

Section 5

Logan People, Logan Stories



Children eating icecreams outside Floate's Store, Slacks Creek 1956

Savage Garden

Pop sensation Savage Garden have achieved international success, but the boys still call Logan City home. Darren Hayes and Daniel Jones met while performing in local bands, and their mutual love of music drew them together. Tired of performing more covers than original work, the two quit live music to concentrate on writing. The combination of their different styles produced a sound that has proved extremely popular the world over, although it took 150 copies of their demo tape to find a friendly ear in the record industry.

Their first single “I Want You” was a huge hit, followed by their second release – “To The Moon and Back” – which went to Number 1 on the National ARIA Charts. Their third single release “Truly Madly Deeply” reached the No 1 spot in the Australian charts and stayed there for eight weeks. Their self-titled album was released in 1997, selling more than 10 million copies worldwide and winning a healthy crowd of awards. It went straight to Number 1 and won a record 10 awards at the 11th Annual ARIA awards.

Despite their sudden rise to fame, Jones and Hayes insist that they are just beginners and have a lot to learn about making music and surviving in the record industry.



Dick Johnson

Career

Dick Johnson is well known across Australia for his driving prowess and laconic nature. His racing career began in 1964, driving a Holden FJ and concentrating on locally-held events. He placed first in only his second race and went on with several successful seasons driving various Holdens, including GTR and XU-1 model Toranas. He switched to Ford in 1977 and turned his attention to southern events, including Bathurst.

Johnson became a national celebrity in 1980, after his race-leading performance in the Bathurst classic came to a stony end when he hit a rock rolled onto the track by a spectator. He crashed out of the race but won the sympathy of the nation, and returned in 1981 to win his first Bathurst with co-driver John Ffrench.

Since then Johnson has enjoyed a string of successes, including three wins at the Bathurst 1000, two victories at the Sandown 500 and securing five Australian Touring Car Championships. Dick is now a Member of the Order of Australia since being recognised in the 1998 Australia Day Honours List. In February 1999, Dick announced his intended retirement from racing.



He lives in Daisy Hill, having moved to Logan with his wife Jill when the area was still known as Albert Shire.

Why Logan City?

“I was introduced to Logan by a friend who’d bought some land up there with a mind to build a house. He encouraged me to come out and have a look at the block next to him, and said not to just sit in the car and look at the block but to get out and walk up to the top of the hill. So I did, and the view was just magnificent... and we still have that view now.”

“I’ve seen Logan City grow in the time I’ve been here - when I first moved here I looked out our bedroom window and saw ten lights – I counted them, ten lights. Now I defy anyone to count them, there’s hundreds of thousands of lights.”

“I’ve never moved out of the area. It’s convenient to me in many aspects; it’s close to the City, convenient to the airport and to go down the coast is a piece of cake. You can basically get anything you want in Logan, you don’t need to go out of the area. My kids were educated at John Paul College and Daisy Hill Primary, both of which were excellent schools.”

“Basically if I didn’t like living here, I wouldn’t have been here 25 years! But you know what the down side is? It’s not confined to Logan City – it’s all over Brisbane. It’s graffiti. I hate it with a passion.”



*At the wheel of Car 17 - a Ford Falcon EL V8
Shell Helix Racing Team, 1998*

Bilin Bilin

Bilin Bilin who was well-known and well-respected in the general Logan area. Born in the early 1800s, he became a leader of the Yugambah people about 1863.

Bilin Bilin appears to have travelled widely through the area and many people recalled meeting him, usually referring to him as “Jackey Jackey”. He spent time with Pastor Hausmann at Bethesda Mission near Beenleigh. Hausmann taught Bilin Bilin to read and write and said that he recognised him as an important man among his people. Bilin Bilin’s brother Mark was a good singer. In 1864, the settlers of Waterford were invited to a corroboree and Mark entertained their guests by singing an English song. Around 300 Aborigines from Pimpama, Coomera and Tambourine also attended the corroboree which was held in a paddock at Hinchcliffe’s property “Broomhill” - their usual camping place.

In 1875, Bilin Bilin was given a kingplate which stated that he was “King of the Logan and Pimpama”. In 1887, he was granted a free pass on the new railway to visit his married daughter at Beaudesert.

