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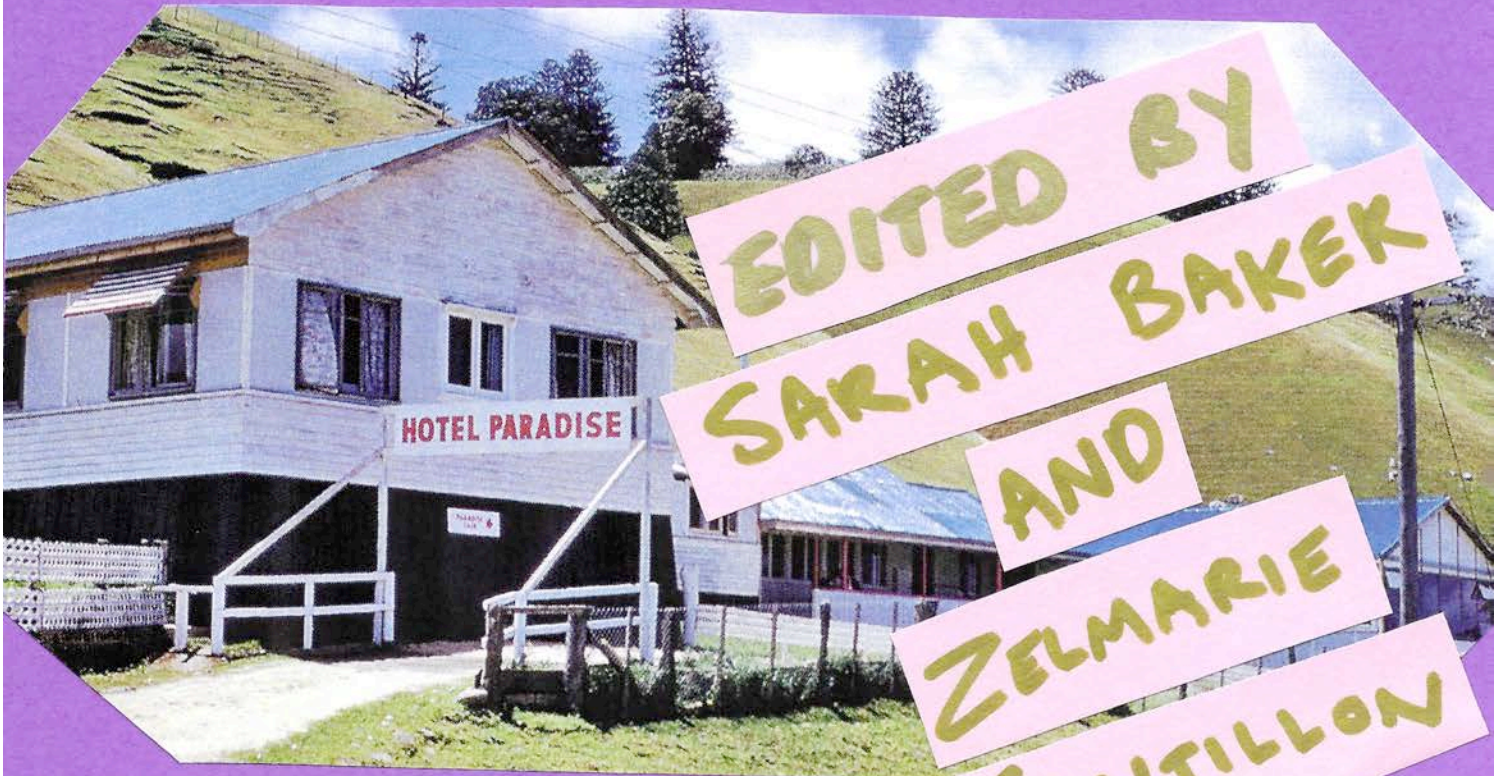
YOU

YORLYE

AT THE

DAUN

PARADISE



EDITED BY

SARAH BAKER

AND

ZELMARIE

CANTILLON

## Reimagining KAVHA zine series

### Series editors

Professor Sarah Baker (Griffith University)

Dr Zelmarie Cantillon (Western Sydney University)

The Reimagining KAVHA zine series emerges from an Australian Research Council-funded project, 'Reimagining Norfolk Island's Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area'. This project analyses how cultural injustices are reinforced or resisted within KAVHA as a living heritage site. Specifically, we focus on Pitcairn Settler descendants' relationships with *Daun'taun*, as well as that of other residents who have long and deep connections to the area, and their experience of heritage management in KAVHA. In addition to publishing scholarly writing (e.g. peer-reviewed articles), another way we aim to capture these relationships is by co-creating zines with the community. Zines are a research tool used by social scientists to centre creativity, collaboration, agency and resistance.

The zines in this series are a form of public history and community archiving, enabling people to tell their stories on their own terms. We approach the zines as a way to facilitate the sharing of memories, experiences, feelings and local knowledge. This isn't about creating a definitive history of the subject at hand. Instead, the zines in this series provide a space where multiple voices can appear together, recording the emotional resonance of the past. As such, the zines are forms of heritage activism which emphasise the democratisation of history-making.

For project updates and other issues of this zine series, see:  
<https://reimaginingkavha.com>

### Series titles

See You at the Paradise (2021)

*Edited by Sarah Baker and Zelmarie Cantillon*

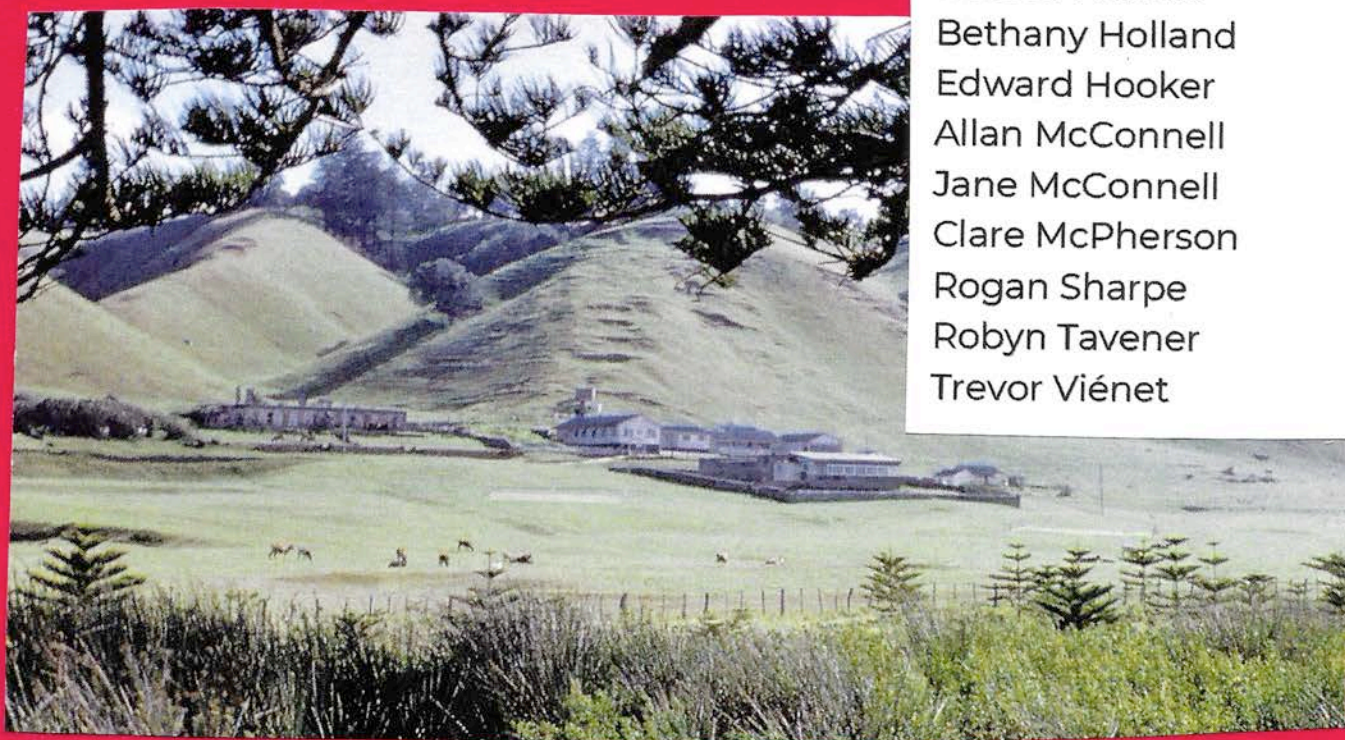
## See you at the Paradise: a Reimagining KAVHA zine

### Editors

Sarah Baker  
Zelmarie Cantillon

### Contributors

Pat Anderson  
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Anona Buffett-Cooper  
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David 'Dids' Evans  
Gaye Evans  
Russell Francis  
Bethany Holland  
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Rogan Sharpe  
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## Acknowledgements

The editorial team extend their thanks to everyone who made the production of this zine possible, especially our contributors who gave their time to share memories and stories of time spent at Oceanside and the Paradise. Thanks especially to Russell Francis for the zine's title!


Thank you to the Lions Club of Norfolk Island, who provided use of their clubhouse – the Surgeon's Quarters in KAVHA – for the two zine workshops, and to its members who created content for the zine as part of a 'Sticky Note' activity early on in the production process. The Lions clubhouse was so valuable to us, enabling our workshop participants to be *Daun'taun* for the creation of their zine pages, surrounded by the wonderful Lions photo collection – the three black and white images of Dewville on display were great talking points for participants about the early days of the Paradise story.





A huge thank you, too, to Trevor Viénet who granted permission for the use of images from the Earle Viénet photo collection. Trevor's father stayed at the Paradise as a tourist in 1960 and took numerous photos of the Paradise hotel and its surroundings. These images provided inspiration for our workshop participants and are featured throughout the zine. Russell Francis also provided images of himself as a child at Oceanside and as a young man at the Paradise and these are used here with his permission. Thanks too to Robyn Tavener for permission to use images from her personal collection of photographs. Photos of the contemporary green site where Paradise once stood were taken by zine editor Sarah Baker.

An image of the whale bones appears on pages 23 and 28. We have been unable to identify the copyright holder of this image but welcome them to get in touch with us so that the image can be correctly attributed.



Scattered throughout the zine are also extracts from old advertisements for Dewville and Oceanside that appeared in the following:

- '14 Glorious Days at Norfolk Island...', 1951, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 February. (see page 3)
- 'Classified advertisements', 1934, *The Australian Woman's Mirror*, 15 May, p. 41. (see page 3)
- 'Holiday resorts', 1935, *The Australian Woman's Mirror*, 2 April. (see p. 26, 34)
- 'Norfolk Island: Attractions of Kingston', 1933, *The Pacific Islands Monthly*, 24 April, p. 27 (see page 39)



Our contributors also drew inspiration from policy documents and heritage management plans, including:

- Commonwealth of Australia, 1985, *Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983–84*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, pp. 10–11. (see pages 34, 56, 66)
- Commonwealth of Australia, 1986, *Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983–85*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 18. (see pages 54, 68)
- Commonwealth of Australia, Norfolk Island Administration, Jean Rice Architect, Context Pty Ltd and GML Heritage Pty Ltd, 2016, *Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area Heritage Management Plan April 2016*, viewed 3 June 2021, [https://www.regional.gov.au/territories/norfolk\\_island/files/KAVHA-Heritage-Management-Plan.pdf](https://www.regional.gov.au/territories/norfolk_island/files/KAVHA-Heritage-Management-Plan.pdf). (see page 55)

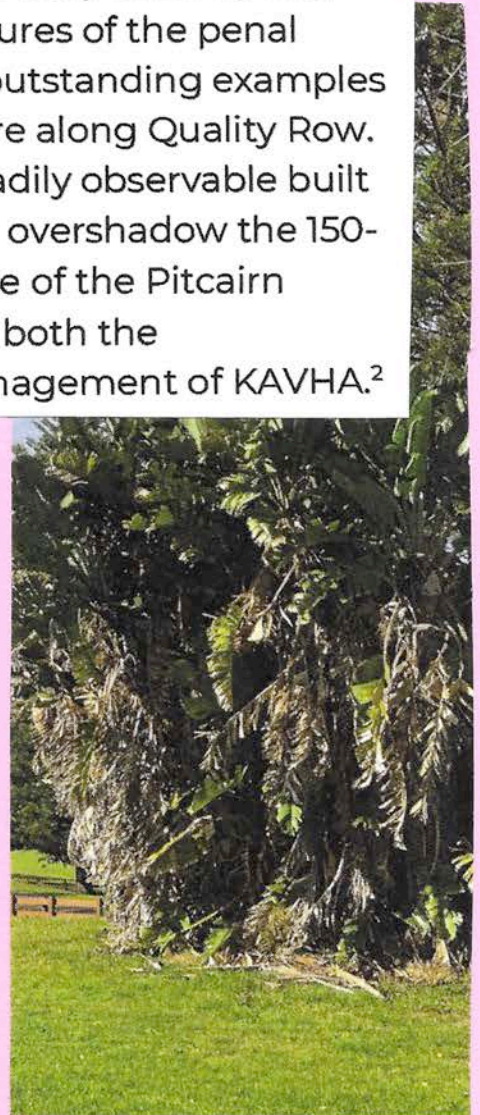
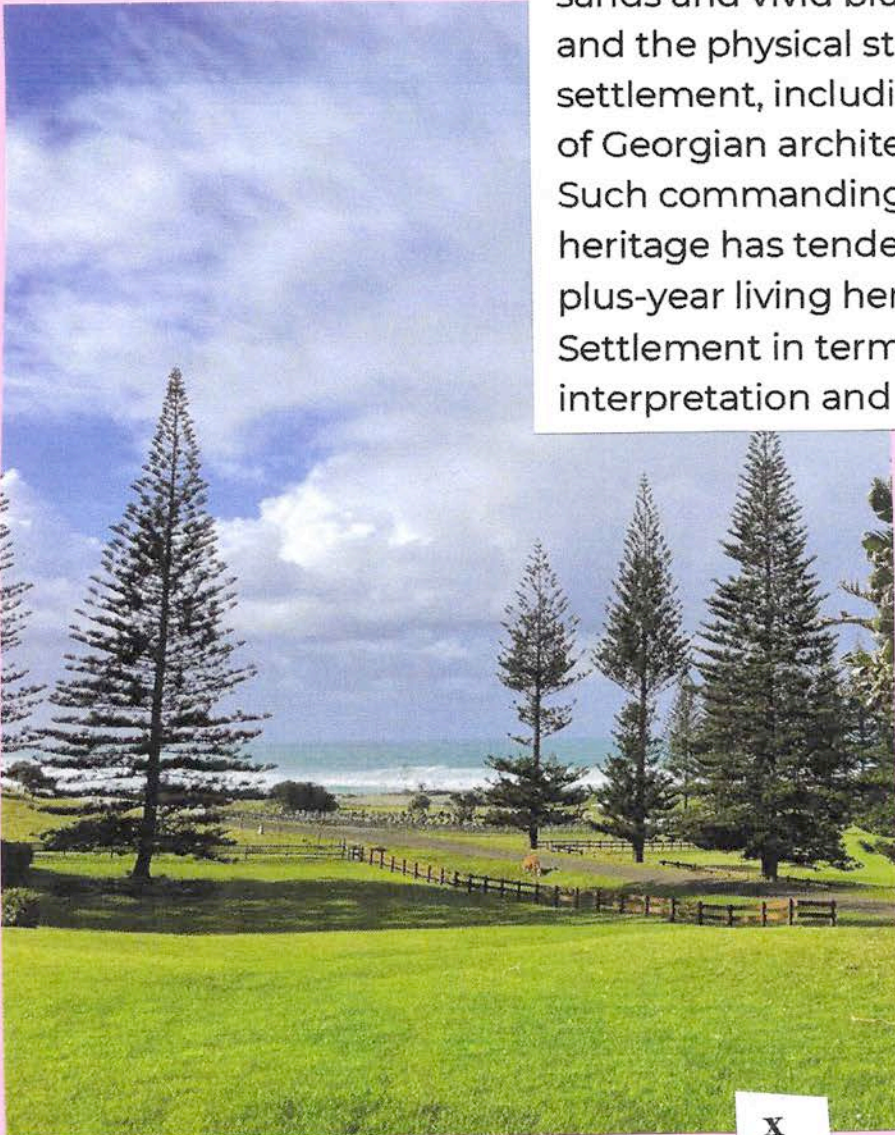
Thank you Rogan Sharpe for the amazing assistance provided with running the zine workshops. Polaroid images seen in the zine were taken by Rogan and he also drew the map featured in the zine's editorial.


Lastly, thanks to Dr William Despotovic for looking over a draft of the zine's front matter.

## Editorial

The Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (KAVHA) in Norfolk Island is one of eleven sites that make up the UNESCO World Heritage-Listed Australian Convict Sites property. Although its World Heritage status was granted to recognise remnants of the British penal settlements,<sup>1</sup> KAVHA is also significant for its earlier Polynesian settlement and its central role in the everyday lives of people of the Pitcairn Settlement since 1856.

What makes KAVHA so eye-catching for visitors is its dramatic natural beauty – green pastures, towering Norfolk Island pines, a rugged coastline, contrasted with the golden sands and vivid blue serenity of Emily Bay – and the physical structures of the penal settlement, including outstanding examples of Georgian architecture along Quality Row. Such commanding, readily observable built heritage has tended to overshadow the 150-plus-year living heritage of the Pitcairn Settlement in terms of both the interpretation and management of KAVHA.<sup>2</sup>



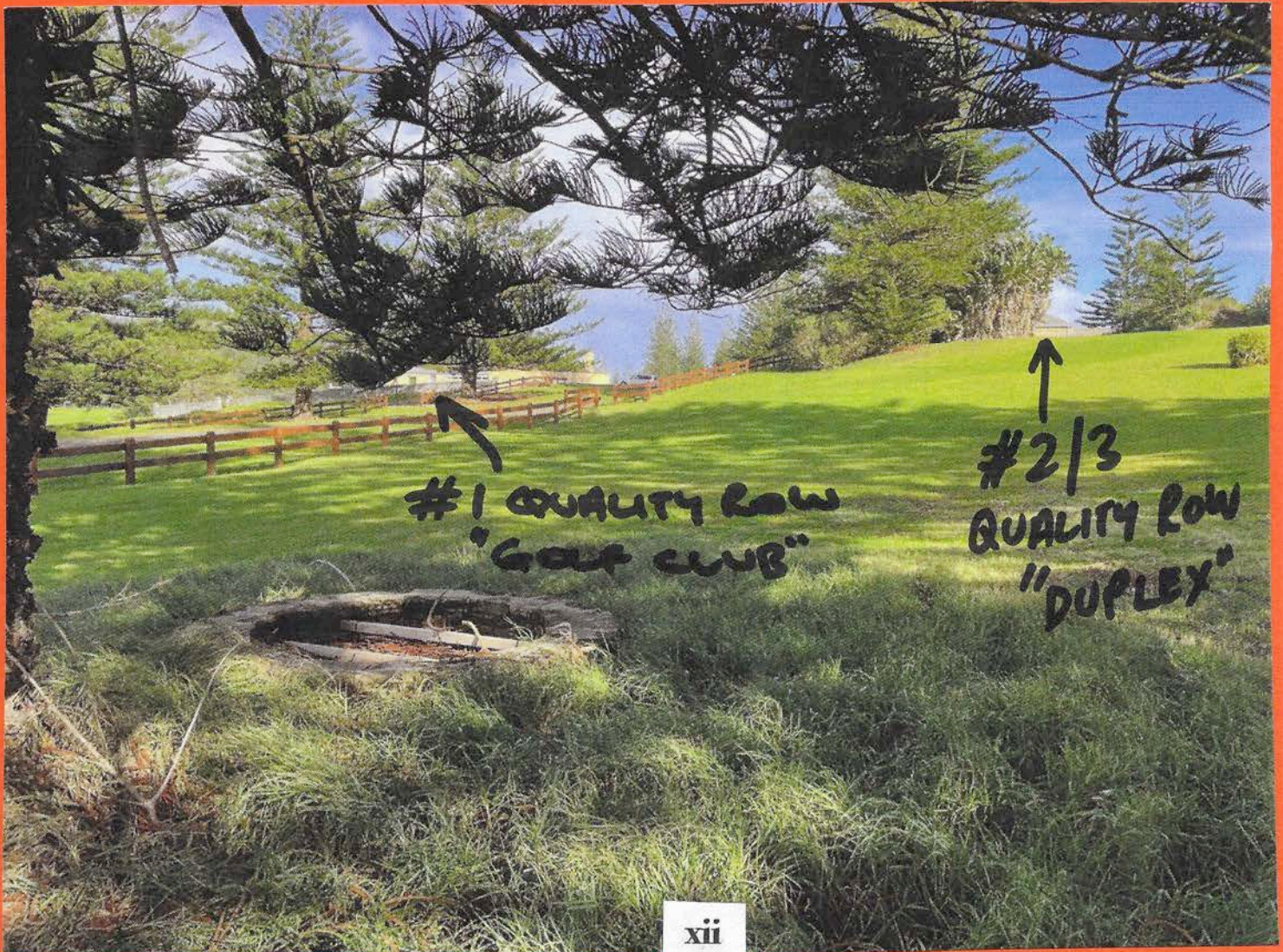
A scenic landscape featuring a vibrant green field in the foreground, a dark stone wall on the right, and a yellow building with a grey roof in the background. The scene is framed by a green border. The sky is blue with some clouds.

