Urrbrae. This was in turn, linked to the Waite Institute in South Australia through land and a house named Urrbrae, gifted to the University of Adelaide by Peter Waite.) The most likely reason for the eastern theme is that early professional forest officers for the Forests Department were recruited from the eastern states, as WA had no home grown professionals. Kessell who succeeded Lane-Poole was an Adelaide graduate and in 1927 three graduates of the Adelaide University School of Forestry were appointed Assistant Divisional Officers.

A second example of the use of a theme is in the three forest blocks **Broke**, **Shannon** and **Chesapeake** that followed a theme already established with the nearby Chesapeake Brook and Shannon River that flow into Broke Inlet – a theme based on the American War of Independence.

Broke Inlet was named after Capt. P.B.V. Broke, a famous Royal Navy Captain, when it was found during Lieut. Preston’s exploration of the south coast in 1831. Later that same year, John Bannister, while attempting the first journey from the Swan River Settlement to the settlement on King George Sound, was well off course when he found a river that he decided must flow into Broke Inlet. He named it the Shannon after HMS Shannon, the ship in which Broke made his name. Later exploration found Bannister’s river was actually the Deep River, previously named by sealers. Further exploration found another river, which did flow into Broke Inlet, and it was named the Shannon. Then in the Legislative Assembly in November 1872, it was announced that “... a considerable river which runs into the Shannon from the westward, a few miles from its mouth, is called the Chesapeake, thus associating the name of her gallant antagonist with that of the Shannon and her commander.” The USS Chesapeake had been captured by Broke in HMS Shannon after a 15 minute gun battle off Boston on 1st June 1813.

When Broke Block was incorporated into the new D’Entrecasteaux National Park in 1981 the block name, along with several others, was cancelled. They were reinstated in 1997.

4 DIVERSITY OF HISTORY

The origins of forest block names provide a window into a fascinating diversity of historical events and their often obscure connections with Western Australian forests. The following examples illustrate just a few of them.

Jasper as a block name was shown for the first time on the 1960 Pemberton 80. It was another of the names that were cancelled in 1981 when the block was included in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park but reinstated in 1997. It takes its name from Lake Jasper, the largest permanent freshwater lake in the south-west of WA. On 27th August 1850, Alfred Bussell married Ellen Hepingstone at Wonnerup and they went to live at The Broadwater. In 1854 the family moved to Ellensbrook and there, on the 12th April 1863, a second son was born to Alfred and Ellen, the first having died very shortly after birth. Their second son was christened Jasper, after a Bussell ancestor, seafarer and privateer, lost at sea when quite a young man. Jasper lived for just 12 months before dying after a short illness and was buried at Peppermint Grove. In a letter to his brother John, dated 14th May 1864, Alfred described a journey that he and his wife had made, from Ellensbrook to his Donnelly runs, partly to find a route to reduce the traveling time between the two and partly to try to take Ellen's mind off the death of the baby.

"We made the Donnelly slopes early in the day and began to ride apace. 'Halloo there's the sea. No, it's on the wrong side. It's a lake! How beautiful,' cried my wife, 'and this' she continued 'was our Jasper's Donnelly run.' 'We will call it Lake Jasper, Nelly' and she wept aloud."

Dombakup Block also has tragic connections. It takes its name from the Dombakup (pronounced Dumbakup) Brook. Henry ('Rasputin', or 'Raspy') Rowe, a well known local forestry worker, told Roger Underwood a story, which Roger thought might be apocryphal except that Raspy's wife, Olive, grew up on the farms which are now part of the Dombakup pine plantation. There is an old forestry bridge over the Dombakup Brook on Callcup Road, just above a deep pool. This is a spot to avoid on a misty winter evening when the late sun slants through the tall trees. It is haunted. Down the road a kilometre or two, where the pines and blue gums now tower over the bracken, were the most remote of the Group Settlement farms coming out from Northcliffe. Not being able to make ends meet, a young settler left home to try to make money in the Goldfields, leaving behind his wife and two children. He promised to be back in a year. The year came and went and he did not return, so in despair, the young woman walked to the pool on the Dombakup Brook and drowned herself and her children. Two days later the young man returned. He had been delayed by bad weather and boggy roads. However (Hutchins 1916 p 49) records "... the settler's wife in one of the other Groups (i.e. not Group 115), who drowned herself, together with two of her four sons." Also "... then there was the unforgettable tragedy of Mrs. Wilson of 107 Group, who drowned herself and two children in the river..." (Symes, 198? p22)