As Bilin Bilin grew older, the Chief Protector Archibald Meston pressured him to live in an Aboriginal reserve but he preferred to remain in the Logan area. Eventually, however, he could no longer resist. Photographs taken shortly before he died show Bilin Bilin at Deebing Creek, a long way from his own land but still wearing his kingplate.



Bilin Bilin in later life, after he had reluctantly gone to live at Deebing Creek Mission



Guests at the wedding of Eadie Fels of Loganholme to Charles Hornburg in 1905. Note that the men of the wedding party are wearing sashes across their shoulders

A German Wedding

The poem below was written by an elderly woman Mrs Tina Hasted who attended a German wedding when she was a child. She recalled that the groomsmen who rode around inviting people called out “Yahoo!” but they often called out “Hochzeit! Hochzeit!” which means “Wedding!”

Invitations were issued by best man and groomsmen
Two weeks before the wedding day.
They wore on their shoulders a red and blue ribbon
Calling yahoo and yahoo as they rode on their way.

Their call echoed right through the valley and hills -
“There’s going to be a wedding, yahoo!”
Every place that they called was invited to come
And everyone came to the wedding yahoo!

The reception was wonderful, lasting two days.
The men plucked the poultry and cleaned up the barn,
The women cooked food in tasteful ways
Then the men settled down for a beer and a yarn.

Now the wedding feast was over,
Everyone looked for some more wedding fun,

The beer in the casks was sinking low,
But the tin rattlers party still had not come.

The tin rattlers were the uninvited guests
Friends of the bride and groom
At last they came rattling tins with a stick
Very much like the handle from a broom.

The rattlers and their captain then gave a concert
With music and poems and song.
Then invited the guests to eat and be merry
And dance through the night until it was dawn.

They must then go home and start milking cows
And horses and pigs and chooks must be fed.
The work is still there though you danced all the night
But a wedding’s a wedding, hey Fred?

Questions and discussion

1. Try to work out who the people in the photograph are: see if you can pick out the bride, the groom, the bridesmaids, the groomsmen.
2. Who might the other people be? Maybe there is the bride’s parents, the groom’s parents, perhaps the bride’s married sister, friends? See if you can guess.
3. Has anyone in the class been to a wedding? Perhaps they could compare some of the customs with those mentioned in the poem.



Here is another photograph of a German wedding in the 1890s. We are not quite sure where this wedding was held, but possibly in the Marburg or Boonah districts where there were also German communities.

In the photograph above, you can again see the ribbons on the groomsmen's shoulders. One man has a fiddle, probably to help the tin rattlers with the music for dancing. The wedding was probably held in the local church, then the reception was held in the barn on the farm which would have been decorated for the occasion. In front of the group is a pile of corn cobs – these must have been swept out of the barn to get ready for the wedding reception. The photo had to be taken outside because there was no flashlight for cameras in those days.

Questions:

1. Again, work out who the people might be.
2. What sort of roof has the barn? What are the walls made of? What would a barn be made of today?
3. Look at the things in the gutter of the barn. We don't know why they are there. Can you make a suggestion?
4. Today, it takes just a tiny fraction of a second to take a photograph but in the 1890s, it took a few seconds and everyone had to stay very still. Can you see anything in the photograph above which shows you that it took a long time?

The German Teachers

Secondary discussion topic (fairly difficult)

In 1879, a school inspector reported:

Beenleigh school and the schools in the immediate neighbourhood have more than the usual difficulties to overcome.

With the exception of the large sugar growers, the majority of the families are Germans, and it has seemed to them necessary to have small schools of their own in which they insist that the German language and the peculiar tenets of their respective religious opinions are taught. I do not think that there is any very deep-set dislike to the State school as such, but these small schools of theirs seem to have the preference. They are for the most part kept open for little more than half the day while they are in operation, and if the children stay away for a day or two every week, no notice is taken of the irregularity; hence the children are employed more frequently on the farms than they could well be if they attended the State schools.

These small schools are also opened and closed as it suits the teacher, or when the residents can or cannot obtain the services of some needy adventurer of their own nationality who will continue in the place for a time and teach their children the German language and the Church Catechism for a consideration. When he has acquired the means to travel, [the teacher] takes his departure and the school is closed for a time. A few of the children then attend the State school, but the major part of them stay at home until their school can be re-opened.

