

<sup>1</sup> Assistance provided by Peter Harford and some research details by Jenny Carollo

The family never heard from David again. Vida was 18. Her older brother David Bernard was 22 years old and the other children Mary 15, Marguerite 11 Mark 8, Olivia 5, and Michael 3 years of age.

My childhood memories of Laura Vida Simpson, my grandmother, were of a short chubby lady with kindly blue eyes that sparkled when she chuckled. Her chuckle belied an underlying sadness that I did not understand until I began to research her family history. Gran was always fastidious in her personal health and always had a delicious perfume about her (something from the Watkins Man?).

Her daughters recall that in her younger days Vida had long black hair and a beautiful China Doll complexion. I can remember brushing her long hair which by then had turned grey. Gran kept a miniature box with a tiny pair of tweezers with which (as a special treat) we were allowed to pull from the box-- a psalm to be read out aloud to her. She used to sing Hymns as she went about her daily chores.



**Laura Vida Simpson (Nee Harford)**

William's home was on a small bush holding of about 5 acres where they kept a cow "Biddy" and a goat "Billy" as well as some chooks and a vegetable garden. William worked mostly at the Copper Mine at Ravensthorpe nearby and he had also worked at Dallinson's smelter. He dabbled like most miners in some prospecting and had a mine of his own which was close to or on his block.

### **Children**

William and Vida had the following nine children:

**Dorothy**      Born 21 September 1909 at Ravensthorpe.  
                      Married William McIntosh  
                      Died January 1995 at Perth

**Winifred**      Born 18 February 1911 at Kundip

Married Stanley Green 14 December 1940  
Died 15 November 2003 at Perth

**Bertha** Born 17 May 1912 at Albany  
Married Ron Setterfield 14 December 1940  
Died at Perth

**Thelma** Born 22 September 1913 at Albany  
Married Arthur Dove  
Died 21 July 1999 at Perth

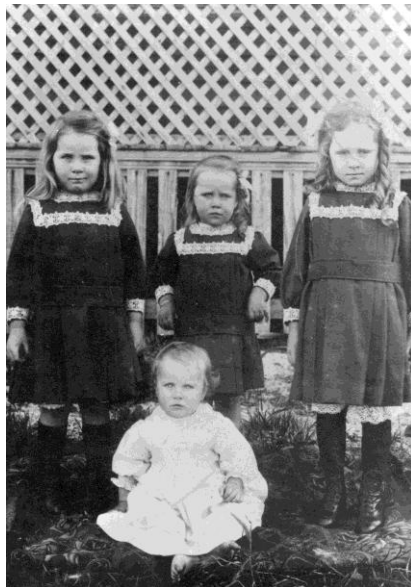
**William  
Harold** Born 18 December 1916 at Kundip  
Married Majorie Edwards 15 February 1941  
Died 22 January 1995 at Albany

**Frederick** Born 22 August 1919 at Kundip  
Married Bonnie House 29 January 1951  
Died 4 February 2004 at Albany

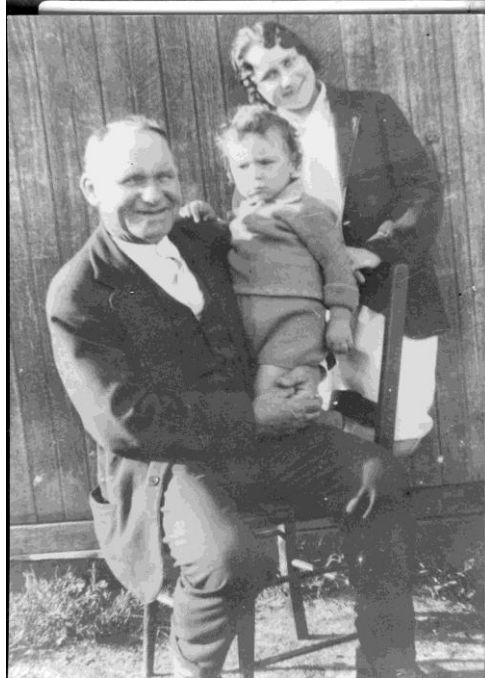
**Majorie** Born 1921 at Kundip  
Never Married  
Died 23 February 1968 at Albany

