



Bolton's Mill

Originally built by the Bailey Family, Bailey's Mill provided much employment for Mandurah residents as well as valuable Tuart for use in body building for cars, railway carriages, buses and trucks. The growing timber business sourced Tuarts from the coastal area and at one time supported 12 men in employment. The mill, situated between Old Mill Lane and Bolton Street, operated on the shore of Soldiers Cove and lent its name to several roads within the Soldiers Cove area.

The Bailey Family were millers in Fremantle who expanded their business to Mandurah in 1911, at a time of great growth within the budding transport industry and when many railway lines were being, or had been built.

After World War One, Bailey's Mill had passed into the hands of Len Bolton, a member of the Bolton Family also of Fremantle (Isaac Bolton was well known in business circles), who were vehicle body builders. Len Bolton placed the mill under the managership of Mr. W McKerracher. Under his custodianship the business grew and improved. They continued to trade under the Bailey name for some years prior to changing to Bolton's.



Bolton's Mill Cont'd

One tragedy which happened at the mill site was the death of Norman Cooper's brother Jock, who was killed in a milling accident.

In the mid-1920s one of the Bolton trucks went through the decking of the old Mandurah Bridge while transporting a boiler.

Also during the 1920s, Bolton's Mill was involved with the unlucky boat '*Leviathan*', which had been built by Olaf Wilson, a boat builder of Mandurah. The purpose of building it was to transport materials, including timber, to Fremantle. It is thought that the Bolton business in fact supplied the engines for the *Leviathan*. The *Leviathan* became grounded on the Mandurah sandbar, nothing could shift her and she remained fast for a week, after which a blow set in sending the seas crashing over her stern into the unprotected holds and filling her up with water and sand. Gradually she broke up and her bottom drifted ashore.

The Mill closed under the Bolton name in 1926, and while still a little early for the Depression years, the loss of this employment within Mandurah must have put added pressure on the people of Mandurah.

In 1937 the mill was briefly re-opened for around 12 months for a Perth company who made wine barrels and casks, but they went bankrupt prior to World War Two. After the land was subdivided and sold, the boiler from the mill sat for some years in a corner of Percy Powell's paddock near the corner of Pinjarra Road and Dower Street.

The corner of Bolton Street and Soldiers Cove Road became the surgery for the first resident dentist of Mandurah. This site is remembered by Neil Morfitt in his Oral History.

The milling tradition of this particular area in Mandurah is commemorated by three street names; Old Mill Lane, Bolton Street and McKerracher Street.

References: R Richards '*Mandurah and the Murray*', J Burgess '*Water under the Bridge*'.

