



## **Allan Alfred White**

28-8-1923 —17-4-2016

Allan was born in Broken Hill, but grew up in Uraidla where his parents moved to soon after, where they became successful orchardists. Allan attended Balhannah Primary School leaving at the age

of thirteen years after he successfully gained employment at the Centennial Hall, Wayville. Allan must have "put his age up" as back in 1936 the school leaving age was legally fourteen years.

July 21st 1942, Allan enlisted the Australian Army in Wallgrove N.S.W. stationed firstly in Alice Springs, followed to Darwin when it was bombed by the Japanese in 1943

Allan was seconded into the American Army, who in turn posted him to the Philippines to live in various villages, as an under cover agent for the American Army Intelligence. It was during this time that Allan celebrated his twenty first birthday. Allan had the utmost respect for the village people, who protected and looked after him so well from the Japanese soldiers,. Although food was so very scarce during this time, his protectors gave Allan a twenty first birthday celebration that he never forgot.

One time when Allan was on leave in Adelaide, while staying at a hostel in Hindley Street he met an attractive young housemaid by the name of Claire Porter, who after his discharge on July 16th 1946 Allan married in 1947. In 1950, because the prospects of work was more promising Allan and Claire moved to Dublin from where they were renting a house in Unley.

Claire's parents, Lllias and Brice Porter were still living in the family home that Claire's father had built in early 1900, on the corner of Third and Seventh Streets, Dublin. Allan and Claire rented the "Pigeon House" formally located at Lot 65 Sixth Street, Dublin, from Charlie Thompson for six shillings per week - -sixty cents in today's currency.

In the beginning Allan commenced working with his

father -in-law building and renovating houses. One of these that I remember Allan telling me about was the Two Wells Methodist Church Hall (the Uniting Church Op Shop today). This building is where Allan learnt to perfect "stucco" decorative cement work trowelled over bare brick walls. Another achievement that Allan was proud of was repairing the Virginia Catholic Church's high brick wall behind the altar that had extensive cracking. By all accounts because of both the wall height and it was a church wall, this job was quite a challenge for both of them.

Another story that Allan related was when they had to get rid of a well on a site in Two Wells township. Allan did not realise he was using more gelignite than was required, causing many houses in the area to shake considerably. How Allan ever got away with not being identified that he was responsible for the residents' very early morning shake-up wakening, goodness only knows, but he did.

After a few years Allan entered into a partnership with Windsor resident Milton Gill. During this association, they erected the Dublin Cricket Club's besser block club rooms, and obtained a contract with the Education Dept. to erect a number of new school toilet block facilities (Dublin being one of them) and dig the trenches (by hand, pick and shovel) to the septic tanks, connecting septic systems to the majority of primary schools toilet blocks within the Mallala District Council Area. There was an additional school contract obtained that included several nearby districts schools.

Allan enjoyed participating in community activities. Playing football for Dublin held special memories for Allan. Square dancing in our Dublin Institute, and at Two Wells was very popular in the 1950's, Doss and Gerald Collins, Doris and Ern Collins, Doll and Herb



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Carslake regularly made up their square of four couples. Besides helping to arrange and attending the dances in Dublin, Allan and Claire frequently travelled miles to various venues around the Adelaide Plains. They both enjoyed ballroom dancing immensely. Table Tennis was played regularly by locals in the Dublin Institute, but I am not sure if it was competitive with other towns during this time.

Allan and Claire regrettably returned to Adelaide in 1957 to live, owing to the lack of available work in the Dublin area.

Allan commenced working for Bradford's at Port Adelaide, later being transferred to Darwin to manage their store there. In 1970 Kevin Bubner moved to Darwin to work, staying with the Whites for a few days before finding accommodation. Kevin remembers opening his first pay packet on Allan and Claire's kitchen table. When Allan and Claire returned to Adelaide they purchased a home in Lockleys, followed by several others, including a home unit in Brooklyn Park where Allan remained after his beloved Claire passed away in 2007, until he was admitted to St Laurence's Nursing Home at Grange in 2013.

Although Allan never became a Dublin resident until 1950, he loved our little township as passionately as Claire did. They were among the first former residents I contacted in late 1996 to enquire if they would support the forming of a local Dublin History Group to preserve the area's history for future generations. This they both readily agreed to.

After Doss Collins, Beverly Jones, Phyllis Barkla and myself were given permission to form a History Group in July 1997, and up until the time that Claire became ill, I do not think they ever missed a function together. Allan's support continued after Claire's passing, frequently visiting on a Sunday, firstly to the Dublin Cemetery, followed by knocking on my front door by 10 am for a cup of tea and a couple of Tim Tam biscuits for morning tea, before always enjoying lunch at the Dublin Hotel. During these visits, that included at times his nieces Gwen Rutter nee Prime, Heather Evans nee Taylor and Kaye Pedler nee Prime, Allan shared so



many memories and reminiscences with his nieces and myself that together with Claire they had babysat in their early years.

Allan still continued to support the Dublin History Group Inc., including being financially very generous, funding the restoration of the Fighting Forces Comfort Fund Embroidery in memory of Claire and the Porter family and a very substantial donation to the Dublin Community's Restoration project for the Dublin Cemetery gates and new fence project. Allan stated at the time: "I will be put to rest up here one day, I do not want to have to continually look at the unsightly front wire fence that is presently in place each day." The dedication of the Dublin Cemetery Project in 2013 was the last Dublin function that Allan attended. Allan and Claire are responsible for providing the majority of the history concerning the Porter family, together with some town history information that was freely given during friendly lunches in my home at times. Allan and Claire would spend many hours explaining to my husband Bob the family connections with many of the former residents buried in the Dublin Cemetery. Allan had been a pallbearer for a few of them.

With Allan's passing, his nieces lost a wonderful caring uncle and the Dublin History Group have lost a wonderful benefactor, and personally I have lost a dear friend.

***Allan may you Rest in Peace.***

*Pat Thompson*