

# ❖ BARRY CUNNING ❖

## BACKGROUND

The Cunning family's connection with the Buderim region goes back to the late 19th century when Barry's great grandfather, William Cunning, migrated from northern England to take up land in the Tanawha district. He farmed and ran a saw-mill as part of a wave of settlement that followed the timbergetters who first felled cedar and beech trees on Buderim and its surrounding areas in the 1860s. Subsequent Cunning generations continued to live in the district as farmers or timber workers, with one family member still living on part of the original landholding.

## BARRY'S LIFE

Barry was born in Nambour Hospital in 1944 and lived in Tanawha where his father was a timber hauler. As a young child, he was diagnosed with a kidney condition and, at age five, had a kidney removed. His siblings recall long periods when he was hospitalised in Brisbane, and their parents' nightly trips to visit him after their day's work.



Barry attended Buderim Mountain School, doing the daily trip from Tanawha on the back of Gilbert Nonmus's truck which was fitted out with canvas seats like the old picture theatres. He experienced periods of illness throughout his childhood but enjoyed activities like cubs and scouts, firstly in Buderim then at Tanawha when a troop was formed there. His siblings remember him as a prankster, and the dramatic impact of a pineapple strategically placed in a visiting aunty's bed.

His siblings recall a fairly idyllic childhood, swimming in creeks and riding bikes to Buderim up Crosby Hill Road, once a track originally formed by a Cunning relative, according to family legend. They remember watching their father loading timber from forests round Ilkley and beyond on to wagons at Eudlo railway station, destined for the Brisbane wharves where the timber would be used for wharf piles. They recall a memorable trip to Canberra, Mt Kosciuszko and the Great Ocean Road around 1955, and family beach holidays a bit closer to home.

As a young teenager, Barry worked with his father in the timber business. He died in 1959, shortly before his 15th birthday, outliving his life expectancy by several years.

## CUNNING LEGACY

Barry's grandfather gifted a 20 hectare block of natural vegetation to the Maroochy Shire Council for use as a scenic reserve. Located on Main Creek Road, Tanawha, 'Cunning Park' immortalises a family whose linkages to development in the wider Buderim district span generations.

*Donor: Val Colless*