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'KOALAFIED TRADESMEN'

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to buy some materials, and they kept asking, 'what's your scale' and I was going, 'ah ...'. So I bolted, I was horrified. But, it worked for me. I started with photographic references and I drew from those. But I had to get to know the buildings. I wandered up and down the main street making references for every building.

In the end, I got Robert to make me a solid core so that there is some weight to the pieces, then I made the verandah and any other appendages and then I did the drawings for all the surfaces. The last one I did was the one on the diagonal; most of them are straight on, but the last one I did was the hairdresser's shop at the bottom of the street as you come into the town, and I took that on the diagonal so I got the cut-off corner.

I felt that I had mastered what I was doing by the time I did that one, because all of the angles are sliding away from you — it was an enjoyable journey. But they are my interpretation of the buildings; they are accurate to the extent that if I have chosen to do the sign I try to make it as accurate as possible; but I have left stuff out that didn't look good.

I changed the colours to the colours of the drawing papers and then just harmonised with them, I didn't want to lock into other people's paint choices and I left off things that didn't make a pleasing shape and form at that scale. Chimneys are a very good example. They just look busy, and so do the urns.

Someone must have come into this town in the late 1800s and said, "have I got a deal for you, I have a trailer load of urns". If you look at the top of the facades of a lot of the main street buildings, they have this elaborate Victorian urn on the top — always the same urn. I put an urn on one, but when I drew it I thought no, they just look fussy — so my buildings are urnless. That's my story.



In 1936 Australia was 'riding on the sheep's back', and it was in this year that Garnet Coghill Maddrell decided to have the Garan Vale Woolshed built. Claude Whitfield, a family friend from Narooma, constructed the shed and it was one of the most modern sheds in its time. As well as shearing their own flocks of Merino and cross bred sheep, the shed was also used by some of their neighbours who were on smaller holdings. These included John Kain, Eddie Hill, Jack Bunn and Mick Nomchong.

The most renowned shearer at the time was Allen Thorne, who was shearing sheep at Garan Vale from 1936-1969 without missing one year. Allen always insisted on using the same stand — his record can still be seen to this day chalked on the wall of the shed.

Garnet's sons, John and Garry, grew up working in the shed during their school holidays and, at times, after leaving school. Whilst Garry was woolclassing, John became an expert in sharpening combs and cutters, doing mechanical repairs, as well as working on the woolpress. John has fond memories of growing up at Garan Vale and, as he was the youngest child in the family, he was often found running to their maid, Kate, calling out, "save me Kate", after a rowdy game of chasings. She would throw him up on her shoulders and continue working in the kitchen. Kate worked for the family for over 35 years and was thought of as part of their family.

After leaving school John ran a successful electrical business in the main street for several years. Then when Garnet died, John and his wife Moira moved to Garan Vale. After obtaining his pilot's licence in 1956 at Goulburn Aero Club, John flew a variety of planes for over 50 years.

He fondly remembers the field days that were regularly held at Garan Vale. There was an airstrip out in a back paddock.

Crowds flocked there to be entertained with low aerobatics, parachuting and joy flights in Tiger Moths and Austers.

John recalls an occasion in the early 1960s when he was asked to drop 'fundraising leaflets' over Braidwood. He flew just above the chimneys of the Royal Hotel and down the main street



JOHN AND MOIRA ABOUT TO HEAD OFF TO THE WILD BLUE YONDER.

Memories of a wonderful life

Lyn Cram talked to John Maddrell about his life and the Garan Vale Woolshed

on a busy Saturday morning, whilst Norm 'Slim' Marlen dropped the leaflets that had been carefully rolled and secured. John's brother Garry Maddrell exclaimed that it was, "just like confetti" with Wallace Street covered with leaflets and not one blowing away. John Bunn, who was

only a young lad at the time, was so terrified he ran for cover into the nearest shop.

There were a few flying incidents where John was lucky to survive, and this has made him thankful for every day in his life. As the saying goes ... *carpe diem* — seize the day.

LEFT TO RIGHT: ALAN SALMON, A MYSTERY MAN, JOE HUTCHISON, JOHN DONAHUE AND JOHN MADDRELL ENJOYING A DRESS-UP EVENT FOR THE GOULBURN AERO CLUB.

