

# Ian Douglas McDONALD 24-5-1898 to 6-3-1963 & Violet Jean McDONALD, nee MURRAY

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Ian Douglas was the fifth child and third son of Alexander John and Jessie McDonald and was born at West Wail. Later that year his cousin Ina Donaldson was born at Warialda, New South Wales. His grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

Current events included the war between Spain and the United States of America, in the course of which the United States won Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippine islands; Marie and Pierre Curie discovered radium and polonium; author Ernest Hemingway and singer Paul Robeson were born and the German statesman Otto von Bismarck died. In Australia the Draft Constitution Bill was accepted by voters in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, but rejected in New South Wales.

Ian attended the West Wail State School with his brothers and sisters and other schools as the family moved. His brother Hugh recalls two incidents concerning Ian. One day when a very small boy, his mother missed him and a search started immediately. His father found his foot-prints in the mud on the river bank and covered them in case they were needed by a black tracker; however Ian was found safe. When the family lived at St Helens Plains, Ian and Hugh set out on bikes to ride to the nearby Grampian mountains. The boys climbed Mt Victory and viewed Lake Wartook lying in the valley below. Realising that night was fast approaching they started to descend, became separated and only Hugh arrived home. Jessie sat up all night with a lamp in the window and at dawn a search party set out. Ian was found sleeping at a farmer's house.

The family later moved to Lara and from here Ian rode his bike daily to Geelong to attend the Gordon Institute of Technology. In February 1919 the Mayor of Geelong, Cr. W. Brownbill, wrote him a letter addressed to 'Master Ian McDonald.'

*I noticed by the Geelong Times that you have won the Alexander Miller Scholarship. And that you have travelled every day from Lara and back again to school which shows that you are determined to receive a good education. Allow me to congratulate you on winning the scholarship and also to commend you for your zeal. I will always follow your successes with pride and pleasure, and may you go on to become a good citizen. Again wishing you success for your future.*

On April 22, 1928 Ian was married to Violet Jean Murray at the Marong Presbyterian Church by the Reverend Harvey. Vi was born on April 5, 1906, the daughter of James Alexander and Mary Eliza Murray, butcher of Marong, nine miles from Bendigo, Victoria. She attended Marong State School and received a business course scholarship which she did by correspondence. Later Vi travelled by train to nearby Leichardt and Derby state schools where she taught sewing and other subjects. She played the piano well and had several pupils. On Saturday nights she would play for the local dances and on Sunday play the organ at the Presbyterian church.

Ian died in Melbourne on March 6, 1963, aged 64 years, and was buried in the Eastern Cemetery, Geelong. An obituary in the *Geelong Advertiser* of March 7, 1963 records the main events of his life.

## WORKS A MEMORIAL TO LATE MR. I. D. McDONALD

*Mr. Ian D. McDonald, city surveyor of Geelong, died yesterday in Melbourne. As an engineer, he had a Commonwealth-wide reputation; he left many works of lasting beauty and usefulness in Geelong; and he was a tireless worker in community causes. The Mayor of Geelong (Cr. A. R. McAllister) said yesterday: "The death of Mr. McDonald has left a gap in our municipal life that may never be filled.*

*"During Geelong's period of tremendous post-war expansion only a man of his far-sightedness and imaginative thinking could have kept pace with the rapid succession of events.*

*"His works will benefit many future generations as well as those of the present, and he joins that select band of whom it can be said: 'If you seek his monument, look around you'."*

OUTSTANDING

*The town clerk of Geelong (Mr. L. L. Walter) said: "His death will be a great loss. He has, at all times, shown outstanding municipal ability and engineering ingenuity, and this has won him high respect and esteem not only among other Geelong and district municipalities, but throughout Australia.*

*"He and I were associated for 27 years, and his death will be a great loss to me and to the municipal staff of this city. We shall miss also his co-operation, which was wonderful at all times."*

*IN FIRST A.I.F.*

*Mr. McDonald was born in Horsham in 1898, and he began his education in that district. He continued his studies at the Gordon Institute of Technology, but interrupted them in 1916 when, at the age of 17, he joined the first A.I.F.*

*As a member of the 3rd Brigade Machine Gun Company, he served for three years, chiefly in France and Belgium.*

*On his return to Australia, he joined the municipal staff of the City of Albury as assistant engineer. While working in Albury, he undertook a correspondence course in engineering, including water supply and sewerage. In 1925, he obtained the New South Wales local government engineering certificate.*

*AT GEELONG WEST*

*In the following year, he was appointed engineer of the Shire of Marong, near Bendigo, and, in 1927, he became engineer of Geelong West. In 1932, he was appointed engineer of the City of Mordialloc, and carried out the duties of both appointments concurrently until he joined the Geelong City Council staff in 1936.*

*PUBLIC ACTIVITIES*

*Mr. McDonald was a member of the Legacy Club of Geelong for more than 25 years, and was a past-president. In 1956, he was president of the council of the Gordon Institute, on which body he served for about 30 years.*

*He was secretary of the Geelong and District Town Planning Committee during the difficult years in which the original draft of the plan was prepared and objections were considered.*

*During the second world war, he was treasurer of the Geelong Fighting Forces' Hostel, and he organised voluntary farm labor to assist the war effort. This task usually occupied three hours of his time each day before he began work at the City Hall.*

*He was a strong believer in church unity, and the combined churches' Nativity scene on the Gheringhap Street roundabout last Christmas was a particular source of pleasure to him.*

*EASTERN BEACH WORK*

*He was principally responsible for the design and construction of the Eastern Beach swimming pool, and much of the playground equipment there and in other city parks is of his design.*

*He is believed to have been the first municipal engineer in Victoria to appreciate the possibilities of the land-filling method now employed above Hearne Parade. By patient experiment he did much to develop the system to its present state of efficiency, and was regarded as a leading Australian authority on the process.*

*He made an early assessment of the possibilities of cement, salt and bitumen stabilisation of soil for road and footpath making, and, as a result of his experiments, certain technical processes were developed which have proved to be most efficient and economical for the soils and clays of Geelong and district. For this work also, he became widely known outside this district.*

*AWARDED M.B.E*

*In recognition of his services, he was created a Member of the Order of the British Empire last year.*

*Mr. McDonald is survived by his wife and their daughter, Mrs. A. James.*

*After a service at Christ Church, Moorabool Street, at 2 p.m. to-morrow, Mr. McDonald's funeral will leave for the Eastern Cemetery. The cortege will pass the City Hall, and then, by Mr. McDonald's own wish, will proceed to the cemetery by the way of the floral roundabout and Eastern Beach.*

Ian and Vi had a daughter, Lynette. Vi lives at 1 William Street. Geelong. Victoria.

Child of Ian and Violet :-

1. *Lynette* Rosemary McDonald Born 27-6-1936

• SOURCE : This biography was from page 210 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.