

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE1198

Stewart, Eleanor Jessie

(1887 - 1977)

Born 1 January, 1887, Ebenezer Mission Victoria Australia

Died 31 December, 1977, Australia

Occupation Aboriginal storyteller, Linguist

Summary

Eleanor Jessie (Nellie) Stewart, of Wergaia descent, was born Eleanor Pepper at the Ebenezer Mission in western Victoria. Her family travelled widely, spending some time at Coranderk before settling at Lake Boga near Swan Hill. There Eleanor learnt housekeeping and cooking skills from the wife of the local baker, A.C. Stone, who was friendly with Aboriginal people.

Nellie married Jackson Stewart, of Wemba Wemba descent, and they lived and worked around the Riverina and raised a large family. Nellie worked as a shearers' cook, and was able to save enough money to buy a house in Swan Hill. In about 1960 she was visited by Alan Marshall, a well-known author, and they planned to write about the early days in the Wimmera. Eleanor also remembered and recorded in writing some Wergaia words, the lists of which are now deposited with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra. The Institute also holds audio-tapes of the stories and vocabulary she recounted for C.J. Ellis and Luise Hercus.

Published resources

Photograph

Serviceman and Servicewomen in uniform during World War II and community portraits in Victoria, Garwood, Alana

Report

Victorian Protection Board Report for 1887, Victorian Protection Board, 1887

Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic and Barbara Lemon

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