

Arthur Turner

24-April-1919 to 17-April-1994

Arthur Turner was born **Allan Joiner** on the 24 April 1919 to **Florence Myrtle Joiner** on the banks of the Murray River near Mildura, his birth certificate number being 13378/1919. Florence was only 16 years old at the time with her **mother Caroline Goad** being the informant on the birth certificate. Caroline's husband **Howard Goad** had disappeared a couple of years earlier and by now she was living with **Percival Searle**. Percival Searle is the suspected father of Allan. Florence's teenage sister Isabella Goad also fell pregnant to Percival.

A year after Allan's birth, Florence married Henry Hall on the 22 -April-1920 in Mildura. Henry was a rabbit trapper born in Gawler S.A. and 28 years older than Florence.

One of my fathers first memories, most likely around age six, was running the rabbit traps, sometimes with old Henry Hall sometimes without. Sometimes at night Henry would stay in bed and Allan would be out in the dark on his own. Running across the icy ground feeling the frost crack under his bare feet or through rain and hail with only a singlet and a pair of shorts. Henry would wire him to a tree with fencing wire wrapped around his ankles or belt him with stinging nettles. At one stage Henry chained him to a tree like a dog for a week feeding him only bread and water. Henry would put Allan's head between the wire strands of the fence and twist them till he choked. Or clip him over the back of the head with the handle of the pick he used for setting the traps. Florence copped the beatings as well. On one occasion Henry came back to the camp from town, drunk and in a rage, pointing the paper thin barrel of his shotgun at Allan and his mother, threatening to shoot both of them. The quivering barrel moving from one face to the other with Florence yelling at Henry "shoot us you bastard, shoot you coward and get it over with". On another occasion Henry threw a cast iron camp oven at Florence hitting her in the middle of the back with Florence falling to the ground in pain. Florence still had to do the cooking, tend the fire, keep the camp tidy and fetch the water from the River, all on her hands and knees as she could not stand and walk. One day when Allan was about nine years old he was standing in the middle of a river somewhere near Wagga Wagga. Henry rode up on a horse with a stock whip in his hand and started to whip Allan. Henry had twice almost drowned him in the river by holding his head under water. Henry used the stock whip on Allan which had a piece of copper wire in the tip cutting his arms and legs. Allan could see his own blood flowing down the river. Unable to swim and unable to move with fear, he could only stand and take the whipping. The farmer, who's property they were trapping for rabbits, passed on his Jinker headed to town and saw what was happening, said nothing and kept on moving. That night on his way home from town, the farmer stopped at the camp and told Allan and his Mother that every thing would be all right as he had reported the whipping to the Police. The Police would be out the next morning to see them. Sure enough the next day the police arrived at the camp and found Allan laying on an old bag covered with a torn blanket. They made him strip to check for wounds. The policeman saying "don't worry Laddie, he won't do that again". After that they took Allan to the Police Lockup in Wagga and put him into the care of an elderly couple. Allan always said that the policeman (Sergeant Cowis), his wife and the elderly couple were some of the kindest people he ever met.

They kept him in the lockup but told him he was not in jail and that he would have to work for his keep. So they made him feed and water the chooks. They also gave Allan his first pair of boots and some clothes. They gave him his first taste of icecream and lollies and all the food he needed. It appears that Allan stayed with the police for a couple of weeks until the travelling judge came to town. There was a hearing of some sort with the only known consequence being that Allan was taken from his Mother and Henry. Allan was taken from the Court and placed in a children's home. Investigations by me writing letters to the New South Wales Justice System revealed that it was probably a travelling judge who heard the case and in those days they would not keep their files for a great time as they had to carry them as they travelled. I was told the files would have been destroyed within a couple of years if in fact there were any files to start with. There are no records of a trial, no known names of the people involved going to trial or punishment as a result of a trial held in NSW. It is most likely Allan was sent to the Boys Home in Mittagong. Hazel Warren insists that her Father and Mother went to Mittagong to get Allan from a Boys Home when Allan was about fourteen.

IN THE HOME

Allan told me of when he was in the home, of the hard work he endured. He was ashamed of the abuse and the beatings as well as being pack raped by the older children. The sexual abuse was by his peers, not his carers. Allan always had uncontrollable tears in his eyes when he spoke of these times. He says the only good thing they did for him in the home was to teach him to read and write. After a while he escaped from the home by climbing out the leadlight window above the door way. Making his way from Mittagong to Cobram and finding his mother His mother handed him over to the police who returned him to the Home. When Allan broke out of the Home and found his mother, Henry gave both Allan and Florence a bashing breaking Florence's leg. Forcing Florence to send him back to the Home. Allan says his Mother giving him up to the Authorities is what drove him to change his name later on as he wanted to hide from her so she could not send him to another home. Even as an adult in later life with grown up children this still haunted him.

Hazel Moules, Allan's cousin says¹¹ Mum and Dad went on the train, to Mittagong. I was told in them days you had to pay money to get the child out of a home, so it was money that Grandma Searle gave to Mum that day from the box, the money for the release of Allan from the home, also to find a home and a family to stay with. So we became Allan's family, I thought it was just great having our uncle Allan staying with us. We both became very fond of each other, although he was my cousin I always called him uncle Allan.

Allan changed his name to Arthur Turner when he left Mildura and I believe it was because he was in the home called Turner. I have found out that a Gentleman named Turner ran the home for a while. I don't know his Christian names but here was a Arthur John Turner in the area. I also believe there may be schooling records for Allan Joiner.

Arthur joins the Army

During the depression it was more likely you worked for food only rather than food and money. So this was Arthur's reason to join the army. Three meals a day and a pair of boots. Defending your country didn't come into it at the time. So on the 16th of

July 1940, Arthur Turner VX35567, aged 21 joined the Australian Imperial Force at Royal Park, Melbourne, Victoria.

I would be grateful for any mention of his name at Mittagong as this was a large part of his life that had an enormous effect on him. This has had an effect on me as well as I am only the second generation Turner.

Best Regards
Maurie Turner