

## **OH 550/23 - Interview with Vern and Fay Hallam**

### **TAPE 3, SIDE A - Daily life**

#### **You were talking about your housekeeping?**

**Fay** Oh (laughs). I had a scrubbing board. You know the old fashioned wooden scrubbing board and did I have wash troughs? Not at the time.

**Vern** No I don't think so, you had this glass scrubbing board.

**Fay** Big baby bath and used to do most things in that. The old copper outside, if you could, you had an old copper and you slice up the velvet soap and put that in there and boil it up. But we managed you know. The clean things went into the water first and so your things got dirtier and dirtier until in the end I think you could almost ....

**Vern** Soup for tea.

**Fay** stand stick up in it and then that used to go around on my floor, my dirt floor because water on dirt hardens it and I got it to the stage where I could actually sweep you know if leaves and things came in – we often had leaves around but Vern's mother used to do that and I can remember my mother doing it at one stage. Never wasted the water, soapy water went out the back – Vern's mother used to do that every Monday morning. Because Monday morning there you had to do your washing.

**Vern** Some of the smart boys used to go down to the heap of screenings ready for the bitumen road and they would take a load of that away and put in their sheds and that was very effective.

#### **What about cooking. You mentioned you actually cooked outside with an overcoat on or something?**

**Fay** Oh yes, my and Army overcoat. When it rained, when it got too hot and Vernon's ground sheet – we tied that to the end of the corner of the shed – this was the open part and I don't know where he got this stove from, but I didn't bother to look in it you know I thought it was, it just old and battered the same as the new one, new Metters that I had in the house that was all put in there, that's the house at Monash, I could never understand why I couldn't get anything to bake properly. I could get things on the top of the stove and everything would be hot and I would have hot water and then Vernon managed to get one of these water fountains you know cast iron and that was a God send that helped keep water nice and hot for our bath at night and one day I sort of looked right at the very

bottom because I had a tray there you know the old fashioned trays and I lifted it up and there wasn't any bottom at all in this so it was just sitting on the ground. So that solved that problem but I don't know I didn't attempt cakes after a few times. Most of my cooking I did was on top of the stove and we would make pancakes one day with apple in them and there would be pancakes another day with meat in them, so you just eked out an existence that way.