

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE4818

Radisich, Zelda

(1922 - 2009)

Born 1 January, 1922, Auckland, New Zealand

Died 1 March, 2009, Boulder

Occupation Contortionist, Hairdresser, Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) worker

Details

Zelda Hinemoa Patricia was born to Lily Louise Higham and Jasper Kent Finlay in Auckland, New Zealand in 1922. Jasper was a remittance man who had been sent to New Zealand from the United Kingdom by his father, Sir Jasper Kent-Finlay. He worked as a barber and died when Zelda was four years old.

Zelda and her mother travelled to Australia. Prior to leaving New Zealand, Lily had her body tattooed from her neck to her toes, depicting scenes from many countries. She even had her will tattooed on her back.

Zelda was trained as a contortionist and she and her mother travelled Australia and the world performing 'tasteful and entertaining' exhibitions.

Lily married again to Harry Seabrook, whose act in the show was riding a motorbike and performing the 'Wheel of death'. The family moved to Western Australia in the early 1930s where Zelda attended the Boulder School.

Leaving school at fourteen, Zelda's first job was in a lolly shop in Burt Street, Boulder and then she went on to work as a hairdresser in an establishment called 'Louise hairdresser & beautician'. She travelled to Kalgoorlie daily on the tram, costing 6 pence, taking her crib (lunch) with her. However, travel became too expensive for a Boulder girl, so she went to work for Boulder hairdresser, Joy Harper in Lane Street, Boulder.

During World War Two, she became a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) worker, doing 1000 hours of voluntary service at St John of Gods hospital in Kalgoorlie. She also helped in the digging of trenches in Burt Street.

Zelda married Matt Radisich in 1944 in the Kalgoorlie Registry Office, and the couple lived in a house built by Matt in 1950 in Dwyer Street, Boulder. They had one son and a daughter.

Zelda died in March 2009 in Boulder.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition

Karlkurla Gold: A History of the Women of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Criena Fitzgerald and National Foundation for Australian Women, 2012,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/wikb/wikb-home.html>

Author Details

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