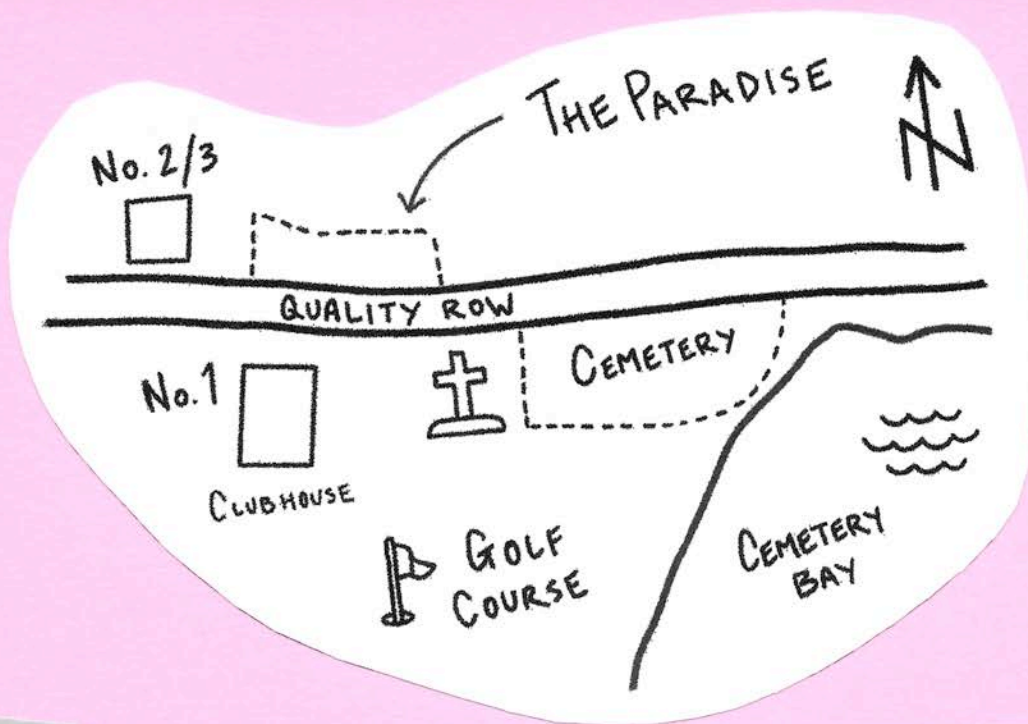
From the perspective of the academic discipline of critical heritage studies, this foregrounding of British colonial heritage isn't surprising. In the Western world, heritage management has long been dominated by an 'authorised heritage discourse'. As heritage scholar Laurajane Smith explains, this discourse:

“emphasize[s] the material basis of heritage, and attributes an inherent cultural value or significance to these things. Furthermore, the sense of gravitas given to these values is also often directly linked to the age, monumentality and/or aesthetics of a place.”<sup>3</sup>

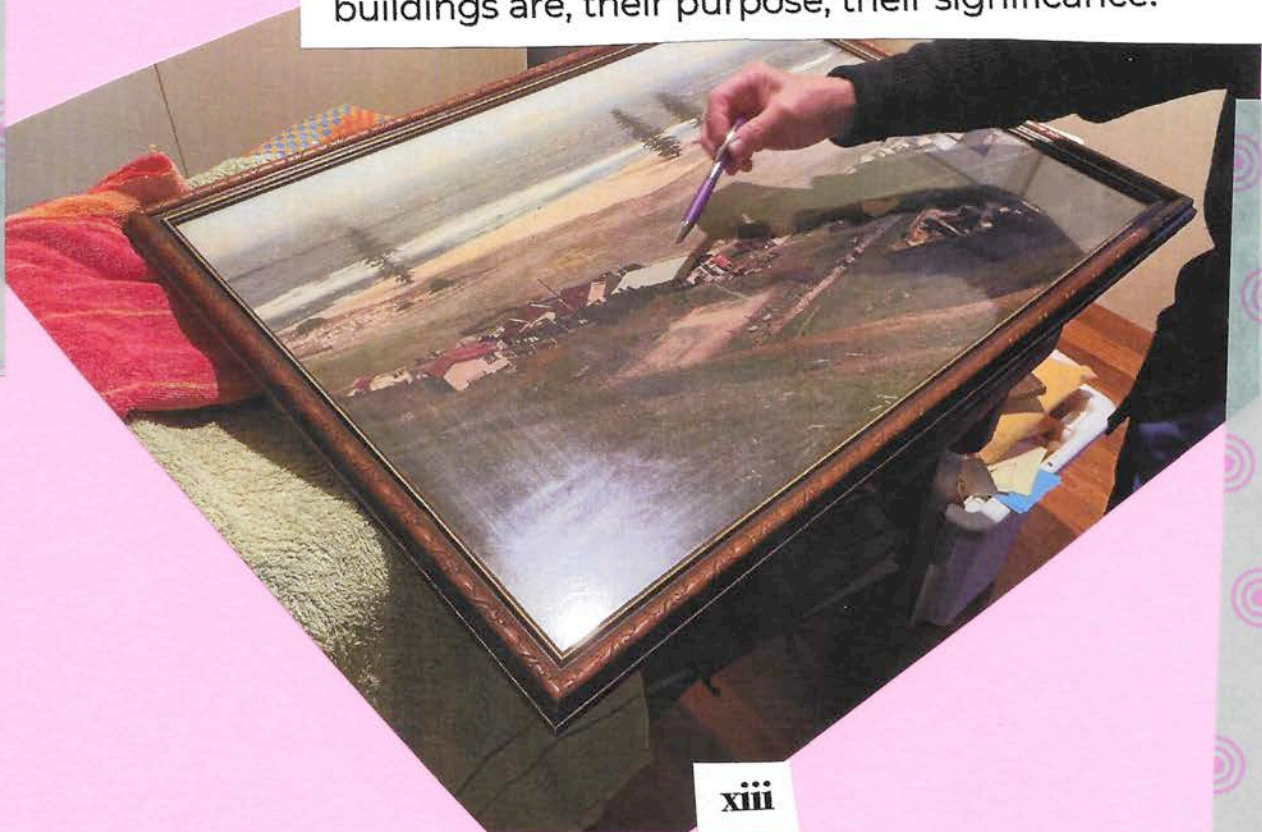
In KAVHA, the authorised heritage discourse has been reflected in the systemic prioritisation of built heritage from the penal settlement and the associated histories of the convict period. As a result of the authorised heritage discourse, the histories of the Polynesian and Pitcairner settlements have been rendered less visible.

For example, tourists and new residents to the island might wonder, like Sarah did on her first visit to Kingston, about the expanse of green at the end of Quality Row next to the Superintendents of Convicts Duplex (No. 2/3 Quality Row). A piece of land with incredible views, this fenced, grassy plot features some trees and shrubs, a picnic table and a cattle grid to allow for vehicle access. The site looks across to Emily Bay and on to Nepean and Phillip islands, and to the east over to Norfolk Island Cemetery and Cemetery Bay.





There is no signage at the site giving any indication of what this place might have once been. Over the road at the Norfolk Island Golf Club, an interpretive sign offers a glimpse into the past. One of the sign's images from the 1940s, depicting World War II radio infrastructure, also shows a series of buildings across from the Georgian ruins of the Stipendiary Magistrates Quarters (No. 1 Quality Row). There is nothing on the sign, however, to say what those curious-looking buildings are, their purpose, their significance.



### ***A brief history***

The buildings in the image on the 'Golf Course' sign were a guest house named Dewville, constructed by Bob Dewey in the 1930s on leasehold land. The early days of the guest house are captured in an article in *The Pacific Islands Monthly* from 24 April 1933, with the newspaper's correspondent writing:

“ Last holiday weeks are being spent by settlers from 'up country' down at Kingston: where an enterprising and far-sighted resident has been busy for months past building up a colony of attractive little bungalows, all of different design and all snapped up as soon as completed. Three are permanently let and the rest brim over with joyous casual tenants whose faces and numbers vary from week to week. As an additional attraction the largest bungalow has been fitted and equipped as a tea room and restaurant where vagrant meals may be taken or a weekly arrangement come to. ... A hard tennis court is in course of construction.<sup>4</sup> ”

Dewville was one of the first commercial accommodation providers on the island,<sup>5</sup> offering accommodation to island residents from 'up country' (i.e. other parts of the island), and increasingly to visitors from abroad when the island started experiencing an uptick in tourism.

With changing management over the years, the hotel went through numerous expansions and name changes – Oceanside and Kentville among them – before becoming the Paradise by 1960. In KAVHA archaeological surveys and heritage management plans, the following information about the site is usually recorded:

“ D21 ‘DEWVILLE’

This was an accommodation complex built in c.1930s to the east of the Quality Row Duplex. It consisted of a number of small weatherboard lodges, some of which were probably incorporated in the later Paradise Hotel which developed on the site.

D22 PARADISE HOTEL

This complex of timber, iron and fibro structures developed on the site of ‘Dewville’ in the second half of the present century.<sup>6</sup> ”



For many years, the lease was held by Travelodge Australia, whose proposals to replace the old buildings with new structures were rejected due to opposition by the Australian Council of National Trusts, the Royal Institute of Architects and other like-minded organisations.<sup>7</sup> As reported by *The Canberra Times* in 1972, the Australian Council of National Trusts had labelled the Paradise Hotel as ‘one of the worst mistakes made on the island’ – ‘the building should have been demolished and the site cleared’.<sup>8</sup>

By the early 1980s, reports were indicating urgency around the removal of the Paradise:

“As the conservation and enhancement of the Kingston and Arthur’s Vale area on Norfolk Island proceeds, the incongruity of the existence of the Paradise buildings has become apparent and their removal more urgent. The Commission believes that the structure should be carefully demolished under archaeological supervision and the site revegetated as part of the curtilage of the adjoining historic structures.”<sup>9</sup>

The fate of the Paradise was sealed in the 1987 report ‘Demolition and Landscaping of Paradise Hotel Suite’.<sup>10</sup>

By the time of the 1988 Bicentenary celebrations – marking the arrival of the First Fleet in Australia and the beginning of the colonial settlement on Norfolk Island – the Paradise Hotel was no more, the buildings having been ‘demolished [in 1987] because of their intrusive nature’,<sup>11</sup> not being ‘in keeping with [the] rest of the historic area’.<sup>12</sup>



This potted history gives an indication of the important place the Dewville–Oceanside–Paradise had in Norfolk Island’s emergent tourism industry, which has since become the main economic activity on the island. We also see the disdain in which the Paradise was viewed by heritage bodies, consultants and representatives of the Commonwealth Government, with the buildings seen as spoiling the heritage value of a road otherwise occupied by an ‘outstanding collection of fine Georgian buildings’.<sup>13</sup> However, we haven’t yet delved into how the Paradise might have been significant in the everyday lives of Norfolk Islanders. The contributors to this zine highlight the many ways in which the Paradise and its precursors had local, cultural, social and historical significance to the Norfolk Island community. Their stories point to the value of the Paradise as a twentieth-century heritage place<sup>14</sup> in the Pitcairn Settlement which, if it were still standing, may today have been afforded the kinds of protections and respect that were bestowed on the penal settlement buildings of Quality Row.



### ***About this zine***

The Paradise seemed an obvious choice of focus for the first title in our zine series. Despite the hotel having been removed with very little trace at its original location, the Paradise was ever-present in the reminiscences of locals. Early conversations Sarah had with Norfolk Islanders about the project suggested the Paradise was underrepresented in official narratives of Kingston, but that its rich social and cultural history was deserving of being captured by the project.

## REIMAGINING KAVHA – CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS TO THE ZINE WORKSHOP FOR “SEE YOU AT THE PARADISE”

Do you remember the Paradise Hotel in Kingston? What about the Oceanside? Perhaps you have photos of the Dewville/Oceanside/Paradise or other mementos? Maybe you have stories from working behind the bar or performing music for patrons? Or maybe you have memories of having drinks with friends and finding love. Whatever it may be, our zine workshops are for you!

The Reimagining KAVHA team invite community members with long and deep connections to Norfolk Island’s Pitcairner settlement to share those memories in the zine *See you at the Paradise*. Zines are self-published, DIY-style booklets - a form of public history-making that can also act as a community archive. This zine will produce a record of the Paradise site (also home to the Oceanside, and before that the Dewville) which celebrates its place in Kingston’s history.

We will be running **two zine workshops** where we can come together and create pages for the zine. Zine-making involves collaboration, creativity ... and cake! The workshops will involve group discussions and activities to get you thinking about the Paradise, followed by time to write down your thoughts and memories, look at photographs and policy documents and create pages for the zine.


**When?** 1–4pm, Sunday 13 June and Wednesday 16 June

**Where?** Lions Club (Surgeon’s Office)

The

In May 2021, we put a call out for contributions via our project website, social media and the local paper. We invited the community to come along to our zine workshops, participate in an interview with us, or submit any stories, photographs or documents they had relating to the Paradise.

included in the zine,  
phone number above. We are  
June 2021.



In June 2021, we held two zine workshops at the Surgeon's Quarters building of KAVHA, home to the Lions Club of Norfolk Island. The research team provided coloured pens and paper, highlighters, sticky notes, glue, washi tape, scissors, and print-outs of photos, old newspaper articles and extracts from policy documents. Participants brought along items from their personal collections and reminisced about their days at the Paradise or stories they had heard from family. The research team guided writing exercises, asking participants to respond to prompts such as 'It was Friday night down at the Paradise and ...' (see pages 33–39) and 'If there was going to be an interpretive sign at the old Paradise site, what would it say?' (see pages 65–68). Together, we chatted, wrote, drew, cut and pasted to create the pages that make up the bulk of this zine.

EXHIBIT CLOSED

ZINE MAKING  
= WORKSHOP =  
IN PROGRESS



**A PARADISE WEDDING**



Also included in this zine are transcripts from interviews with those who had connections to the Paradise site, but did not attend the zine workshops. Robyn Tavener reflected on her time living at the Paradise as a young girl in the 1960s when her parents managed the hotel, as well as her role in rehoming parts of the Paradise at the time of its demolition (see pages 40–52). David ‘Dids’ Evans also spoke of his part in the removal of the Paradise in the 1980s, along with his connection to the site through his father, Bubby (see pages 61–64). Russell Francis and Edward Hooker (who also attended our workshops) remembered their times socialising at the Paradise in the 1970s, with Russell taking us back to his childhood at Oceanside in the 1950s when his parents managed the guest house (pages 4–18).



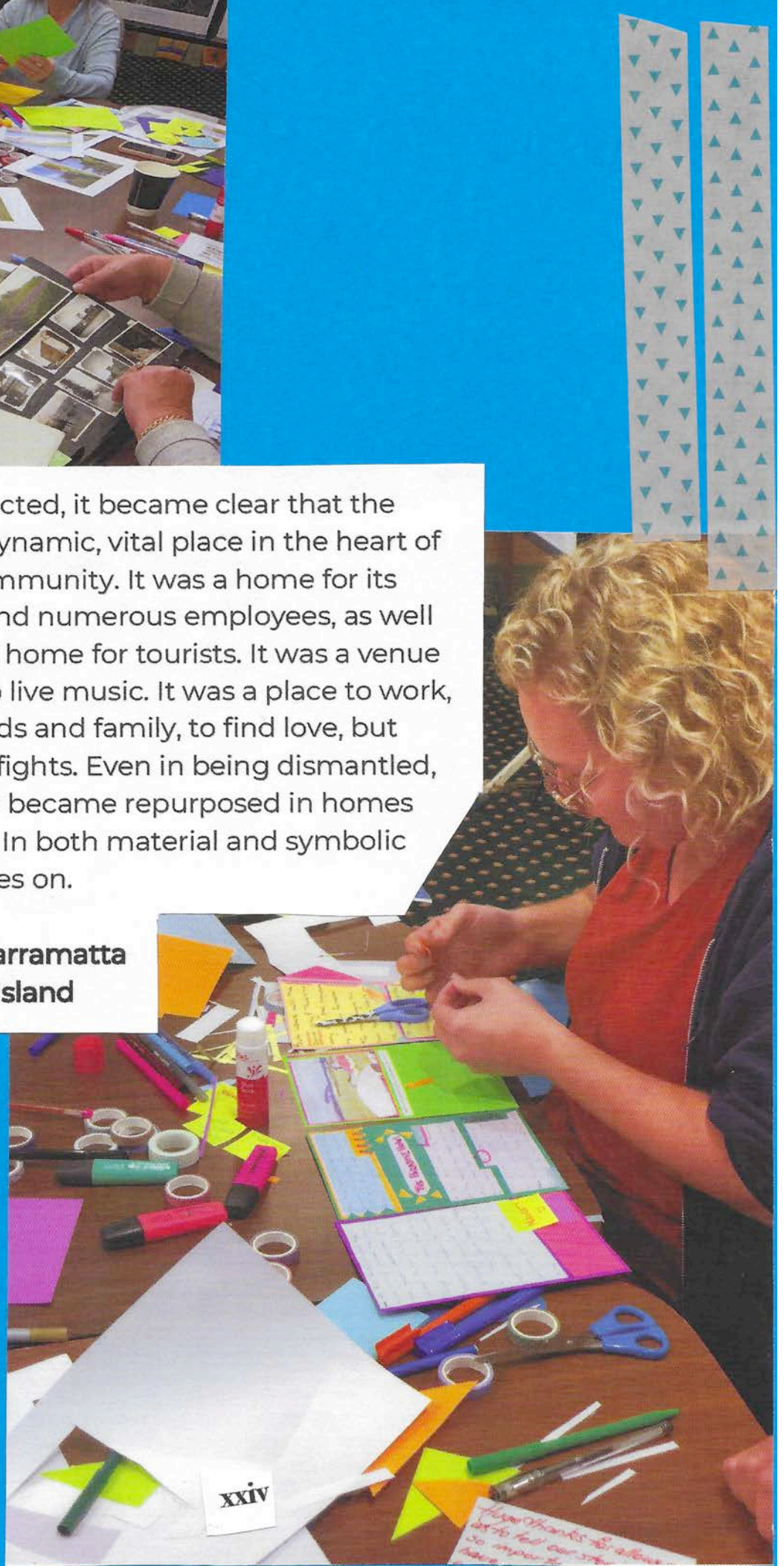
Some contributions throughout this zine are in Norf'k, presented without translation to English. Norf'k is recognised by UNESCO to be an endangered language, and its use in the zine and workshops represent an important expression of Pitcairner culture. If you're unfamiliar with Norf'k, we recommend checking out *Speak Norfolk Today: An Encyclopaedia of the Norfolk Island Language* (1999) by Alice Inez Buffett. 'The pink book', as it's known, is a wonderful resource for learning and teaching Norf'k. Alternatively, try *A Dictionary of Norfolk Words and Usages* (1986) by Beryl Nobbs-Palmer.





From all that we collected, it became clear that the Paradise site held a dynamic, vital place in the heart of the Norfolk Island community. It was a home for its managers' children and numerous employees, as well as a home away from home for tourists. It was a venue to dance and listen to live music. It was a place to work, to meet up with friends and family, to find love, but also for mischief and fights. Even in being dismantled, its material remnants became repurposed in homes across Norfolk Island. In both material and symbolic ways, the Paradise lives on.

**Zelmarie Cantillon, Parramatta**  
**Sarah Baker, Norfolk Island**





<sup>1</sup> See Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, *Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Nomination*, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Canberra, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See also Gibbs, M, Duncan, B & Varnam, R 2017, 'The free and unfree settlements of Norfolk Island: an overview of archaeological research', *Australian Archaeology*, vol. 83, no. 3, pp. 82–99; Nobbs, C 2019, 'KAVHA: Part II – Management since the Commonwealth takeover in 2015', *The Norfolk Islander*, 12 October.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, L, 2006, *Uses of Heritage*, Routledge, London, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> 'Norfolk Island: Attractions of Kingston', 1933, *The Pacific Islands Monthly*, 24 April, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, NSW Department of Commerce, Government Architect's Office, and Otto Scerhalmi & Partners Pty Ltd, 2008, *Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area: Conservation Management Plan*, viewed 3 June 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/105331>, p. 48.

<sup>6</sup> Wilson, G & Davies, M 1980, *Norfolk Island: Archaeological Survey Kingston-Arthur's Vale Region, Volume 1*, Department of Housing and Construction, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup> Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories 2004, *Norfolk Island: Review of the Annual Reports of the Department of Transport and Regional Services and the Department of Environment and Heritage*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 113.

<sup>8</sup> 'Plan and criticism of Norfolk Island', 1972, *The Canberra Times*, 15 February.

<sup>9</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, 1985, *Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983–84*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, pp. 10–11.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Cox Richardson Taylor and Partners, 1987, *Demolition and Landscaping of Paradise Hotel Suite*, Department of Housing and Construction NSW Region, Kingston, ACT.

<sup>11</sup> Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, NSW Department of Commerce, Government Architect's Office, and Otto Scerhalmi & Partners Pty Ltd, 2008, *Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area: Conservation Management Plan*, viewed 3 June 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/105331>, p. 36.

<sup>12</sup> Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories 2004, *Norfolk Island: Review of the Annual Reports of the Department of Transport and Regional Services and the Department of Environment and Heritage*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 113.

<sup>13</sup> Richards, N, Sapienza, T, Yousif, A & Wilson, G, 2019, *Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (KAVHA) Archaeological Zoning and Management Plan – Volume 1. Text*, Extent Heritage, Sydney, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Marsden, S & Spearritt, P, 2021, *The Twentieth-Century Thematic Framework: A Tool for Assessing Heritage Places*, Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles.

I KAH WAH

Un known

FIRE

BURNT DOWN  
LONG AGO

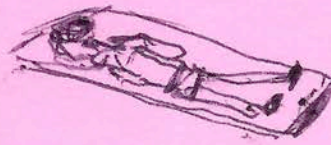
Whale  
Bones

Whale  
Bones  
ENTRANCE  
ARCH

Great  
location

THE VIEW  
& JOHN & TGD'S  
HOSPITALITY.

Being in a  
relaxed state



MEMORIES

announcing  
our  
engagement  
1962

Parties.

FRIDAY NIGHTS

# MEETING PLACE

- " HISTORIC
- " HOMEY
- " RACE DAYS

- ① Grass Hopper and Alan Dyer playing "Show Me The Way To Home" at the close of Friday night celebrations
- ② playing in the Duplex turns next door.

Whale Bones

## BURBY'S

## CORNER

(CUTTING OFF THE TIE)

In Town  
(Kingston)  
But first at  
New Cascade Rd.

SMA, 3 Feb 1951



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**Conversation with Russell Francis and Edward Hooker at the site of Kingston's Paradise Hotel, 23rd December 2020.**

**Sarah:** I'm with Russell and Eddy, and we're on the site of the Paradise Hotel, sitting on a bench and surrounded by some bananas and pines. But this, I'm guessing, isn't how it was.

**Russell:** That's not a banana. They call that a Traveller's Palm.

**Eddy:** And it wasn't here before too, of course.

**Russell:** No, that's been planted since they pulled down the Paradise.



**Sarah:** And so where do you want to begin? Where should we begin with this story of the Paradise Hotel?

**Eddy:** Well, Russell's the main guy, this is his -

**Russell:** No, you're - you -

**Eddy:** You've got a photo there of what it was -

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Eddy:** - like when he was here.

**Sarah:** I don't know if this was - I don't know when this one was taken. <shows a black and white image of Oceanside>



**Russell:** Yeah, that was taken -

**Sarah:** Is it familiar?

**Russell:** Yeah. Yeah, that's about the time - pretty much what it would've looked like when I was here, but then these little cottages here, they must've got sort of subsumed into the rest of it because when they pulled it all down, these - at least some of these little cottages got taken away, remember?

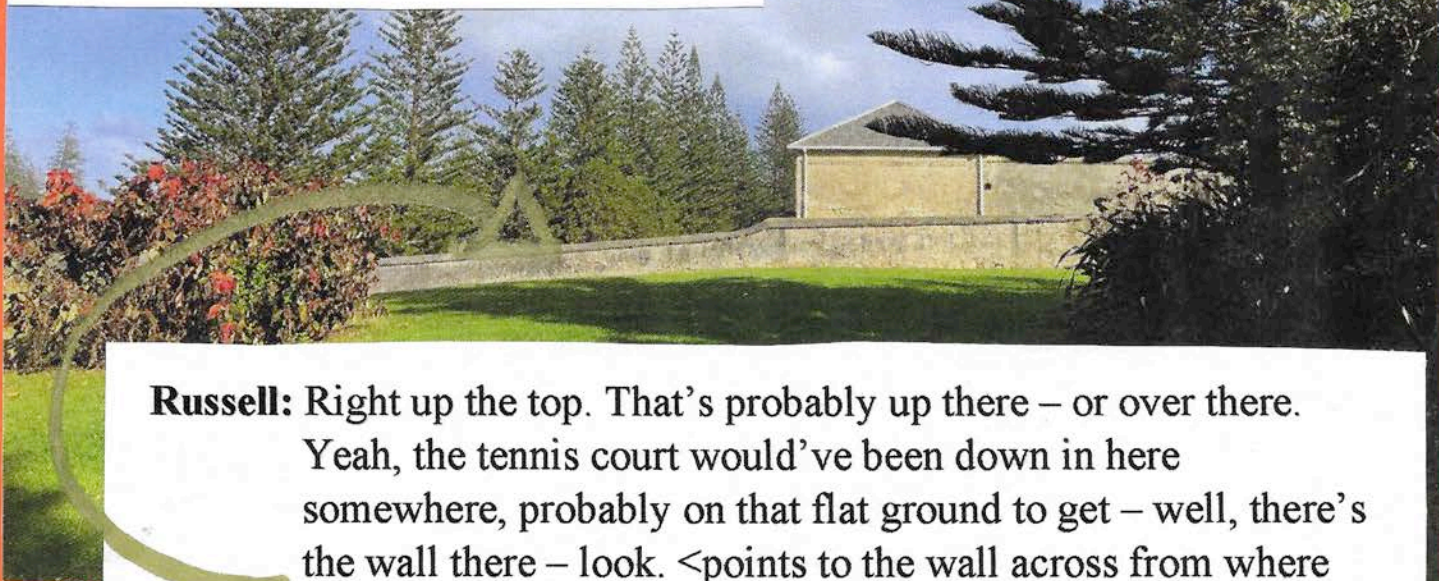
**Eddy:** Yeah, yeah.