Keats Block is a naming relating to two unsavoury incidents in WA's past. The block name is from Mt. Keats, on which the Forests Department built a fire tower. Mt. Keats was named by John Bannister in 1831 after "Mr. Keats of the Commissariat". William Keats arrived on the ship "Gilmore" with his two sons, William and James, in 1829. Reported as "a character better known than respected" Keats was sentenced to seven years transportation to Tasmania in 1835 for plundering the wreck of the small cutter the "Cumberland". The "Cumberland" was sailing from Fremantle to Augusta with belongings of the Bussell family, when it was wrecked at Shoalwater Bay on the 28th August 1834. On the 11th July 1833 William Keats Junior, then aged 18, shot and killed the Aboriginal leader Yagan, then wanted for murder, as Yagan and some other natives waited at the farm where the Keats brothers were employed, to be given some flour. James, then 13, shot and wounded another native. William was speared a number of times, but James escaped to claim the reward for Yagan's killing. He then had to leave the Colony as the natives had sworn revenge. Yagan's body was decapitated and his head sent to the UK, ostensibly for study. It was returned to WA a few years ago.

The timber industry had been active in WA for some sixty years before the Forests Department was created. The industry was responsible for opening up the high forest areas of WA and had established itself in a number of centres and its leading lights had become men of some significance. One of these was Henry **Yelverton** after whom a block was named. The origin of Henry's first sawmill was uncovered by Jack Bradshaw, also a contributor to this conference, while seeking information on how his great grandfather, John Hughan, came to Australia. Hughan was traveling on the "Charles Fox Bennett" from Liverpool when it ran aground near Cape Leeuwin on the 18th November 1853 and was wrecked (just five kilometres from this venue). All 15 passengers and the crew of 10 got ashore safely and the bulk of the cargo was salvaged and later sold at auction. Included in the sale was "a steam sawmill, contrived somewhat like a locomotive, so that it can be wheeled about by a couple of horses". The Perth Gazette dated 27th January 1854 recorded that "At the sale of goods from the wreck of the Charles Fox Bennett this week at Fremantle, prices ruled very high. The portable steam sawmill was purchased by Mr. Yelverton for £210." The mill was later installed at Quindalup about one kilometre inland from the jetty. John Hughan was a sawyer in Liverpool, England, but it is not clear whether he was traveling with the sawmill on an employer's behalf, or whether his presence on the ship was coincidental. It is known he went on to Melbourne, and later Ballarat, where he was associated with William Wanliss as a saw doctor. In that capacity he was sent to Jarrahdale in about 1872 to install the saws in the first Jarrahdale mill. His two sons, two grandsons and a great grandson became sawdoctors in turn and worked for Millars and State Sawmills. There is currently a "Hughans Saw Services" business in Osborne Park, Perth.

South Australia is often stigmatised for its elimination of German names during World War I. There were however at least two such changes in WA. One comes into our story. **Fernbrook** was part of the Harris River Working Circle and the name derives from a siding on the Brunswick Junction to Collie railway line, just north of Worsley siding. The original name for the siding was Heidelberg but the name was changed after a request by the Under-Secretary for Lands on 10th August 1915 to get rid of German names. Fernbrook was adopted on 9th January 1917. It is interesting that the need to change German names did not extend to the **Brunswick** River, also the name of a plantation block, or the town of Brunswick Junction on the same stretch of railway line. The probable reason was that the name Brunswick was given to honour one of Wellington's generals, the Duke of Brunswick, killed at Quatre Bras during the Battle of Waterloo campaign.

The block now named **Clinton** had an uncertain beginning, first as Hinton and then Clinton. The timing of the name promulgation strongly suggests it was related to the British Empire Forestry Conference held in Australia, beginning in Perth on 21st August 1928. Included in the program was a lecture to be given under the chairmanship of the Governor of WA, Colonel Sir William Campion, on 'Forestry in Relation to the Modern State'. The speaker was to be Lord Clinton, Chairman of the British Forestry Commission. An interesting insight into the pace of the times (and the influence of forestry officials) is illustrated in the plans for the post-conference rail journey to the eastern states: "Arrangements have been made to halt the Trans-Australian train at a point about 95 miles east of Kalgoorlie to allow delegates 30 minutes in which to inspect dry country forest types."