**Stanley** Born 1924 at Albany  
Married Blanche Nelley 12 December 1945  
Died 23 May 1985 at Rockhampton, Western Australia

**Raymond** Born 1928 at Albany  
Never Married  
Died 31 Jul 1958 at Albany



From Left: Winifred, Bertha, Dorothy seated Thelma



**William Simpson with son Raymond (born 1928)**

William and Vida's son Fred wrote about William's mine:

*In 1908 all workers were given a holiday on St Patrick's day, so my father decided to take his intended wife prospecting. As they wandered about the hills and gullies a reef was discovered, which proved very rich. He decided to work the mine and called it the Ardpatrick. (Ard for hard and Patrick because of the day he discovered it) While he worked underground, a couple of horses circled continuously working the windlass and keeping the mine free of water.*

*After a couple of years William decided to take a week's break for Christmas, also to give the horses a rest, though my mother thought he should keep them working. This turned out to be a disaster, as the water took over and the mine flooded.*



**Ard Patrick Mine, Kundip**

*Many years later in 1931, during the depression the Government decided to reopen the mine using powerful pumps to control the water. Much gold was mined, but water took over again:*

We are very fortunate that we have Thelma's written account of her Memories of Kundip Days, which she was encouraged to write by her daughter Delyse (Dove) Godecke while undergoing Chemotherapy for her cancer. They were remembered as happy days.

### **Thelma's Story**

*It was in the quiet little picturesque town of Albany in the year 1913 that I arrived in this world, born the fourth daughter of William and Vida Simpson. Although my parents were a happy married couple, we thought it a bit odd that my father seemed more like a grandfather, being 24 years older than my mother.*

*Dad was born in England in the Cotswold Hills and was educated at the "Blue Coats School" a very high class school for boys at the time. However after graduating, he decided he wanted to roam the world. He had a fiery temper and after a heated argument with his devoted parents, away he went. He indulged in wine women and song and traveling from place to place. He participated in many kinds of work varying from miner to a sailor, then at the age of 41 he came to a way-out place called Kundip, and it was here he saw my mother, and he liked what he saw. In all his travels he said no one could come up to her. She was 17 and the eldest daughter of a very poor family, as many were in those days and worked as home help for a farming family.*

*They were married a year later and had my eldest sister Dorothy, followed by my sister Wyn. At this stage not much work was available, so they moved to Albany where my sister Bertha was born, followed by myself. My mother had four little girls by the time she was 22 years old.*

### **Kundip Days**

*The gold was booming in Kundip by now, so once again the family travelled by boat (the old Eucla) to Hopetoun, a little seaside place which had a jetty, a hotel and one shop. By train one would travel to Kundip and Ravensthorpe in the Phillips River district.*

*It was at Kundip I became aware of my first surroundings. The kids of today would not want to trade their lifestyle for ours. However, but we were as happy as larks. Dad had a little 3 roomed house built and as it was new with a verandah. In those days it was considered a nice home.*

*We had the barest necessities, beds and like most places a curtain for a wardrobe and kerosene cases with creotone cover in front for a dressing table. We had a meat safe and to set jelly, a dish covered with a lid was lowered under the ground to be cool enough to set it. We bathed in a big galvanized tin tub. There was no water inside and we had to go to our taps outside to get it from tanks. The toilet was a classic. To get there was a good 80 metre walk (awful on a dark wet night) with many lizards and spiders inside and out.*

*My memories of this place go back to when I was about 2 1/2 years old. It was then I was aware of surroundings and recall fondly my lovely mother Laura Vida. She was just a slip of a girl, with gorgeous blue-black hair which hung in ringlets around her face and a china doll complexion. She was so tiny.*

*She had a wonderful faith in God, courage and stamina that would put many a strong man to shame. There was a bond between my mother and me (not that she didn't love each of us). With me being born delicate and having bronchial asthma, I needed more attention than the others who were very healthy.*

Every winter maybe twice, it was the usual thing for me to have some very bad attacks. There was no doctor or chemist at Kundip so my mother would bundle me up and carry me about a mile along the road to a place we called kid patch (so called because the sludge from the smelter ran down there and settled on the road). Here the only man in town who owned a horse and sulky would pick us up and drive us to the hospital at Ravensthorpe. Sometimes I would have to stay and Mum used to break her heart to leave her baby girl behind.