**Russell:** But that's pretty much what it would've looked like in the – probably the early fifties. These were accommodation for guests in the guest house. It wasn't called a hotel back then. It was just called Oceanside – well, when we were here, it was Oceanside Guest House.

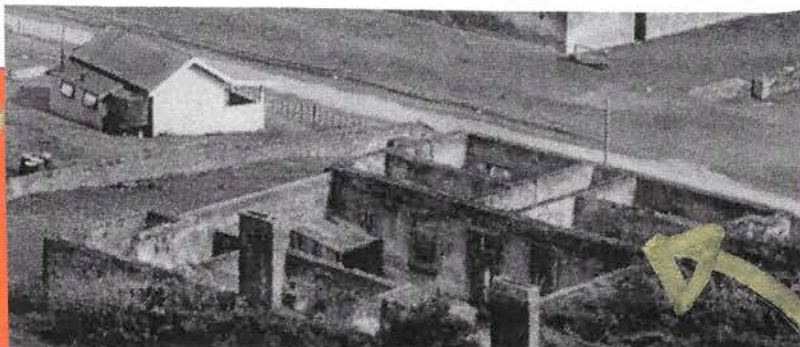
**Sarah:** And where were you living?

**Russell:** This one. <pointing to photo>

**Sarah:** Which was -



**Russell:** Right up the top. That's probably up there – or over there. Yeah, the tennis court would've been down in here somewhere, probably on that flat ground to get – well, there's the wall there – look. <points to the wall across from where we are sitting>



**Russell:** And that's the duplex here - <pointing to photo> along the – along after the high walls of the building, there's a courtyard, that's where my father used to keep the pigs in there.

**Sarah:** And this was – and this building here <points to photo>, which is near the wall, that was still part of the Paradise complex?

**Russell:** Yeah. As far as I imagine. Yeah, it's inside that fence, yeah.

**Sarah:** So it's quite big?

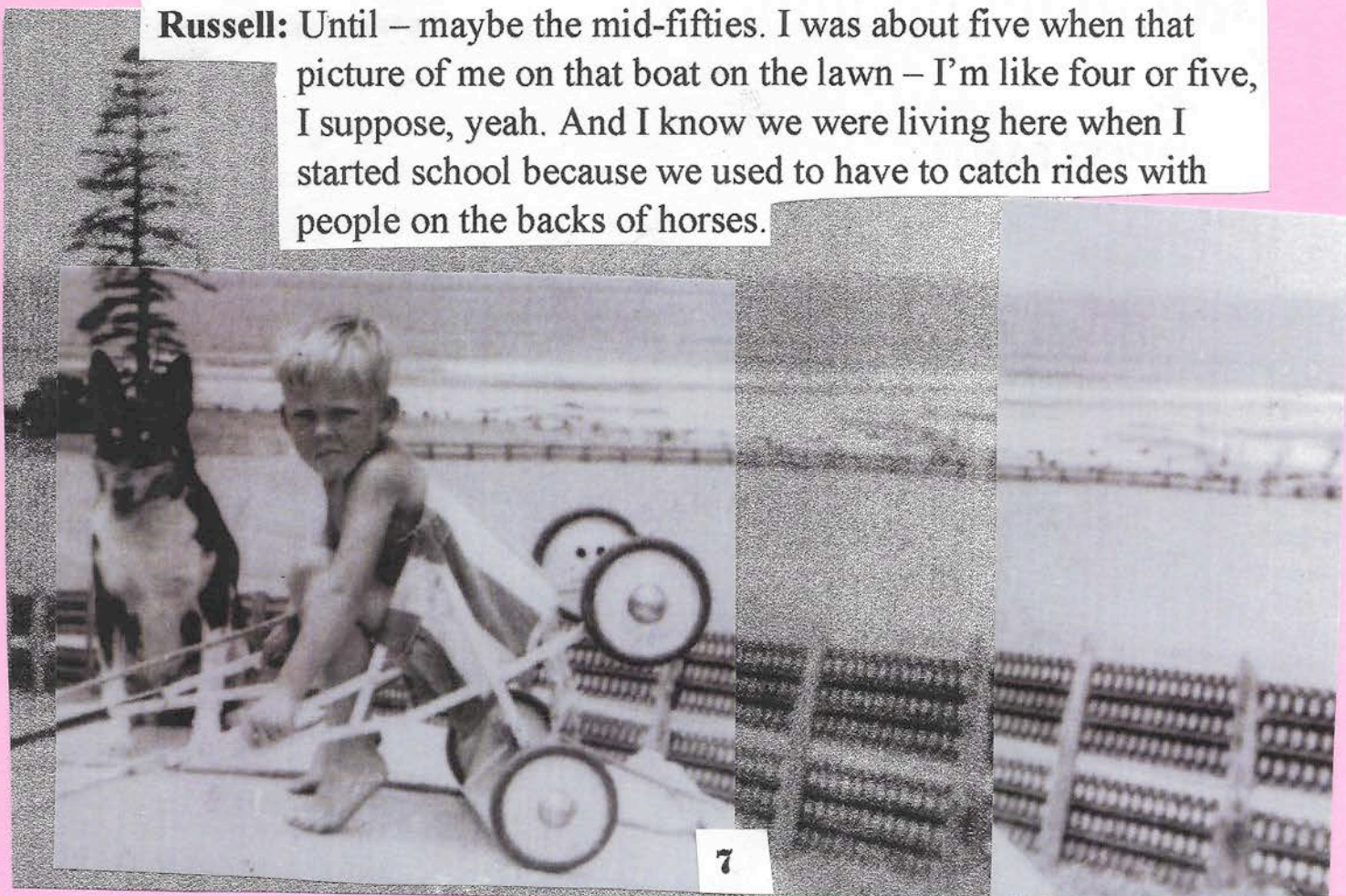
**Russell:** Yes.

**Sarah:** This is a pretty big site!

**Russell:** Well, it doesn't look anywhere near as big as – it doesn't look big enough now to contain all the buildings that used to be here. These buildings all around here, they just grew and grew and grew.

**Sarah:** How many years were you living here?

**Russell:** Until – maybe the mid-fifties. I was about five when that picture of me on that boat on the lawn – I'm like four or five, I suppose, yeah. And I know we were living here when I started school because we used to have to catch rides with people on the backs of horses.





**Sarah:** And what about you, Eddy? When did the Paradise become part of your life?

**Eddy:** When it became a place for Friday night social get together – music, dancing – I think about '63, '64, but I can't tell you the exact year it started up. But I remember the bloke who I used to come down here a lot with. Me and him used to come down here a lot and chill. Well, just about all the young people used to come down here. It's more of a place to come and meet your other mates you haven't seen during the week, depends where you've been working and what you've been doing and -

**Russell:** It was pretty much a must do on a Friday night. Families, kids, mums and dads brought their kids down here -

**Eddy:** And also, I think it originally started off – because the plane used to come once a week, they used to have a farewell night on a Friday night before -

**Russell:** Their guests went.

**Eddy:** Yeah, before their guests went. It was a Friday night too. Sometimes it used to get a little bit out of hand when drinking was involved and – yeah.

**Sarah:** And so were you there at the same time? Did you cross over into the -

**Russell:** Well, from the seventies on, yeah.

**Eddy:** Yeah. -

**Russell:** Because it went on for 20-odd years, that Friday night business. That Friday night business came about because of the liquor laws, so there was a hangover from the prohibition days when back in the thirties and forties, you had to get a

certificate from the doctor to say you were a fit and able person to be able to get a ration.

**Sarah:** Really?

**Russell:** Yeah. No, it was serious. And they used to – I've just been reading in the *Pacific Islands Monthly* about these people whinging about how undignified it was to line up and get your ration and then people who didn't drink could come down here and get theirs, but then they'd sell it off at a huge profit to the -

**Eddy:** Their mates or others.

**Russell:** - to drinkers. <laughter>

**Sarah:** So when did that stop?

**Russell:** Well, the liquor licensing laws were quite an evolving thing. They used to have – theoretically, none of us were supposed to drink except there wasn't a hotel you could go and drink at. You could be a member – you had to be a member of a club, either the golf club, the RSL club or probably – maybe the Leagues club wasn't there then, but the Ferny Lane Club. You had to be a member and if you weren't, the police theoretically could turn up and demand to see the signed book and anybody who wasn't a member who hadn't signed in, every person who wasn't a member of the club had to sign in. And I think that even to come down here and have a drink theoretically on any other day except Friday here, you had to – theoretically -

**Eddy:** Sign in.

**Russell:** - sign in. And Friday night was sort of a release -

**Eddy:** Yeah, an open -

**Russell:** Open Night it used to be called.

**Eddy:** Yeah, yeah. For - farewell for them, Open Night for farewell for his guests.

**Russell:** And a couple of the other places had open nights too. The Wednesday was the Norfolk Hotel, remember, that was open night for locals to come and drink.

**Eddy:** Yeah.

**Russell:** And Thursday was South Pacific and here was Friday and Saturday was South Pacific again, so the police – but I've never heard of anybody – I never, ever heard of the police suddenly swooping down and saying, "Let's see the book," and, "Who – are you a member?" Never heard any of that.

**Eddy:** No I didn't.

**Russell:** So it was pretty – it was starting to fade away - those restrictions.

**Eddy:** Yeah, by 1970 was -

**Russell:** Yeah. So Friday was the open night when the liquor licensing laws let locals come in without having to sign these silly books. So that's why Friday was the night that we were entitled to come and drink without all having to sign one of these registers.

**Sarah:** It's so interesting, that – just how something like that can shape the behaviours of – or the weekly rhythms of drinkers.

**Russell:** Yeah. Well, it was exactly what it was. It was a weekly rhythm.

**Russell:** But how many people do you think the bar area – the main bar area of – when we all used to meet in the bar area -

**Eddy:** Probably -

**Russell:** - there were couple a 100.

**Eddy:** I don't know about a couple of 100, probably around a 100. Yeah, it was a fairly big -

**Russell:** It used to -

**Eddy:** It had a dance floor.



**Russell:** Tiny dance floor and Alan Dyer, the proprietor at that time – this is in the seventies, as I remember it, but he used to play the trumpet – he used to sing and Kenny Gordon used to play the trumpet with his hat on and that, remember?

**Eddy:** Mm.

**Russell:** And at the end of each evening, he – what song – what did he used to sing – Dyer?

**Eddy:** 'Show Me the Way to go Home' or something like that.

**Russell:** Yeah, yeah. And that was it. No more drinking, clear out.  
<laughter>

**Eddy:** The main musical instrument is the piano at the time down here. ...

**Sarah:** So there was always live music?

**Eddy:** Yeah.

**Russell:** Yeah, Friday nights.

**Sarah:** Every Friday night, live music.

**Eddy:** Yeah, flirting and all that sort of -

**Russell:** Gossiping and carrying on.

**Eddy:** Yeah, all that sort of thing, carrying on, yeah.

**Russell:** Pick an argument -

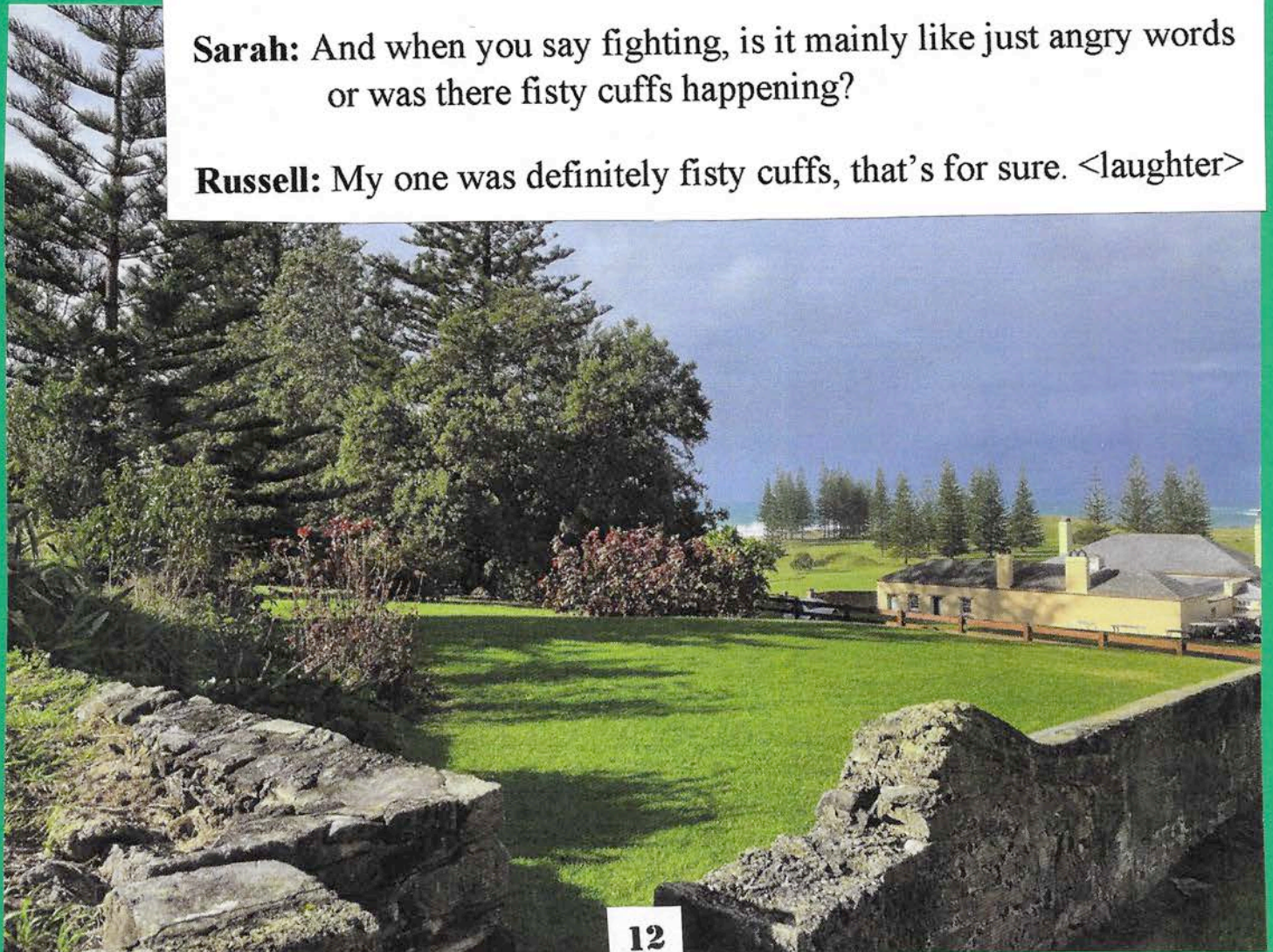
**Eddy:** And pick an argument. Me and Russell can come down here, haven't seen him all week and I pick an argument with him and - yeah.

**Russell:** Yeah, I got thrown out one night for fighting with somebody down here. <laughter>

**Eddy:** I think there's plenty people who've been thrown out and barred

**Sarah:** And when you say fighting, is it mainly like just angry words or was there fisty cuffs happening?

**Russell:** My one was definitely fisty cuffs, that's for sure. <laughter>





**Russell:** And at the front of the big bar area was a big massive glass that you look right out over here. <points out to Phillip Island>

**Eddy:** Yeah.

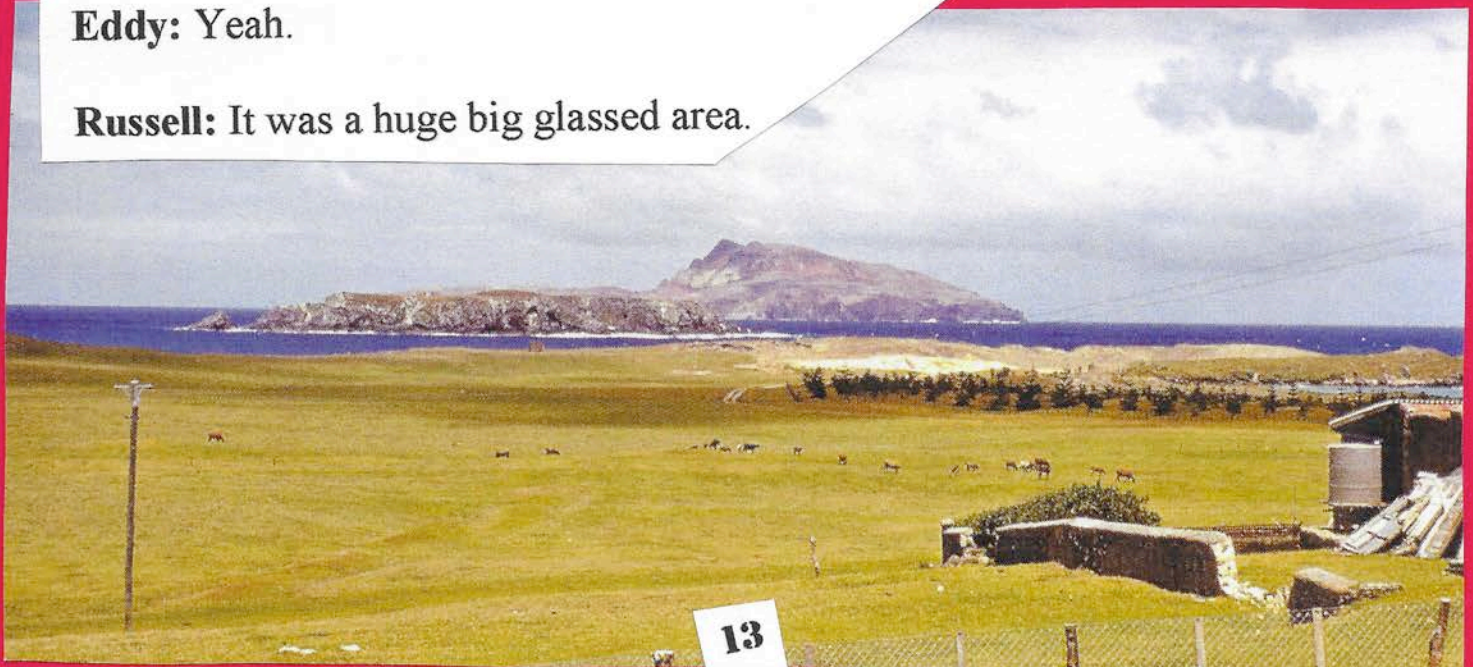
**Russell:** And it had – used to have a whole lot of small tables up that end and people could sit down –

**Sarah:** It's like a picture window.

**Russell:** Yeah, it was.

**Eddy:** Yeah.

**Russell:** It was a huge big glassed area.



**Sarah:** And so what was behind the buildings? Was this always just as it was?

**Russell:** Just hills.

**Sarah:** The hills haven't changed.

**Russell:** Well, my dad made me a little wooden sledge and I used to go up – way up there and knock off furniture wax and greasy runners on the thing and come tearing down this hillside, like five, six, whatever it was. It was just something you wouldn't do now when – after you're 15 or 16, you're definitely not going to do this sort of stuff because you know about broken legs and arms. But I used to tear down here somewhere.



**Sarah:** So was the – was something like the Paradise Hotel – was part of its importance the bringing people together to one spot as a community? Other than those other two drinking holes, were there other parts of the island where people got together?

**Eddy:** Well, it started off by Pop Dewey was the guesthouse.

**Russell:** Well, it had another name.

**Eddy:** Deweyville.

**Russell:** First of all it was called Deweyville and then it was – when we were here, it was Oceanside and then it became the Paradise, so I don't think it had had any other names that I've heard of. So it was named after Bob Dewey who lived up in Music Valley. He had the lease. My dad, from memory, he – we used to go up there on a regular basis and see Bob Dewey up at Music Valley. He lived with another bloke who used to work for my dad in the kitchen, cooking. He was a really good cook. So we'd go up regularly. But anyway, it was Deweyville, then Oceanside, and then Paradise. But I'm not quite sure when it became – it would have to – well, Deweyville, it would've been in the 1930s.

**Eddy:** Thirties, yeah, because it was here when the flood occurred here in '36. Water came down some of these valleys here and – well, it came down all the valleys and damaged a number of

**Russell:** Supposedly washed out a bloody piano.





**Russell:** 'Show me the way to go home' was played, "That's it, we've got your money, now bugger off".

**Sarah:** So was that played at leaving time, or last round?

**Russell:** No, you finish your drinks and toodle off.

**Eddy:** It was eleven o'clock closing time. He wanted you out by half past eleven, before midnight. No hanging around.



**Sarah:** I found this from that government report, and it says, "The Federal Government paid \$370,000 to Travelodge Australia in compensation for the resumption of the Crown lease and related tenants' rights in improvements over the site of the Paradise Hotel in Kingston. Travelodge Australia was then granted an interim five-year lease, after which the hotel building was to be dismantled as it was in need of repair and not in keeping with the rest of the historic area."

**Russell:** Oh, it was ugly.

**Sarah:** It was ugly, was it?

**Russell:** It was really ugly. It was just a conglomeration of big boxes made out of all different materials.

**Sarah:** So as you said, it had been built on and built on and built on.

**Russell:** Oh boy, it was very unsightly.

**Sarah:** And so what happened? What happened to the Paradise? Did it decline or -

**Russell:** No.

**Sarah:** - was there a point where it no longer became the place to be on a Friday or -

**Russell:** No, it was still a running concern. Well, it might've declined, but I think the lease came to an end. About '86.

**Eddy:** Yeah.

**Russell:** And by '88 at the bicentennial, it was gone.

**Sarah:** Because I was thinking, what was the feeling around that bicentennial year with so much change happening down at Kingston?

**Russell:** Well, I didn't see anybody down here picketing the place saying, "Don't pull down the Paradise." I think that they pretty much realised that its time has come.

**Eddy:** Yeah. I think it was kind of – yeah, okay.

**Russell:** As a matter of fact, I don't even recall – I should've come down here and taken some photos of bulldozers and things, whatever. Did you ever see anything? Me either.