The block name **Federal** was directly derived from Federal Gully but the origin of that name was obscure. Len Purcell, who as a lad lived at Hamel, and later was a long time employee of Millars at Yarloop, provides a likely origin. The Nanga Brook Mill opened in 1908 and the Millars Timber and Trading Co. railway from their Yarloop complex to Nanga Brook Mill ran through Federal Gully. Purcell said there was a train crossing facility in Federal Gully that enabled loaded trains leaving Nanga Brook to run 'doubles' because of the stiff grade away from the mill. Trains were hauled out in two parts, often the resident loco giving assistance to the Yarloop main line loco. When two trains ran to Nanga Brook, Federal Gully could be a crossing point for 'up' and 'down' trains. Federal Gully was part of the "safe-working staff and ticket system" used by Millars for any mill railway where it was required. In 1927 the Prime Minister, Mr. James Scullin, visited Nanga Brook. He had gone to school in Ireland and, unknown to him, there was an old school friend of his working at Nanga. The local representative for the day, Miss May Holman, arranged a

meeting for them in the Nanga Brook Hall. Purcell said the gully was so named as the Federal party stopped there for a picnic lunch at the time of the visit.

Nanga was also used as a forest block, its name being derived from the Nanya Brook, wrongly spelt on the first map of the area.

There are a large number of block names derived from Aboriginal names of local features. The early foresters, or perhaps the early Forests Department map-makers, obviously found the spelling and length of some of these names hard to handle so quite a number have been shortened, usually by dropping the final 'up' e.g. **Mattaband** for Mattabandup, and **Quillben** for Quillbenunderup. There is, of course, an inherent problem with native names. Surveyors, explorers and early pioneers who recorded the Aboriginal names would hear them and then depend on the phonetic spelling to arrive at a written likeness of the pronounced word. Such a practice is open to a wide individual interpretation and understanding of what was said. The change to the spelling of **Munyerring** block is an example. The name is derived from Munyerring Springs and Munyerring Pool on the Julimar Brook, recorded by J.H. Breen in 1905. The name was correctly spelt up to 1912 by the Lands and Surveys Department, but then spelt as Munjerring. Corrected in 1952 by the State Nomenclature Committee, Lands Department plans were not corrected until 1974 and the Forests Department plans in 1979.

The block name **Milyeannup** is perhaps the only block name to give us a deeper appreciation of how the local natives marked their land. Milyeannup is the native name for the Place of Milyan, wife of Wooditch. The native legend of how this pair came to be man and wife is told in 'An attempt to eat the Moon' by Deborah Buller-Murphy and includes: "They left that neighbourhood and lived happily for many years at a place which has ever since been known as Milyeannup."

The area now called **Wilga** was originally called Wilgie Springs. Wilgie was the coloured ochre used by Aborigines to decorate their faces and bodies for corroborees. It was apparently a native item of trade. The Shepherdsons of the Adelaide Timber Company built a mill there in 1908 and the Forests Department used the name for a block. In 1946 the Shepherdsons bought forty General Grant and Stewart U.S. Army tanks. Some were sold but five of each went to Wilga and East Witchcliffe. The General Grant was a very heavy machine used mainly for short jobs, such as pushing over trees to make haulage tracks, after being fitted with a dozer blade. The Stewart was a much lighter machine and proved useful for log hauling and loading. A General Grant tank was on display at Wilga in 1997, together with a mixed collection of logging gear and milling equipment.

In November 1927 T.N. Stoaite, Working Plans Officer (later Conservator) wrote to Head Office proposing the forest block name, Kennedy Pools. **Kennedy** block was shown on the Dwellingup 80 in the following year. At that time the railway lines running into the bush from the timber mills were also used by the mill people whenever they wanted to hold a picnic. Kennedy's Pool on the Holyoake Bush Line was a favourite place used for many years. According to Department of Land Information, the origin of the name for the pool is unknown. One possible origin of the name is that the pool was named to honour Governor Sir Arthur Kennedy. Another is that it was in some way connected with the Kennedy Log Hauler used at Jarrahdale. However a more convincing option would appear to be the name of a State Sawmills Bush Boss. According to an undated note (between 10th May and 4th June 1921) on a Forests Department file W.J. Properjohn undertook an inspection of Jackman's property, No. 60/11, a Sawmilling Permit then in the name of State Sawmills (SSM). He was assisted by Bush Foreman Kennedy. Given that at the time Properjohn was a senior manager for SSM and that some time before this SSM had acquired cutting rights over large areas to the east of Holyoake, Bush Foreman Kennedy may well have been honoured by the naming of Kennedy's Pool - or maybe he was just the first to swim in it.

