

My thoughts of the Chapman Valley Show

I grew up with a strong family connection to the show with my great grandmother, grandparents and parents being strong supporters of the show from its commencement. My uncle, Don Worthington was the first secretary of the show and my grandfather, Mr Sim Bunter was the first treasurer and was made a life member. My auntie, Colleen Kennedy was assistant secretary for many years. It was a proud day for my family when the society made me a life member of the Chapman Valley show following in my grandfather's footsteps. Dad was a committee member for many years and Mum was a member of the ladies committee.

Mum and Dad would always help me decorate my little cane dolls pram. They would blow up the balloons and cut the crepe paper and I would then put it all on the pram. The boys would bring their bikes to the show all decorated up. I can remember we would have to parade them in front of the dining room - what a proud moment!

I can remember the men going to the show in trousers, white shirt and tie and the ladies would be in a dress, hat, and gloves.

Mum would always make me a new dress for the show. When mum had finished in the Pavilion, she would then dress me up. As I got older mum used to put my hair in rags so my hair would be in ringlets. I hated them but they always got put in my hair the night before the show and taken out when I got dressed in my new dress. Not long after getting all dressed up Mum and Dad found me swinging on the rail that goes around the horse ring. Mum also had a new dress for my sister Janniel for the show, so mums sewing machine was busy up to show day. I kept this little family tradition up with our daughter Justine. I did however give the ringlets a miss.

The merry-go-round was always a highlight for me. I always had to go on the horse and not the boat as it always seemed that the horse went higher and faster than the boat. That was not true as they all went the same speed. Oh, we cannot forget the big toffee apples and bags of fairy floss to take home and not forgetting the fairy floss on the stick that we ate during day. What a treat.

As the show was always held during the school holidays (school year only had 3 terms then). I used to have to help the ladies committee wash glasses and jugs for the members and public bar and then on the Sunday after the show go back and help wash, dry and pack them away in wooden boxes. We would then clean and set the pavilion up ready for the show.

I started as a steward at the age of 11 in the knitting and sewing section helping my mum. I always said I had a good teacher as it had to be right with her. When the sections split into two sections N1 - sewing, embroidery and fine cotton crochet and Section N2 into knitting, crochet and children's section, I helped my auntie, Edie Murphy on Section N2. When Auntie Edie retired from the section I took over as head steward. This I did for many years until I became treasurer of the show. When I retired from treasurer, I did the around the showground announcing for 4 years.

Neil my husband, was a steward for 43 years helping my father in the poultry section and then they moved on to the grain and fodder. Neil continued in the grain and fodder for many years after my dad passed away.

My grandfather and I exhibited poultry in the show for many years, winning most points in the show and most points in the agricultural sections numerous times. This was something that we as a family were immensely proud of. We entered in the show as C. & S.J. Bunter. It was always a highlight receiving the most points in the show cup from Sir David Brand, Premier of Western Australia, or Mr. Les Logan MLA.

Show day was always a busy day. Had to be up at 5am to get the chooks caught and in the pens by 8am so that we could be ready to go to the pavilion for steward duties. Finish in the hall and go and check on all our prizes and catch up with family and friends. At 5pm back in the hall to hand out exhibits then go and catch the chooks and take them home and put into the proper pens as we had to have them ready for the Northampton Show the next week.

After a quick tea and shower, in the car and drive to Yuna for the Show Ball. What an occasion a live four-piece band consisting of Doreen and Jack Jones, Kevin James and George Wiltshire played at the ball. The trophies were presented at the ball for a few years before being presented at the show. I loved dancing with my grandfather at the ball as he was an awesome dancer.

I can also remember a reporter from the Geraldton Guardian coming to the show and typing up all the class winners from each section. These were published in the Geraldton Guardian the next week along with special photos taken on the day.

As a student at Chapman Valley Primary School, I can remember exhibiting in the education section. The handwriting class was a class that I loved. I can remember writing my copy many times to get it right or what I thought was right.

My family always supported the show exhibiting in all sections in the show. We found this to be very rewarding. One year we were so keen to get a crochet article finished I finished it in the car driving from Yuna to Mum and Dad's at Yetna with the cab light on in the car. Our daughter Justine was so keen another year to get her flower arrangement right, she cut a flower off one of my pot plants that I had ready for the show. My loss, Justine's gain. It was a proud day for our family when Mum was invited to open the 60th Chapman Valley Show, a day she still talks about as family came from Perth to see her open the show.

For the 50th Chapman Valley Show we hosted the Midwest Miss Show Girl in Nabawa with a cabaret style dance at the Community Centre. The hall was decorated beautifully with fairy lights and gold balloons. A great night was had by all.

Having missed only one show in my life I look forward to show day each year to catch up with people who come back to Nanson for this special day of the year in Chapman Valley.

Coralie Simpson