

# Ella Jean WHITE, nee McDONALD 12-5-1896 to 22-2-1983 & Arthur Wellesley White

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Ella Jean was the fourth child, second daughter of Alexander John and Jessie McDonald and was born at West Wail. Her cousin Len McDonald was born two weeks earlier at Noradjuha. Her grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

Historical events that year included establishment of the Nobel Prizes, the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, and the death of the American writer Harriet Beecher Stowe. In Australia the Melbourne Cup was filmed for the first time and the statesman Sir Henry Parkes died.

Jean attended West Wail State School with her brothers and sisters. She remembered: how her Grandmother Sheridan taught her to make a bed properly by smoothing the top of the finished job with her crutch, and Jean afterwards used a broom handle; that Gran often cooked breakfast for the family, a good meal of chops and eggs and bacon; Gran, a great seamstress, often gave Jean little pieces of lace; that the children all had their share of cows to milk; the big Aboriginal kitchen midden with the empty mussel shells on the river bank not far from the house; the river in flood, making it difficult to get to school; and the excitement of attending the wedding of her cousin Archie Raggatt to May Butler in 1906, with the table of wedding presents illuminated by a row of kerosene lamps.

In 1913 Jean accompanied her father to Queensland while he looked after his brother Angus's property near Longreach. Angus had taken his wife Flo for a lengthy holiday following the death of their only child, Ewen. Before her marriage Jean was a nurse at Fairfield hospital, Kildonan Presbyterian Children's Home and the Geelong Protestant Orphanage. On April 3, 1919, Jean was married to Arthur Wellesley White at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Geelong, by the Reverend D.Smith. The bride's brother George was best man and her sister Tina, bridesmaid. Arthur was born in England on June 18, 1886, the son of Joseph and Julia White of Wimbledon, printers and stationers. Arthur had served in the Royal Australian Navy during World War One. For a time, Arthur and Jean operated the post office at Waurin Ponds. Later Arthur was a steward at the Corio Club in Geelong.

During World War Two, Arthur joined the RAAF as did four of his children, Alex, Lindsay, Jessie and Margaret. The family gained publicity for having five members in the one service. After his discharge Arthur did a rehabilitation course in cookery at the William Angliss Trade School. He became chef at the Geelong Hospital and remained there until his retirement. The family lived at 318 Myer Street, Geelong. Arthur was interested in singing, and at the time of his death was compiling notes of his navy travels. He died on September 20, 1963 and was buried in the Eastern Cemetery, Geelong.

Jean's interests were dressmaking, knitting, crochet, working for the Grace McKellar Home For the Aged, and the annual fete at Shannon Park Spastic Centre. Unfortunately her sight failed in later years. She lived with her daughter Jessie Smith at 2 Meakin Street, Geelong, for years before she became a patient at the Grace McKellar Home. Jean died on February 22, 1983, aged 86 years and was buried at the Eastern Cemetery with her husband Arthur. A headstone marks their grave.

#### Children of Jean and Arthur :-

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. <i>Alexander</i> Wellesley White | Born 18-3-1920  |                |
| 2. <i>James Lindsay</i> White       | Born 14-11-1921 |                |
| 3. <i>Jessie</i> Raie White         | Born 26-5-1923  |                |
| 4. <i>Christina Margaret</i> White  | Born 3-3-1925   |                |
| 5. <i>Betty</i> Irene White         | Born 4-5-1927   | Died 14-4-1951 |
| 6. <i>Peggy</i> Eileen White        | Born 21-5-1929  |                |
| 7. <i>Coral</i> Jean White          | Born 14-5-1933  | Died 18-1-1970 |

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 206 of "History of Ewen & Rachel McDonald & Descendants" by Jill McDonald which was originally published in 1985. It was republished as part of "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" in 1995.
- COLONIALISTS : Christina and Donald McLean and their ten children migrated from Argyllshire to South Australia in 1837. This was in the earliest years of the colony. The McLeans initially settled near Adelaide where they grew the first wheat crop in SA. Then in about 1840 they pioneered the Strathalbyn area. There are now well over 20,000 descendants spread across Australia and elsewhere.
- CHANGES : Please contact us with additions, corrections or suggestions about any part of this family tree.
- CONTACT : Visit our website [www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com](http://www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com) or Strathalbyn Museum phone 08 8536 2656 to discover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.