The only medicine available was Scott's Emulsion and my mother found this quite expensive as funds were never too flash and I have disliked the fishy taste forever more.

This was the time England and Germany were at war and this quiet little town didn't have many who could volunteer but I remember quite plainly my Mum's brother (Uncle Davey's) horse tied to a peppermint tree and saying a fond but sad farewell. We all adored him.

Letters came for a long time in his beautiful handwriting, then they stopped. One day a man came, dressed in black (as we told Mum, his collar was around the wrong way!) to tell Mum the sad news that David had died of wounds in answer to the call for King and Country.

When I was 3 ½ years old, I remember the old town Midwife coming with a white calico bag on her back. Even older children in those days were never told about the birds and the bees; and for all my childhood days I swore I heard the baby crying in that calico bag. It was really a bed pan etc.

After a few hours my brother Bill arrived and what excitement. A little boy after four girls! My parents were thrilled, but Bill turned out to be a replica of Uncle Dave and was so very, very shy and wouldn't speak to anyone. I really had my nose out of joint because as I said I wasn't the baby girl anymore.

Kundip, the little gold mining town, as I remember in 1916 consisted of a large tin Hall (used twice a year) 2 shops with the wonderful jars of lollies, which we seldom ever tasted, and a little tin building, which a little widow with three children battled to turn into post office and tea rooms where miners could buy a meal after their long day underground.

There was a school consisting of one room and a little lobby in which to keep hats and lunches. In the summer which was very hot, the bread in our dinner was often used to play hockey with sticks made out of gum tree limbs. The little school where Dorothy and Wyn went was 2 ½ miles from our place. Wyn was fun and always up to tricks but Dorothy was very aloof. Bertha was my soul mate until our walks in life parted us.

We used to sit and play cakes and mud-pies in the sand. We had never heard of self-raising flour in those days; we used to play with make believe tarter, soda-and salt!

I was taken to Sunday School, just a little class which our teacher (recently married) and his lovely wife used to conduct for about 10 children. My little legs thought the journey was never ending, but I loved it.

I remember at 5 years old being chosen to sing with Bertha:

"We are but little children, weak  
Nor born in any high estate  
What can we do for Jesus sake?  
Who is so high and Good and Great"

*These were our better years at Kundip. Bertha and I went to school. Dad had work on the mines and had fenced about 5 acres of our land so we got our lovely cow, Biddy. We also had about 20 fowls, so had milk cream and eggs. Dad had made a lovely vegie garden with every sort of vegie possible and a large tomato garden up near a well, where dingoes used to come and drink and snakes crawled everywhere-but we were never bitten.*

*My brother Fred was born at this stage and we were all kept up in the shed away from the house when the lady with the calico bag on her back visited us again.*

*Every Sunday evening mother prepared us a lovely tea, then the big green cloth with tassels on would be put on the table and Dad would play the old phonograph with lovely records. I have never forgotten mother's favourite was "Abide with Me".*

*Then came the news the war had ended and everyone was invited from Ravensthorpe and Kundip to join a free train trio to Hopetown where there were sports and free cool drinks and lollies. We thought it wonderful. Bertha won sixpence in a race and I thought she was rich*

*Then alas after the war everything went wrong. The mines were closing, not having enough money for any modern equipment to get the gold out. Many families left for Perth and two families arrived at the time the plague influenza hit, they both suffered, losing two or three children and in one instance, the father.*

*Then the drought came. It never rained a drop for 3 years and everything died. We had to send Biddy away as there was no feed for her and we had no vegetables. We gradually had to kill our chickens (the ones the dingo's didn't take); the shops closed and moved to Ravensthorpe, leaving us with the little boarding house .*

