# Bygone jobs—Jack Pettifer Audio transcript

Ken: Jack, how old were you when you first came to live in the old parliament house.

Jack: I would have been about 13 at that time, Ken; 1933, yes. My father was promoted from a senior attendant on the front door to housekeeper. The housekeeper was allocated a small flat in the south western corner of the building. At that time, it was open to the garden area outside, not enclosed with the building that’s around there now.

There was a kitchen, living area, a couple of bedrooms, and a small lounge room. There was mother, father, my sister, and myself. Of course, that meant there wasn’t enough room for me. I was allocated a bedroom along the corridor next to the telephone exchange.

The house in those days, Ken, there was quite a different atmosphere, quite a different environment from what it is today. In the 1930s, in between sittings of the House, there were long periods of adjournment when there was very little doing in the House. Visitors were shown over the House through the front door. Very few members came to the house during those recess periods.

Ken: So it was quiet?

Jack: Very quiet. The pressmen would come in and use their rooms up in the Senate and the House of Reps press galleries. And weekends, for instance, they would be the only people that would come and go into the building.

Ken: So how would a 13-year-old boy entertain himself?

Jack: Those corridors were ideal for roller skating, Ken, and the cement verandas as they were... yes.