

# ❖ ANNA NEUENDORF ❖

## BACKGROUND

Anna Termeulen was born on the island of Celebes on 26 January 1925 in what was then the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) and spent her childhood and youth in Cherebon in west Java and Batavia (now Jakarta). When Anna was 17, the Japanese invasion brought World War II to her doorstep. Anna and her mother, along with some 2000 other Dutch women and children, were sent to an internment camp in Tjideng, a rundown, outer suburb of Batavia.

Hunger was a constant in the internment camp and many internees died of malnutrition. They also lived under the threat of punishment for any indiscretions. On one occasion, Anna was punished for not wearing a badge displaying her prisoner number. She was compelled to stand outside the commandant's office for 12 hours in the hot sun and was still standing at the end of the 12-hour period. Two Japanese soldiers who were subjected to the same punishment that day had collapsed.

At war's end, Anna was sent to Australia for three-months' recuperation. Soon after that, she found work in Melbourne and met Trevor Neuendorf, a former Australian Army officer who had been captured at Tobruk. He had spent four years of the war in an Italian prisoner-of-war camp. Anna and Trevor married in Melbourne in 1948.



## BUDERIM - LIFE AND COMMUNITY

Anna and Trevor, with their baby daughter Gail, moved north in 1951. They set up home in a packing shed on their 17 acres of Buderim farmland and started a new life as small-crop farmers. A son, Keith, was born in 1954. They farmed their Buderim property until 1959, and then bought a small furniture shop in nearby Maroochydore - the beginnings of what was to become Neuendorf Interiors. With no previous retail experience, they improvised, worked hard and expanded services to meet customer demand, maintaining a very hands-on involvement in the business as it grew and prospered. They continued living on their property in Buderim and participated in community activities, particularly the establishment of Headland Golf Club.

Anna continued her involvement with Neuendorf Interiors after Trevor's death in 1970. With her artistic eye, business acumen and keen work ethic, she was well-suited to her key role in the business. She was a creative thinker but also a doer, seeing ideas through to completion. She loved young people and, through her example and encouragement, provided a fertile environment for employees to achieve their potential.

While Anna's business role was central to who she was, she loved her home in Buderim. It was her castle and its décor reflected her artistic flair. The garden, which she tended herself, was a further expression of her artistic eye. She loved and was much loved by her children and grandchildren. She remains an inspiration to them and to her extended family.

By nature, Anna was quite reserved and never sought recognition for her internment survival or subsequent achievements. Throughout her life, she remained totally un-embittered by her war-time experiences. For Anna, it was a time of personal growth. The love she held for others, the warmth of her humanity and a deep inner strength were apparent to those who knew her. She was resilient, determined and refused to give in to difficulties - personal qualities and attitudes undoubtedly attributable to her teenage war-time experiences and the wonderful example set by her mother during those difficult years.

Anna passed away on 4 June 2015. She was still working part-time at Neuendorf Interiors until a year before her death.