

Around the Ridges and a bit beyond

Issue 162 March 2018 eMail: aroundtheridges@hotmail.com
Phone 4934 1192

A Tribute to Patricia Josephine Watts

5-8-1937 — 14-1-2008 by *Margaret Stewart*

This is a special tribute to a very special lady, Patricia Josephine Watts, fondly known as Pat.

Pat was a foundation member of the newsletter committee and was the first treasurer elected. Pat continued in this role until her resignation at the August meeting, 2004.

Pat and her husband Kevin, were moving to Gracemere, having sold their property "Glen-Avon" at Ridgeland. However her interest in the newsletter continued for the rest of her life, with generous donations to allow the committee to post a copy to her every month.

I must admit it was a sad moment last month when we folded the newsletter as I was the person that had always addressed the envelope and I knew how much Pat had looked forward to the newsletter in the mail.

My friendship with Pat began in our early school days. Pat moved with her parents Steve and Julia Connor, from Laurel Bank to a property named "Dunrobin" on the South Yaamba Road, in 1946.

I was a pupil at the Calmorin State School when Pat and her brother Noel arrived. Noel and I became good mates at school as most of the time I was the only girl in our class. As time went by Pat's other six siblings attended this one teacher school. As the years slipped by Pat and I found ourselves both married to dairy farmers. So the connection continued through the dairy industry.

The Watts family of Carmel, Tony and James attended the Ridgeland State School as did our daughters Connie, Karen and Linda. Carmel and Karen were in the same class and remain good friends to-day.

Sadly Pat and Kevin lost their first born Kathryn, in a tragic farm accident.



Pat and Kevin were involved in most of the committees in the district. Pat was always willing to help in any way she could, baking a cake for an auction or as an entry in the Ridgeland Show, slices or biscuits for an afternoon tea or perhaps a handmade craft item for a multi draw prize. Pat was also on the roster to sweep the Ridgeland Hall and we missed her presence when she moved. Pat continued her association with the Ridgeland Branch of the Q.C.W.A. until ill health prevented her from making the journey from Gracemere.

With the Ridgeland Campdraft approaching it has brought to my mind the times I spent with Pat catering for the Workers and Judges at the Campdraft. Our caravan was set up next to the office and we would serve sandwiches and cake (often one of Pat's lovely fruit cakes) with tea or coffee, all prepared in the caravan and served under the annex.

Kevin was a keen campdrafter and my husband, Ken often travelled with him to other campdrafts.

Occasionally Pat and I would organise to accompany our men. One such time still very vivid in my mind was

Continued on Page 2

at Clarke Creek. Pat and I camped in the horse float and by morning we thought our feet had fallen off during the night. Boy was it cold!

Another time was the Bowen River campdraft. We had taken a caravan as the Watts and Stewart children were going this time. I really think it might have been colder than Clarke Creek but we had a wonderful time with our children all together for a couple of days. Our friendship was invaluable.

Tragedy struck the Watts family in 2011 when their youngest son and brother, James, lost his battle with cancer.

Pat showed great strength to overcome that heartbreak, the same courage and resilience with which she fought her own battle with cancer until the very end.

Testament to the quality and popularity of Pat's character was the huge number of people at her funeral service.

Her kindness to others will never be forgotten.

The most important thing to Pat was her family. She was a devoted and loving wife, mother and mother-in-law, grandmother and great grandmother and a loyal friend to many.

If you were Pat's friend you had a friend for life.

Rest easy my dear friend.

We are all going to miss you.

Down Memory Lane

The Beef Industry - Early cattle sales were held at the Showgrounds in Rockhampton but in 1951-52, Mr George Smith held cattle sales in his own right at Dan Hanrahan's property 'Retreat', Garnant.

Unlike the high fences required after the introduction of the Brahmans, the yard fences were about 4'6" high for the dairy cattle and British breed beef cattle that passed through the yards.

By 1953, The Ridgelsands Rodeo Association started the organisation of the cattle sales. Mr Smith contin-

ued as auctioneer. The minutes of the Ridgelsands Rodeo Association shows that Mr James Ryan was paid 10 shillings to advertise a sale on the 24th April 1953.

On the 23rd January 1954 a cattle sale was held on W Harmsworth's property on the corner of Calmorin and Hansen Roads. The Rodeo Association's profit from the sale was seven pound. (Taken from Fitzroy Flashback and contributed by Reg and Merle Smith, Pat Watts and Allan Thompson)

In the 1970's cattle prices slumped. Bullocks that had been purchased for \$140 two years previously and fattened sold for only \$98. (That is \$98 for 819lbs. dressed weight bullocks).

*Contributed by Jack Jones
extract from Fitzroy Flashback*

Ratepayers Association Meeting

5-2-2018

The meeting was well attended.

An issue was raised about a pile of excess material left near a driveway on Sheldrake road after some road works had been undertaken. Steve Hughes from RRC was very receptive to remove the excess material.

Also there were a number of discussions about the problems at the Laurel Bank Transfer Station.