*We had our stores delivered once a fortnight by horse and cart from Ravensthorpe and the meat and butter etc were in poor condition when they arrived. Our meals got poorer and poorer and we couldn't pay the grocer for our goods, but kids don't realize the pressures on parents. We laughed and played, loved the birds and the golden beetles of all beautiful colours; the wild cherry trees which we ate till we couldn't eat any more; we loved the flowers, beautiful Qualup bells, orchids and the pink, yellow and red hakeas; in winter the dew on these lovely blooms it looked like a bit of fairyland , and a sight I'll never forget. I remember one wonderful event, a Christmas tree in the town hall. I was sporting a new pink ribbon in my hair which overruled the fact I had no shoes or socks on. They had cool drinks and supper and kids ran wild, while someone tried their heart out to make a tune on the piano.*

*Then came presents, the only Xmas gift I can ever recall. I hoped for a dolly. I didn't care what sort or colour, but my prize was a red satin pin cushion in the shape of an apple. I was disappointed but still thought it was good, but Mum never had any spare pins; the only ones she had were always on the babies nappy. My little sister Marge arrived by this time.*

*Another lovely time was a holiday trip to Hopetoun 22 miles away. Dad was still at the mines and couldn't leave his work, so my mother got a little beach shack for 2 shillings and 6 pence for a week. It was only just a shack, with tin sides and a tin roof and a floor with boards as corrugated as the tin on the walls.*

*Mum was told to bring mattresses, bedding, crockery and cutlery. So she packed up. I don't know how she did it, as at his time there were five kids in the family. She hired an old carrier who was supposed to call in time for the train, but he went to the pub, got drunk and never turned up. When Mum realized what had happened, she did what only my wonderful Mum would have attempted. She loaded the mattresses and as much as she could into the wheelbarrow. Dorrie and baby Bill on her hip, Wyn and the rest of us carried gear according to what we could manage. She left a note for Dad to pick up the wheelbarrow from the*



*station, didn't have to lock the door, and off we started about one and a half miles to the station. We were only a little way down the track when we heard the long loud whistle of the train. They waved as always and we pressed bravely on, hoping against hope they would wait for us and wait they did, which seemed a long, long time.*

*We got aboard, mattresses and all, and with childish glee and excitement soon forgot about the awful carrier. Our joy was boundless as we arrived and ran down to the water leaving poor Mum standing with all the gear. After we had satisfied ourselves that the sea really was there, we went back to Mum and cut through scrub and prickles to our shack.*

*There were two rooms, one with a double bed and a window and the kitchen had rough stools with put plenty of splinters in our pants (most of which had holes) so the splinters were a direct hit! a plank for a table and an apology for a stove. Mum had to find a piece of tin and hold it on with a brick to set a fire and boil the kettle. There was no light-only a candle we had bought, so we chased the spiders while it was daylight.*

*However, all that mattered to us was the glorious sea water. I remember Bill asking Mum to bring a kettle of water to warm the sea and we loved the shells. We lived on tomatoes as Mum couldn't cook anything on that stove. After a week of glorious sea air we were wonderfully refreshed but knew we had to return to Kundip and the heat.*

*It was just after this that Dad went on to Albany and we waited eagerly for word to join him. I remember my mother having countless battles with snakes; they would stand up ready to strike, but she was always the quicker of the two.*

*I also remember the day the fire roared down the gully. Mum shut us all in the house and went down the bank alone to beat out the fires with a wet bag. She only returned when she had conquered it and I can see her now with singed arms, hair and eye brows burnt off.*

*Two lovely times I recall amid happier times was a week's holiday for each of the four girls at Hobby's farm. My mother worked for them before she married and they had a great affection for her. They were elderly and good farming people; they lived about 12 miles from our house and drove a buggy to get us, one at a time and I went first. We had to walk up a big hill on to the top road to Ravensthorpe (it was just a dirt track) and just wait until they came along. I was full of sheer delight, but missed Bertha. There was so much to see, the old farm house was about on a par with ours, but it was lovely to have tons to eat, cream and milk and fresh eggs. I loved gathering them. They had a few sheep and cows and a horrible bull; also 4 mules who were so stubborn.*

*Mrs. Hobby taught Vida (the name the family used) to sew the hessian flour and sugar bags for bloomers for the girls and many of their clothes came from charity.*

*From here on life became too much of a struggle for the family, they even cooked up Billy Goat but none of the kids would eat it! The cow was left to pay for money owed on groceries.*

*At last word came from Dad that he had a rented house at Albany and a few days work on the wharf. We had to leave our house and land to the grocer for unpaid bills, so we left with just our fares for the boat."*