Mudros is the block name for an area of pines, mainly *P. radiata*, established on resumed land in the Mundaring Weir catchment. The first plantings were in 1923. This appears to be the only forest block name with direct connections to World War 1. The fact that so many went and so many did not return may account for this. Lemnos is a Greek island in the eastern Mediterranean and Mudros is a port at the eastern end of the island. This was the nearest port of any consequence to the battlefields of Gallipoli for the Allied forces and became the major forward base for the campaign. By 22nd March ANZAC troops were at Mudros. The 3rd Australian Infantry Brigade was

to be the first beach storming party. The invasion fleet formed up in Mudros Harbour. When wounded and sick men were evacuated to Mudros, conditions there were only better in that the men were out of range of Turkish guns. Even the nurses and doctors on Mudros were savaged by the prevalent illnesses of dysentery, diarrhoea and gastro-enteritis. The flies were with them too. The R.M.S. Britannic, younger than its sister ships Olympic and Titanic, and not yet finished when WW1 started, was fitted out as a hospital ship. On her maiden voyage she was on her way to Mudros to pick up wounded from Gallipoli, when almost within sight of the Island of Lemnos she struck a mine and sank. Why the block name was chosen and who made the choice are not known. In the 1923 Forests Department Annual Report and on the superseded Pinjarra 1:250,000 map the area is spelt Murdos, however in the 1924 Annual Report it was spelt Mudros.

The block name **Bidella** was shown for the first time on the 1957 Donnelly 80 with the spelling Biddella but became Bidella in later issues. The name is derived from an original Barlee Brook property called Biddellia, taken up by F.P. Barlee, for 25 years the WA Colonial Secretary. In 1866 Barlee took up a run on what became known as the Barlee Brook. Thomas Dickson, who had been in Barlee's employ at Crawley for several years, set out on 18th February 1867 from Nedlands, driving nearly 60 head of cattle bound for Barlee's new station, Biddellia. In daily stages of about 25 kilometres the journey took 16 days. He became Barlee's manager on the property and later its owner. A search for family tree information enabled Ms D. Maher to tell me that Biddellia, the Dickson Homestead, was named after Thomas Dickson's Irish born wife, Biddellia Blake. The block name **Dickson** was shown on the 1934 Manjimup 80 but sometime prior to the issue of the 1940 Donnelly 80 the name was changed to **Easter**.

Thomson Block was named after Forester Jack Thomson, who started with the Forests Department as one of the first apprentices. Later he worked on forest survey and assessment in the area south of Lake Muir where the block and the Thomson Road are situated. He was a founding member of the Forest Field Officers Association and was largely responsible for drafting its Constitution. On his retirement he became a staunch and active supporter of the Conservation movement. Bill Bunbury dedicated his book 'Reading Labels on Jam Tins' to "former forester and life-long campaigner for the Environment, Jack Thomson". The book title is from Jack's commentary in the book.

The forest block name **Hoffman** was taken from the various mills and settlements of that name. It appears that the name of the first sawmill came from a brand of saw-bench used as the breaking-down bench in at least the first of these mills. From the 'Southern Times' newspaper of 22nd July 1899,

"On Thursday afternoon a serious accident, which promises to be attended with fatal consequences, occurred at the sawmills at Newlands, which have not long since been established by the 'Imperial Jarrah Timber Co.'. It appears, as the men were engaged at work sawing through a heavy log of timber, that one of the flitches of timber slipped with the result that the Hoffman saw ran back, struck the other piece of timber and threw it onto the benchman."

In its following issue the 'Southern Times' reported on the enquiry into the accident:

"Thomas Lochart, sworn, said he was employed at Newlands as a benchman. His duties were to work the Hoffman's carriage on which the logs rested when they were broken down. The motive power was steam. He controlled the carriage by a lever. He passed the carriage to and from the saw. When he used the lever as the timber was being sawn the carriage would stop instantly, but on the return there would be no resistance and the carriage would be going quicker and might travel three or four feet before it could be pulled up. Thomas Crabtree, sworn, said he was the Superintending Engineer of the Company's mills at Newlands. He had prepared the plan which had been produced, showing the position of the Hoffman Bench."

