

Rachel Annie URQUART, nee McDONALD 17-11-1902 to 27-11-1949 & John URQUART

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Rachel Annie was the seventh child and third daughter of Alexander John and Jessie McDonald, and was born at West Wail in the Wimmera. She was the only McDonald grand-child born that year, and shared her name with her Uncle D.Ws daughter Rachel Annie, born seventeen years previously in 1885. Her great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

In 1902 the Boer War ended in South Africa and Cecil Rhodes died. In Australia, women gained the vote for federal elections and William Farrer's new wheat strain, Federation, was made available to farmers.

Raie was nearly two years old when she was baptised by the Reverend Thomas Gray on October 29, 1904 at the Presbyterian manse in Horsham. She attended the West Wail State School with her brothers and sisters, and other schools as the family moved. When her family settled in Geelong, Raie became secretary to Basil Collins, manager of Collins Brothers' woollen mill. She also taught secretarial practice at the Gordon Institute.

During the 1930s, Raie was married in Melbourne to John Urquhart. Known as Jock, he was born in New Zealand, the son of Duncan and Margaret Urquhart, nee Gordon. They made their home in Geelong where Jock was employed as a motor mechanic. There were no children.

During World War Two, Jock was in the army transport section. At this time Jim West, fiance of Muriel Forsyth, daughter of Raie's cousin Annie, was stationed at Flinders Naval Depot in Victoria. He made himself known to Muriel's relatives in Geelong and became a frequent visitor to their homes. Jock was transferred to an army depot at Karrakatta near Perth and Raie followed. While in Western Australia, Jock was best man at the wedding of Muriel and Jim in February 1944.

Raie and Jock were a very popular couple, and it was a sad day for their relatives and friends when Raie died of leukaemia, ten days after her 47th birthday. She was buried in the Eastern Cemetery at Geelong. A year later Jock died of heart attack, and was also buried in the Eastern Cemetery. There is a stained glass window in memory of Raie at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Geelong, and a plaque in the vestry in memory of Raie and Jock.

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 212 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 or Strathalbyn Museum phone 08 8536 2656 to discover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.