

# James Long Sunshine Biscuit Company

■ After **James Long's** death, his son **Mr T.P. Long** took over the business and in 1921, its name formally changed to the **Sunshine Biscuit and Confectionery Pty Ltd** controlled by **Long** and **Adam Ramage**.

After the **Sunshine Biscuit and Confectionery Pty Ltd** took ownership it became a household name around the country and it continued to make its popular biscuits and sweets. The factory was damaged by fire twice.

On March 7, 1923 the **Sunshine Biscuit Factory** was destroyed by a fire.

The damage was estimated at £12,000. In addition to the plant and machinery mass stocks of flour, sugar and other materials were destroyed.

At least 80 hands were thrown out of employment. Although the fire destroyed the factory in its place a finely constructed modern factory was built with the most up to date equipment of the time.

The success of the company was outlined by the **Melbourne Argus** in 1938...

"The company does a large volume of business in the **Wimmera and Western District**.

"In the course of its manufacture of varieties of biscuits the company uses 1000 tons of flour a year and large supplies of milk, eggs, and butter, which are bought mostly from the districts around **Ballarat**

"It is noted chiefly for the manufacture of an excellent brand of dry cracker biscuits.

"Climatic conditions at **Ballarat**, which is about 1600ft. above sea level, are regarded by the company as ideal for the manufacture of the biscuits.

The manager was **G.B Lawry**.

On Sunday, January 22, 1939, a deliberately lit fire at the premises destroyed the workshop and caused £6200 damage.

In 1947 **Sunshine Biscuit Co** merged with **George Farmer and Co.** to form the **Ballarat Products Company** and production continued to expand with more equipment imported from overseas.

In 1952 it was employing 250 workers, the same figure as in 1966 and in 1977 the factory was converted to a dry pet food factory by



● The Sunshine Biscuit Factory building in Ballarat in 2006.

Photo: Ash Long

**Arnott Harper Pty Ltd.** The Factory became known as the **Friskies** plant. The company's life came to an end in 1991.

The **Sunshine** name continues to live on today with recipes and such still being used by other companies.

**Ollie's Lollies** make a lolly that uses the same recipe as **Sunshine**, as well as the experiments completed by **University of Ballarat** Bachelor of Applied Science students.

The large site remained vacant throughout the 1990s with various development proposals failing, until in 1999 the **Ballarat City Council** approved a plan for the site which included a supermarket, shops and some residences along East St.

Part of the original building and wall was retained in the development.

## Fact File

Some items produced by **Long and Co.** were:

- **Long's Cream Crackers** (a biscuit of creamy richness)
- **Long's Me-Le Wafers** (Made from malted wheat)
- **Long's Bi-Bi Rice** (the childrens biscuit)
- **Long's Vanilla Coffee** (a distinct specialty)
- **Long's Currant Luncheon** (a tip-top fruit biscuit)
- **Long's Cracknels** (light and palatable)
- **Long's Milk Flake** (just the thing with cheese)
- **Long's World-famed Cough Drops** (have stood the test for 40 years [in 1904])