**Eddy:** No.

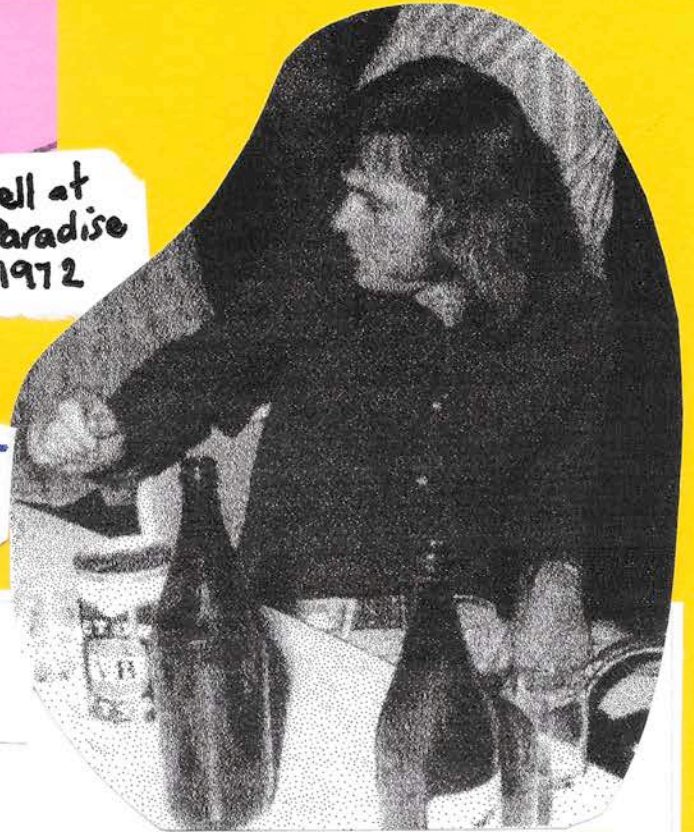
**Russell:** All of a sudden, it was gone.

**Eddy:** Yeah. So that's about the – this was a great social place, probably in the sixties and seventies. I reckon by 1980, it kind of -

**Russell:** Yeah, suddenly it didn't seem that imperative that you were here on a Friday night – come a time.

# Addendum

Russell at the Paradise in 1972



"BOOZE COVERED EVERY AVAILABLE SURFACE!"

"DAYS OF EXCESS!"

"THE PARADISE SWILL-A-THON"

RF

Russell Francis

Thu 24/12/2020

To: Sarah Baker



Sarah I forgot to mention my most vivid childhood memory at Oceanside It was an earthquake sometime in the mid 1950s. Ed says it was in 1956

I remember being in the storeroom at the back where my father had jars and bottles of stuff on shelves and they all started vibrating off the shelves! I can still see the dust cloud around Phillip Island where a big piece slid off the top into the sea. People have said that they could see a kind of ripple effect in the ground across the golf course.

Some more shakes in the early 60s made a lot of Poms who had recently settled here rethink and jump ship

Russell

"an ugly blot on the landscape but many a happy moment spent here"

COME TO  
HOTEL PARADISE

FULLY LICENSED

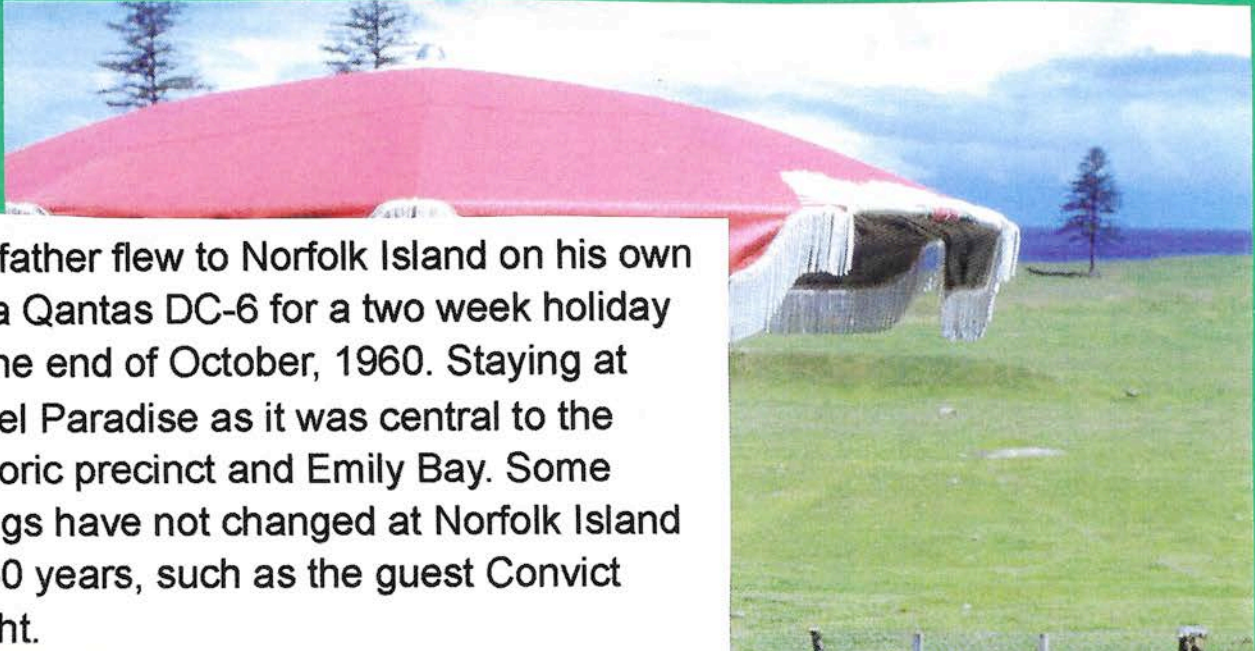
FAMOUS FOR ITS  
HOMELY AND HAPPY  
ATMOSPHERE

ACCOMMODATES  
100 GUESTS

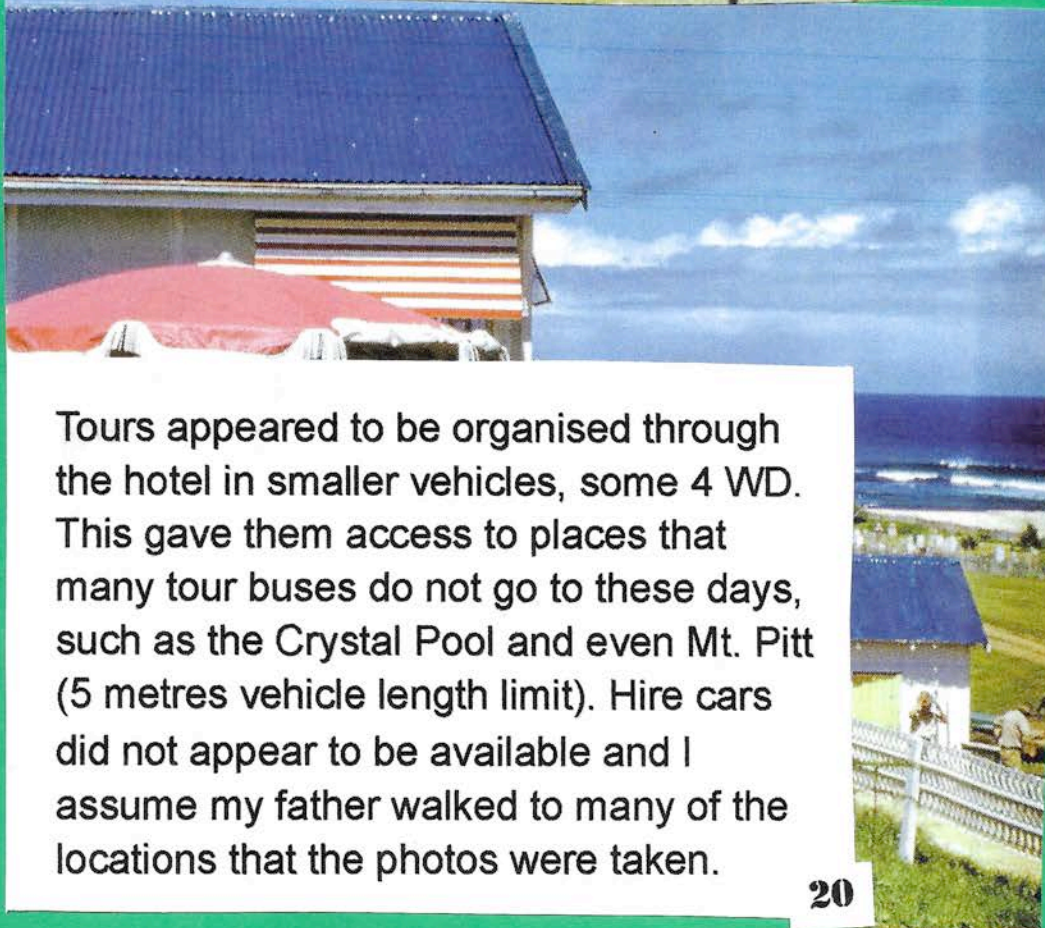
\$8 DAILY PER  
PERSON FOR A  
ROOM WITH A  
PRIVATE FACILITY

\$10 DEPOSIT TO  
SECURE YOUR BOOKING

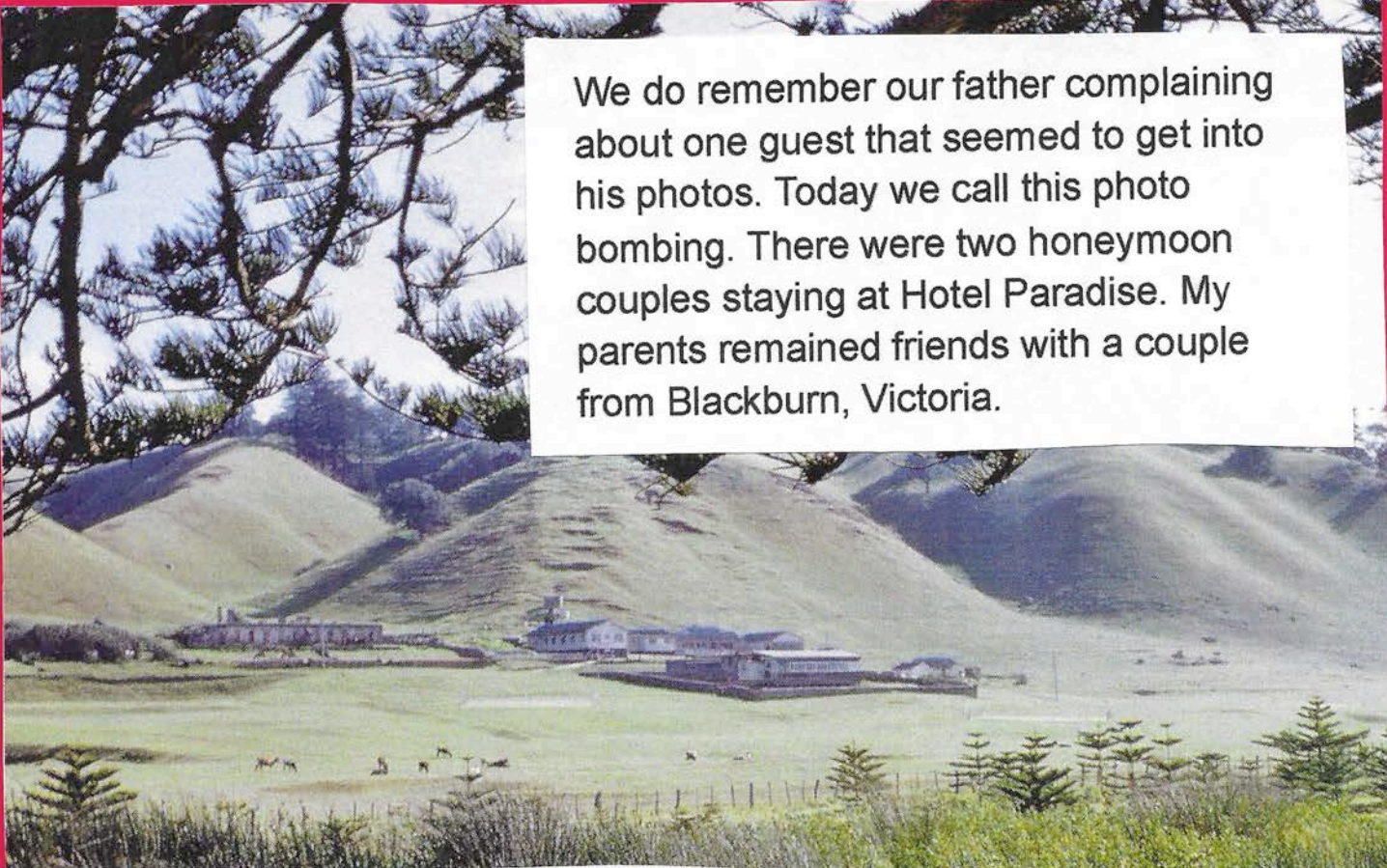
RENT A HORSE OR  
A HONDA MOTOR  
SCOOTER FOR  
\$2 PER DAY



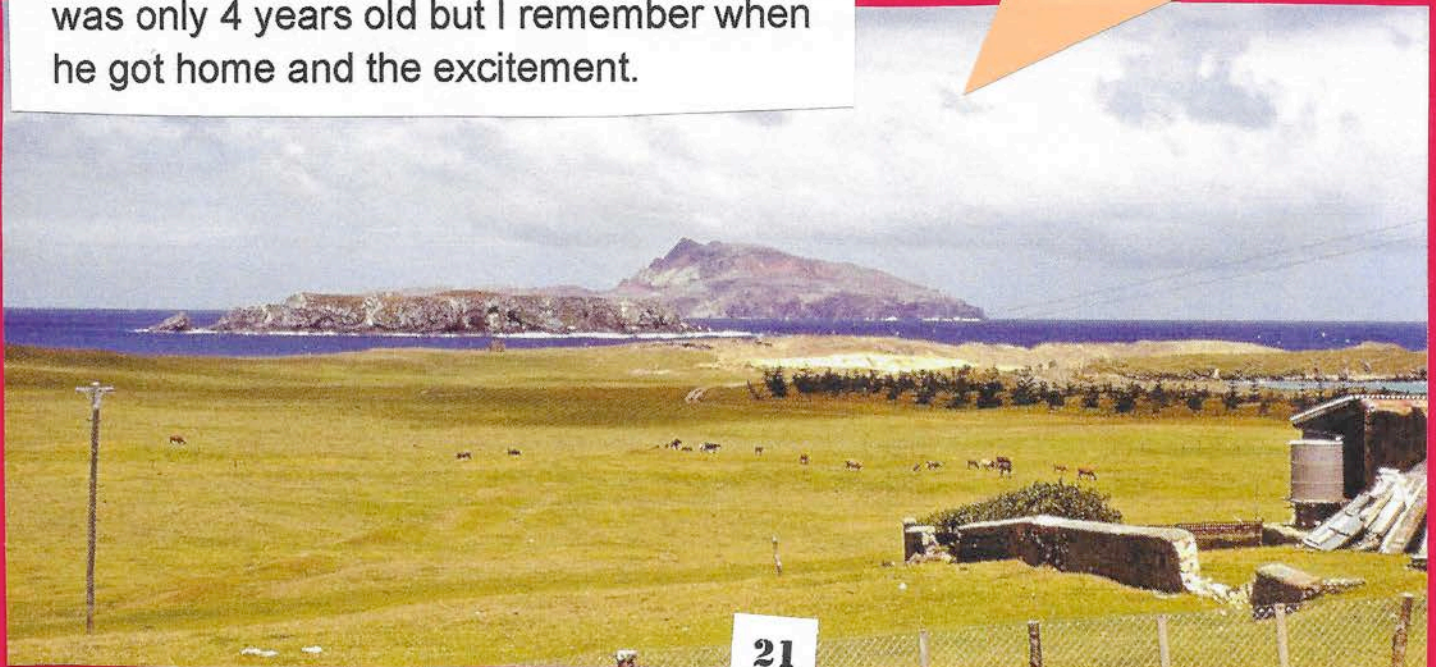
My father flew to Norfolk Island on his own on a Qantas DC-6 for a two week holiday at the end of October, 1960. Staying at Hotel Paradise as it was central to the historic precinct and Emily Bay. Some things have not changed at Norfolk Island in 60 years, such as the guest Convict Night.



Tours appeared to be organised through the hotel in smaller vehicles, some 4 WD. This gave them access to places that many tour buses do not go to these days, such as the Crystal Pool and even Mt. Pitt (5 metres vehicle length limit). Hire cars did not appear to be available and I assume my father walked to many of the locations that the photos were taken.



We do remember our father complaining about one guest that seemed to get into his photos. Today we call this photo bombing. There were two honeymoon couples staying at Hotel Paradise. My parents remained friends with a couple from Blackburn, Victoria.



What was exciting for us was that Dad was going to bring back duty free presents. For himself he bought a Canon SLR camera with a shutter speed of 2000<sup>th</sup> of a second. He purchased a Japanese transistor radio, pearls for Mum and pressed battery operated tin toys from Japan for us boys. Our older sisters received Japanese kimono night gowns. I was only 4 years old but I remember when he got home and the excitement.

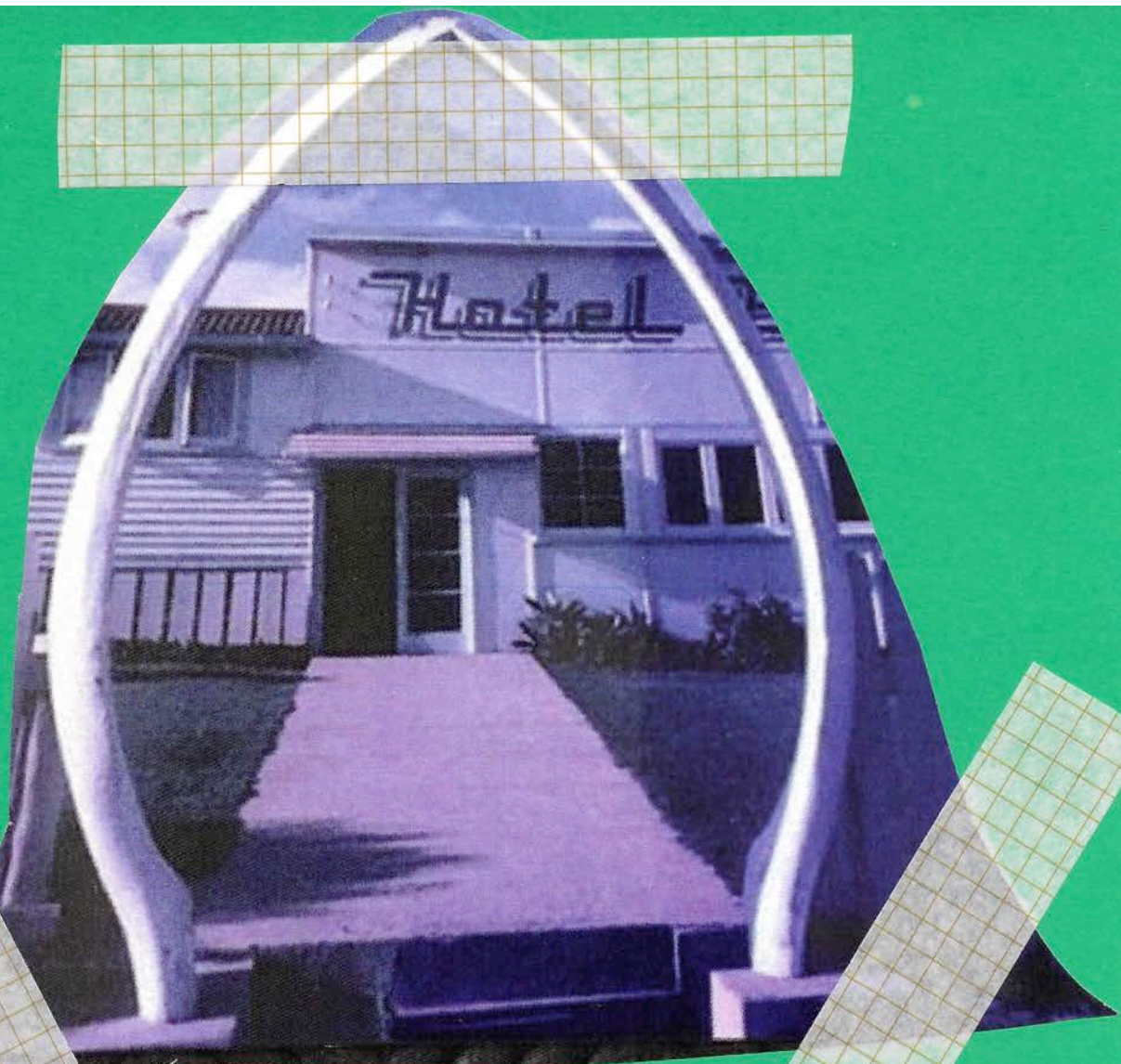
Dewyville - Ocean Side - Paradise

1963-64 - Paradise by now  
And a Friday night - for a  
fare well for guests leaving  
Saturday - Sunday.

The band then, Mercia Nobbs,  
Fletcher Nobbs, Alex Nobbs,  
Richard DOURAN.