There have been many discussions in the past about the problems of the transfer station; but, so far an economical solution that suits the local residents, ratepayers and the Council has not been found. The council is continuing to work towards resolving the problems at the Laurel Bank Transfer Station.

Ridgelsands & District Sporting & Agricultural Assoc Inc

Annual Agricultural Show

Saturday 2nd June commencing 8:00am

Stall holders are welcome.

For further details please contact

Leonie Thompson on 4934 5587

or Diane Bull on 4934 1192.

BIG COLOUR WORKS

*sponsor the printing of
Around the Ridges
every second month for free.*

THANK YOU!

Around the Ridges and a bit beyond is a community and school newsletter. Stories, notices, poems, anecdotes and historical memoirs need to be submitted by the 11th of the previous month — if you have a special event, allow two months lead time if possible.

We love our sponsors - and hope that you do too. Please support them and buy locally!

HUGE COMMUNITY AUCTION

SATURDAY 10TH MARCH AT 9am

CNR RIDGELANDS ROAD AND WOODFORD ROAD

ALTON DOWNS

Due to the huge response at the first auction (over 1000 lots from 50 vendors) CQ Auctions are holding a 2nd and final clearing sale

OUTSIDE VENDORS AGAIN WELCOME

Turn your unwanted items into cash

Any items including farm machinery, trucks, horsefloats, trailers, boats, caravans, workshop gear, horse gear or household items welcome.

Assistance given with unloading. Free use of large trailer for you to bring in your items

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Catering by Ridgeland's School P&C,

Bar run by Alton Downs Polocrosse

From The Front Lines

By Peter Evans

Eric Austin was born just outside Crow's Nest in 1919, the son of a bullock driver and later dairy farmer, in what eventually became a family of 12 children. When World War II broke out, he wanted to join the army, but his father said farm workers were needed to keep food supplies up and he was needed at home.

When Japan entered the war conscription was introduced in Australia and Eric and a brother were called into the Infantry for military service. He enlisted on 18th December, 1941, and trained firstly at Chermside, then Cabarlah, and at several beaches North of Brisbane, before finally being sent by train with the rest of his unit, 25 Battalion, to Townsville, and then by boat to Milne Bay, in PNG.

The Japanese attacked there on 25 August 1942, hoping to gain control of three Allied airstrips in the area. Outnumbered, outgunned and with local air support for the Allies they were repelled by 6th September, the first defeat for the Japanese on land in the War. In all, 171 Allied servicemen were killed and

The Milne Bay Militia

Away in the north of Queensland
On the tropic shores of hell,
Stands grim faced men, who watch and wait
For a future none can tell.

No fiery speeches stirred their hearts
No banners waved them on,
Just a silent prayer and a woman's tear
Then the land they loved was gone.

No morning sunshine met their gaze
No street with cheering crowds,
In this land where fever stalks unseen
And death drops from the clouds.

For this is war were life is cheap
Where human feelings fade,
Where deeds of valor pass unseen
In the jungle's swampy glade.

And then comes grim reality
Through smoke and flame and heat,
Through drenching rain and slimy mud
Where death went with defeat.

But through this greatest test they came
With a foe completely routed,

And cleared a nation's anxious brow
With courage some had doubted.

So remember this you armchair critics
Who sneer and criticise,
The ANZAC blood is in us all
It sleeps but never dies.

The Mad Machine Gunners

Deep in the salt-salt stained earth they wait
With a song of sadness and a song of hate
That blends with the breakers' monotonous beat
On sands once trodden by carefree feet

Watching all day for the foe to appear
Sick with disgust at the rumours they hear
Stalking all night through pest laden air
Searching for spies that they know are not there

Laughing when laughter seems far and remote
As Chambers and Leamon go stalking a goat
At Maurer who swore he'd discovered the spies
Till he found it was only the moon in his eyes

216 wounded in that conflict.

Eric was not injured but like hundreds of others he developed tropical ulcers, dysentery and malaria, and spent time in a rough bush hospital. There was little help there and he was eventually sent home on a hospital ship to Brisbane. He spent the next year in and out of hospitals and convalescent depots, with severe recurring bouts of malaria, and was eventually classified as B Class medically and unfit for overseas service. He was put to work in military laundries in Brisbane for the remainder of the War.

During all his time in the Army he maintained a correspondence with Vera Maddern, a girl he had met in Crow's Nest before he had enlisted, and late in 1943 they were married at a place called Emu Creek, just outside Crow's Nest. Included in his letters were some transcripts of poems written by another machine gunner of 25 Battalion, an R.A. Johnson.

Eric died in 2008. Vera, now aged 96, now resides at Bethany. One of their daughters, Rilla Evans, has lived on Black Gin Creek Road since 1979.

Combing the guns for corrosion and rust
Neath the shrewd, piecing eye of Captain Mal Just
Yearning a visit from the Japs out at sea
But quaking with dread of their keen 2IC

Sweating and digging with no chance to shirk
Trying in vane to dodge Corporal Burke
Frantic with worry when the "heads" in their glory
Come creeping around for a feasible "story"

And so it continues through times dreary trend
God only knows where it ever will end
Its just one long worry from Captains to "runners"
Its no bloody wonder they're called,
"The Mad Machine Gunners"

Note:

These three poems were written by Pt. Raymond Albert Johnson EMG Company, 25th Battalion Queensland who served fighting the Japanese with Eric Austin also a machine gunner in Milne Bay, PNG. These poems reflect the mood of our soldiers on the front lines. It was the first defeat the Japanese suffered on land in the war.