*Wyn and her family have made many nostalgic trips back to visit the old block at Kundip as did my husband Lindsay and I to photograph the "Ard Patrick" and walk over the old place. Serendipity played it's part once again when we were at Ravensthorpe and a man overheard me asking about the "Ard Patrick" at the tourist bureau (he was a local) who said I will take you there!*



Wyn wrote this lovely poem that is published in the little booklet Kundip 1901-2001, put together by local women of Ravensthorpe:

### **GHOST TOWN**

Towns and cities spurning I'm returning, so it seems  
To satisfy a yearning- Kundip ghost town of my dream  
Vast acres of the mallee blend in a bluish haze  
They draw the heartfelt teardrops that glisten as I gaze

The gorge still breathes it's glory swathed in purple and in gold  
Rocks I climbed, so many times their majesty still hold  
There's a lone crow a-cawing on a distant hill  
Where the somber mines with their rotting lines loom eerie, and so still

To a few their depths spelled gladness, to most, heartache and pain  
As they gave their best, with inspired zest the elusive gold to gain  
But now there reigns a silence, aftermath of a bygone day  
The populace have drifted, each to his separate way

Amid ruins there abides a sadness with yesterdays boom Hotel  
To other lands it's strange but on yonder range there blooms the Qualup Bell  
As I wander back along a derelict track (deep in reverie)  
Where once a busy train sang a swift refrain there returns a memory

I hear the joyous notes of childhood wafted on the air  
Occupants of homesteads which are dotted here and there  
But alas! The vision passes, again the streets are bare-  
Homes have gone –have crumbled and none are there to care

As dusk is falling there's a breeze from Hopetoun's shore  
I can hear the dingo calling, as in days of yore  
Will the roads ever be awakened by the multitudes busy tread?  
Will the hills once more yield riches or decay prevail instead?

Wherever I may wander guided by my schemes  
Kundip, I will remember- the Ghost Town of my dreams.....

**Winifred Green.**

Yes dear Wyn, the hills are once more yielding riches as Kundip is at present being dug over once again. Wyn wrote many beautiful poems, a talent inherited from her grandfather David Harford.

### ***Albany Days***

*We were overjoyed with glee to think we were going to a town with all it's wonders, motor cars, electric light and ice cream which I had never seen, much less tasted. We piled into the carrier's cart and caught the train into Hopetoun, staying one night in a shack 2/6 per week, but highly overpriced.*

*Next morning we waited on the shore to see a little puff of smoke, like a cigarette in the distance. We watched as it came nearer and though only a very small boat, the "Eucla" looked pretty big to us. At last it anchored and our furniture, such as it was, hauled aboard.*

*We boarded about 2.30 pm and full of wonderment and glee, looked forward to a wonderful time. Five minutes after the anchor was pulled up the sea was so rough that we were all immediately violently sea sick. My mother couldn't lift her head off the pillow and she had Fred on one arm and Marjorie on the other, I was the only one who could stand and all the family kept sending me to the dining room for water. The steward came to see if we wanted anything. We said apples. I'm glad we stated what they were supposed to be as they were in the last stages of decay, and I swear they were from the season before. I think my mother must have prayed "Help us make it through the night" as we survived and the next morning we rounded Bald Head at Albany and what a glorious sight it was.*

*We were intrigued. I remember I was sick on the side of the boat coming into the town jetty, Albany, my birthplace will always be dear to my heart. The sheer joy and wonder at what we were seeing. Boats everywhere, beautiful sea water and had our first ride in a taxi (never had heard of one); and then we arrived at the house dad had rented for us. It was a brick house; mum had a scullery with a sink in it and we put a match to the gas bulb for instant light. There were lights in the streets and I thought it was fairyland. A milkman came with milk and the baker delivered the bread every day; and a Chinaman came around with vegetables and fruit (which we couldn't afford). It didn't take long to unload our luggage which was a table and a stool, a couple of chairs, mum's sewing machine and a double bed for mum and dad. We had to share beds, two to a bed. Bertha and I straightaway said we'd share. That's the way we were.*

