

## Beatrice Louisa ELLIS, nee McDONALD 24-2-1885 to 22-8-1970 & Frederick James ELLIS

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Beatrice Louisa was the second child and first daughter of Charles and Ellen McDonald, and was born at Carchap. Four of her first cousins, all girls, were born that year: Flora Raggatt at Carchap; Rachel Annie McDonald at Noradjuha; Adelaide Margretta Mott in Victoria, and Rachel Maud Tucker in South Australia. Her grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

The German composer Brahms wrote his *Symphony No. 4* and in Australia the Broken Hill Proprietary Company was floated.

Louisa, known as Lou or Louie, attended Lowan South State School. The certificate of exemption from compulsory attendance stating that Louisa McDonald had been educated to the standard of education required by the Education Act 1890, is dated the fifth day of December AD 1895 and signed by district inspector William A. Cavanagh. Lou was not yet 11 years old. She became her father's mainstay in caring for the younger children. As she grew up she entered into district activities, and was a good tennis player and capable horsewoman. Lou was a woman of strong personality, vivacious and well liked.

When her brother Charlie married in 1915 she and her sister Ivy accompanied their father to live in Horsham. During World War One, Lou joined the Voluntary Aid Detachment, VADs, which assisted with nursing duties. When a world-wide influenza epidemic broke out in 1918-19, killing more people than the war, Lou helped nurse the sick in their own homes, under medical supervision. She was also a member of the Australian Red Cross Society and like many other tireless war workers was awarded a certificate, '*in recognition of four years devoted service during the Great War, 1914-1919*'.

Lou was a member of the congregation of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Horsham and also taught Sunday school. She was always interested in young people and assisted with the Cub movement and the Girl Guides. The First Horsham Girl Guide Company began in 1926 and a warrant form for district secretary was issued on January 10, 1927 endorsing Beatrice Louisa McDonald. It is signed by the state secretary and Mrs Alexina Butcher, district commissioner of Horsham, and by Lou herself. The signature is B. L. MacDonald with an 'a' in the Mac. The Scout Association of Australia's Victorian branch has no record of Lou holding any position in the Cubs.

On May 26, 1930 Louisa was married to Frederick James Ellis at the Catholic Church, Castlemaine, Victoria by the Reverend Father Donoghue. The wedding breakfast was at the home of the groom's parents at Newstead, a small town nearby where Jim's father was a school-teacher. A three-tiered wedding cake, magnificently iced and decorated, was a focal point at the celebration. Jim was the son of Frederick Walter and Bridget Rose Ellis, nee Murtagh, and was born on June 30, 1894 at *Steep Bank*, Tahara Bridge, Coleraine, Victoria. On February 7, 1916 Jim enlisted in the army and as Number 442 Private F. J. Ellis, 39th Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces, saw active service in France. He was discharged on July 27, 1919.

Lou and Jim had met when he was stationed at Horsham as a signalman with the Victorian Railways. After their marriage he was transferred to Melbourne where he was employed on many suburban stations on the Sandringham line. Jim was a gifted craftsman and did fine wood carving, plaster moulding and painting. He and Lou had a lifelong interest in tennis. They lived at 44 Imbros Street, Hampton. Jim retired from the railways in 1959. Lou was a foundation member of the Clan Macdonald Society of Victoria when it was inaugurated in October 1934 and held various positions on its committee. A small book published by the society in 1939 lists Lou as a councillor and relatives as members: her brother C. W. S. McDonald and daughter Edith of *Innisvale* her sister Ivy Barrett; her cousin Hugh Sheridan McDonald and daughter May; and her cousin George Wallace McDonald.

For many years she worked in an executive capacity for the Presbyterian Babies Home at Camberwell and actively assisted in the conduct of the home. Lou died on August 22, 1970 at the Southern Memorial Hospital, Caulfield, aged 85 years. The funeral at Hampton Presybterian Church and after at Cheltenham lawn cemetery was attended by many friends and relations. On Lou's headstone Jim had inscribed, 'The world is better that she lived'. In 1971, Jim and his sister Edith Ellis made their home at 40 Oxford Street, Belmont, Geelong. On June 30, 1984, Jim celebrated his 90th birthday by dining with friends and relatives at a restaurant. A month later, on July 29, he died suddenly at his home. After a service at Geelong he too was buried in the Cheltenham lawn cemetery, Melbourne.

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 158 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.