Then some where - where  
ever for a party

AND yes when ALAN DYER  
was the manager - the  
closing song - 'Show me the  
way home' - and he meant  
it too!



entrance  
to  
the

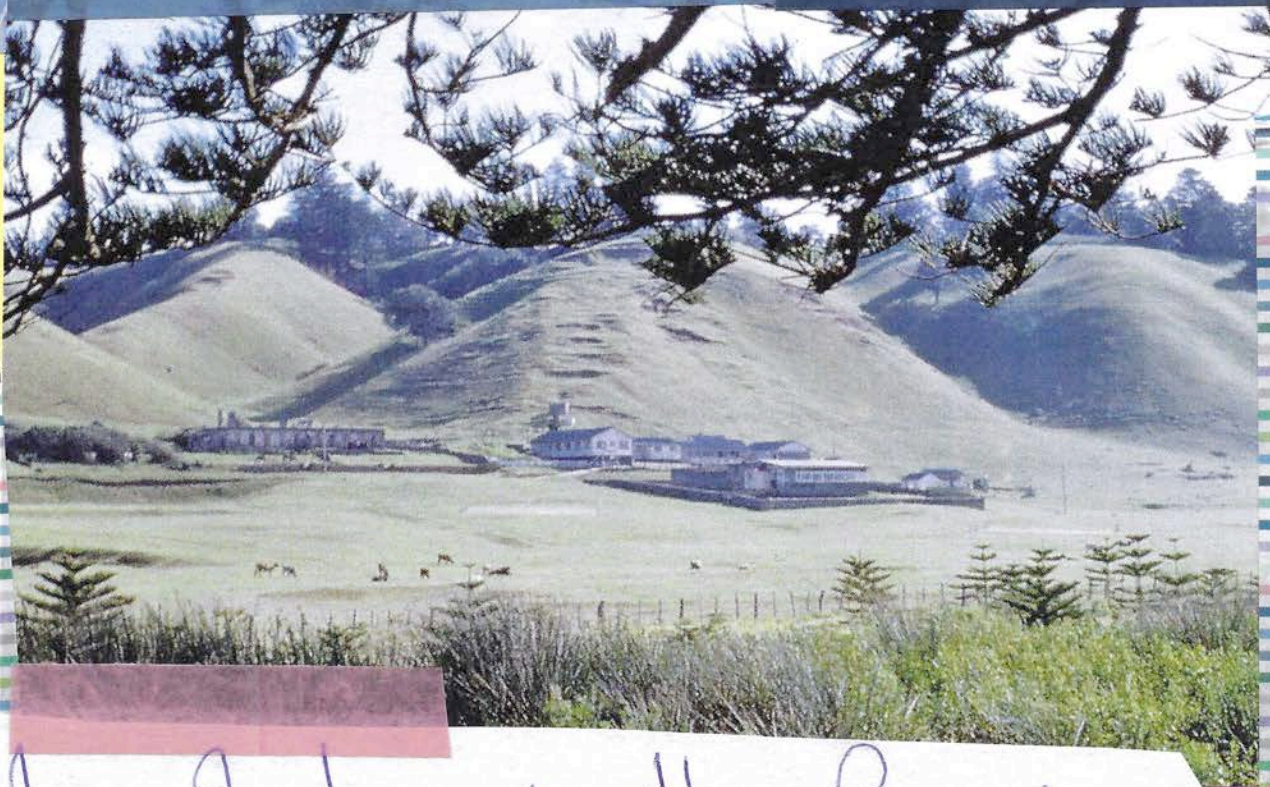
Old  
Paradise  
hotel



the hotel

the good  
view

the  
hotel  
in its  
glory  
days



When I heard the Paradise  
was closing I

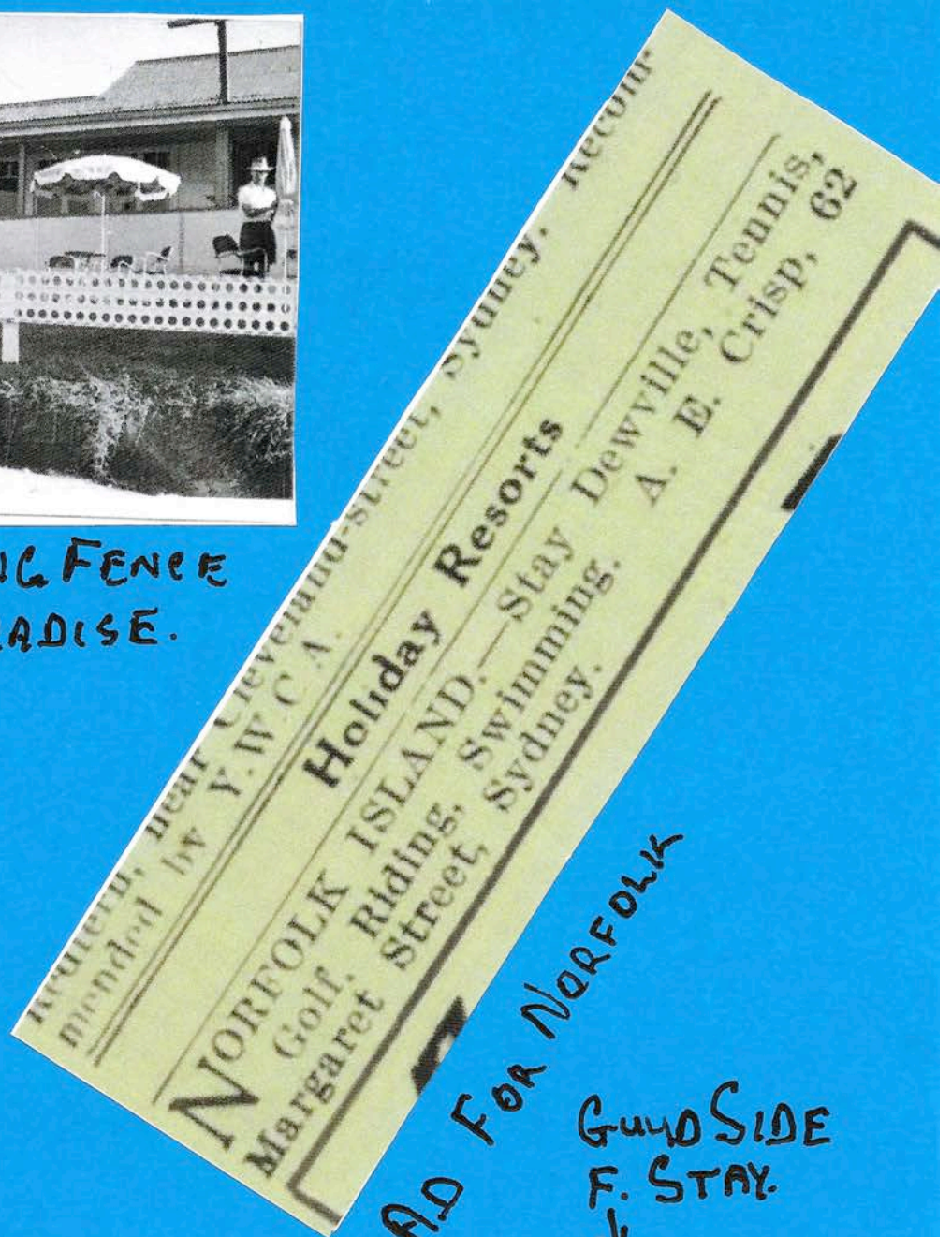
— was ~~SAD~~  
~~SAD~~

— happy for all the  
great memories

— where was the island  
to go now for laughter  
music & fun?

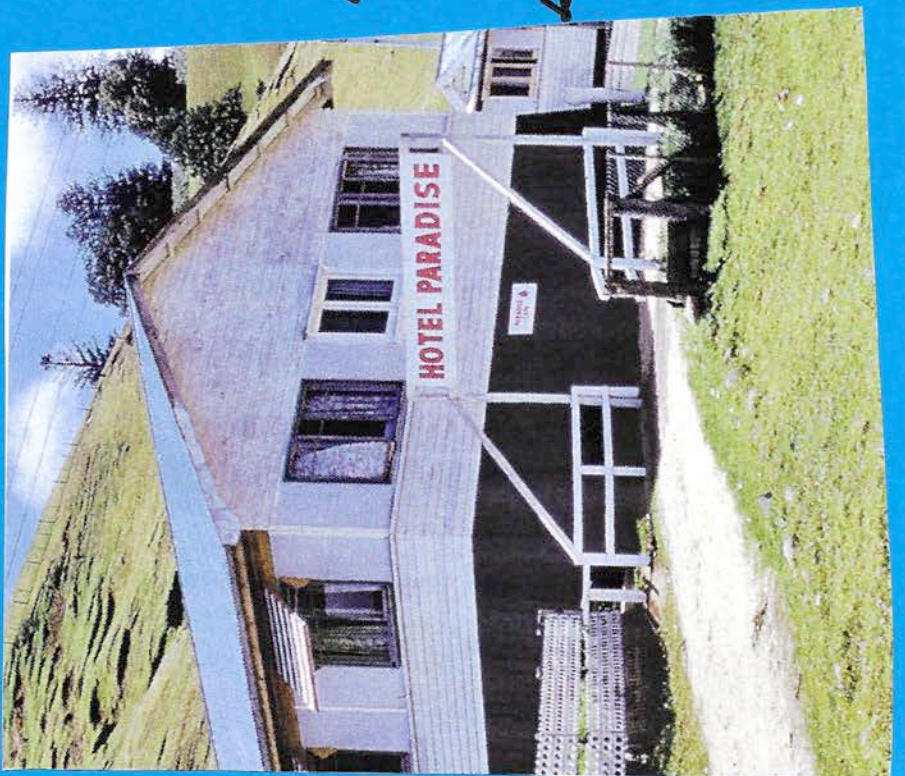


MARSDEN MATTING FENCE  
AT FRONT OF PARADISE.



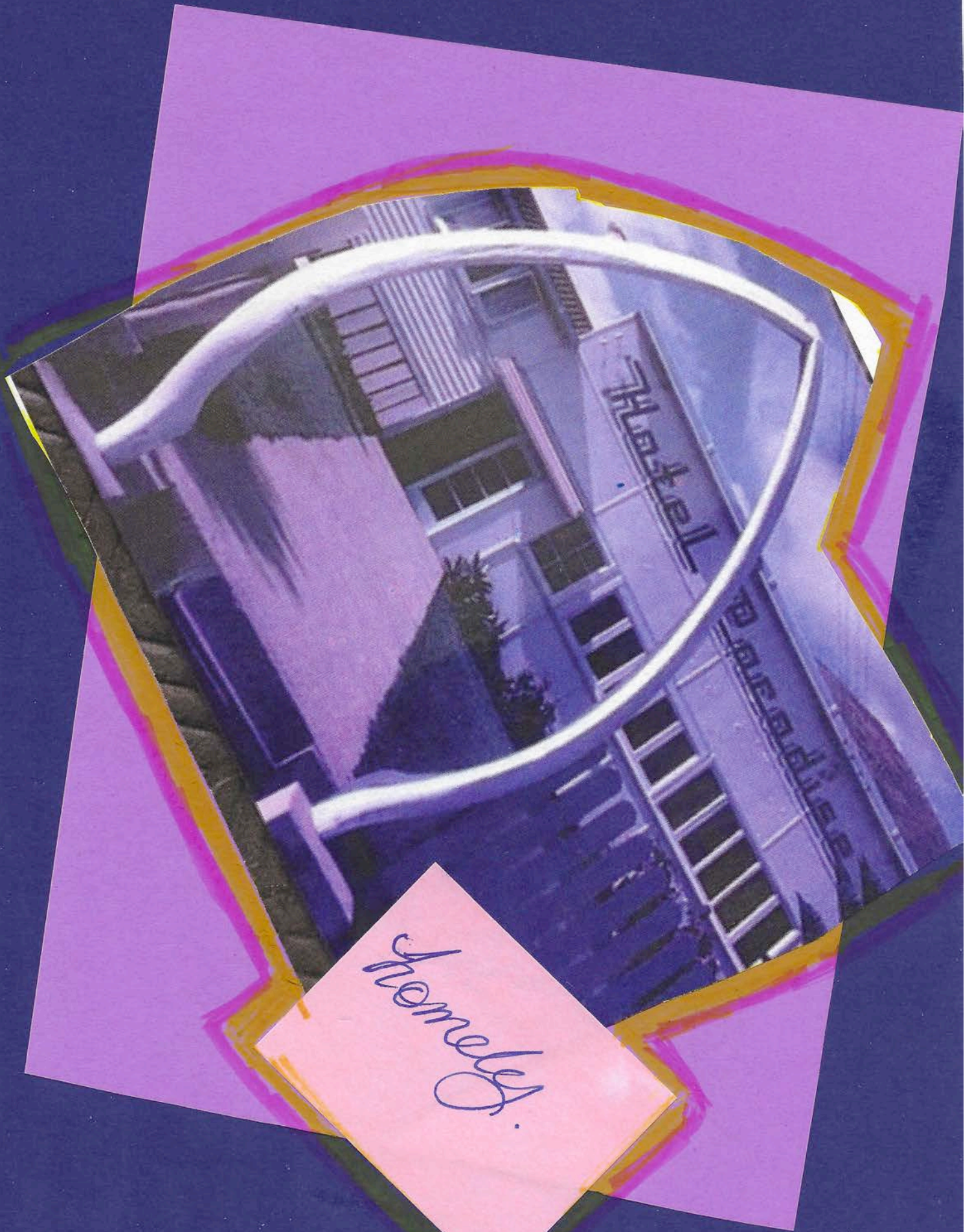
A.D. FOR NORFOLK

GUARDSIDE  
F. STAY.



MYSE LESS FAVORITE MEMORY OF PARADISE IS THAT  
WHEN THE NIGHT REVELERY HAS COME TO ITS END AND ALL THE  
PATRONS HAVE LEFT THE TWO PEOPLE THAT WORKED THE BAR HAD  
TO DO ALL THE BREAKING UP EVEN CLEANING DOWN ALL THE TABLES  
WASHING ALL THE DRINKING GLASSES AND THEN EMPTYING ALL  
THE ASHTRAYS, SMOKING WAS VERY POPULAR BACK IN THOSE DAYS,  
WE WASHED THE ASHTRAYS LAST OF ALL BECAUSE OF THEIR  
SMELL AND THAT SMELL GETS INGRAINED INTO YOUR HANDS  
AND THE BEST AND ALMOST THE ONLY WAY, BUT ALSO THE  
QUICKEST WAY OF GETTING RID OF THAT SMELL WAS TO  
WASH YOUR HANDS IN TEA LEAVES OUT OF THE TEA POT

DEM SE GET ET RORNB. DEM TUI PARADISE  
NOR CONFORM EN WITH EM CONVIC BUILDING  
OR QUALITY ROW, WAAH PARADISE NOR ORN  
QUALITY ROW COS ORN BLOODY BRIDGE ROAD  
COS AH STONE MARK D END OFF QUALITY ROW



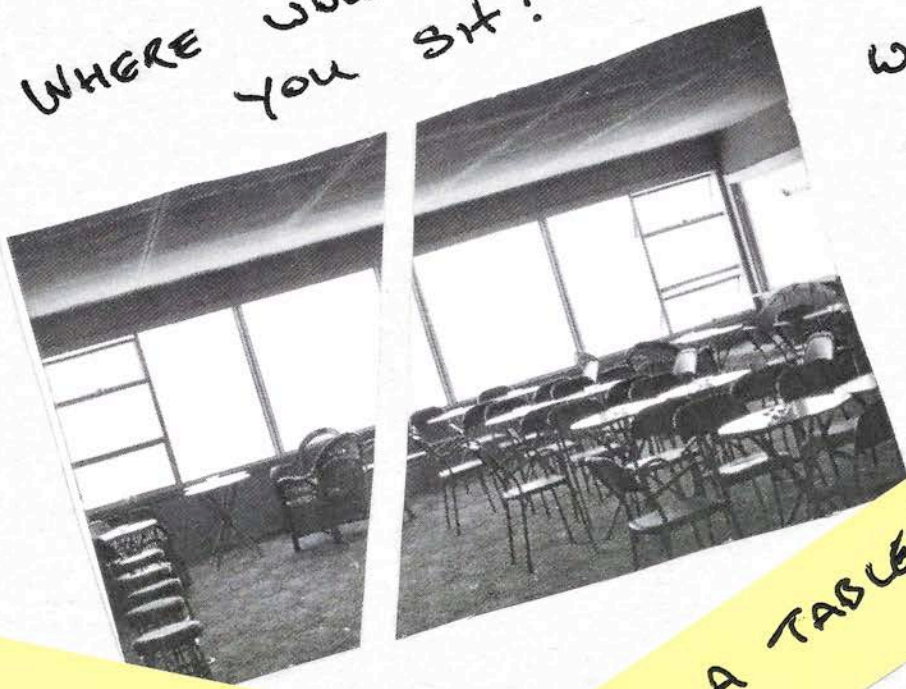
Homeless.



THE VIEW



WHERE WOULD YOU SIT?



Windows had a wide view of the Golf course.

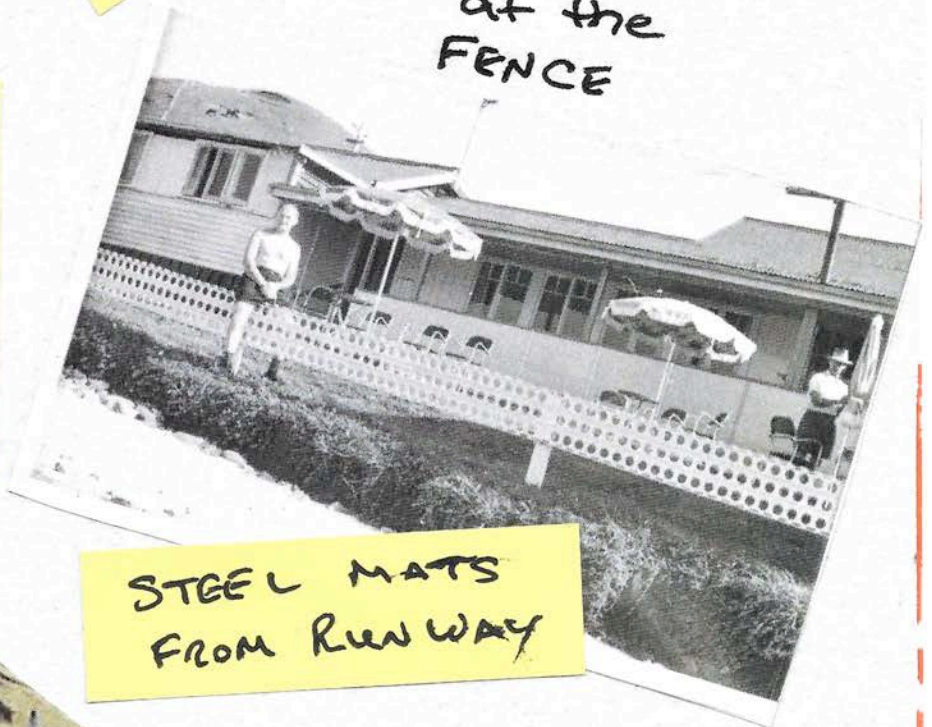
And the wind against the windows...

At the Bar

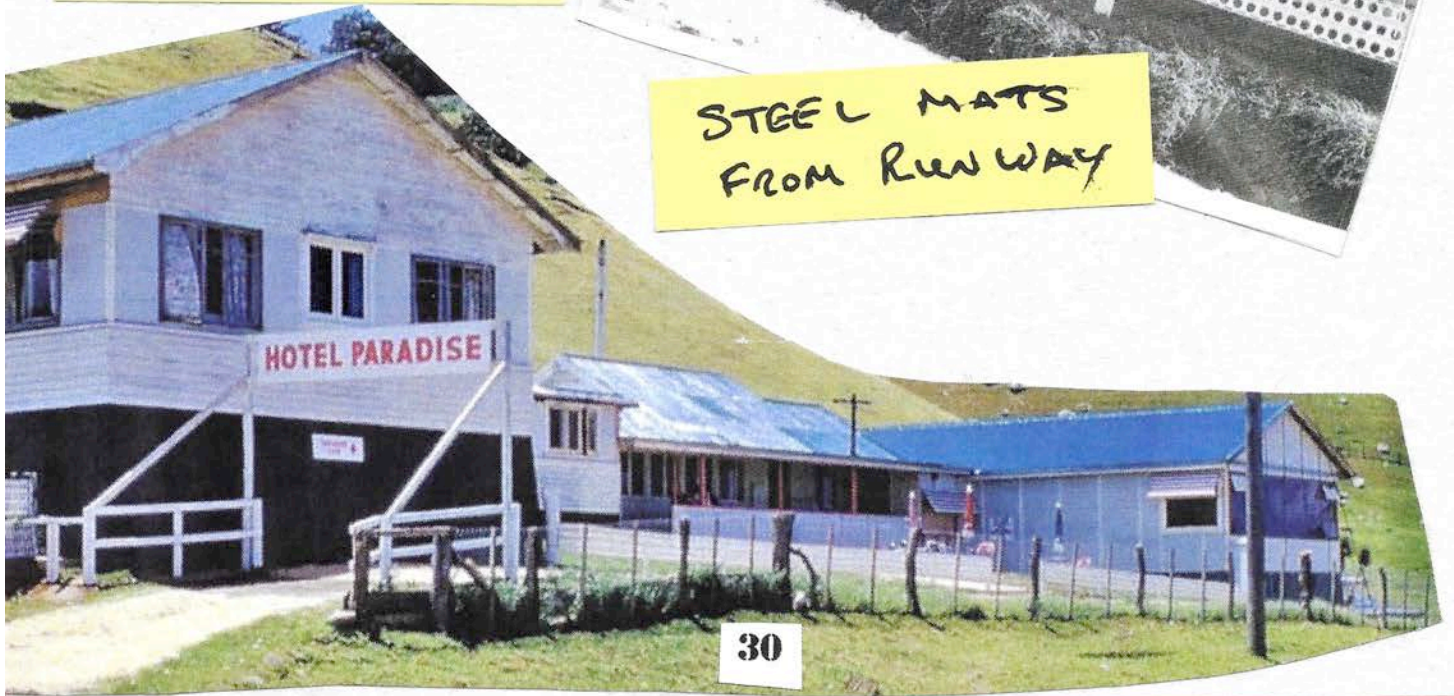
OR AT A TABLE?

Look at the FENCE

YOUR HOTEL AWAITS



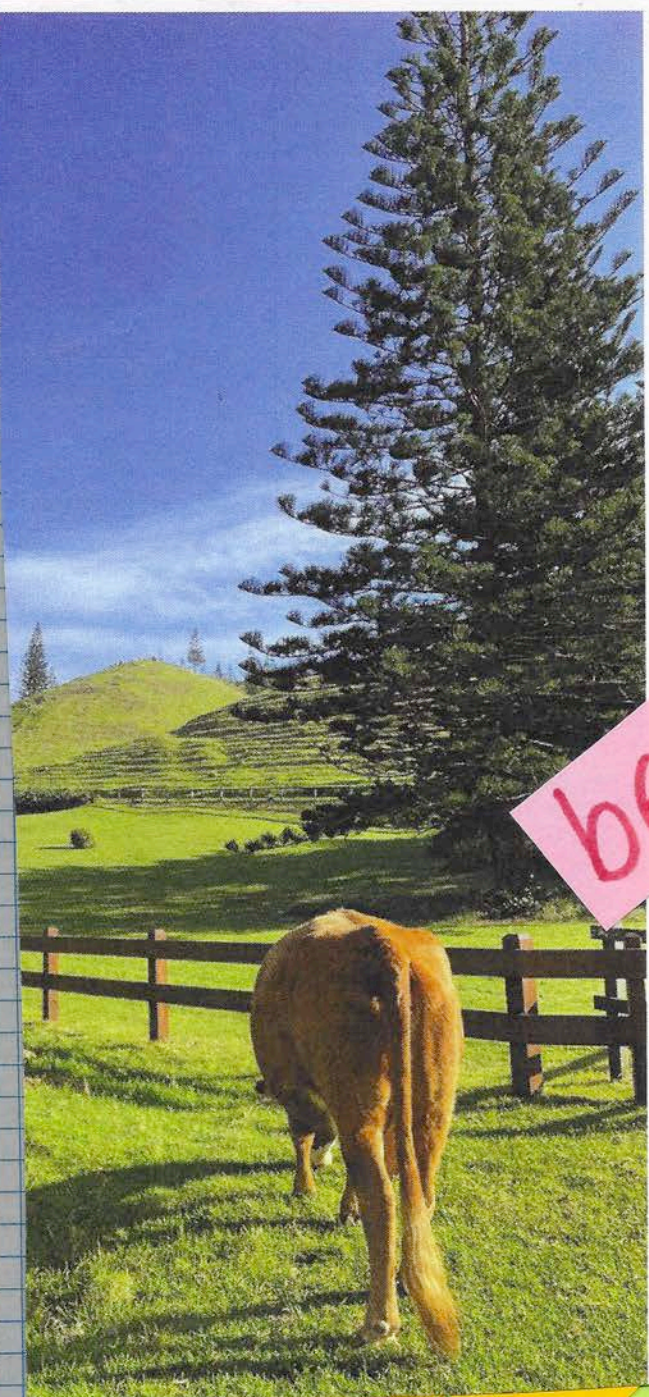
STEEL MATS FROM RUNWAY



Just cant  
imagine a  
hotel being  
here !!







beauty.



It was Friday night<sup>down</sup> at the  
Paradise. Minnie<sup>1</sup>, Marj<sup>2</sup>, Edie<sup>3</sup>, Leslie<sup>4</sup>  
were gathered outside giggling  
and putting on lipstick before  
heading in to dance long f'da  
band playing that night.

