

FRANK VALE

27.4.99

NAME: FRANK WALTER BLAKE VALE

BORN: "TOORA" South Gippsland, Victoria
26th October 1908 (one of 12 children [12th man])

MARRIED: Florence Vale (nee Mackie) (deceased)

FAMILY: 5 Children: 2 Boys, 3 Girls

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Vermont, Victoria 3133

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Franks' parents and their children lived on an estate at Tarwin Meadows, a large dairy property with 1,000 cows, his father being a bookkeeper for the business. Frank attended school at Tarwin Meadows, finishing school in 8th grade at 14 years of age obtaining his merit certificate with a high rating.

On leaving school Frank assisted the family milking cows for 2 years (family share dairy) during that period he stripped black wattle bark and for the first time was paid wages for this work.

On the dairy property they operated the Tarwin Meadows cheese factory and as a result of Franks' enthusiasm in stripping bark and his keenness to work he was offered a permanent job in this small factory.

Over the next 2 years he continued to milk cows and was being trained in all aspects of cheese and butter manufacturing.

The Manager of the nearby Coralyn cheese factory became ill and Frank accepted the position of Acting Manager and during this period his knowledge and training within the industry resulted him qualifying and being awarded various certificates. This gave him authority to purchase milk and cream and the qualifications to manufacture cheese and butter. This was the start of Frank's life in the Dairy industry.

During those early years of Franks career he first learnt about refrigeration while attending to the various factories refrigeration plant, this along with his need to have some understanding of accounting similar to his father activated him into studying engineering and accountancy at the working mans college (now the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology).

During 1936 Frank with his new wife (Flo) left for Hamilton, Victoria to take up his new position as General Manager of Hamilton butter factory.

During those years under Franks aggressive management style soon led to acquisition of dairy factories along with the South Hamilton freezing works in 1950.

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The company now had developed into one of the states largest producers of cheese and butter for local and export markets. The company also manufactured ice cream and ice, installed an automatic ice manufacturing plant along with developing the companies cold storage business; eventually the company became Murray Goulbourn.

During 1952 Frank was offered and accepted the position as General Manager of Woodmasons Limited, a public listed company.

In 1953 Frank was promoted to Managing Director at that stage Woodmasons was one of the largest ice manufacturers in Australia.

During this period the sales of block ice manufacture for ice chests was starting to decline rapidly with the advent of the domestic refrigerator.

To combat this Frank with his usual ability developed the crushing of block ice and marketed crushed ice in plastic bags. Woodmasons was the first to develop the automatic coin in slot ice vending machine at each of their factories.

Profits of the business were then being channelled into cold room development, particularly as ice sales continued to decline. Frank introduced a programme to extend the cold storage side of the business, particularly in the low temperature storage area.

This necessitated a conversion of existing rooms to be able to operate as freezers. This required converting bare pipe coil rooms to forced draft systems with liquid recirculation.

Woodmasons again was one of the first to make these changes resulting in higher efficiency with plant rooms being automated to run unattended.

This move was widely accepted and appreciated by clients such as poultry processors, Steggles and Birdseye who required such to facilitate the growth of their business.

The late 1950's Frank Vale followed closely experiments being carried out by engineer, Stan Dunkerly on his property for the quick freezing of peas for Pict Frozen Foods.

With domestic refrigerators and freezers now well established frozen food manufacturers were developing at an aggressive rate; requirements for quick freezing facilities and freezer storage needed to be developed.

Frank developed a close association with Stan Dunkerly, with Frank taking the opportunity to build a blast freezer at Woodmasons Oakleigh plant allowing experiments to be carried out on quick freezing of peas.

Frank in conjunction with Stan Dunkerly and Dr James Vickery, C.S.I.R.O. of North Ryde developed procedures on the research of quick freezing of vegetables.

Adopting those procedures Woodmasons embarked on the large scale freezing of vegetables and poultry, Frank also experimented with plate freezers for the quick freezing of export meat in cartons, resulting in no expansion of meat within the carton, avoiding bulging of cartons, this offered tremendous advantages for the handling and stowing of cartonned meat.