*Starting school was a wonderful experience. Marching into class to a real piano was a highlight. Brother Bill who was terribly shy still would walk all the way to the town jetty when he was still very small and get cockles from the town beach and went fishing. One day he fell in alongside a big coal hulk and was fortunate enough someone was on the spot to rescue him. Bill was a man of few words. He lay on the jetty until his clothes dried. He wouldn't tell Mum but he told me, which was fatal as Mum soon heard.*

*Our brother Stan was born (1924) making 8 children. Dad seldom had little work so things were extremely grim: then he got a job when the Eclipse lighthouse was to be built. He was there for a couple of years. He had to go over in the "Kybra" and then ashore in a little basket as it was such a rocky coast a boat could not get close. We were glad as we said while he was away Mum would have a rest from having babies.*

*Our father was adamant that we go to Sunday School, so first we went to the Methodist then a couple of others; but because of our shabby clothes we were ridiculed. At last a friend of Wyn's got us to go to the Salvo's. The girls were to spend many years in the Salvation Army, Bertha especially did good work alongside her husband Ron Setterfield.*



**Marjorie bridesmaid to sister Bertha (bride) other bridesmaid Ruby Simpson**

These were the depression years and life became a struggle for the family. By this time they were living in a little house in Vine Street. The years of struggle and anxiety for dear Gran became too overbearing and she was committed to hospital in Perth with a nervous breakdown, leaving the younger ones in the care of their older sisters. In 1932, Bill was 15 years old, Thelma 18, Wyn 21 Dorothy 23 and married to Bill Macintosh.

In his letters home their father wrote thanking the girls for parcels sent, especially at Christmas which he said would have been a very poor affair without them. His letters home give us an insight into a loving, concerned father.

*"My dear Daughters,*

*I am writing home, I trust I will find you quite O.K. Myself had to come in for a few days with a bit of an accident to the shoulder. It will be alright in a week then I shall go back the other side of Denmark. Sonny (William Jr.) has just got a job at Millbrook, 10/- a week, found (board) which is better than being home doing nothing. Bertha is managing like a little mother and better than most of them. I still think the original plan is the best one. The children don't like the idea of going into a home, neither do we until it is forced on us. I can work on here and save what I can and when Mum begins to get better you girls can look around for a house for us and by that time perhaps I will have saved enough to bring the family up. Bertha will look after them for twelve months, there is no cause for you to worry. I am doing enough here. I wrote to you from the camps before I left. I would have to pay the children's keep so it's just as cheap to keep them with us no matter how poor, it is always a home and the children don't grow up to forget. Now girls I don't want you to worry, things may be brighter ahead, who knows? This letter is for you both and don't forget although I'm not very demonstrative as far as affections go but I love you all equally. Now Thelma you can think we have done the right thing and I think the lads will find something to do as they grow up. Well Winnie and Thel don't keep me long without a letter as I am longing to hear from you.*

*With fondest Love, Dad.*

In 1936 William Simpson died at the age of 68 and is buried in Albany. Vida was to live with her family for the rest of her years.



**Left rear: Arthur Dove (Husband of Thelma), Stan Green (Husband of Wyn) and Ken McIntosh (Dorothy's Son) Middle: Raymond, Thelma (Dove) and Wyn (Green) next to Vida Laura Simpson. Front row Grandaughters Pam Green and Delyse Dove.**

Life dealt Gran another blow when in 1948 her beautiful daughter Marjorie was found dead with an overdose of barbiturates she was prescribed for a health problem. She was only 26 years old. Marjorie had the most beautiful head of strawberry blonde, wavy hair and creamy complexion. She was a deeply religious Salvation Army girl.

A younger son Raymond, who used to fish with his brother Bill after the war, also died of a blood disease at the age of 30 in 1958. After that her daughter Dorothy lost two sons as did Fred lose both his sons Graham and David at a young age. Four grandchildren in their early years what a lot of heartache.

A loving family surrounded Gran and her deep religious beliefs sustained her throughout her troubled times. Gran lived with Fred when he married Bonnie House and she had the pleasure of sharing their lives along with two grandsons in a home in Hare Street.

The family moved to Perth in 1963, the year I was married, for treatment for Fred's son David and that is where Vida spent her last years, dying two years later in 1965 at the age of 75 years. Her life on this earth was such a challenge to her health and faith, I am only grateful she did not live to see Bonnie, her loving devoted daughter-in law die of cancer.