Aldin<sup>1</sup>, Lass<sup>2</sup>, Ernie<sup>2</sup> & Sid<sup>3</sup> were also  
outside having one cigarette before  
also heading in to dance long f'  
dem gael! ♡

**Holiday Resorts**  
**NORFOLK ISLAND.**—Stay Dewville, Tennis,  
Golf, Riding, Swimming. A. E. Crisp, 62  
Margaret Street, Sydney.  
1935

ES FRAIDI NAIT EN PAERADAIS  
SE DAN SOE MII EN MAIS FREN  
BRIICH ORNAA BAIK, WAN HONDA 90  
EN TEK ORF. GWEN AP PAAS HUTCHISONS  
WAN KAA RAIT AP AUWAS AS SOE  
WI GU FAASA. STI RAIT ORN AUWAS  
TIEL SOE WI GU FAASA YET TAL WI  
FLAIYEN. AP FLEEMAN'S DAA KAA  
PUL AKLAN OER. ES BILL RILEY!  
// (Sgt!!!)

As the conservation and enhancement of the Kingsley  
Arthur's Vale area on Norfolk Island proceeds, the  
incongruity of the existence of the Paradise Hotel buildings  
has become apparent and their removal more urgent. The  
Commission believes that the structure should be carefully  
demolished under archaeological supervision and the site  
revegetated as part of the curtilage of the adjoining historic  
structures. Any alternative site for replacement hotel should  
lie outside the historic area.

it was Friday night down  
at the paradise, tea was  
over & the guests wandered  
down to the bar in there  
Pjs to make a cuppa or  
have a drink, sitting in the  
lounges overlooking the  
amazing view of Kingston.  
Some retire early & some  
stay on to mix, dance  
get drunk, play pool,  
whatever they happen to  
indulge in a good time is  
always on the cards down  
at paradise,



It was Friday night down at the Paradise.

I can remember arriving in the car and trying to find a place to park.

Walking in the dark up the driveway, I could hear the music playing and hear of many voices talking, laughing.

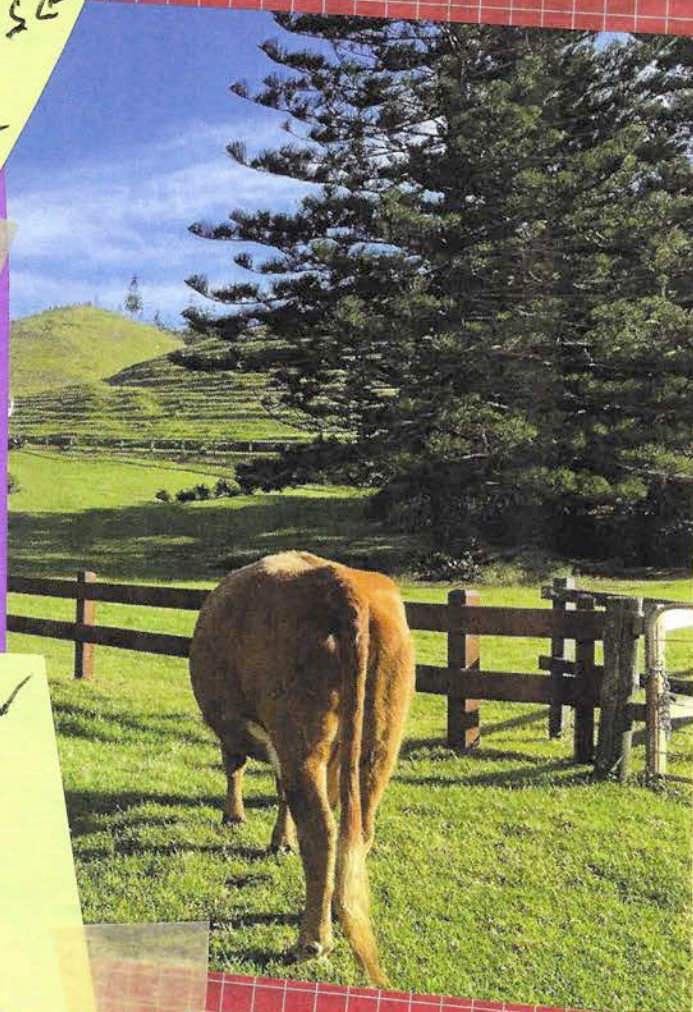
It was an Open night. An Open night was when locals could mingle with the guests listen to a live band, to late it would not be uncommon for a guest to call into the bar in their night gown.

ORNAFRDI NITE  
PARADISE ESTD  
SIDE F BE

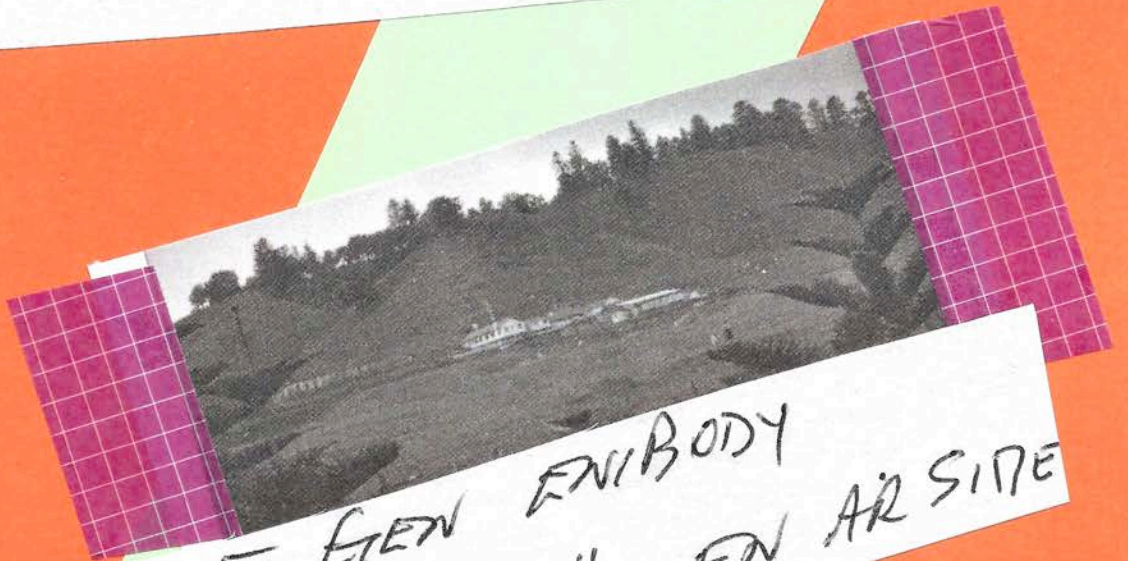
MOOS EVRY BODY  
SWEN 6' DOWN  
PARADISE EWEN  
DOE DEM QUIT  
NO TRANSPORT

PLENTY SULLUN USE  
A LEWE DERE  
SE SHIKA

PLENTY SULLUN  
BIN USE A  
MARRY AFTA  
DEM MEET DOWN  
DERE AT PARADISE



ES ORN ONE FRII NIGH DOWN PARADISE  
EN SOMETHING SE MAKE STINGY GURRET  
EN HI DERE ELEN AH BAR SWANGEN  
HIS HARN ABOUT SKIMMES ON BIG  
GORILLA



'BAWLEN OUT ELEN ENIBODY  
" COME ORN COME OR " EN AR SIDE  
SE PACK.

CULLA COME FEN ORF ARE RANOA  
COME UP BETHINE STINGY PICK THEM  
UP EN CARRY ET OUTSIDE  
STINGY 4 TIME BIGPA DEN CULLA

April 24, 1933.

# NORFOLK ISLAND. Attractions of Kingston.

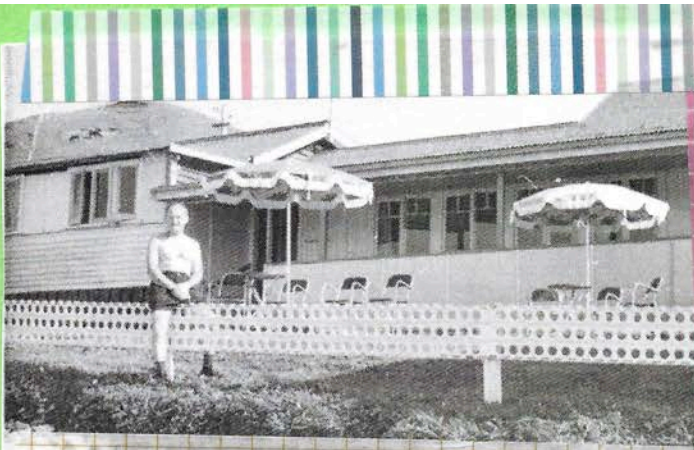
*From Our then Correspondent.*

NORFOLK IS., March 21.

THE long summer drought has broken at last and the roads that have been so deep and dusty are hard and clean with here and there a yellow puddle to warn us of winter rains coming pretty soon. Farmers and planters are ploughing and planting, and their wives are putting vegetable and flower seeds into cherished garden plots and agreeing to exchange young plants in a few weeks' time.

Last holiday weeks are being spent by settlers from "up country" down at Kingston; where an enterprising and far-sighted resident has been busy for months past building up a colony of attractive little bungalows, all of different design and all snapped up as soon as completed. Three are permanently let and the rest brim over with joyous, casual tenants whose faces and numbers vary from week to week. As an additional attraction the largest bungalow has been fitted and equipped as a tea-room and restaurant where vagrant meals may be taken or a weekly arrangement come to.

The green acre on which this little settlement has arisen is separated from the blue waters of Emily Bay only by the width of the golf course to which visitors are made warmly welcome and where they are certain of a very good game. A hard tennis court is in course of construction and very fine bathing is to be had in Emily Bay or the rougher waters of Slaughter Bay; while, for convenience of domestic shopping or postal business, Burns, Philp's main store is close at hand and our solitary post office is down the road.



It was Friday night  
the Paradise

music

laughter

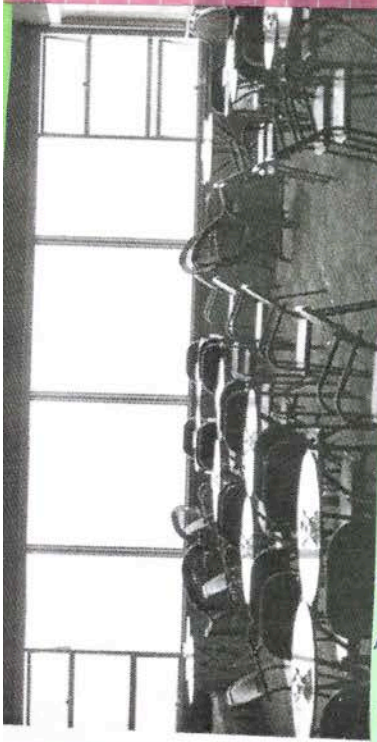
Mess behind

the bar

locals & tourists

having a drink.

- Colleen cooking in  
the kitchen



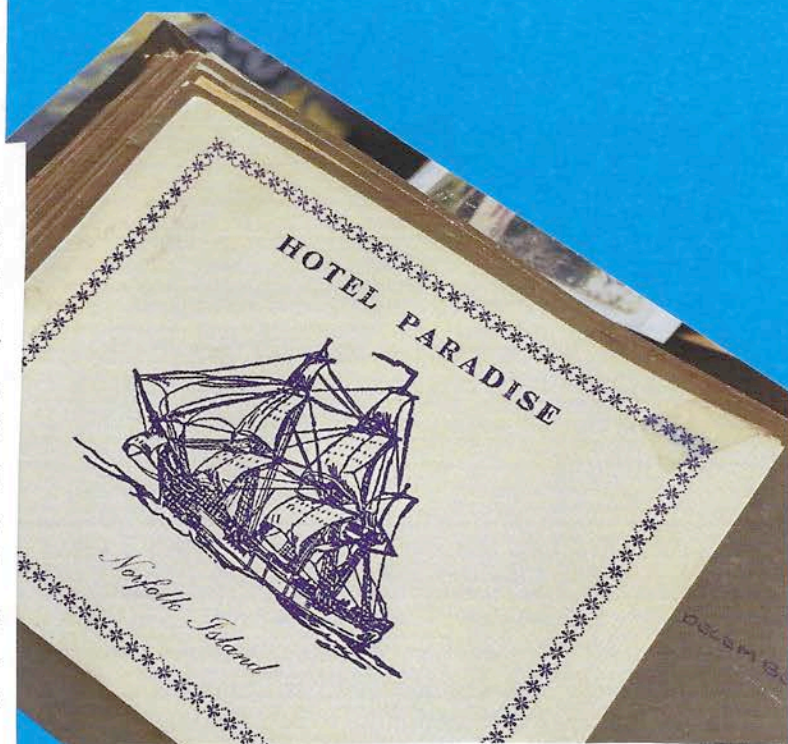


## Conversation with Robyn Tavener at Seventh Heaven, 9 June 2021

**Sarah:** Where would you like to begin your story of the Paradise?

**Robyn:** Well, my parents went into partnership and bought the hotel in 1962 with another couple called Meg and Rupert George. My parents were Thelma and Eric Semple. My father had been ill, and his doctor said, "Change your occupation." It was then he saw an advert in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "Partnership wanted for hotel in South Pacific Island." He thought he'd ring this number, so he rang Meg George, went to Mossman, they talked together, "Oh yeah, we'll do that." Meg said, "Well, you'd better go and have a look at the hotel, Eric." Her husband was rather elderly and unable to do so. There was only a plane once a fortnight in those days, so the boat, the *Tulagi*, was leaving Sydney. He got on the boat, came here, had a look at the hotel, "Yes, we'll buy it." Went back, got the boat back again, and then we made plans to move here.

Dad came in July 1962 just after the whaling station had shut down. Mum and myself and my brother stayed in Sydney and sold our house. We arrived in the November. As soon as they bought the hotel, they started doing renovations on it because there was only a couple of old fridges, so Dad built a big cool room, and a freezer. Started expanding some of the guests rooms, built another wing down out the front, up along the western side.



I was 11 years old when I moved here and all I wanted was a pig and a horse. Well, we had a paddock full of horses, we had something like seven horses that were let out to guests. Having all these horses, it was just wonderful. We had two sulkies that we used to harness up for the guests.

It was quite a rambling old pub, and all the guests would have – once again there was only a flight every fortnight from New Zealand and from Sydney, which was a DC4. So, accommodation included breakfast, lunch and dinner, morning and afternoon tea and all the tours, plus entertainment at night. This would be a film night one night, bingo or housie another night, indoor bowls another night and a Norfolk film slideshow or a movie night. That was the four nights entertainment and then on Fridays was the open night at Paradise, which was islander night, or 'Open Night'.

Every second Friday there would be a big farewell dinner because the guests were leaving the next day, and then they'd have the dance where local musicians would play. So, that was the routine of the pub. When Dad expanded the capacity, I think we'd have something like close to 100 people staying, which was quite a lot. They'd be there for a fortnight and yes, it was good. You got to know the guests quite well. There'd be lots of kids come in school holidays. A great time was had by all.

**Zel:** How long did your parents have the Paradise?

**Robyn:** Until 1972, I think it was 1972. About 10 years and they sold out to Travelodge.

Dad was a bricklayer by trade, going up scaffolding etc. That's when he was told to change his occupation, but he couldn't help it. He loved building. He did a lot of building and alterations at Paradise, a lot. Did the staff quarters, built a house for us. That came after and then did the western end, another whole wing which took a lot more people.

**Sarah:** So, all of these buildings, they weren't connected to each other, were they?

**Robyn:** There was the main bar and lounge area, and then there was a dining room and then went up the hall up the steps to all the rooms. Yes, so they were all connected. But the staff quarters were down the other side, and the engine room, because we had a generator as the power didn't run here all the time. So, it was virtually all in the hotel. The kitchen was out the back of the dining room, of course.

**Sarah:** So, just thinking of the site at the moment, there's the old convict well. So, where are some of these buildings in relation to that well?

**Robyn:** Our house was right behind that well. That was just like a paddock, and you come in and drive up around the back to do the garbage and that sort of thing. The laundry and the clotheslines were up the back. The horse paddock, the saddle shed was up the back.



**Zel:** What was it like growing up at the Paradise?

**Robyn:** Oh, I loved it. I had a ball. As soon as I arrived here, I just loved it. I think it was a bit of a shock for my mum. We'd come from Wahroonga in Sydney. We had a beautiful house there that Dad had built. We'd just moved from Pymble to that one and then – anyway, she was up for the adventure. So, she ended up helping of course and ended up doing the bar, the bar used to open at four o'clock in the afternoon.

We'd eat all our meals there. We had a lot of staff. The routine was Dad would get up in the morning and start the generator up and then he'd go and pick up the staff because a lot of people didn't have vehicles or modes of transport then. So, pick up the girls that didn't have cars. There was one housemaid who used to ride her horse, put it in the paddock. The horse's name was Sugar. There are some funny stories I could tell you about that.

The cooks would get picked up and he'd bring them down and they'd be starting work at, I suppose, 7am, something like that. Another lady used to ride her motorbike, she was a housemaid. So, there were the two housemaids and the cooks and the waitresses and lots of waitresses over the period of time had to come in from New Zealand and that's some of the ones that'll tell you about their love stories, I'd say. They're still on island and I still know them. So, they worked in the dining room.

Mum and Dad did the office work and the bar work. Dad or his brother Clive used to take all the tours. The days visitors didn't do tours they'd get dropped up town to go shopping because there was no other transfer. Have you seen photos of the big old Paradise bus? The big old bus would drive up there and park in town while they went shopping for three hours and then they'd come back into the dining room for lunch. Dinner was always three courses, usually soup, a main and then dessert. Lunch was a main and a dessert. Breakfast was cereal, cooked breakfast, toast. Morning and afternoon tea, which was taken down into the lounge room. I've actually got the tray mobile upstairs that we used to push around, the tea trolley. They would have for morning tea, I can't remember, scones or cooked tarts or something or the like, then of an afternoon usually it was just a cup of tea and biscuits. So, all the food was there for them.



**Zel:** You must have met a lot of interesting people, I mean being a teenager?

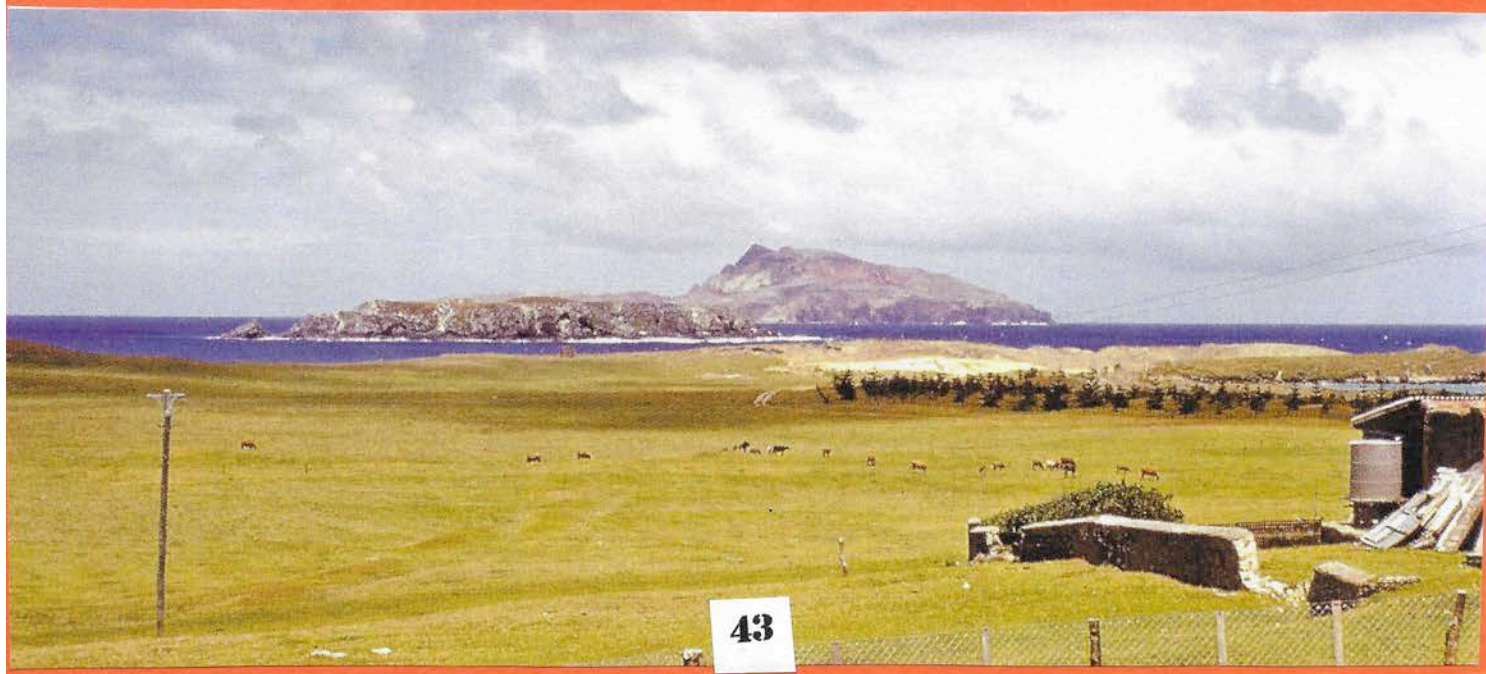
**Robyn:** Yes, I did. Then there'd be kids sometimes they'd come back every year, so we'd have a wonderful time just galloping around and off to the beach. Often we'd go and play in the cemetery at night. We played in all the ruins of a night. It was what you did. At that time too, little Honda scooters had just come to the Island and so Honda 50s were buzzing around. Some of the guests would hire a Honda scooter and they'd park them down the shed and my brother and I and my cousin Greg and I, would often, (when the guests were having dinner) go and get the bikes and go for a buzz around the common and up to Ball Bay on them, unbeknownst to them. Over the bunker, the bunker was on the golf course, over and up and over that. I had a great time living down there.

**Sarah:** I've seen some photos of a room with a magnificent view over to Phillip. Was that the dining room?

**Robyn:** That was probably the lounge room. Because the dining room you came in and there was a bit of a corridor. There were all timber windows, but the dining room was up behind that. You could still look out, but the uninterrupted view was from the actual lounge room. The bar was in the lounge room.

**Sarah:** It must have been incredible.

**Robyn:** Oh, it was. It was lovely. It was up high.



**Sarah:** So, why was Paradise so important on the Friday night for islanders?

**Robyn:** Oh, it was entertainment. It always had a live band and there were the guys that played all types of instruments. I always went to the dance nights. That's where I learnt to dance. As a 12-year-old, 12 to 16.

**Zel:** Oh, really?

**Robyn:** When I think about it, yes. Because there was dancing, and everybody could dance in those days. I mean, I just learnt there from one of the waitresses, she was a very good dancer. I'd just dance with her. Never had a lesson, but all the guys could dance, and all the women could dance in those days.

**Sarah:** You were talking about the live music. What sort of music was it?

**Robyn:** Well, there was always piano, a saxophone. There was a squeezebox and a guitar. And there'd be a couple of guys on the piano. There was drums too. A full band.

**Sarah:** Were they playing original songs?

**Robyn:** No, no, not original. They'd be playing like foxtrot, waltz, Pride of Erin. That sort of music. Then Dad used to fancy himself as a singer, so he would get on the mic too, just because he enjoyed it, but he wasn't very good. It didn't worry him, he used to have a really good time. Jump up from behind the bar and sing. Then sometimes on a Friday night, acts would come down. There was a fellow called Bob Hemus and he'd come down and do some acrobatic acts. What else did we have? We had other people would come and do little acts before the main dance, sort of thing. I think it was hilarious. Bob Hemus, he was a little tiny man and they used to do a circus. He'd get dressed up in a little white nappy, nothing else on and he'd just do a few contortionist things and the funniest thing that I can remember was he had this little machine, anyhow he'd get himself in it and he'd put his legs around his neck and his arms would come around between his legs and he played the mouth organ. Then he'd flick a switch and he'd start rotating. He'd be playing the mouth organ - Swanee River was a favourite - I don't think there's any photos of that, but when I think about it now, it's quite hilarious.

