

Interview Extracts

Tom Strout of Willunga's recollections of celebrating New Years Day at Port Willunga

Oh I can remember them (parents) talking about the New Year's Day events which took place at Port Willunga, in the days when the jetty was still in its entirety and boats would come in, give rides. There used to be picnics run by the Forester's Lodge. The Forester's Lodge was at Aldinga in those days. So it was a mecca for everybody else in the district and they used to travel by horse and cart and buggy, by horseback and the rest of it. Yes, that was the big event of the whole district I think for the year.

Fay Hunt of Maslin Beach's recollections of family picnics and New Years Day

Our fishing days we made a picnic out of it, yes often. It was usually on all day picnics that we cooked our meals. We would take all our food down and park on the beach, especially down along Moana and Sellicks. The cars used to be a little bit apart and then you'd put all the canvas over the top and make a beautiful shade area. But we spent most of the day in the water. But I can remember we just went out for a meal and couldn't wait to get back in. They'd say, "No, you've got to wait a half an hour. You'll drown". (laughs) But New Years Day was also the big day. That was always at the beach spent with relations, mainly at Aldinga Beach. All the cousins and aunts and uncles. So there was cars – you know, quite a few. Real family gathering with all the shelters along the beach. There were no shops or kiosks, only at Moana, the old round kiosk – I remember that one. You didn't have ice cream or anything when you were kids. We used canvas water bags to keep the water cool. And we never missed cold bottled drinks. You know, you didn't realise. To what children have these days. And if you had a raspberry cordial that was a real treat.

Sam Liddiard of Aldinga's recollections of picnics and New Years Day celebrations on the beach

Dad and mum used to have two horses and a buggy and we'd go down to Silver Sands and we'd put up a shade, have our leg of mutton and tomatoes and cucumber with four gallons of water, and we'd be the only ones on the beach. You'd see an odd motorbike come past you. And then New Year's Day they've have the motorbike races and it'd finish up the motorbikes would be racing in the water. The tide would be coming in (laughs). Mum and them would sit in the shade while we went out in the water. We'd take our little bats and have a game of cricket on the beach, and there was no one around. Today, you've got to have a parking meter down there, to get down there now.

Fay Hunt of Maslin Beach's recollections of Christmas Day celebrations

The big day was just before Christmas, Christmas Eve, yes. Father Christmas used to come down the road. In fact I didn't know for a long time, but it was my dad. (laughs) And my sister recognised one time that he had a pullover on the same as dad wore. It was his golf one. It was underneath his Father Christmas costume. They came from,

oh, Reeves garage, and down the road. They had a sledge that they pulled him down with. Ice cream used to be the big thing. We'd have the little Dandy ice creams. That would come out from Adelaide, because ice creams, even when I started work, wasn't a thing you sold there. Mr Reeves didn't have refrigeration. And then we gave out sweets. When I worked there the shop was just packed. We'd have a little breather when Father Christmas came, but the shoppers would come back in. Especially the fathers would come in to do the late shopping for their wives. They would say, you know, "Suggest something for my wife," for the next day, for Christmas. (laughs)

Hilda Lush of Willunga's recollections of an aeroplane landing near the school

I remember once when we were there at school it was great excitement – I think I must have been in about Grade 4 or something – and an aeroplane landed just down, I suppose it was about a mile away from school, opposite where the Salopian Inn is now. There was something wrong with it – it couldn't get any further. And you know, there weren't too many in those days. But everybody, even the teacher –and he was a grey haired man – they swarmed down there to look at the plane. Whether we got the teacher's say so or not we all went down there. Very soon afterwards everybody came – the whole school, the teachers too. It was a marvellous thing. You know, quite unusual.

Hilda Lush of Willunga's recollections of the first train to Willunga

Well where we lived was in that place across from the Salopian Inn and the train line, just went a little way across from us. We used to rush out to the verandah to have a look at the train go along. Well, practically the same as cars going along to Willunga, there weren't so many. The train was quite a thing there for a while. There was always quite some excitement with the train. People used to run to the station to have a look at it when it stopped. You'd just go there for a drive to look at the train.