This peculiar state of affairs makes the attendance at the State Schools of a more or less fluctuating character, and as these new comers who, under the most favorable circumstances, only intend to remain with the State school teacher for a short time, are undisciplined, irregular, unsteady, ignorant of English speech and modes of thought, the results obtained at the usual examinations are sometimes disheartening to really efficient and zealous teachers.

Why intelligent Germans, hard-working, successful, and comfortable farmers, do not educate their children in the language and in the modes of thought of their adopted country is hard to conceive, for in doing it they need not forget the language and the associations which bind them to their Church and to Fatherland. There can be no question that education suffers much by persisting in such a course, but their own children are the greatest sufferers, and through them the State loses what it has a right to expect.¹

Exercises:

1. Use a dictionary to try to work out what the inspector means by “the peculiar tenets of their religion”? (note that peculiar doesn’t mean “odd” in this case)
2. What statements or descriptions in the report indicate that the inspector has a poor opinion of the German teachers in the German schools?
3. What statement in the report shows that the inspector has a good opinion of German settlers?
4. What do you think are some arguments in favour of the **inspector’s** viewpoint.
5. What do you think are some arguments in favour of the **German settlers’** viewpoint.

¹ Annual report of inspection, 1878, by T. McIntyre, QVP, 1879, II, p. 96

Coming to live in Logan 1967

Pat Howie was born in England in 1934 and she emigrated to Australia in 1967 with her husband Gordon and their children Karen age 9 and Joanne age 4. They were accompanied by her mother, her sister and her sister's husband and family. Three years later, Gordon's mother joined them in Australia. These are edited extracts from an interview carried out by Jeff Rickertt in 1998.

Q: Why did you decide to emigrate?

A: One reason was that the children would have a better opportunity out here education-wise. Gordon had relatives in Perth, but we didn't really want to go to relatives. We thought we'd try and make it on our own and we wanted somewhere it was warm. My sister and her husband were keen to come. My father had died in 1966 - he'd been ill for a long time. It was the ideal time for us to make a move if we were going to. The children and my sister's children were young enough to adapt to it. We thought we'd try it.

Q: How did you actually come out here?

A: On the "Fairsky" - by boat - we decided to come the slow way — it was on the ten pound migrant scheme at the time.

Q: Tell me how that worked.

A: You went down to the Australia House and said that you'd like to migrate and could we go under the immigration scheme. I remember we went for quite a few interviews. They mainly wanted to know what sort of work Gordon did. They were also interested in the children, how many children we would bring with us. We went to medicals and once we'd passed all that and x-rays and everything, we didn't hear anything for a while. About Christmas we heard that if we'd like to emigrate we could go to Melbourne - and we'd already said we wanted to go to Brisbane. We had a little conflagration and decided no, we wouldn't go to Melbourne. It was the middle of winter and we were cold enough, so we said we'd wait. Then at the end of January, we had a telegram saying we could leave in two weeks. So that was it.

Q: Were most of the other passengers like yourselves under the assisted program?

A: A lot, but not all of them. My mother came out with us and she paid her own passage and got on the same ship to come out here with us. It was mum, my sister and I - nine of us came out together. So it was really good, that helped us a lot.

Q: How long did it take?

A: Five and a half weeks.

Q: Were there any happy memories from that trip?

A: It was warm coming through the Red Sea. Gordon liked it - he didn't get sea sick. I was always sea sick, and the kids were sea sick. There was bad weather starting out, fog in the Mediterranean but coming down the Suez Canal was the most wonderful experience. The kids absolutely loved it. By the time we got to the Australian Bight when it was very rough, the kids had found their sea legs.

Q: When you disembarked at Brisbane, where did you first live?

A: First of all we went to the Migrant Hostel [at Wacol]. We landed in Hamilton docks. We wondered where we were coming because we could smell the mangroves for the first time and it was warm and we thought "Good grief" - because you read as many books as you can, but you're not absolutely sure what you're going to find. When we came up the river we were all a bit apprehensive. We landed and someone from the ANZ Bank came to meet us, which was very nice, we put our money through the ANZ in England.