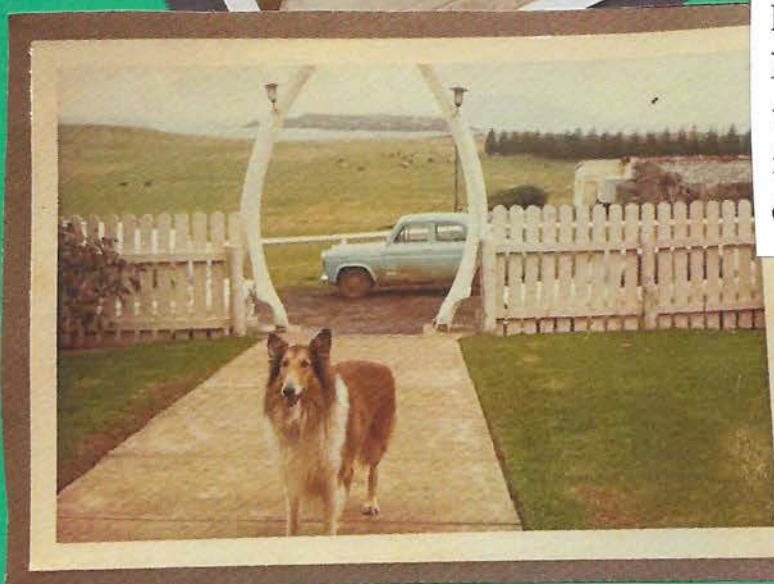
Some of the funny things that used to happen down there in the kitchen with staff. It was just like you're flat out trying to keep the cooks in line. Because they'd get up in the morning and do breakfasts, they'd do the morning tea, they'd do the lunch and then they'd prep the evening meal or whatever, which as I said it was always full on. Often they'd go and have a bit of a tippie in the afternoon, then they'd come back to serve us.

You had in the kitchen, the big dishwashing person and someone else to help do this. Lunchtime was usually like a salad with fish, or I don't know, I'll say cold meat or lamb chops. But there was always dessert like bread-and-butter pudding or jelly and fruit, stuff like – it was always full on. So, there's a lot to prepare when you think about it, compared to how people – in those days you had to make everything from scratch. Bread was delivered I think three times a week, so we had in the back of the kitchen three big bins where the bread was put and then you'd have to pull the bread out and then slice it. You had to slice all your meats and everything yourself. My ex-husband's family had the dairy here at that time, Tavener's Dairy. Yes, they'd deliver fresh milk in the cans every day to the kitchen.



**Sarah:** What a beautiful picture. Is this your dog?

**Robyn:** That was our dog at the time and his name was Saki. There he is again there. Dad and I schemed and brought him to the island without telling Mum. He features in quite a few photos. He usually did all the island tours with the guests.



**Zel:** How did you feel about the Paradise closing down?

**Robyn:** Closing down it was sad, but it was inevitable. Travelodge got cold feet and felt it was not going to be allowed to rebuild when the lease expired. Travelodge were like a company that I'd say had the resources to build it, but they didn't feel confident to build. So, yeah, it was a bit of a sad day. But other accommodation had started opening up on the island well and truly by then. So, when Paradise closed, these other places grew bigger and more opened up.

**Sarah:** You mentioned that you had purchased some parts of the Paradise.

**Robyn:** Yes.

**Sarah:** How did that all come about? What was the end of the Paradise?

**Robyn:** So, by then Jan and Ted Semple were running it or Ted was actually paid by Travelodge to do it. I don't quite know the financial set-up, but I think he must have, or taken over the lease. Anyhow, when the lease was ending, they sold off furniture, they sold off lots of parts of Paradise and then my ex-husband and I, we had quite a few sections of land and he had the idea that we'd buy parts of Paradise and relocate it, and that's what we did. So, we bought I think four big chunks of Paradise. I can show you some photos of that. Part of this house here is part of it. We had the four chunks of Paradise which we built houses from. I don't think moving buildings had ever been done here before, so it was quite an interesting project. Everyone said, "Well, why do they want to do that? That's all junk." But we turned it into things.

**Sarah:** So, they were actual buildings, so it wasn't just -

**Robyn:** Well, they were chopped up. There was say, a wing. It was what could fit on the truck, like chop it off, chainsaw it off and put that on the truck and move it up. The piles were done on the new site, so it was brought up and plopped on the site. Reconnected and added on, verandas, doors, what have you.

**Zel:** That's amazing.



**Sarah:** You mentioned upstairs you've got the tea trolley. Was everything that was inside the Paradise for sale?

**Robyn:** They sold that. Yeah, they sold I presume beds and stuff like that. I didn't really know that much about it until a lot of stuff had already been sold. All those things were sold off. Furniture, beds, bedding.

**Sarah:** The other day someone told me that in their office they've got a door from one of the guest rooms of the Paradise which still has the number on it.

**Robyn:** Yeah, because they all had numbers on them. I've got some doors here that are from Paradise as well.

**Sarah:** Oh, that's amazing. So, what would that have been? Would that have been, like the guest quarters?

**Robyn:** That would have been guest – yes, they were all guest rooms that we bought.

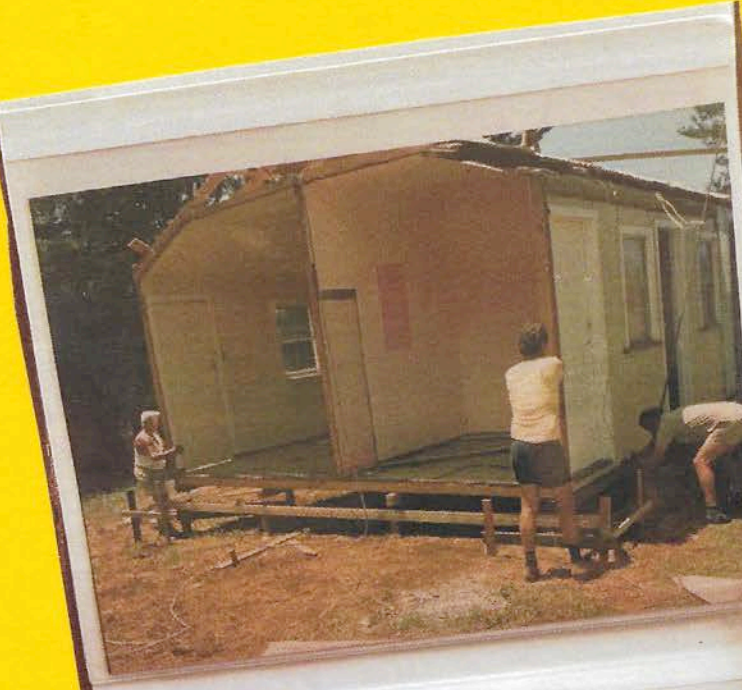
**Zel:** Wow.

**Robyn:** That's another one there. So, obviously, these were the ones that went down Cascade, but it was quite a big operation when I think about it now. So, these are several photos of it. Just moving, putting it on – that's my Dad, my Dad came and helped.

**Sarah:** Oh, look at that.







**Robyn:** So, these are the rooms, and this is down at Kingston.

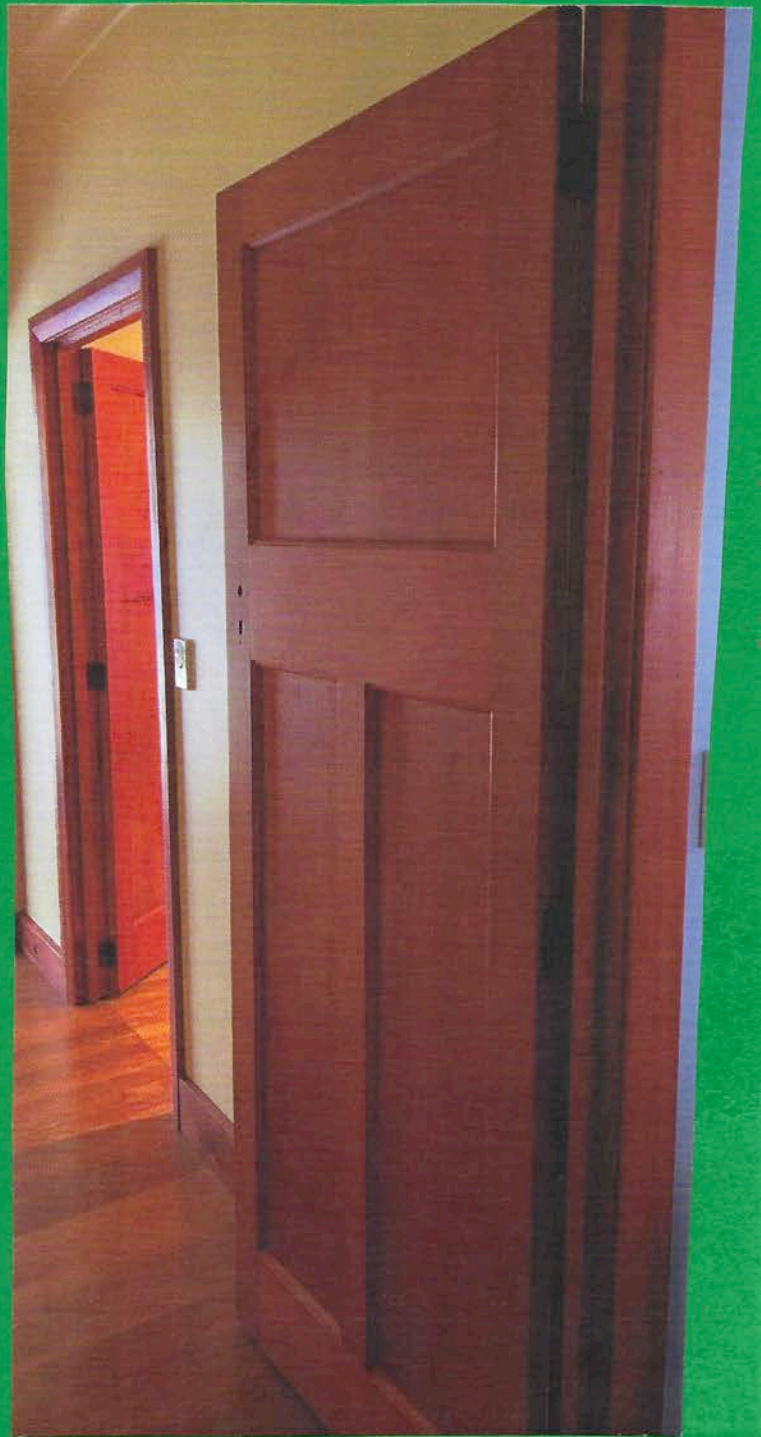
**Sarah:** Oh yeah, this is it at Kingston at the actual Paradise site. Incredible.

**Zel:** Yeah amazing, I just thought it was demolished. I didn't realise it was taken apart and moved around.

**Robyn:** Well, not all of it, we just bought some chunks of it. I think the rest of it was probably demolished, but we bought the solid bits that we could. It was all beautiful timber, because in those days when they built stuff they used to only use hardwood, and it was really good timber.



**Robyn:** So, this is the house here, "Seventh Heaven", which has a piece of paradise in it, and I'll show you that inside of this back section here. A piece here in the front. We put that high bit there in the middle, joined the two bits together. So, there's a bit here and a bit there. So, this is June 2003, so that's what the house looked like before we started working on it which is both sections of that is Paradise.



So, this part here, if you come back in here, this part here, that piece of building is part of Paradise, and we knocked that bit and put that bit on. But that actual building part was brought here and put there. I would say thinking back now, like all these doors have been used in here now. These were all Paradise doors. This is another one here, look. One, two, three and there's another one here. So, there's another one here. So, they're really old doors. There's more of these upstairs.

**Zel:** So, there's really bits of the Paradise all around the island at this point.

**Robyn:** Yes. ' The whale bones, I think they were taken to a private home, but I think they're now in the museum. When Jan and Ted died, they had no children, so I was one of five beneficiaries and a co-executor. Cleaning out their house which was at Ball Bay, there was a big shed that had not been opened for I think about 16 years or so. We finally got it open, it was like you walked in the door and boom, floor to ceiling was just documents. They never threw anything out ever and also, all the stuff from Paradise was in the two sheds and oh man, we had to just go through it. In the house there was a lot of slides and footage of Norfolk because they used to show the old reel projectors. They used to show that when they did island night which was the slide night and the movies, they'd show those of old Norfolk. So, we gave that all to the museum. Because I thought "we can't go through it, we don't know how to digitise it". And whether all of it was significant I don't know, but we just thought "that's the best place for it to go".

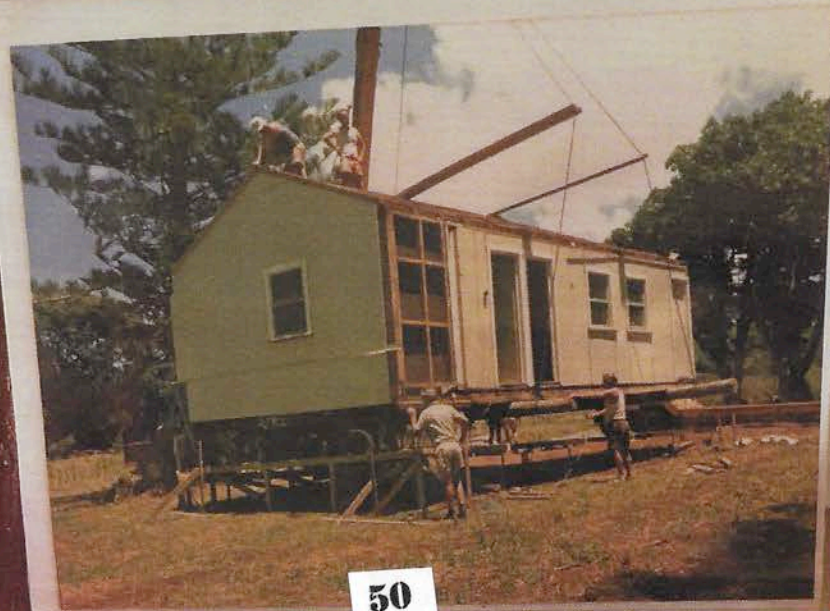


**Sarah:** What was the scene that we would have found on the day?

**Robyn:** Well, it went in parts. It didn't, like it wasn't all in one day, no. Heavens no. So, I think everything was sold – not everything, was sold, and then once that was empty, well, I had young kids and I had a business and everything by then, so I didn't go and watch it all day and night. I just saw bits of it. But all I know is the days that our stuff was being moved, it didn't all happen in one day either. And it had to be prepared up where we were putting the houses before anything was moved.

**Zel:** So, that was a long process of pulling it down.

**Robyn:** Oh, yes. Yeah, it was. .





**Sarah:** It never burnt down, did it? Because I've heard a couple of people mention it burnt down in a fire and that is how it met its end.

**Robyn:** No. That was the Kingfisher that burnt down. The Paradise never burnt down, no. Never had a fire there to my knowledge. No, it was Kingfisher.

**Sarah:** It's incredible really, how things grow and then they are pulled down but actually disseminated throughout the island and they come to live on in different forms.

**Robyn:** I'll just show you these, these were out of like – that's one of those really old ashtrays, I've got heaps of those.

**Sarah:** Oh, wow, that ashtray is from the Paradise?

**Robyn:** Yes. These are the sort of things that were sitting around. It's just like, yes, I just got this and it's just, I can't throw them out. I've also got - we had our own China down there like big chunky china and all had the Paradise insignia on it. So, I have got somewhere a dinner plate, a bread-and-butter plate, a soup bowl and cup and saucer. And I've got a milk jug with "Paradise" on it.

**Robyn:** So, that's the truck moving it and it had to come up Middlegate Road. I remember there was someone on the back of the truck because we had to go under the power lines, so they had to lift the power lines up with a stick to get under it, because nothing that big had been up there before. I mean, look at these old photos now that you just wouldn't -

**Zel:** Incredible.

**Robyn:** So, we brought chunks that big of it.



**Sarah:** Did this come from the Paradise?

**Robyn:** Yes.

**Sarah:** Oh my gosh. That is incredible.

**Robyn:** I can pull that out for you. Yeah, that was the original safe of Paradise.

**Zel:** That's amazing.

**Robyn:** That's the old Chubb safe. So that was used in the office at Paradise.

**Sarah:** Incredible.

**Robyn:** And that was at Jan and Ted's. It was sentimental to me so I got it cleaned up. Honestly, it takes about five guys to lift it. So, I had it refurbished. It was completely sandblasted and it's on wheels now – I can pull it over on wheels.

**Sarah:** So, now it can be rolled around rather than having to –

**Robyn:** I can just pull it out to clean. Because it's heavy as lead. Even to get it over the door, we sort of broke the door getting it in. It's so just heavy.



**Sarah:** So, you're here living amongst the Paradise in some way.

**Robyn:** Oh yes, it was a big part of my life, it really was.

**Sarah:** And continues to be.

**Robyn:** There's things that I have every day that, yes, that are bits of Paradise sitting around.



A fantastik  
time looking  
@ memories  
en laa fen!

# Memories

See you later  
alligator!

Proud  
Mary!

I see a bad  
moon rising

Gloria

Bumboras

It's now or  
never

Sitten ornaa Paaradais  
raenda, wotchen aa griin  
stietshan waegan se  
ful' tiinieja drainen  
krors aa banka!

Commonwealth of Australia, 1986, *Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983-85*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 18.

'The Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area on Norfolk Island is under threat from a proposal favoured by the Norfolk Island Government for the building of a new hotel on the site of the Paradise Hotel in Quality Row. The Commission strongly opposes any new development on that site in order to protect the historical integrity of the area.'

Huge thanks for allowing us to tell our stories. It's so important and we have never been encouraged to do so. What marvellous memories of happy carefree days and summer nights.

It would have been great but it wasn't allowed.

TRAVEL LODGE  
had architectural plans drawn up for a hotel in the beautiful gorgian style of Kingston buildings.

Commonwealth of Australia, Norfolk Island Administration, Jean Rice Architect, Context Pty Ltd and GML Heritage Pty Ltd, 2016, *Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area Heritage Management Plan* April 2016, viewed 3 June 2021, [https://www.regional.gov.au/territories/norfolk\\_island/files/KAVH-A-Heritage-Management-Plan.pdf](https://www.regional.gov.au/territories/norfolk_island/files/KAVH-A-Heritage-Management-Plan.pdf).

'Heritage Significance: Aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, natural or aesthetic value for past, present or future generations.' (p. 153)

'Historical Significance: An item having this value is significant because of the importance of its relationship to the evolving pattern of our cultural history.' (p. 153)

'Local Significance: Items of heritage significance which are important to a local community and have heritage values, including fine or typical examples, or are rare at the local community level.' (p. 155)

'Social Significance: Items having this value are significant through their social, spiritual or cultural association with a recognisable community.' (p. 157)



WEN AI YA PAERADAI S  
SHE TEN DAUN ORL AKLAN  
KAA BUIWET. WI DAA  
SAED. HAED DAA  
MACH THING BIN HAEPN  
DAUN DEYA LUDU  
DAA MACH AKLAN.  
AI STIL SOHRI  
TU DES  
DIEH

The belief that historic buildings can be preserved by dismantling them and rebuilding them on a new site is still held by some people despite the growing awareness of those concerned for our heritage that little of real value results from divorcing a building from its traditional setting.'

After the flood all of the cutlery washed out all over the golf course and the Piano ended up on the Bunker! Imagine that!

## THE PARADISE Hotel

A place that holds many memories for the Norfolk Island People and those who visited The Paradise Hotel over many years.

A hive of music, fun, joy and laughter it lives on in many places all over the Island - Visit the Pier Store Museum to see some of these pieces

... as the band played their  
tunes loud across the room  
the music echoed over the  
bunker. A roar came from  
down the road and next  
minute a bike with three  
passengers came to a halt  
at the front door. In they  
went, laughing, hugging and  
searching for the bar.

A ha!

George  
playing the  
Piano

NAUGHTY

☹

GLORIA!



Image(s) from the Earle Viénet Collection, used with permission. November 1960.

Sitting in the dining room and looking  
out at the amazing view -  
Lone pine, Nepean, Phillip, Emily Bay.

A place to be. The sights to see.

It's PARADISE!

But where will the  
band play? There's no  
way we'll find anywhere  
as great as Paradise.

Too many laughs, the  
best spot on Norf'k en  
no said baeta!

99 bottles of beer on the  
wall, 99 bottles of beer.

Over again.

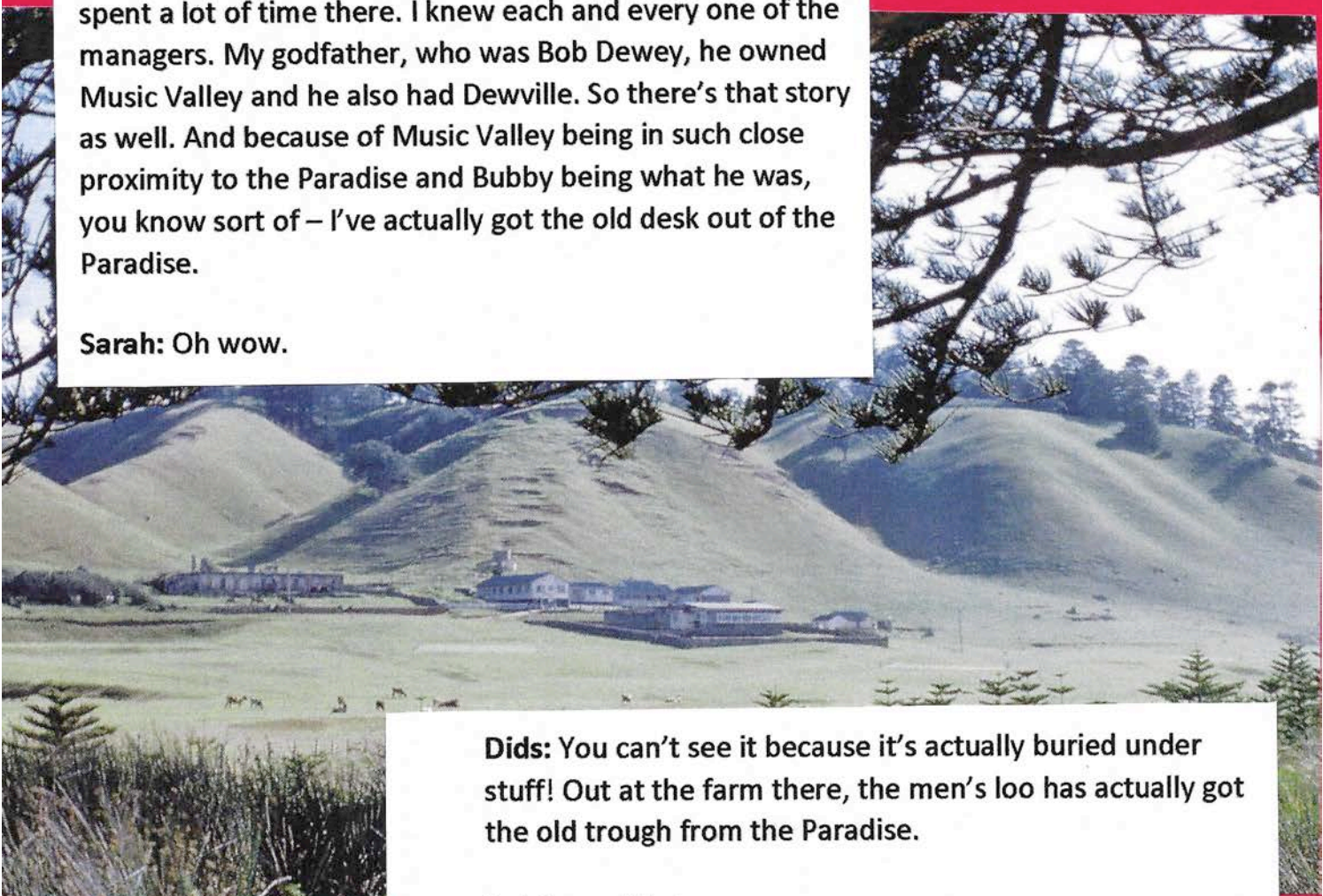


LOUD!