The original Hoffman sawmill was built in 1896 and burnt down in 1917.

The name **Waterous** was given to the forest block as a reminder of the old townsite, and Millar's sawmill of that name, situated on the McKnoe Brook. The mill was named after the steam engine that powered it. This was a huge single cylinder engine which, according to (Southcombe 1986), was manufactured by the Waterous Co. of England. It should be noted however, that a later publication, (Gunzburg and Austin 1997) gives the maker as the Waterous Engine Works of Brantford, Ontario, Canada. Also, a report on a visit to Jarrahdale at the end of the nineteenth century by one of Millars English Directors states that "No. 2 (Jarrahdale) Mill is 12 miles east of Jarrahdale and is a Waterous (Canadian) Mill in good condition employing 32 men."

The block name **Kearney** first appeared on the 1957 issue of the Donnelly 80. James Kearney arrived in WA on the "Hougomont" in 1868, a convicted Fenian. Kearney was denied an early pardon, despite having an excellent convict record, and served the full term for his ticket-of-leave. Kearney received his pardon in 1871, and worked as a shoemaker in Perth. He married Catherine Tobin, an Irish migrant who came out on the "Robert Morrison" in 1866 at the age of twenty-one. Kearney and his wife settled in the Bridgetown area where he became an itinerant bootmaker and cobbler. In time he became a landholder and successful farmer, and his family were pioneers in the Nannup District. James Kearney's name was included among those duly elected Members of the (first) Lower Blackwood Road Board in the Government Gazette of 3 April 1890. James Kearney Junior served on the Board for 44 years, longer than any other member. James Kearney Senior was the Great Grandfather of Len Talbot, a well-known forest officer and historian, now retired. Len claims the block name was taken from the adjoining farm property, then owned by Phillip Clement Kearney and states the correct pronunciation of the name is 'Karney'.

The block name **Forest Grove** came from Groups 6 and 7 of the Group Settlement scheme, opened to settlers in November 1921 and known as Nuralingup. The school for the Groups opened at the start of the 1923 school year with John Tonkin (later Premier of WA) as headmaster with one assistant. Turning twenty one in February 1923, Tonkin immediately applied for membership of the Australian Labor Party. Following acceptance he received approval to form the Nuralingup Branch of the A.L.P. The energetic and enthusiastic Tonkin became its first Secretary. He also became first Secretary to the Nuralingup Branch of the Group Settlers. Following protests by the Group Settlers League that their mail was being forwarded to Narlingup, a small siding between Boyup Brook and Kojonup, they received permission in 1925 to choose their own name. They chose Forest Grove.

The **Somerville** pine plantation was established by the Forests Department on endowment land owned by the University of WA as a mutually beneficial exercise. First known as Applecross, the plantation was renamed in honour of Mr. W. (Bill) Somerville. Somerville arrived in W.A. in 1896 and was employed on the harbour work in Fremantle, by the Public Works Department. A blacksmith by trade he was one of the first Secretaries of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the organisation later known as the Amalgamated Engineering Union. He was an organiser of that union from 1903 to 1905 when, after a plebiscite, he was elected the workers representative on the Arbitration Court, a position he occupied until 1941. He was appointed to the University Senate as the Government Representative in 1912, Acting Vice-Chancellor in 1933, Pro-Chancellor in 1936 and Acting Chancellor in 1938. He was Vice-President of the first Labor Congress held in W.A. at Coolgardie in 1899 and was President of the Labor Congress held in Fremantle in 1902. He attended the historic National Congress of the Australian Labor Party in 1911 that decided the Commonwealth Bank policy. These are only a few of the many public offices that he held in a W.A. career spanning 58 years. He died on Christmas Eve 1954, aged 85. According to Bill Latter, Somerville quite clearly saw himself as the custodian of the original charter for a free University. He considered himself to be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the sons and daughters of working class families would never be excluded from a University education. It is probable that his proprietary interest in these matters brought him into conflict with many of his colleagues who sat with him on the Senate.

