

# Family and Local History Newsletter

Joondalup Library, Local History  
102 Boas Avenue, Joondalup, 6027

Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm  
Saturday 9.30am – 12.30pm

## Margaret Cockman – Vale 26 July 2023

With a 'can do' pioneering spirit handed down through the generations, Margaret Cockman embraced every opportunity to be involved in building the community of her childhood. Her family's early connection to the area fuelled her interest in the history of the region and their desire to build the Wanneroo community through hard work and commitment ran through her veins.

Margaret Jane Cockman was born on 13 April 1931 to Cecil Malcolm Cockman and Mary Jane Dorothy (Dolly) Cockman (nee Ostle). She was a great granddaughter of James Cockman and Mary Ann Cockman (nee Roper), who were the first family to settle in Wanneroo in 1852. Margaret lived in the Wanneroo area her whole life and her commitment to the local people of the area and the district led to her deep involvement with many organisations as a volunteer or dedicated member.

Margaret attended Wanneroo School until the age of 14, leaving the area to go to Yarloop where she worked on a dairy farm. Margaret returned to Wanneroo within a year and in 1946 was employed as an office assistant with the Wanneroo Road Board. In *Remember when: stories of Wanneroo* published by the City of Wanneroo, Margaret recalled her early experiences after leaving school:

*I left school when I was fourteen and started work for the Wanneroo Road Board when I was fourteen and three quarters. I spent the time between leaving school and starting work at a dairy farm in Yarloop helping my older sister look after her three children. That's where I learned to ride a push bike ... I rode into town every day to get meat, mail, and the paper. When I got the job at the Council I needed some mode of transport, so I bought a spanking new Bluebird bike. ... For the first quarter mile of the two-mile journey to work I had to walk my bike up a deep sand track, but I could ride the rest of the way ... locals who drove past would stop and ask, 'Do you want a lift?' They'd throw my bike in the back of the truck or hold on to it balanced on the running board of their car ... I rode a push bike to work until I turned twenty-one and was old enough to get a driver's licence.*

In 1946, Margaret also took on the job of assistant secretary of the Wanneroo Agricultural Society's Wanneroo Show. In the 1950s she was promoted to secretary and became the first woman secretary of an agricultural society in Western Australia. She held the position for 31 years.

In 1961, the old Wanneroo Road Board office was repurposed as a library and the Shire of Wanneroo didn't have a librarian to manage



P02485. Margaret Cockman at her 21st birthday party, held in the Wanneroo Road Board Hall. 1952.

it. Margaret was sent for a week's training to become one. She spent two days at the Osborne Park Library, two days at the Medina Library and a day at the Circulation Department in Perth to gain the experience needed to do the job. Margaret said, 'I was then a librarian.'

Over the next 50 years Margaret worked for Wanneroo and saw the Road Board grow into the Shire of Wanneroo and later form the City of Wanneroo and the City of Joondalup.



# Welcome to the Family and Local History Newsletter Summer 2023 – 2024



P00375.52. Margaret Cockman's retirement farewell dinner. 1996.

When the Shire of Wanneroo Administration building was opened in Joondalup in 1979, she was among the first staff members to work there. Margaret retired from the City of Wanneroo in 1996 and was their longest serving employee. Having worked for the Council for five decades, Margaret had the unique opportunity to witness every major development and project undertaken throughout Wanneroo and Joondalup's early years.

Margaret is best remembered for the incredible volume of voluntary work and community service she performed that contributed to the development of the Wanneroo and Joondalup communities we know today. Margaret either assisted with or founded the running of community groups including the Wanneroo Country Women's Association, Wanneroo Agricultural Society, Wanneroo and Districts Historical Society, the Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, Mullaloo Surf Life Saving Club, Wanneroo Red Cross Doorknock Appeal, Yanchep Golf Club, and the Wanneroo St John Ambulance Service.

The St John Ambulance Service was an important community role for Margaret. She became the Branch Secretary of the Wanneroo St John Ambulance Service branch in 1969 and then a sergeant in 1970. In the late 1970s Margaret was a volunteer and trainer at the Wanneroo St John Ambulance Service. In 1976 she successfully captained the Wanneroo First Aid Team to win the national nursing competition.

Margaret also captained the West Australian Nursing Team that won second place in the South-East Asia competition in 1984. As a member of the WA mixed team she participated in the international competitions in New Zealand in 1985. In 1990 she was appointed to the position of Officer Sister. At a ceremony held at Government House in 1997 the governor of Western Australia awarded Margaret the honour of Commander of the Order of St John Ambulance for her service to the organisation. She retired from active service in 2003.

