

❖ DOROTHY & BERT EDWARDS ❖

BACKGROUND

Tenterfield-born Dorothy Wilson and Sydney-born Herbert (Bert) Edwards both served in the Middle East during World War II – Dorothy as a physiotherapist in an Army field hospital (2/5 AGH) and Bert in an Anti-tank (2/2 Tank Attack) regiment. They met in Palestine in 1940 when the ‘hospital’ visited the ‘troops’. Dorothy was a Lieutenant at the time and Bert a Sergeant, but such trifles were overcome.



They subsequently returned to Australia and married in Brisbane’s St John’s Cathedral in August 1942. Following discharge at the end of the war, Bert gained work as a sales representative with Caltex, his pre-war employer. With a sales district spanning the Brisbane-Maryborough area, Bert and Dorothy bought property in Buderim in 1947 and moved there in 1949 with their family of six young children, including two sets of twins.

LIFE ON BUDERIM

Bert and Dorothy settled into their Short Street home and Bert continued in his role as sales rep with Caltex. Dorothy opened a physiotherapy practice, the Coast’s only one at that time (and for the next 30 years), and they had another daughter. Having a large family, Bert and Dorothy needed to be resourceful. Their sons recall their involvement in the family’s little side-business supplying chickens and ducks for the passing trade. It was their job to kill and pluck the birds for those who required them ‘dressed’. Bert often did a deal with the local butcher, Dave Weakley, swapping a dressed drake for a roasting beef (pound for pound).

Despite family and career demands, Bert and Dorothy still had time and energy for community involvement. Dorothy was a member of Red Cross and Quota International, whilst Bert was Group Scout Master of the Buderim Scouts for a short time. They were foundation members of Headland Golf Club and, in 1959, donated the Digger’s Shield which is played for every Anzac day at Headland’s. Tragically, Bert died in 1960 leaving Dorothy with the seven children, the youngest aged two.

As well as managing her maternal role and her physiotherapy practice, Dorothy was able to continue her involvement in Quota and other community activities. She served in various roles at Headland Golf Club, including three separate two-year terms as Associates President, and was honoured with Life Membership. She loved her card games, especially Bridge and Solo, and was a member of the Buderim Bridge Club. She also spent many hours in her garden, much influenced by Edna Walling, one of her patients. Dorothy was a very welcoming person, and her children recall her warmth in playing host to visitors to their home – the ‘old’ people who were very much part of Buderim. Dorothy died in 1983.

Bert and Dorothy’s children recall growing up in Buderim with great fondness. They all went to Buderim Mountain School and two of them taught there after graduating as teachers. They recall the Buderim of their childhood days as a mainly farming community tending crops of banana, pineapple, ginger, strawberries and market gardens. They remember family card games, Guy Fawkes and Halloween parties and family sing-a-longs on trips to Brisbane. They consider their father Bert as a man who died too young – a good life cut short. They regard their mother as an amazing woman - a strong matriarch, yet a very private person.