

JEAN ALVEEN BURCHMORE

1903 – 1974

Her motto: "Others first"

Jeannie Alveen Harrower was born at home on Monday 26 January 1903, Australia Day, celebrating the nation's founding. Jean, as she became known to all, was the youngest of the seven children of Robert and Jane Carnaby Harrower (née Hutton), both of Scots descent. [For those roots [click here](#) for Hutton family genealogy and [click here](#) for Harrower family genealogy]



Jane and Robert Harrower in 1903 surrounded by their seven children with baby Jeannie on her mother's lap.

By 1894, Robert had built and moved into the Bexley home with four children and then came David, Sarah and finally, Jeannie.

Stories of the tough life during the 1890's depression were passed down the years. We remember being told that Robert would tramp many miles to his brick mason's work for a bag of groceries per week. Nevertheless, Jane made sure that their daughters were raised as ladies, properly dressed, schooled, churchgoing and taking piano lessons.



Our maternal grandmother, Jane Carnaby (Hutton) Harrower aged 46, is pictured c.1907

Her four daughters, Mary Jane (by then Mrs. Forest Sydney Taylor with four children of her own), Annie, Sadie and Jean.

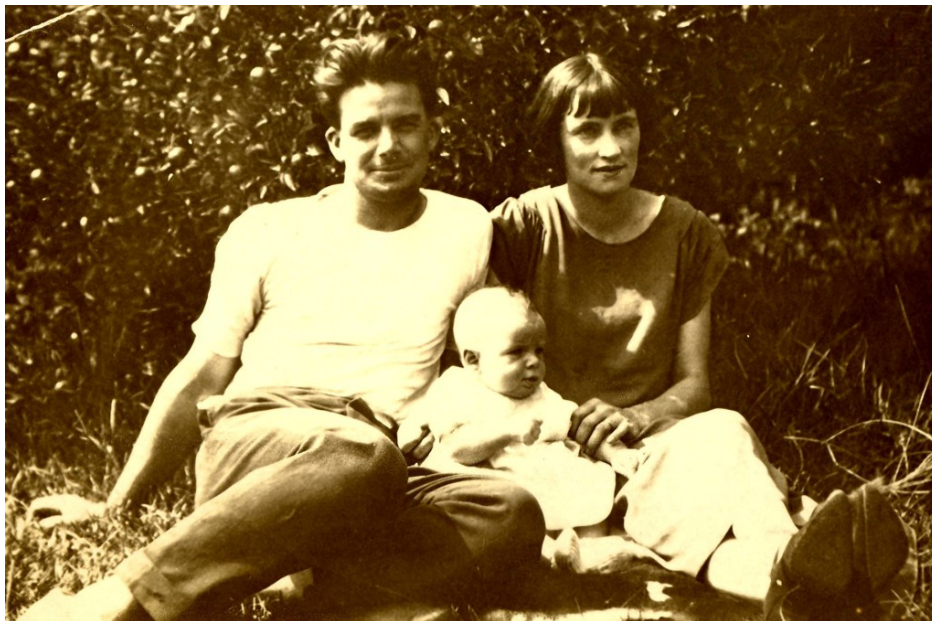


Michelle and Edgar stumbled across an apron hand-stitched by Jean at school. They had it conserved and framed before presenting it to Rhonda on Christmas Day 2012 in memory of “Nan” (as she was known by all her grandchildren). Jean demonstrated a clear skill for needlework while at school, which she left in her early teens to work as a milliner, travelling by tram to Arncliffe station, thence by steam train to work in the Haymarket, Sydney area.



By age 17, she had met Jack Burchmore as they are pictured as bridesmaid and best man at the 1920 marriage of her sister Sadie to Bill Raine.

Jean and Jack were married at Kilkenny (South Australia), an Adelaide suburb where he was commissioning automatic glass forming equipment.



On his next project, this time at Brisbane, their first son, John Robert (pictured here) was born in 1924.

Robert Harrower and his older sons, one a carpenter the other a bricklayer were now building homes for Bexley relatives [[Click here](#) to see The Harrower compound] at Abercorn and Highgate Streets and on weekends would trek to Peakhurst to do the same for their Hutton relatives who had come to Australia in 1912.

By 1927, Jean and Jack with young Jack were proud residents at #22 and within the next four years Ken and Noel arrived to complete what we later called "The brothers Three" (pictured below).



Picture the eight cousins bracketed for exactly eleven years by Neil William Raine 13 Dec 1920 to Noel William Burchmore 13 Dec 1931. In between were Billy and Jack Harrower, Wal Raine, young Jack Burchmore, Joan Harrower and Ken Burchmore. We look back fondly to those early days. Our homes were located on the northern fringe of The Township with easy access to undeveloped land known as Bexley Gully and frequented by virtually all the local boys. Tales have been told of "Bexley Barefoot Days" when on non-schooldays we would entertain ourselves for just about all of the daylight hours. Makeshift games like cricket, battles with opposing gangs and notably Bonfire night which each year coincided with Empire Day on Queen Victoria's birthday. Each year until 1939 on 24 May, we would march from school to the local cinema where patriotic speeches, martial music and the afternoon off would honour an Empire on which (at least until then) the sun never set.

Of course, the main celebration would be "Cracker night". Our gang had toiled for week's gathering tea tree from the gully, old tires and anything combustible to form the mightiest bonfire, which had to be guarded against sabotage by "enemy" gangs. At 8PM sharp, our leader would torch the bonfire amid cheers and the sound of fireworks and skyrockets watched by a host of parents and sisters.



This 1936 certificate recognizes the early days of Jean's contribution to this fund raising friendly society which gathered regularly for sing-a-longs (with Jean at the piano and to send their modest donations to the central body-in later years becoming Eurobodalla Homes which provided vacation accommodation for the needy. Jean was active until her death- more than 40 years contributing to a worthy cause while uplifting the spirits of many local women like those pictured below.





Sadie and Jean were almost inseparable for Jean's lifetime. Born three years apart, piano teacher rapping knuckles, home making, child bearing swapping notes almost daily, serving as surrogate mothers, providing meals in the absence of one or the other. Ken remembers Aunt and Uncle being masters of the cribbage board who routinely enjoyed (or suffered) his company.

In retirement, one of their longest trips was on the Strathnaver to England returning via Europe and Bangkok where they are pictured above.



Jean and Jack were blessed with seven grandchildren who called them "Nan and Pop" and she reveled in their company. Here is a typical backyard picnic.

Jean Alveen died suddenly at her Bexley home of 47 years. Her joyous life ended on 13 July 1974 which curiously was the same date 13 July 1929 on which Jane, her mother and 13 July 1948 Alice, her mother in law had both passed.

At her funeral service a large gathering of relatives, family business associates; bowling club and social club members as well as family friends came to pay their respects.

Her nature was beautifully captured on a sympathy card from Marina and Reg:

“Jean’s disposition was such that as well as being happy herself, she made a lot of people happy too, which is a wonderful way to remember her”

Still in our hearts,

Ken and Noel.
May 2017