

Benjamin Ernest McLEAN & Joan Natalie McLEAN, nee SMITH

Biography as published in 1995

Benjamin Ernest McLean, b. 18/11/1925, at Strathalbyn, S.A.

Parents : Olivia Mary McLean (nee Parker) & Edwin James McLean

Grandparents : Mary McLean (nee Stacey) & John McLean

G-Grandparents : Christine McLean (nee McPhee & Donald McLean

Shared the balance of "Maplemore", engaging in mixed farming.

Ben was instilled with a pioneering spirit born of his Scottish ancestors, who migrated to South Australia in 1837. This was the driving force which gave him the urge to look further afield quite early in his married life. His first quest for seeking another area of Australia to conquer was as a pioneering farmer in Queensland.

He sold up all of his stock at Angas Plains, via Strathalbyn, early in 1961 and drove to the Darling Downs area in Queensland, thoroughly investigating the cotton industry, working on several farms, also wheat, sorghum, and other cropping areas.

He then balloted for several blocks around the Dawson Valley area, but was not successful.

Art Linklater of U.S.A. was developing the Humpty Doo rice growing scheme, on the flood plains of the Adelaide River in Northern Australia. Again Ben was not successful in the ballot.

Shortly after, the Ord River Scheme was completed in Western Australia and settlers were being called for, but once again he missed out in the ballots. This was fortunate for him, and his family. as both of these schemes were fraught with problems from the start, although the Ord River is now a prosperous area growing many varieties of tropical fruits etc. Both schemes failed owing to the inability to control insects and wild life. Upon his return to Angas Plains after about 12 months away. he decided to try Western Australia.

Farms were being allocated on the Esperence Sand Plain and he qualified for a 2300 acre allocation. It was an excellent area and they soon developed it into a prosperous farm. However, he was still not satisfied so sold out for a good price at the time, and bought a sheep station in the Murchison area. He found this to be a rewarding move and will never forget the years that he put in on those three quarters of a million acres. He looks back on this period as the best years of his life.

He then moved to Hopetoun, W.A. where he bought 450 acres, and built a stone house, subdivided about half of the land into farmlets, and retired.

Joan and he gain a lot of pleasure catching up with their family of five children and thirteen grandchildren. Also by travelling extensively, in and out of Australia. Indeed he is the only member of Edwin McLean's family who has experienced the joys of setting foot on the old country where our ancestors migrated from in 1837.

Married: **Joan Natalie Smith** b. 28/9/1931 at Nailsworth, S.A.

Joan enjoyed 20 years in Girl Guides and was awarded by the Girl Guides Association the "Banksia Award" for working tirelessly for guides in Western Australia, particularly in the promotion of camping. As a lone Girl Guide

leader and at State and National camps she helped many girls to enjoy the outdoor life and camping. She also earned her 20 year long service badge.

Children :- Edwin, Jennifer, Lorna, Natalie & Cynthia.

- SOURCE : This biography is an extract from "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" which was published in 1995 – page 329 & 330.
- 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.