The Machine Gunners, "Sweetheart".

Take heed, you bush yokels and big city slickers,
As you sit here alone with your sweetheart, the Vickers,
For hate has decreed that you take up this post,
To keep slit-eyed nippons away from this coast.

When night drops its veil and you lie down to sleep,
In this haunt of mosquitoes and terrors that creep,
Though your sweetheart at home my do things that will hurt you,
Your sweetheart, the Vickers, will never desert you.

Though she stands here above you, and stares out to sea,
Don't think your forgotten, for that never will be,
For some day you'll know what her friendship is worth,
As she kisses each nippon goodbye from this earth.

So deep in these sands she'll cheer you and wait,
To sing you her song of conquest and hate,
With a chorus of scorn at the foe in retreat,
Who came with ambition but returned with defeat.

And when you return once again to you home,
Where harmony dwells and free people roam,
You can say as you stroll arm in arm with your "miss",
"It was my sweetheart, the Vickers, that gave me all this."

Question:

Are all the animal manures of equal value for my garden?

Answer:

No, animal and poultry manures vary in their nutrient value. Poultry manure is normally the richest, but it lacks bulk and therefore humus-forming capacity. However, all animal manures are very good for the garden as they develop humus micro-organisms in your soil.

*Referenced from:
All Your Gardening Questions Answered
by Tom Wyatt*

Salmon and Potato Salad

Ingredients:

12 baby potatoes
4 eggs
125g green beans, trimmed
250g punnet cherry tomatoes, halved
250g tinned salmon, drained, flaked
150g mixed salad leaves
¼ cup seeded olives

Dressing:

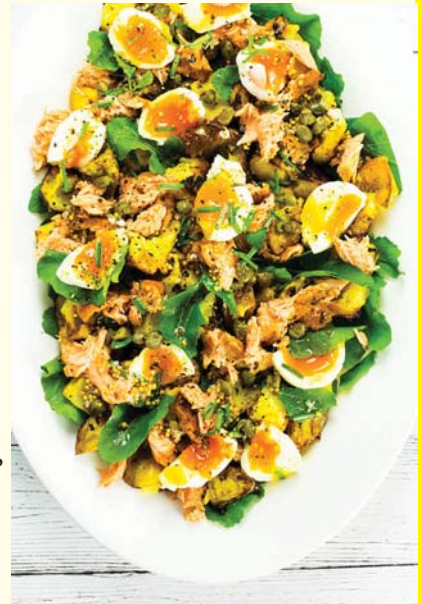
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup red-wine vinegar
2 tsp whole grain mustard
2 garlic cloves, crushed

Method:

Place potatoes in a saucepan with enough salted cold water to cover. Bring to boil on high. Cook 12-15 minutes until tender. Drain. Cool. Place eggs in a saucepan, cover with water, bring to the boil. Cook 4 minutes, adding beans half way through cooking. Drain and refresh in cold water. Halve beans lengthways. Peel eggs and halve. Transfer to a large bowl with remaining ingredients.

Dressing:

In a screw top jar combine all ingredients. Season. Drizzle dressing over salad just before serving.



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Trailer 6x4/ute/tray/van	\$19
Larger trailer or with hungry boards	\$22
Volume fee per m ³	\$49

ALTON DOWNS HALL

Hall Meeting	28 Feb 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	10 Mar 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	28 Mar 7:30pm
Dance	30 Mar 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	14 Apr 7:30pm
Cent sale	21 Apr
Hall Meeting	25 Apr 7:30pm
Card Night	12 May 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	23 May 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	9 Jun 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	27 Jun 7:30pm
Dance	29 Jun 7:30pm
Dance	13 Jul 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	14 Jul 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	25 Jul 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	11 Aug 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	22 Aug 7:30pm
Dance	31 Aug 7:30pm
Card Night	8 Sept 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	26 Sept 7:30pm
Dance	12 Oct 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	24 Oct 7:30pm
Indoor Bowls	10 Nov 7:30pm
Dance	30 Nov 7:30pm
Hall Meeting	28 Nov 7:30pm

Alton Downs Pony Club

Meeting 1st Tuesday
of the month 7.30pm
Alton Downs Hall

QCWA Ridglands Branch

Meeting 1st Wednesday every
month commencing at 9.30am
QCWA Ridglands Hall
Contact Joyce 4934 5120

Ridglands & District Sporting & Agricultural Association Inc

Meetings are held on the 2nd
Wednesday of the month,
commencing at 7.30 p.m.
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Jill Fry
Katie Bull
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Peter Hunt

Fitzroy Northern Area Ratepayers Association

Meetings:

7th May 2018

6th August 2018

5th November 2018

All Residents and Ratepayers
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