Business commenced to boom in frozen peas, resulting in Woodmasons converting old chiller rooms into freezers.

Frank Vale was responsible for inviting Dr. James Vickery from C.S.I.R.O. to many of our cold storage conferences as a guest speaker giving members of the C.S.A.A., an insight to the many areas of research and procedures for the storage and handling of frozen foods.

During 1960 Woodmasons acquired a large parcel of land at Dandenong for future cold storage development. Also during 1960, Michael Rudnev of Brisbane with assistance from C.S.I.R.O. developed the first insulated sandwich panel.

Rudnev presented his panel technique to the 1962 Commonwealth Cold Storage conference at Surfers Paradise. Delegates at that conference were not enthused about the system and felt the insulated panel would never take over from the conventional method of construction (brick & mortar)

Frank Vale being the innovator had for some time the panel construction under review and liked what Rudnev had developed.

Frank saw tremendous opportunities with the system particularly as this system offered to develop cold rooms at about 1/3 of the cost of conventional methods. This method offered tremendous design benefits with reduced construction time being a large advantage.

Frank also envisaged that with Woodmasons recent acquisition of land at Dandenong along with the unprecedented growth and requirement for specially constructed cold rooms having the ability to use forklifts and racking systems for the handling of large volumes of bulk product, would clearly give Woodmasons a distinct competitive edge.

Bearing in mind that most commercial cold stores were operating close to the inner suburbs of Melbourne of brick construction and in some cases multi story and were manual stacking product in rooms.

Woodmasons land at Dandenong as everyone believed was to far out of Melbourne, however this suited the dairy industry as it was closer to production areas and offered fast turn around for transport.

By the time 1962 arrived, Frank was constructing Australia's first prefabricated cold rooms. The layout and design enabled the handling of large volumes of product with the full use of forklifts with all product being on pallets or bulk bins, on sight quick freezing of product was available with well constructed blast tunnels and plate freezers.

This pioneering effort of Franks offered the frozen food manufacturer and dairy industry and meat operators tremendous cost savings and every competitive base in the handling and storage and export of their commodities to compete in national and overseas markets.

Woodmasons developed 3.5 million cubic feet of cold storage at Dandenong and in 1969 acquired land at Lidcombe N.S.W. and developed a large prefabricated cold store on that site.

F.V.A.

Frank Vales faith in this new type construction and his willingness to give it a go, revolutionised the construction of cold stores in Australia has been widely acclaimed in Australia and overseas with the Dandenong development of the larger cold store and the entry as to what we know as the modern cold store of today.

Frank Vale in his business career was a progressive innovator, which has had tremendous benefits to the cold storage industry. His life long involvement with the dairy industry has allowed that body to have a close liaison with the cold storage industry. Frank was awarded a life membership of the dairy institute Victorian division.

Woodmasons of yesterday a listed public company developed into Woodmasons of today. The largest cold store operation in Australia (details will be supplied by Warwick Unsworth). Woodmasons remained a public listed company until the acquisition of the company by John Swire & Son.

Franks involvement with the cold storage association of Australia and the Ice Association (C.S.A.A and C.A.I.I.) and the Victorian Association should be on file at R.W.T.A. office.

Frank represented the Cold Storage industry on the committee of the I.I.R. for 20 years. Refer correspondence Klass Visser and Alistair Sharp. Frank was also Chairman of the Australian National Committee of I.I.R. for 4 years. He was awarded the prestigious "Thomas Mort Award" for his involvement and contribution to the institute.

On Frank's retirement from Woodmasons he was offered a position of consultancy to the T.D.G. Logistics Limited a position he accepted and held for 20 years (refer T.D.G. letter)

Frank Vale represented the cold storage industry of Victoria on the executive of the Employers Federation for 15 years.

In 1941 Frank was appointed to the Board of the Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church at Hamilton for a period of 6 years.