In the 1960s Margaret's desire to help the community saw her attend a public meeting held to form a bush fire brigade. The organisation was later known as the Wanneroo Civil Defence and Margaret was appointed the Civil Defence Welfare Officer.

As a member of a well-known Wanneroo pioneer family, Margaret had a keen interest in her family's history and that of the Wanneroo district. In 1979 she co-authored *The Story of Wanneroo*, with former journalist Guy Daniel. The book was published by the Shire of Wanneroo to mark the Western Australia 150th



P00893.01. Chairman of Commissioners with Freeman of the City of Wanneroo. 1998.



P03102. Margaret Cockman and Dulcie Duffy at Cockman House. ca. 1970.



P02523.01. Aline Paley and Margaret Cockman.1990.

Anniversary. Margaret also served as the honorary secretary of the Wanneroo Historical Society having helped to form the society in 1989 as senior Wanneroo Council officer. More than 100 residents attended the inaugural meeting of the society with 101 signing on as foundation members.

In 1980 the Shire of Wanneroo built a pavilion at the Wanneroo Showground and named it the Margaret Cockman Pavilion in honour of her longstanding service to the community. Shire President Charles Searson joined show society President Bill Fulcher in sealing a time capsule containing photos and other memorabilia under the floor of this pavilion.

Margaret's sense of community and her extensive record as a volunteer have understandably been recognised throughout her life. In 1991, Margaret was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her community work and in 2001 the Centenary Medal. In 2002, the Lions Clubs International named Margaret an exemplary



P02286. 1st Wanneroo Basketball team. 1949.

Citizen for Community Service to the people of Wanneroo.

Both the City of Wanneroo and the City of Joondalup have recognised Margaret for her service to the community, her volunteering, and her work with both councils by naming her a Freeman of the City in 1995 and 2007 respectively.

In 2006, Margaret reached another milestone by serving on the Agricultural Society's Wanneroo Show committee for 60 years. Margaret dedicated herself to improving the quality of life for the people of the northern suburbs.

In recent years Margaret was one of the oldest participants in the Queen's Baton relay through Wanneroo in 2018. She was nominated to participate by Mayor Tracey Roberts

and carried the baton into the Jacaranda Amphitheatre at the Wanneroo Civic Centre.

On the 13 April 2021, Margaret celebrated her 90th birthday at a morning tea at Lake Joondalup Lifestyle Village. The event was attended by her family and friends, City of Wanneroo Mayor Tracey Roberts and City of Joondalup Mayor Albert Jacob.

Sadly, Margaret passed away on the 26 July 2023, leaving behind an enduring legacy of her passion, commitment, and dedication for helping the community. Past and present civic leaders unanimously agree that most of our major community organisations would not be running today without the incredible enthusiasm and devotion of Margaret Cockman over the years.



P03251.01. City of Wanneroo Coat of Arms handover. 2020.



P02899 Duffy House 2009



P00105.04 Cnr Davidson Tce and Shenton Ave Dec 1990

## Donations of photos and memorabilia

Was your house one of the earliest in your street or did your children attend the first day at a newly built school? Did you enjoy dressing fashionably, or were you an early member of a sporting club?

Local History would love donations of photos of everyday life in the City of Joondalup and the wider region.

Digital photos can be copied and saved by us, and printed photos can be scanned and returned to you. We also collect print memorabilia such as programs, flyers, posters and newsletters.

Contact us on **9400 4746** or by email to [local.history@joondalup.wa.gov.au](mailto:local.history@joondalup.wa.gov.au)

## Tintype photography

Tintype photography was invented in France in the 1850s by Adolphe-Alexandre Martin. It was the very first type of affordable photography that was readily accessible to the average person.

Tintype photographs gained popularity during the 1850s and 1860s. It was especially popular in the USA. Tintype photographers would travel to carnivals and fairs, and take photographs of individuals, families, and Civil War soldiers.

To create a photograph, a photographic emulsion was applied directly to a thin sheet of iron coated with a dark lacquer or enamel, which produced a unique positive image. Chemicals involved in producing the photographic image such as silver nitrate, often left the photographer with blackened fingers.

Tintype photographs were often hand coloured. Customers purchased cases, frames, or paper envelopes to protect and display their photographs.



An example of tintype photography



*The City of Joondalup acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. We recognise the culture of the Noongar people and the unique contribution they make to the Joondalup region and Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and all Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

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