They were very nice at Wacol, it was just an old army camp, I believe, wooden huts. We decided we'd look for somewhere straight away. After five weeks, we found a big house in Annerley, so we all went together, the nine of us. The kids thought was absolutely gorgeous because they slept in one big bedroom with four beds - and of course they had mosquito nets which was absolutely hilarious to them. From there we looked

for somewhere to live, that's what we wanted to do - find our own place. Gordon had already got a job. We landed in Brisbane on the Thursday and I think he started work the following Tuesday.

Q: Why Woodridge? Why did you come here?

A: Mainly it was money. As I said, Gordon was working. I was doing my best to get a job but I didn't get a job until August. We saved every cent, but it was a matter of cutting the cost. We were looking at Zillmere to start with - and then we came out here. They were just beginning to develop Jacaranda Avenue and the Council were beginning to build in North Road. We first went for a Housing Commission loan on our house, but they knocked us back. We tried the Bank, and the Bank knocked us back. I think it was an insurance agent from the Hostel who told us to come out here and see George De Lisser who built these houses here. That's how we met Pop Trinder out at Trinder Park - George said that Pop had got some blocks for sale here. We moved in on my sister's birthday on the 8th December in 1967, so we'd been here about nine months or so.

Q: Describe the area, the way it was then around here.

A: Dirt roads. Quiet. Very quiet. There was a general store on corner of Charles Avenue and Railway Parade. On the other side of the line which is on Station Road, there was a Post Office and a store, but I don't think there was much else. There was no Trinder Park Railway Station - but Mrs De Lisser said "We're going to have a railway station, you'll be alright here, we'll get a station and you won't have to walk all the way into Woodridge."

Q: Have you maintained contact with family and friends?

A: Oh yes, I still write to my friends. I've got one friend left now in England and I still write to her, so that's thirty years. When we came out here, Gordon's mother was in England so of course at first we had a lot of contact with England. Then Gordon's mother came out three years later and she lived in the house over the road, which worked out quite well. She went back to England a few times to see her other son.

Activities

Imagine you have come from overseas to live in Logan City. Write a letter to a friend in your old country, telling them about all the things you found strange when you arrived in Australia. Mrs Howie mentions a few such as mangroves, the warm weather and mosquito nets. People from other countries would find different things unusual.

Perhaps you have come from another country yourself. If so, write about the things you found different when you arrived.



Workers at Kingston Butter Factory

Kingston in 1939

Ian Rohl wrote this wonderfully descriptive account of his childhood in Kingston.

I have seen some quite dramatic changes in the district, and have seen this small country community develop into a city. Let's take a look at Kingston through my eyes in 1939.

It's a tiny country village ringed by hills, at its centre the railway line, to Southport and Tweed Heads. This is crossed by the road from Brisbane to Waterford and to Beenleigh, it's an unsealed, gravel road, not much changed from the days of Cobb & Co when they ran their service to Beenleigh and Nerang. There are about 48 houses, 11 of these belong to the Butter Factory and were rented by the staff. There are at most seven streets, none of them named and all unsealed and quite rough and dusty. The Butter Factory is the most imposing building, and the chief source of employment in the area. There was also a large Pig Farm employing a manager and staff of one.

The school stood on the southernmost hill. This was a very small, one room, one teacher school, with enrolment most times of about 35, never quite reaching the numbers to warrant a second teacher. The teacher rented a local house and of course walked to work.

On the northernmost hill, the Goldmine operated for various periods under different ownership and provided employment for a small number of men. This was known as Mount Taylor. But I don't know if it had the sufficient height to be officially recognised as a mountain.

There was a combined general store, newsagency and blacksmith situated next to the railway crossing. This was operated by John and Mable Cordingley. Close by was a butchershop, separating the two shops, was a small creek which we local knew as Cordingley's Creek. Today the name has been forgotten and the creek is an overgrown drain. It's all rather sad, as I can remember it with clean flowing water, the school children fishing for rainbow fish and gudgeon with bent pins tied to lengths of cotton.