Vida is buried in Karrakatta, Perth, grave number CR 9042.



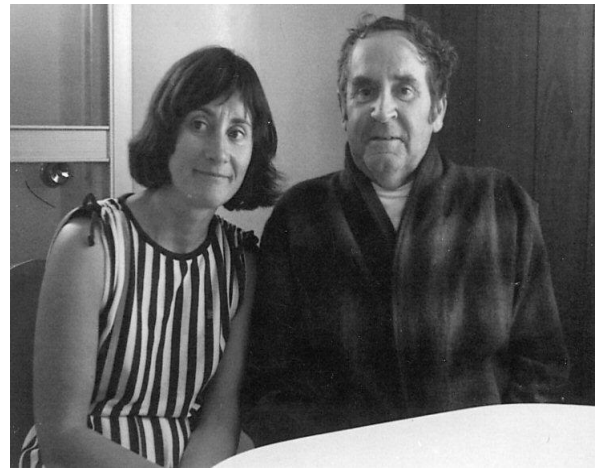
**Vida, Wyn and baby Pam with Raymond**



**Fred and Bonnie (House) wedding**



**Fred and Bonnie's boys Graham and David**



**Stan Simpson & daughter Dianne**



**Gran's gorgeous girls: Thelma and Bertha**



**Ron and Bertha Setterfield with son Barry & daughter Marilyn  
with a Simpson family aunt**



## **WILLIAM SIMPSON 1916 to 1995**



**William Harold Simpson (Bill)**

William and Vida's first born son was born on 18 December 1916 at Kundip, the small copper and gold mining town south of Ravensthorpe. As a boy he was very quiet and shy. On leaving school he found work that took him from hand digging potatoes in the Harvey irrigation area to the gold mines of Boulder.

Bill enlisted in the army 27 January 1941 and in the same year he married Majorie Edwards. Bill's lively sense of humour and love of a practical joke often got him into trouble especially during the war years when he quickly became a constant irritation to his commanding officers. Bill was located at the Forts Albany when discharged on 25 October 1945 and was a member of the 124 Princess Royal Heavy Battery.

After the war Bill purchased his first dingy and fishing nets from John Graham Rich of Denmark, (an uncle of Linda's husband Ron Rich). He fished for a living through to the late 1950's when he got his first full time job at Borthwicks meat works.



**Bill and Ted Pfeiffer on Albany Harbour. The boat was built in the Simpson back yard**



As a fisherman, Bill was a man of immense physical strength. Loading and unloading his heavy wooden boat rowed long distances around the harbour in search of schools of fish. He built his own boats using specially selected pieces of wood that he collected from a she-oak forest.

Marjorie and Bill lived at 25 Vancouver Street Albany from 1945 and purchased the property in 1957 for about 350 pounds. A self taught builder and Jack of all trades Bill commenced to "modernise" the beautiful old federation style home (mind you the back section really did need modernising!) taking away the picket fence, wrought iron and lattice.

Bill and Majorie had six children:

<b>Marion Leslie</b>	Born 25 November 1941 Albany, WA. Married 4 may 1963 to Ronald Lindsay Argus
<b>Valma Laura</b>	Born 27 December 1942 Albany, WA. Married 17 April 1971 to Edward Parker
<b>Kathleen Margaret</b>	Born 18 March 1944 Married 20 July 1968 to Graham Penman
<b>Vernon William</b>	Born 9 March 1947 Albany WA Married 3 November 1967 to Patricia Kane
<b>Clifford Wayne</b>	Born 30 April 1953 Albany WA Married 26 May 1973 to Robin Mitchell
<b>Lynda</b>	Born 10 March 1960 Albany WA Married 19 January 1985 to Ronald Rich

At that time we were a happy scruffy little bunch of five who learned to fossick for things to eat, figs and nuts from the trees in the yard, pudding grass and watsonia stems from road verges and any other fruit we could possum. Of course there was always plenty of fish.

Vancouver Street was an exciting place to live with the hospital across the road with all the associated drama in which the Simpson kids took their part several times. Lynda arrived after many years between us five to complete our family of four girls and the two boys.

