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Open Foundation  
Australian History  
Tues. 7-9pm  
Final Essay  
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RESEARCH PROJECT

Respondant; Mr Fred Linsley Jnr.

Category; Linsley Bus Company 1943 - 1986, Wallsend.

Interviewer; Julie Gray.

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Linsley Brothers was a private bus company formed by two brothers from Wallsend in the year 1943. The purchase included buying the total shares of three companies and forming a Proprietary Limited. Only one of the brothers is still alive today, Mr Fred Linsley Snr.

The company provided private transport for the Wallsend district and some surrounding suburbs. At this time Wallsend was a booming suburb, as it was close to the mines and many miners set up home in Wallsend.

At one stage the company employed twenty three people, which dropped to fourteen in the 1980's. Being a private company employees tended to stay with the firm for a long period of time. The only qualifications required was a class four licence and to be of average intelligence.

World War Two didn't really affect the company except for when rationing came, the public or Government transport received priority. During WWII women started to make an appearance in the industry as they often had to replace the males who were sent off to fight.

To be able to operate a bus company you must receive a licence from the Department of Motor Transport (D.M.T) who then place many regulations and restrictions upon the company. No new licences have been issued for over thirty years. Each private bus company and Government buses have zoned areas in which they have the right to all the bus service for such an area. No other company can encroach on your district. D.M.T. determines the zoning.

Each worker belonged to the Department of Motor Transport Union who looked after and protected the worker, but had little contact with the company.

Linsley Bros. made available runs to and from the B.H.P. for the workers for many years. This at one stage was the companies main source of income, but due to retrenchments and the changing of times, the <sup>number</sup> amount of passengers decreased. Another service they provided was for the mines, but due to modernisation the employment dropped from 400 men a day to 60 men a shift, due to the drop of workers the mining runs ceased to operate.

Another main service that the company provided was the school runs. Here they covered five schools; Wallsend High, Plattsburg Public, St. Patricks, Wallsend Primary, Wallsend Infants. They received school subsidies in which the D.M.T. determined the distance for the pupils and the boundaries. For any excursions that the above

schools required buses for they had to be supplied by the Linsley's and if they were not available then they could go out of their region.

In 1961 they started to lease coaches from finance companies. Here they originally went in partnership with Toronto bus company but eventually bought them out. The Linsleys' acted as a sub contractor to Jayes who therefore did not have full ownership of their coaches. One of the many regulations with such a deal was that the Linsley name and licence number had to be displayed on the rear of the coaches.

Due to such success with the coaches the Linsleys' decided in 1982 to branch out into travel. Here they were licenced for coach trips within and around Australia. Some tours were organised and advertised in the papers and on the radio, such as the Snowy Mountain Tours but many of the tours conducted were for social groups such as church groups, bowling clubs, schools etc, who already had a planned destination.

Linsley Travel organised day tours to the markets, to the vineyards, cricket matches, Pop concerts, just to name a few. This also became a hard business due to Government regulations and restrictions.

At this time some of their service buses held the name Linsley Travel and others held the original name Linsley Bros. Both companies were also offering the service of chartering the buses for trips or private functions. To allow such chartering they had to firstly obtain a permit from the D.M.T. This became an essential part of the business and about one third of their income derived from charters. As the novelty of double decker buses for pub crawls increased so did this side of the business. Both double deckers and single decker buses were available.

In 1986 the company was sold to a larger firm. Looking back <sup>^ because of random health tests</sup> Mr Fred Linsley Jnr states that the motor car bought about some drastic effects, and whilst the tourist side was growing steadily the Government keep enforcing new regulations. Another major decision of selling was the cut back of school subsidies which meant a large loss in which was impracticable to continue.

For the forty three years in which the business operated and supplied such vital services to the Wallsend district and surrounding areas the Linsley's made a valuable contribution to the community, where their name will always be a household name and recognised by many.

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