Frank Vale was a member of the
Hamilton Rotary Club
Prahan Rotary Club
Malvern Rotary Club

Giving in total 23 years service to the various communities, holding office in each of those clubs as secretary and president.

Frank's involvement in the dairy industry and cold storage industry and involvement in refrigeration was well recognised throughout Australia and overseas. This resulted in the Australian Refrigeration Air Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) doing a profile on Frank, which was published in August 1972.

Frank's involvement with the RWTA (CSAA) and CAII has been such that he was awarded a life membership. In recognition of his service R.W.T.A. have in conjunction with all states have established "The Frank Vale Award" (expand on criteria)

FRANK VALE (87 YEARS)

BORN 26/10/1908

LAST OF ELEVEN CHILDREN

BORN "TOORA" SOUTH GIPPSLAND, VICTORIA

Left school 8th grade and milked cows at a Dairy for 2 years after leaving school (Family share diary)

Frank's first job was at Tarwin Meadows cheese factory at 18 years of age.

At that time the manager of the Coralyn Cheese factory took ill and Frank was asked if he would act as Manager. Naturally Frank accepted and during that period he was awarded various certificates giving him the authority to purchase milk and cream. This was the start of Franks life in the Dairy Industry.

In 1936 with his new wife (Flo) they left for Hamilton, Victoria where he was appointed General Manager of Hamilton Butter Factory.

Under Frank's management style, Hamilton Butter Factory soon acquired other factories and developed into a very large growth business.

Included in those acquisitions was the Hamilton Freezer works which Frank set about modernising to accommodate cold storage and ice making facilities.

This was Frank Vales introduction into the cold storage business.

During 1952, Frank accepted a position as Managing Director of Woodmason's Limited which at that time was the largest ice manufacture in the Southern Hemisphere.

With the advent of the domestic refrigerator, Frank like most ice manufacturers had to re-assess his business, hence the start of the true business of cold storage.

At that time an engineer in Melbourne, Stan Dunkerly was reviewing methods to adequately quick freeze peas for a client he approached Frank which in his usual manner jumped at the opportunity building a blast freezer at Woodmason, Oakleigh.

Business commenced to boom in frozen peas, resulting in Woodmasons converting old chiller rooms into freezers.

During the 1960's Michael Rudnev of Brisbane in conjunction with the C.S.I.R.O. developed the first insulated sandwich panel. Rudnev presented his panel technique to the 1962 cold storage conference with not too much enthusiasm from the delegates. However Frank Vale for some time had the panel construction under review and liked what Rudnev was presenting.

Frank saw great opportunities with this system with low cost compared to the conventional method of construction. Woodmason's needed to expand with Frank acquiring a large parcel of land at Dandenong at a low cost, decided to give Rudnev the opportunity to build the first commercial panel cold store.

Frank Vale's faith in this new type construction and his willingness to give it a go at Dandenong has led to the development of the larger cold store and the entry as to what we know as the modern cold store of today.

Frank and Flow had 5 children (2 boys and 3 girls)

FRANK VALE
Retirement

Protestant Churches were burnt to the ground in County Cork last night. Thanks be to God.

P.P.S. Keep sending the money.

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STATE REPORTS continued

VICTORIA:

New Members:

Several new Members have been added to the membership -

Blackburn Cold Stores -
Capacity 87,000 c.ft.

Protean (Holdings) Ltd.
Capacity 215,000 c.ft.

Associated Freezers of Aust.
Capacity 1½ million c.ft.

Resignations:

City Ice & Cold Storage have resigned after some 30 years membership with the Association.

Economic State of Industry:

Due to over-supply of products, e.g., meat, butter and general products during the early months of 1975 there had been a drastic shortage of space. However, the situation should ease a little as Associated Freezers have commenced operation.

Association Activities:

Due to the Retirement of Mr. F.W.B. Vale as General Manager of Woodmasons Ltd., the Victorian Association held a Dinner and Presentation in his honour at Chaucers Reception Centre, Canterbury, on Thursday, 17th April, 1975 which was attended by some 90 guests both local and interstate.