The railway station was staffed by a Station Master and a Night Officer, and they lived in houses adjoining the railway station. The post office was part of the Railway Station too. The Station Master was also the Post Master. Mail arrived daily by train and was not delivered but collected personally. Adjacent to the



Bobby Winnett and Colin Rohl, playing outside one of the Butter Factory cottages, Juers Road June 1946

Railway Station was the School of Arts hall, used for dances, film screening, occasional church services and meetings. This is one of the few original buildings still standing.

There was a family-operated poultry farm, not too far from site of the Goldmine. And my grandfather had a dairy farm with a small herd supplying milk to the locals and his surplus cream was sold to the Butter Factory. He supplemented his income from a small orchard, from honey sales and from supplying timber for power poles, building piles and firewood. There was no baker and fresh bread was delivered to the door by motor van. Fruit and vegetables were sold in a similar fashion, by horse and cart from Slacks Creek. Occasionally an enterprising farming family from the Logan River would call on the Kingston houses selling fresh fish. Fish were mullet which they would catch at night, with a boat, a wire netting frame and a lantern. The fish attracted to the light would jump into the boat and fall against the wire frame.

My family rented one of the Butter Factory cottages situated in what is now Juers Street. So let's look at this typical Kingston accommodation of 1939. The house was small, two bedrooms, a kitchen and a front room doubling as lounge-dining room. It was so small that it contained only a dining table a piano and a gramophone. Eating in this room was strictly for formal occasions. We all would generally eat from the kitchen table, the kitchen was the focal point of family living. Winters were cold and the wood stove was the only source of warmth, so this is where most families ate, read talked or listened to the radio, and where mothers knitted or patched clothing.

There was no bathroom. The outside toilet was usually near the rear fence line quite some distance from the house. The verandah ran across the front of the house and down one side. This side verandah would later be converted to a bathroom and a third bedroom. Water was from one or two water tanks which were filled by rain water off the roof. This was a very limited supply, and water had to be conserved at all times. Periods of drought were very difficult. In winter, water would have to be left out in dishes or saucepans for breakfast as the pipes from tank to kitchen would often be frozen and impossible to use.

There was a continual problem with food storage. Most food had to be fresh, as no one owned a refrigerator. My mother kept cooked meat for a limited time, in a hanging meat safe in a cool spot. A meat safe is simply a wooden framed box with sides of metal doors with perforation small enough to keep out flies. Flies were a perpetual nuisance made worse by the proximity of the Pig Farm. My mother also kept butter cool and safe from ants in an earthenware butter cooler which sat in another container of water. I remember my parents

buying their first ice chest - a wooden device divided into two compartments, the lower half taking the food and the upper space filled with a block of ice. It worked quite efficiently, but of course provision had to be made for the water from the melting ice to be delivered into a dish on the floor or via a pipe through the floor boards. Ice was delivered from the ice works in Beenleigh, and in no time at all every home had an ice chest.

Outside the house in the front yard, my mother had her flower garden, at the rear my father kept a vegetable garden and a section was fenced off for a fowl run. So, like many of our neighbours we were fairly self-sufficient with eggs and fresh vegetables. My father didn't yet own a lawn mower and had to cut the grass with a scythe, a tool which is not often seen these days.

Much of the remaining yard was devoted to clothes washing, none of these cottages had provision for a laundry so my father put down a concrete block and built in a covered area off the back of the house for the wash tubs. Washing was quite a ritual. And always performed on Monday morning. It was essential to boil clothes in a copper boiler, fuelled by a wood fire. The washing was stirred around in the copper container, with a wooden pot stick which was also used to lift the clothes out on to the laundry trolley and then wheel out to the clothes-line to dry. All this was long before Mr Hill had dreamed of his rotary hoist and clothes lines of my childhood were strung across back yards between posts with a convenient bush stick with a fork at one end propping up the middle of the line, and keeping the clothes flying in the breeze.

The other essential in every back yard was the wood heap. A supply of dry wood to fuel the kitchen stove, which was needed from early morning till late at night. Breakfast couldn't be started till the fire was alight, it was often prepared the night before, with carefully placed newspaper and small pieces of wood. This was a substantial meal, often consisting of porridge or eggs and bacon and toast and a pot of tea. The toast was made by holding a long handled fork containing a slice of bread in front of the open fire on the stove. The trick being not to burn the toast or drop it on the floor.

