**SUE GRIFFITHS**

Interview with: Sue Griffiths

Date of Interview: 11 February 2015

Place of Interview: Cootharaba

Interviewer: Jill Lear

Transcriber: Jane Harding

JL: It’s Jill Lear talking to Sue Griffiths, Bill’s wife, regarding their careers in the Noosa area in not only newspapers but photography.

 Sue, what’s your background? Where were you born?

SG: I was born in Nambour and we lived at Forest Glen, which is just outside. I went to school at Buderim and high school in Nambour. And then worked in Nambour. When you left…I did what they call academic courses but I got to grade ten and thought ‘No, there’s more to the world than going to school’ so I decided I was going to leave. So, my Dad, I’ve got five brothers younger than me and my Dad took me into Nambour this one morning and I said ‘I’m going to get a job’ and, um, I went home and I had a job that day and I started at Coles, which the kids always say ‘When it was Penney’s, Mum’. [chuckles]. It was Coles. Um. Didn’t have a background of anything so learnt to do, well in those days Coles were into individual counters and you sold groceries and hardware and dresses and everything, fruit and veges, everything was there. That was the main shop iin the town and, um, gradually learnt to do most of the things and then one day they came and said would you like to do office work and I thought ‘Oh, I’ll have a go at that’ and, um, got to be the junior in the office and just gradually got the senior office job and I was there for a few years and then we got married.

JL: So, where did you meet Bill?

SG Oh, at the local dances down Yandina and Palmwoods and, um, we got married and we came back to Tewantin to live and he was doing spray painting in Nambour when I met him and, um, we came back here then and he started work back with his father. Well, we both went into the business. I used to do the books and then one Easter we had eight weddings booked for the Saturday and the Monday and there was Bill’s Dad and myself and there we cold sort of juggle them if they weren’t the distance in between to get from one wedding to the other and there was one left over and that was mine. [chuckles] So I thought ‘I’ve never done photography in my life’.

JL: So was this when you’d just come out of hospital?

SG: Oh, no, no. This was before. Yeah. David’s our youngest.

JL: Okay.

SG: So that was after he was born.

JL: That was another…

SG: Yeah.

JL: Okay.

SG: Yes, that was after he was born. Yes, it was really interesting because, um, as we established before we were doing half black and white and half colour and they were different ASAs, the films, and things like that so, um, this I might add was a smaller wedding but every wedding it’s essential to have the photographs so you couldn’t afford to mess them up.

JL: Very special

SG: Hmm. So I managed with me little piece of paper on the back of the camera and [chuckles] I managed to [inaudible] and I was so nervous I just wanted to get it home and get it processed so I could see that I had all the photos. But it worked out all right. And from then on, it was another 30 years of taking photographs. And then we started the Noosa News. Well, that was another phase that I’d never even thought about, you know. Going to, well going to all these things and we’d do dining out photos every Fridays and Saturday nights and weddings and then you’d have portraits. I didn’t do commercial, Bill did all of that, in the aeroplanes and things like that. Ahm, but really enjoyed the weddings, it’s very interesting meeting people and all walks of life and so, um, but in the end, Bill wasn’t well enough to keep doing it and we thought well, we’ve been at this for thirty-something, thirty-three years so, um, now’s probably the time and that was just before digital came. But it’s very interesting now. We like to play on the computer and with those sorts of things.

JL: How long have you lived out here?

SG: We’ll have been here…1993 we came here so that’s 12 years this year.

 [Interviewee’s correction: they moved to Cootharaba in 2003, not 1993]

JL: Did you build the house, have the house built?

SG: No. this house was, um, 10 years old when we came here. The people that built it before us, they loved tennis. I love tennis. I’ve always played tennis and, um, they lived in the shed, they built the tennis court, and then they built the house after that.

JL: They got their priorities right.

SG: Yes. [chuckles]

JL: Absolutely.

SG: Life is, yes, life was right. And our grandchildren like to play tennis.

JL: You’ve got the complete package here with tennis court, lovely home, swimming pool, bush, forest.

SG: There’s nine acres here and, um, we’ve got tracks all down through there and it goes back down to Napier Road but you can usually, when we’ve got it all mowed, we’re a bit slower lately [chuckles] you can go for a walk down through, and there’s all sorts of bird life, there’s wonderful birdlife and Bill feeds the kookaburras and the butcher birds and the magpies ….

[In background: Bill Griffiths: No, I don’t]

SG: …so they like to come in.

JL: Yes, no, we do too.

SG: They just like to come in and have company.

JL: Well, thank you Sue. You’ve obviously been the strength, the good woman behind the man.

[In background: Bill Griffiths: My oath].

JL: Yes. And I think that’s important, um, in any success in life. So once again, thank you to both of you.

SG: No, that was a pleasure.