Printed below is an article printed in the Melbourne 'Herald' concerning Frank's retirement.

FRANK VALE PLAYS IT COOL

When Frank Vale joined Woodmason's Ltd. as general manager in 1952, the icebox was still holding its own in the kitchens of Melbourne.

And Woodmason's with four iceworks was one of the biggest icemakers in the country delivering blocks from door to door.

But the growing popularity of the refrigerator in the early 50's put the writing on the wall for the company's ice sales. It needed a new line of business.

Mr. Vale tried to firstboost business by developing sales of crushed ice in plastic bags. But this was only a stop-gap.

So he hit on the idea of developing the company's interests in cold storage. Along the way he changed the concept of cold storage in Australia, making it part of the chain from producer to overseas consumer.

Mr. Vale retired as general manager of Woodmason's this week but will be staying as a director. He is 65.

Breakthrough.

Woodmason's ice plants were unsuitable in many ways for their new function.

The breakthrough came 12 years ago when the company built a cold storage complex at Dandenong using pre-fabricated units and new refrigerants.

'The Dandenong plant enabled us to provide the cold storage services that importers and exporters wanted cheaper than they could build their own', Mr. Vale says.

He got his idea for the Dandenong store from a unit he had built at Brighton.

'We finished the Brighton pre-fabricated unit in April', Mr. Vale recalls.

'By August we had Golden Poultry and Heinz as customers and we could get any amount of butter.

So in September we bought the land at Dandenong. By December 16 we were in business there'.

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... everyone thought I was silly. But it did change the whole set-up. 'It was copied everywhere. "We can handle 45 big trucks a day at Dandenong. Refrigerated vans became so big that they couldn't get in to the streets where some of the old ice works had been converted to cold stores'.

The Biggest

Today Woodmason's is the biggest listed cold storage group in Australia with 4.3 million cub. ft. of capacity. The company moved into Sydney five years ago, and is now in Adelaide too. As well as primary exporters and food manufacturers, Woodmason's has retail chains like Woolworths among its customers.

Mr. Vale was well placed to promote dairy industry use of cold storage space - he left school to work at a cheese factory at Tarwin Meadows in Gippsland during the depression. Later, after he had completed engineering and accountancy courses at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, he became general manager of a dairy factory at Hamilton. Mr. Vale has a family of five - two boys and three girls. His son Donald is manager of the Dandenong plant.

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NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE - 1974 -

DUNEDIN.

Combined Conference with Cold Storage Association of Australia and New Zealand Dairy Produce Freezing & Cool Stores Association.

Between the 10th October, 1974, and 15th October, 1974, the Australian and New Zealand Cold Storage Industries combined in their 5th Joint Conference. A delegation of approximately 65 were present from Australia and 50 New

Zealanders, the Conference being held at the Southern Cross Hotel, Dunedin. A delightful time was had by all and the New Zealanders, led by Mick Powell and Wallace Bodie, should be rightly proud of the way everything proceeded. The Conference was opened by the Hon. C.J. Moyle, Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries. On the business side delegates were well catered for and papers' topics included Modern Techniques in Cool Store Construction, by Mr. L.J. Sewell, Rudnev N.Z. Ltd., Apple & Pear Storage in New Zealand and numerous other topics pertinent to the Industry. Again the New Zealanders excelled themselves in organising the Social Activities which included many scenic trips around Dunedin and outlying areas. At the conclusion of the Conference 27 of the Australian delegation engaged in a conducted tour of the South Island of New Zealand, with a number of the remaining Australians tripping around independently.

Again, Well Done, KIWIS!

for a most enjoyable time.

1974 ICE CONFERENCE

SAVOY PLAZA, MELBOURNE.

The Australian Associated Ice Industries conducted their Conference between the 5th and 7th October, 1974. This was prior to the Cold Storage delegation leaving for New Zealand.

Thirty delegates and wives attended the Conference at the Savoy Plaze where an enjoyable time was had by all.

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