The Butter Factory working day began at eight o'clock and to announce this, they sounded a loud steam whistle, that could be heard all over Kingston. It was blown again at Midday for lunch and most workers went home for a hot meal in the middle of the day. My day outside would be full of interest for the bushland began at our back fence, but this was still out of bounds for me. I'd make up for it later however. Snakes were quite common and everyone had a healthy respect for them. Late in the morning a distinctive drone announced the Stinson three engined airliner nearing the end of its daily flight from Sydney. The flight was directly over Kingston, en route to Brisbane Airport at Archerfield. After refuelling, they would soon be overhead again on the return flight.

Travelling salesmen arriving by train would ply their wares of patent medicines and books and there were also the occasional visits from the last of the wandering swagman left over from the depression years. They would be seeking work or food, and usually sheltered a night or two at the School of Arts hall which had an outside open fire place which they could use. These men with swags and black billy cans would offer to sharpen knives or scissors. One who came to our house showed us how he could make decorative vases by cutting up empty tin cans with a pair of tin snips. With a jingle of harness John Cordingley would drive his horse and cart past our house on his way to deliver groceries and mail to Browns Plains, Greenbank and Logan Reserve.

There was not a great deal of sporting activity apparent in 1939, my father's sister and her husband built a tennis court behind their house, and this was very popular at weekends for social games. Remnants of an earlier court next to Charles Kingston's house remained, but I don't know when it was last used. A cricket pitch occupied a very small part of what is now Gould Adams Park. It was quite close to the road and bordered by thick bushland. It was well patronised in 1930's, but by 1940, most of the young cricketers were playing away and would remain so for the next few years. Other weekend activity included fishing in Scrubby Creek which then was quite hidden by trees all along its banks.

In 1940, I started school, as there was only one other new pupil that year, we were put in the class that started the year before. Somehow, we caught up.

The war had begun three or four months before my family bought their first radio, in those days we called them wireless sets. It was a small mantle model, about 30 x 35 cms in size and it was considered quite modern in 1940. Most radios were rather large wooden constructions standing over a meter from the floor. There were only five radio stations, three commercial, two ABC. The programs covered an astonishing spectrum of contents. Even the commercial stations broadcast music programs, ranging from classical to light and pop music. As well as war and local news, there were plays, serials sporting coverage, church services and many comedy shows. The wireless became an essential item in every home. No one knew how long the war would last. It was a long way from our little insulated existence.

From our hilltop school room, we'd also hear the familiar sound of hammer on metal, as John Cordingley - he's the black smith - worked at his forge, and from the Butter Factory, the din of steel cream cans being delivered, slammed down on metal floors, sliding along to be weighed, workers shouting out the weight and the farmers names as they are entered into the ledger for future payment. By late afternoon there is a change in the sounds that we hear. Here and there a dog barks, an axe rings out as somebody chops wood for a hungry stove, as the light begins to fade, there is a chilling, mournful cry of curlews. We know they're only birds, but their call is so eerie, we children imagine all sorts of ghostly beings. At dusk every frog in Kingston proclaims his presence. By the thousands. Their sound ranges from the deep throated giant tree frog to the smallest of march frogs, all clamouring to be heard. No wonder some jokingly call the place "Frog Hollow". The boobook owl beginning his nightly hunt, calls out his friendly mopoke, and is answered by another a short distance away.

To my grandparents house, high on its hill, the night air brings the sound of the brass band, incredible as it seems this is the Beenleigh Band at practice and the night is so free of motor car or other noise pollution that the music can be heard quite clearly over such a great distance.

Later at night, when most people are going to bed, there's yet another sound, from a long the ridges, from behind the piggery, comes the blood curdling howling of dingoes. It's enough to make one appreciate a safe warm bed. But even at this late hour, there is still some activity. The goods train shunting trucks on the Butter Factory's siding, finally assembles it's full load, and begins the slow haul to Brisbane. The gradient proves too much for the steam engine. It's forced to back up to Kingston Station and try again. This time it's successful, and the puffing fades away in the distance, as in total darkness Kingston sleeps.



Kingston in the 1930s. On the left is the railway station. To the centre of the photograph are the workers' cottages for the Kingston Butter Factory. Front right is the railway residence and to the extreme right is the main road and shops.