

THE HISTORY OF DAIRYING FROM 1943-1973



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1. Erection of power poles in 1960 prior to connection of 240V electricity to Crediton area in 1961
2. Ralph Freegard driving a Massey Ferguson tractor, brother Neville sitting on bags of chaff, Freegard's farm Crediton Loop Rd 1950s
3. Last milk can pickup from Herron's dairy July 1975
4. Harold Petersen's milk pickup/delivery truck at Turner's house Upper River Rd Crediton ca.1960s
5. Helicopter fertiliser spreading on Herron's property ca.1980s

1943 saw significant demand increase for milk, with the establishment of a Rest and Recreation Centre in Mackay for American troops. The US Services collected milk to supply their troops, while deployed in Mackay during the escalation of the Pacific war. This supply continued on after the war was over, and the Mackay people were provided with pasteurised milk.

The industry began to expand. With the installation of milking machines more cows were able to be milked. At certain periods of the year there would be an oversupply of milk, so quotas were introduced in the late 50s so that each farmer received an equitable share of the market based on their production.

1956 and 1958 saw severe flooding in the Mackay district with roads and

bridges washed away, hindering transportation.

In 1961 electricity came to Eungella. This allowed the introduction of shock cooling and a refrigerated cabinet, capable of holding 10 x 10 gallon cans. Plus, no more noisy diesel motors and power at the flick of a switch!

1965 brought change to the industry with the introduction of the "Dairy Pasture Subsidy Scheme" - a government initiative used to encourage farmers to increase the productivity of their pastures by introducing improved tropical pasture species and the use of fertilisers. This was promoted through the hands-on approach of young enthusiastic field staff from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

The task of cultivating and fertilising meant that tractors were a necessity and by now most farms had one. Bulldozing contractors were also now available to clear paddocks of logs and lantana (a noxious weed).

Milk carriers in the 1943-1970 period included Jack and George Thompsett, Jack Brodie and Harold Petersen. In the 1970s, with the benefits of increased fertiliser use being obvious, farmers looked at ways to fertilise the steep hills. With the construction of an airstrip on Crediton Plateau, aerial spraying by fixed wing aircraft began.

Step Back in Time

gathering Eungella's past

Images were contributed to the "Step Back in Time - Gathering Eungella's past" project by past and present residents.
Visit www.history.eungella.com.au for more information.