Bill loved poetry and music. His favourite instrument was the harmonica and often the house in Vancouver Street echoed with rousing renditions of "*Barnacle Bill the Sailor*" or "*The Cuckoo Waltz*". Blessed with a fine tenor voice, Bill also loved singing. He sang out on the harbour while he pulled his fishing nets, he sang at home mending them. He sang to his children and grandchildren and during his last days with his granddaughter Vikki playing his beloved harmonica, sang from his hospital bed.

Bill was devoted to his family and often took his wife and children with him on long trips down the coast. Here they were able to share with him a love of the bush and the sea. Favourite times were the long autumn days at Cosy corner where Bill fished for salmon.

A good provider and an expert bushman, the family never went hungry. There was always rabbit, wild honey collected from the bush a flourishing vegetable garden or a feed of fish from the harbour. A private, religious man Bill's occasional quick impulsive temper often had his kids on the run. But they laughingly recall never having had a belting that they didn't deserve.

Bill loved bawdy jokes, pickled onions, homemade wine, a reasonable salmon haul, fiddling with dynamite, a good explosion...and kisses from small grandchildren. He died in 1995 after a rich and colourful life, a marriage of fifty two years with devotion of a close knit and devoted family.

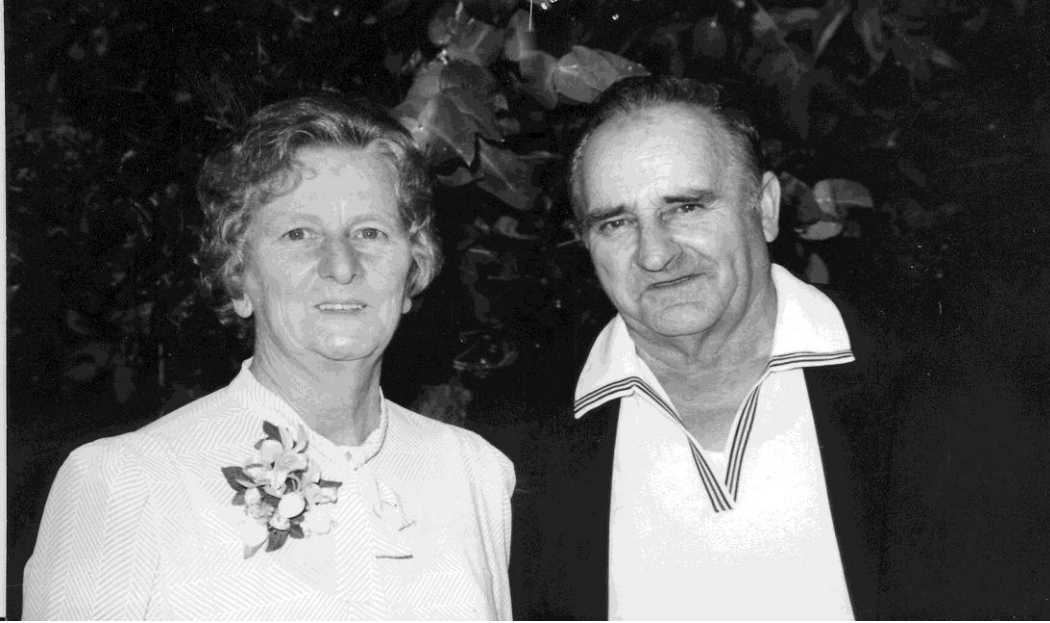
As a pioneer of the track into Wychinicum Nature Reserve Bill's last wish that his ashes be scattered there at his favourite fishing spot amongst the natural beauty that he loved.<sup>2</sup>



**Bill (Photo courtesy of Garry Foster)**

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the eulogy of Val Parker 1995



Marjorie & Bill (William Simpson)

Our Mum gave us bundles of love and the freedom to make our own lives. By example she showed us the strength and dignity needed to raise a family in sometimes very difficult times. She showed the same strength and dignity till her dying hour. The Vancouver Street home sold with much sadness ending an era spanning 60 years.



Marjorie with her brood. Left to right, Val Parker, Lynda Rich, Marion Argus, Cliff Simpson, Vernon Simpson (Jim) and Kathleen Penman.

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