

Donald McLEAN & Pearl McLEAN, nee KEARNES or CAIRNS

Biography as published in 1995

Donald McLean the eldest son, born 18/12/1889 at Narrabeen

Parents : Mary McLEAN & Donald 'Rover' McLean

Grandparents : Christina McLean (nee Black) & Hugh (the elder) McLean

G-Grandparents : Christina McLean (nee McPhee) & Donald McLean

Contractor of Clarke St. Narrabeen.

A newspaper article of 1986 (supplied by Glad. Gardner of Meningie, S.A.) described Donald's heroism as a young man. Quoted from the "Sydney Morning Herald" dated 18/1/1907.

Headed - "Pioneers death (1986) recalls Heroic Rescue" It was really in the nature of an obituary.

"A Narrabeen man who gained fame for a dramatic surf rescue at Narrabeen in 1907 and remained a respected local identity died last week at the age of 97. Donald McLean described himself as an "all rounder" as far as hard manual labor is concerned, be it woodcutting, quarrying or road making.

Under the headline: Dangers of Surfing... Narrow Escape at Narrabeen" – On 18/1/1907 Mr McLean and another bather went to the assistance of John Johnstone, a young man who was caught in an undenow. After a shon struggle they brought him ashore, then Mr McLean went to help his younger brother who had tried to throw out a lifeline and had gotten into trouble himself.

Then Donald McLean had to go back to rescue Mr Johnstone again after he once again rushed into the sun excited by his own rescue and no doubt intent on helping Mr McLean to rescue his 10 year old brother Hugh. None of the rescuers had any training in either surf or first aid relating to the surf. A 1973 Manly "Daily" historical feature said "Don smiled as he recalled them upending the half drowned Johnstone by the legs and pumping his legs to expel any water, after which they poured brandy down his throat!"

For his action in rescuing Johnstone, Donald McLean was recommended by the local progress society for recognition by the Shipwreck Society's Certificate and Bronze Medallion.

The McLean family has been pan and parcel of Narrabeen for about 103_years. Donald McLean was born at Narrabeen in 1889, one of 14 children. He was reported recalling the time when Narrabeen extended from Mona Vale to Stoney Ridge, south ofthe present suburb of Dee Why. As a lad, Donald would earn 5 shillings (50c.) per head rowing visitors around the Lakes, which, he said, were much more extensive and beautiful than today and abounded with large fish. For many years he worked on the local roads for the Warringah Shire Council, later becoming a ganger. He was pan of Narrabeen history who will be remembered with admiration."

Marriage: to Pearl Kearns (or perhaps spelt Cairns). No dates available.

CHILDREN:

1. Donald McLean (unmarried).
2. Lilian Pearl McLean (Mrs Jack Shearman of Bega, N.S.W.) who had an only son Donald Shearman.

• SOURCE : This biography is an extract from "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" which was published in 1995 – page 220 & 221.
 • 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 dicover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.