Quininup Block takes its name from the Quininup Brook, recorded by Surveyor G.R. Turner during a traverse in 1890. For some time it was spelt Quainding Brook until the spelling was corrected in 1897. A school site in the area was gazetted as Quininup in January 1926 and this was extended to the Forests Department settlement. Early residents apparently used the spelling

'Quinninup' which became accepted locally. A campaign was mounted in 1985-86 to have the official spelling changed and it was amended to Quinninup for both the place and the brook in October 1986. On the 31st December 1968 a 700 Series Viscount aircraft of McRobertson Miller Airlines, call sign VH-RMQ, left Perth for Port Hedland but crashed 45 kilometres south of the town when a wing fell off. There were no survivors. The name of the plane was Quininup. MMA had a policy of naming their planes after the rivers of WA e.g. Ashburton, Blackwood, Murchison, the choice of name being determined by the last letter of the plane's call-sign. A WA river with the initial Q was apparently a bit difficult to find and so the plane was named after the Quininup Brook.

The block name **Wilson** and that of Wilson Brook were shown on the 1928 Dwellingup 80. There are three possibilities regarding the origin of the name, all linked to the timber industry. The first possibility is that it was named after Frank Wilson, Premier of WA on two brief occasions, 1910-11 and 1916-17. Wilson came to WA as General Manager for the Canning Jarrah Timber Company, formed in Melbourne in 1891. On the evening of 23rd May 1895 several local timber merchants met to form the West Australian Timber Merchants Association and Frank Wilson MLA was elected the inaugural chairman. Wilson took part in the important Arbitration Court case affecting the sawmill industry in 1905 and the resulting award brought about a serious strike, the only one of any consequence that ever (up to 1939) affected the timber industry in W.A. At a meeting in July 1899 called to discuss the depression in the timber industry, Frank Wilson put forward a plan for amalgamating the larger timber companies. After considerable discussion some of the members decided this was a matter for their London directors. Mills (1986) suggests that this heralded the amalgamation of 1902 and the 'Combine' of eight leading WA sawmilling companies.

The second possibility is that the block was named after Mr. A.J. Wilson, Secretary of the Timber Hewers Society 1903, when representations were made to the Government to have this area opened for cutting. By 1902 a well-organised timber industry union was in existence. A.J. Wilson was Secretary. He had the nickname of 'Woodaxe', from his previous association with the Co-operative Hewers Society. Whilst holding that position, he became the first representative for the Federal seat of Forrest, formed largely of timber districts in 1904, in order to give the workers direct representation in Parliament. Wilson aroused strong opposition and resentment from his members, because he accepted an offer of expenses from the Millars Company to go to Queensland to personally check information from that State which had been used by the sawmillers in the court case mentioned above. Whilst in Parliament he was regarded as an excellent member for those he represented but in 1908 he lost his seat and had to relinquish his position in the Union.

The third possibility is probably the most likely. The Department of Land Information records state that according to Mr. W. Pollard, an early resident of North Dandalup, aged 83 when interviewed in 1980, the brook was probably named after the manager of 'Whittaker's Mill' whose name was Wilson. Thomas Alexander Wilson, a clerk at Whittaker's in Subiaco, had been transferred to Whittaker's North Dandalup mill in 1902 and soon afterwards was made manager. Wilson was a binge drinker and after several warnings was finally sacked in April 1907. Soon after the sacking he went to the Crown Solicitor's office, with copies of the mill royalty returns, and admitted falsifying these under instructions from Arthur Whittaker. Whittaker was charged and tried with defrauding the Forests Department of sawlog royalties but after a 24-day trial was found Not Guilty. It was established that Wilson had deliberately falsified the records seeking revenge for the Company's threats to dismiss him. As the Forests Department lost the case Wilson seems an unlikely name source. However, it may be more accurate to say the Forest Department did not realise that the brook name choice for the block perpetuated the name of such a person. Whittaker's had been granted the first Sawmilling Permit under the then new system of royalty payment, and were then the first to be prosecuted for attempting to defraud the Forests Department.

5 CONCLUSION

Historical research on any one forestry subject or area will probably never be complete and always subject to revision and addition.

Gilbert White put the point succinctly in 1773 when he wrote: “My remarks are, I trust, true in the whole, though I do not pretend to say that they are perfectly devoid of mistake, or that a more nice observer might not make many additions, since subjects of this kind are inexhaustible.”

I, for example, still need an explanation for **Chuck'em** Block.

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