**Conversation with David “Dids” Evans at Flagstaff,  
17 June 2021.**

**Dids:** Kingston was always, right from the word go, a working, living, thriving environment. People went there not to just work and play but it was the hub of the island. Paradise Hotel was down there and it was huge for the community when that was taken down. I played a very big role in that because I had a lot of trucks. I had ten trucks, so I removed a lot of the timber. I grew up down there, Bubby, my father, was always – it had Bubby’s Corner branded on one side of the bar, you know. So as a child I spent a lot of time there. I knew each and every one of the managers. My godfather, who was Bob Dewey, he owned Music Valley and he also had Dewville. So there’s that story as well. And because of Music Valley being in such close proximity to the Paradise and Bubby being what he was, you know sort of – I’ve actually got the old desk out of the Paradise.

**Sarah:** Oh wow.



**Dids:** You can’t see it because it’s actually buried under stuff! Out at the farm there, the men’s loo has actually got the old trough from the Paradise.

**Zel:** Incredible!

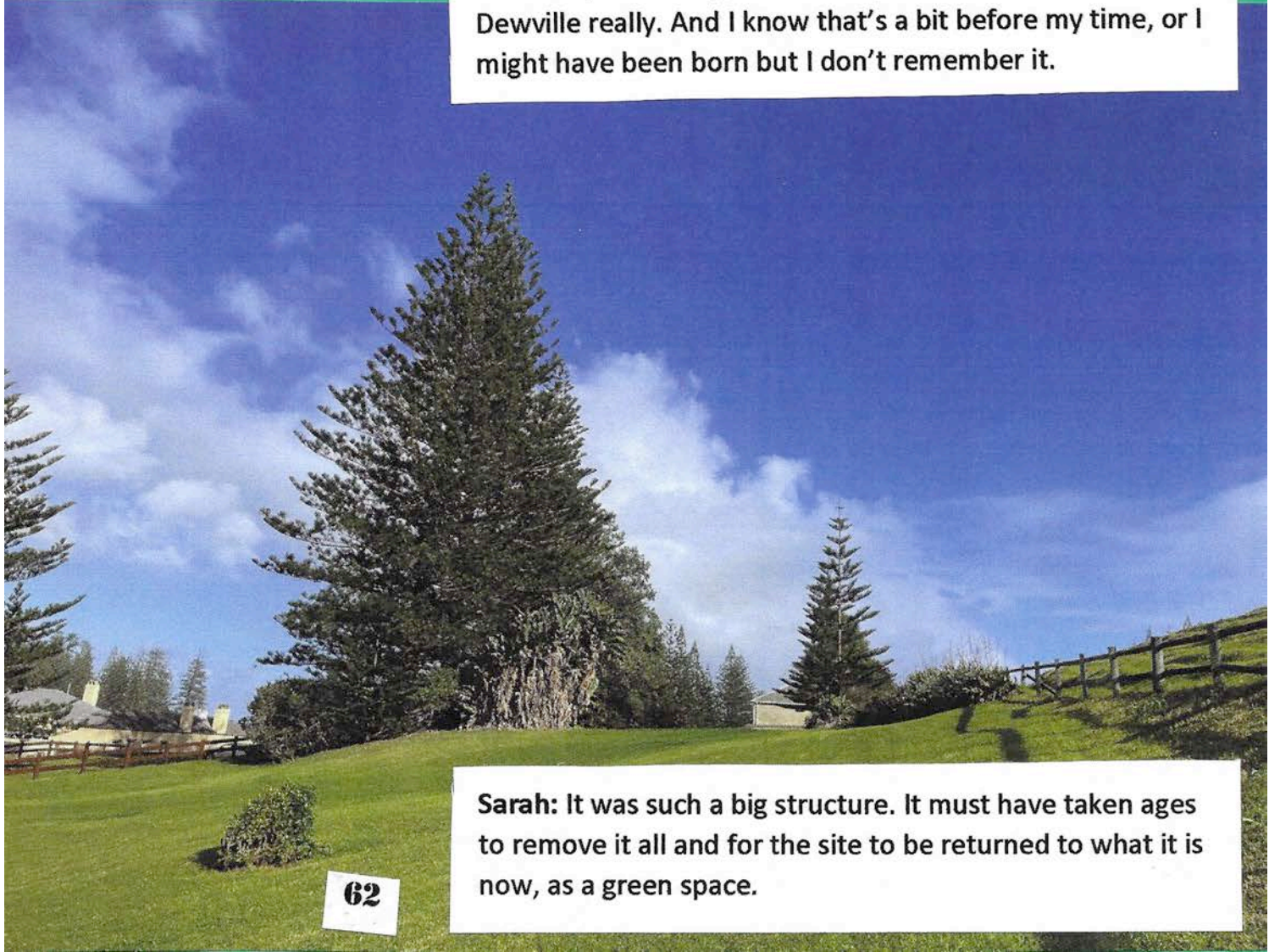
**Dids:** And you used to be able to – until 12 months ago, you could stand there and use it and look up to the mountain and not see one house. You could see all just – this huge mountain whilst you were standing there doing your business. And I used to say, “Go out piss in Paradise.” Someone’s gone and built a shed in it now, near the road now, but –

**Sarah:** And so did you manage to secure some parts of the Paradise – like the desk and so forth, because you were doing all of that moving and removing of the –

**Dids:** Yeah, I bought them. Yeah, even a couple of the big old – I used to do a lot of catering with Bubby. But I did a lot of catering myself as well, so I got a couple of the real big commercial kitchen pots from the Paradise which are really good for Bounty Day, when you're going down there and feeding a hundred people or whatever. Make a big stew or a big pot full of mada or whatever, big curry.

**Zel:** Do you remember what the process was of the final – the end of the Paradise? Before it's removal?

**Dids:** The lease ran out and they were told, I think probably three years in advance, that it wouldn't run past this period in time. And then it had to be taken down. Because it was owned by Travelodge at one stage. But initially started by Dewville really. And I know that's a bit before my time, or I might have been born but I don't remember it.



**Sarah:** It was such a big structure. It must have taken ages to remove it all and for the site to be returned to what it is now, as a green space.

**Dids:** Parts of it actually went out holus-bolus.

**Sarah:** Oh yeah, like Robyn and her ex-husband who bought whole sections of buildings.

**Dids:** Yeah. And put them onto trucks. Yeah. I did a lot of that and a lot of it I actually disassembled, and I took truckloads and truckloads of timber that had just been de-nailed and then was reused to build other structures. But you know, not only was it – it used to have, BJs Jewellers used to be down in the Paradise as well. There were the whale bones from the old whaling industry. Huge old commercial kitchen. Big commercial freezers. Stuff like that you didn't see in too many places around the island back then. We used to actually pump water from up at Music Valley, there next to Bloody Bridge, there used to be a pump house there and they used to pump water from there right around the road back to the Paradise.

**Zel:** Wow.

**Dids:** Just because you didn't have to worry about so many tanks then. And water actually used to be there then. It doesn't – not there these days. Yeah, they reckon during the flood my godfather's piano washed out of the house and out onto the middle of the golf course there.


**Sarah:** Yeah, I've heard that story, and that flood was –

**Dids:** 1936.

**Zel:** – terrible for lots of people.





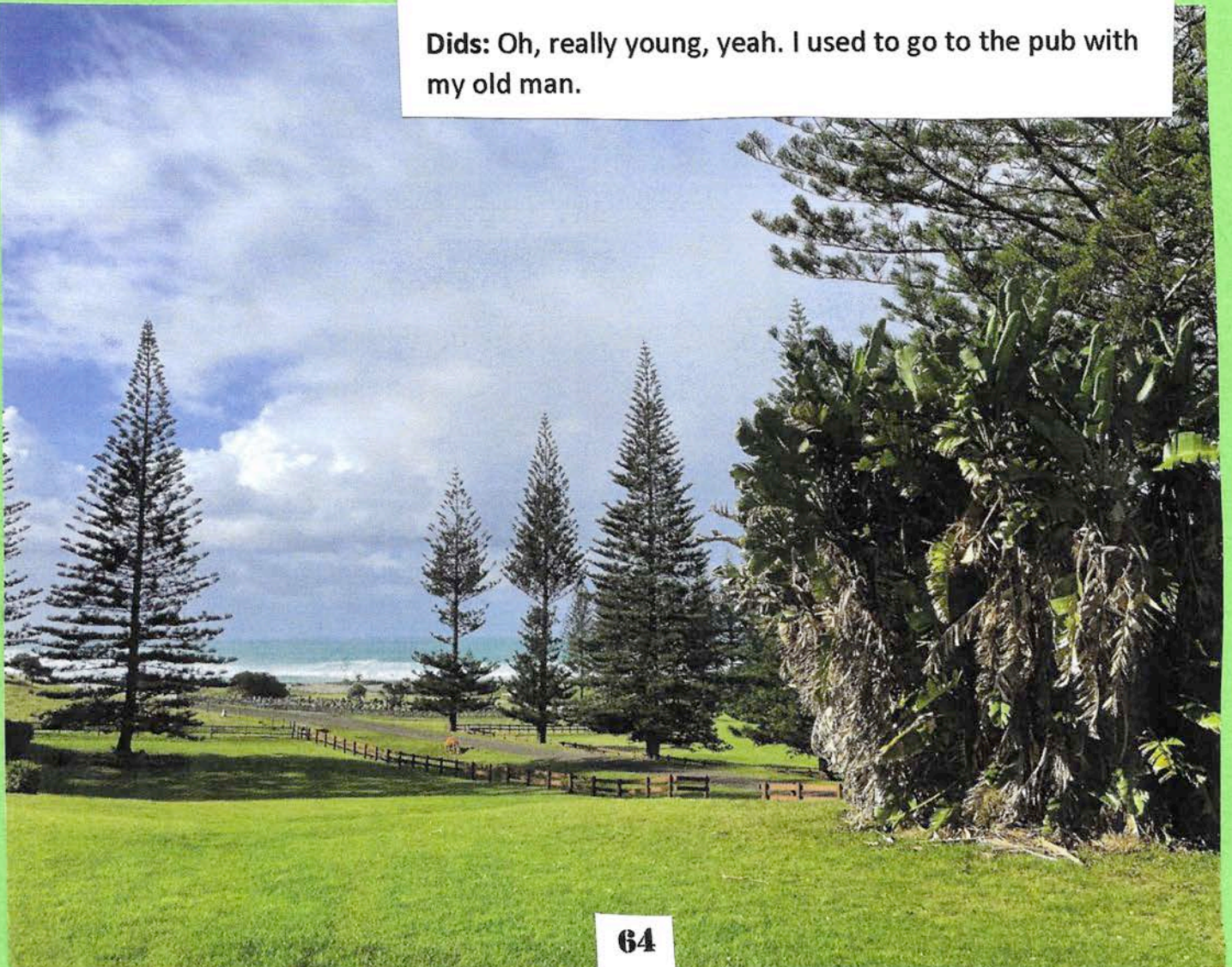


**Sarah:** It sounds like an incredible space, the Paradise. A real social hub for the island.

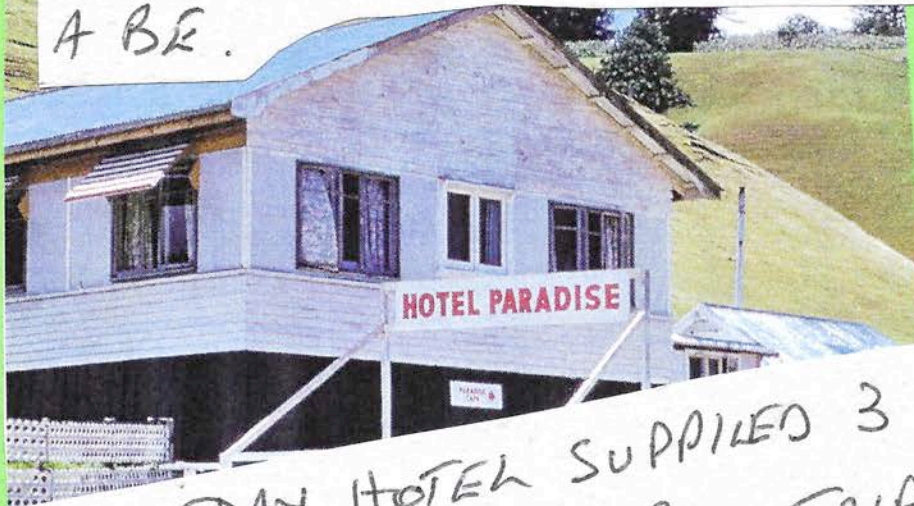
**Dids:** Yeah, with race days and the golf club and the tourists that used to be there, as well as the band nights that used to happen there. It was a source of employment for many people as well, whether they be working in the house or working behind the bar, or going down there and picking up visitors to take them on a tour, or working in the kitchen, or doing maintenance. You know, it was quite a big thing for Norfolk back then as an employee sort of type business. Yeah, so I – many and many of the days I've – been spent down there.

**Sarah:** Somewhere you went when you were young.

**Dids:** Oh, really young, yeah. I used to go to the pub with my old man.

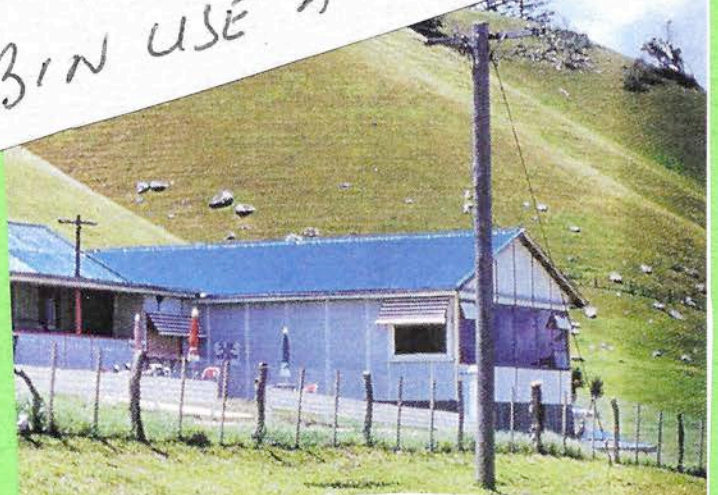


DAY ES SIDE DAH PARADISE HOTEL BIN USE  
A BE.



~~THE~~ DAY HOTEL SUPPLIED 3 MEALS EVERY  
DAY AND A DAILY BUS TRIP UP TO BUN PINE  
AS IN DEM DAYS HAD NO RENTAL CARS  
VERY FEW RESTAURANTS AND NO TOURIST  
BUSSES.

EF YOU WUNT A SI NORIK YOU HIRE  
ONE ~~THE~~ RIDEN HORSES EN HAD 2 OR  
MORE SULLUN DART BIN USE A HIRE DEM  
OUT.



PARADISE HAD D BAAS SIDE FE' ONE  
HOTEL EN ES STILL D' BASS SIDE

This is the site where the Paradise Hotel stood.

Commonwealth of Australia, 1985, Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983-84, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, pp. 10-11.

The settings of historic buildings should remain free of intrusive new structures, so that their architectural qualities can be seen to best advantage. With a degree of imagination and sympathy for the attributes of historic interiors, adaptations for modern-day functions are perfectly feasible. Many significant buildings are recognised first for their external qualities as that is what is visible to the public. The interiors of those buildings are usually given little consideration when redevelopment proposals are conceived. All too often the result is that a significant work of architecture is reduced to its shell with an unrelated modern structure inside.



This Hotel was a place where Islanders & visitors could meet & enjoy music & a drink. Closed by the Commonwealth of Australia because they could not read a map.

AN INTERPRETIVE SIGN ON THE  
PARADISE SITE WOULD NEED TO BE  
EXPLICIT AND IN DEPTH. WITH PHOTOS.  
BECAUSE PARADISE MEANS SO VERY  
MUCH TO SO MANY PEOPLE.

# 'PARADISE LOST'

\* R.I.P. R.I.P. \*

Here was the place to go on a Friday night for visitors and locals. Constructed of Army Huts left here by the NZ Army. It provided holiday accommodation venues for parties, weddings & dance entertainment. Upgrade of the Convict Settlement by the Queensland Government. required its removal as it didn't fit the surroundings

Goodtimes  
Locals

Commission strongly opposes any new development on that site in order to protect the historical integrity of the area. The Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area on Norfolk Island is under threat from a proposal for the building of a new hotel on the site of the Paradise Hotel in Quality Row. The Commonwealth of Australia, 1986, Australian Heritage Commission Annual Report 1983-85, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 18.



Now where to go? The Paradise had been the venue on the Island for so many years. The perfect place to have a Hotel. Overlooking the golf course and the sea.

MY FIRST FARMY NIGHT AT PARADISE MY FUTURE HOME WITH MY FUTURE HUSBAND AND THE REST IS HISTORY.

MORNINGS • MOTORBIKES RIDING THROUGH THE ROOMS AND HALLS • SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO HOME • 11 PM ON A

MORNINGS • MOTORBIKES RIDING THROUGH THE ROOMS AND HALLS

FRIDAY NIGHT • GUESTS CLIMBING THROUGH THE WINDOWS •



ORLEM TUARIS  
LAW NORFUK

GOODBYE  
TOURISTS

# DRINKS

NINI-NINI



IYAS EN  
IYAS AGOE



N.I  
SYD

DENVILLE, BLUE  
LAGOON, OCEAN  
VIEW, KENTVILLE



# FRIDAY

down at the  
PARADISE

LOUD

HAT ON THE END OF  
THE TRUMPET

GUD  
LAIF

(THEN THEY  
POURED A  
DRINK IN IT)



PLAYING PIANO  
+ ACCORDION AT  
THE SAME TIME!

AFTER PARTY 11:30  
ISLANDERS  
AND VISITORS

BOYS WATCHING GIRLS AND  
GIRLS WATCHING BOYS

"YOU CAN'T GIVE ME  
A TICKET - YOU'RE DRUNK!"

DU WARI



CHASING  
US ON  
HONDA90

# OPEN NIGHT

STAFF EATING BREAKFAST TOGETHER IN THE



**Want to learn more about the Paradise Hotel?**

Come and explore the collections held by the Norfolk Island Museum Trust. Highlights include:

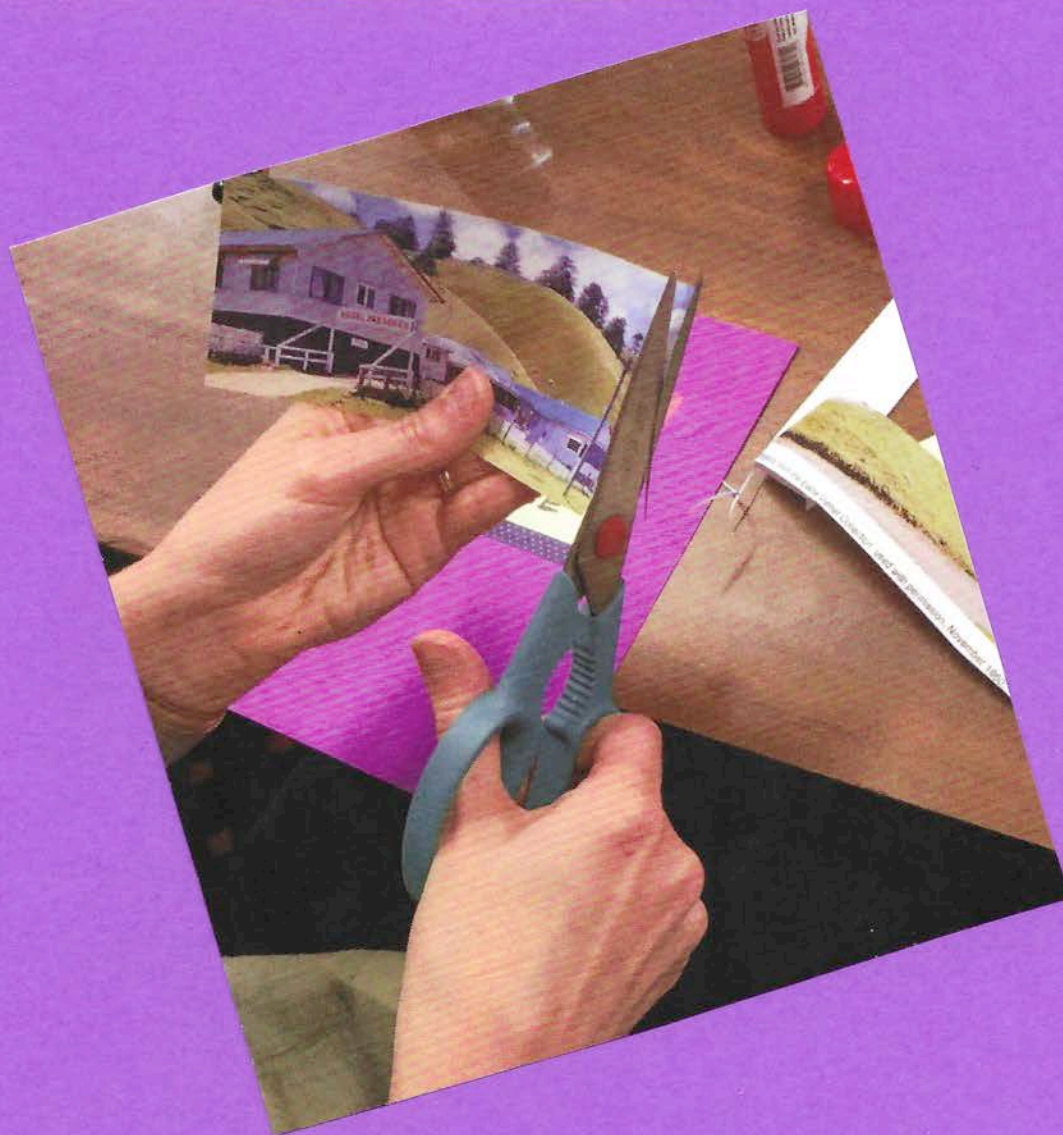
- Ted Semple Collection
- Oral History recordings
- Tourism brochures
- Joyce Dyer Collection
- Paradise Hotel Visitor Book

If on Island ring 23788 to make a viewing appointment time or email [info@museums.gov.nf](mailto:info@museums.gov.nf) to enquire about remote access.

**Compiled by** Sarah Baker

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Cover image of the Paradise Hotel from the Earle Viénet Collection. Image provided courtesy of Trevor Viénet.