

SUNSHINE FOUNDATION

What a strange, and certainly unusual, name for a City, a combine harvester and Charitable Foundation.

How did it come about?

Well, it all originated in that magnificent St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Sturt Street, Ballarat, in the year 1904, when a visiting American preacher The Rev. Talmage, was in attendance, and rendered as his sermon, "Sunshine; the power of Sunshine; the benefits of Sunshine".

Young Hugh Victor McKay and some other members of his family heard the sermon; their home was at Drummartin in northern Victoria, and they were in Ballarat attempting to market improvements to harvesting machines; that young H. V. McKay had invented while working on his parents' wheat farm at Drummartin.

Five such improved machines bearing the name SUNSHINE, were successfully manufactured in 1904/5 in Ballarat by young McKay, and exported to Argentina, which was then world leader in wheat production.

McKay was then swamped with orders for many more machines for Argentina and Australia, so he and his four brothers moved their small factory down to Braybrook Junction, as Sunshine was then named, in order to be near a port to facilitate machine exports to Argentina and a rail head for sales within Australia.

Their venture was highly successful; young H. V. McKay and his family acquired large areas of land around the factory; his own 2 storey timber home and three similar ones for his brothers, were built and two of them still remain, in Talmage Street, Sunshine; (now the city of Braybrook).

The Sunshine Gardens; the Sunshine Presbyterian Church, Sunshine Technical College and the Sunshine Bowling Club all remain on land donated by H. V. McKay and much of Sunshine contains streets named in honour of prominent citizens of the early days. To "get on" in those days you "got yourself a job at McKay's" and became heavily involved in community activities, day and night, and certainly at weekends as well.

Each morning, a special Sunshine bound workers' train left Spencer Street Railway Station and collected workers en-route; you were expected to be inside the factory when the extremely loud 7:15am whistle sounded and in position ready to start active work, when the 7:30am louder whistle went off.

The factory even had its own Sunshine Harvester Works Pipe Band.

The Sunshine Foundation is a family trust, established by a deed of trust in the 1950's by three members of the McKay family. (An earlier generation of the same family was responsible for setting up the H.V. McKay Charitable Trust). All of the five trustees of The Sunshine Foundation are McKay family members.

The Sunshine Foundation is one of a number of charitable organisations in Victoria and is a Member of [Philanthropy Australia Inc](#)

McInnes Graham & Gibbs, chartered accountants, provides secretariat services to the Foundation.

Based on a draft by Bill MacGavin who lived in Sunshine for some 14 years and whose father and late brother worked at McKays Sunshine Harvester Works, for some 45 years between them.