

# Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

August 2015

**Leila Blom**  
15th July, 1917  
– 1st July, 2015

The world was at war for the first time when **Leila** was born to **Duncan** and **Annie McFarlane**. She was the youngest grandchild of **Major Edmund Lockyer** – of Australian

historical significance. He mapped the Brisbane river for the first time, his name given to the Lockyer Valley; he claimed the western part of Australia for Britain in Albany, WA; he also became the First Usher of the Black Rod in NSW Parliament and Landowner/ Grazier in the Murrumbidgee. So a significant part of Australian history is in her family story.

She grew up in the country at High Range near Mittagong. Leila's schooling began at High Range then Bowral Primary before she began to attend Bowral High School. It was during her final year in Primary School that she met her lifelong friend, **Dorothy**. They were friends from that time on. Eighty-six years later their earthly lives have ended just three months apart. She loved her horse and during the Depression she would ride him to Bowral High School 11 miles each way.

The Depression left many sad images in Leila. Often she would describe how tough it was on people as they sought work in the country just to eat. In 1948 she married **Wallie Blom** a train driver. They moved around NSW finally finishing up in Mt Colah. They had two children **Olga** and **Paul**.

Gardening and sewing were passions and so every vegetable imaginable was grown in the large vegetable beds at the back of the house. She also loved animals and so there was always a pet dog for her to love. In Inverell there had been a small herd of goats as well.



Wallie retired in 1977; so they enjoyed thirty retirement years together visiting Olga and Paul and Paul's children, **Matthew**, **Andrew** and **Nicole**, then their families, through until the end of 2008 when Wallie passed away at age 91.

Olga said that her mum would often say: "Love one another and do good to all people."

She was always gracious, optimistic and accepting of others: no matter what their beliefs. She was a peaceful person who believed we should accept one another with all our different ideas. There was no reason to argue or get upset with one another. It really bothered her that Christians could get angry with one another. This was totally opposite to who she was.

She loved the church and her God. She always wanted to know what was happening, and was thrilled to hear of the work done overseas. When she was unable to attend she would read *Church Matters* and listen to the CDs of the services. She was attending a monthly Bible Study until very recently.

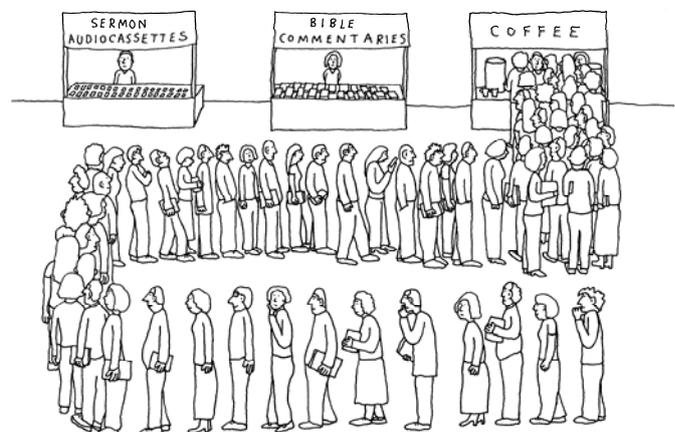
Her life covered WWI, the Great Depression, WWII and the massive changes we have seen in the world since then.

One can reflect on all the experiences that God allowed her to have, which He used in moulding her character to be conformed to the compassionate, humble and serving likeness of Jesus Christ.

So we are celebrating God's finished work in Leila Blom.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

A TYPICAL SCENE



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## Making Your Garden Grow

The recent announcement that Sydney member **Robert Alexander Douglas Mackenzie** (Alex, to us) had received a Diploma of Biblical Studies from Sydney's *Moore Theological College*, was greeted with understandable admiration by our congregation. But this grew when we learned how long it had taken for him to achieve his sought-after goal.

Older members will remember (maybe with mixed feelings) the old Ambassador College Correspondence course our fellowship conducted many years ago. Many would agree that doing *any* study course by correspondence can be a hard slog. There can be a feeling of isolation for some, along with a sense of disconnect that can slow learning in the most enthusiastic of students.

Alex identifies with the latter. "I discovered that I'm the kind of person who needs the discipline of regular class attendance that will keep me accountable to my goal."

One such goal that Alex found was strongly emerging in his life a decade ago was to "formally study the Bible and its application to our daily lives as followers of Christ." Only this time he would knuckle under to attend classes in person.

Little did Alex know it would take until 2015 to kick his ball into the net, attending for two hours a week at Sydney's respected and historic Moore Theological College in Newtown. His choice of college is interesting. It was named after its founder, **Thomas Moore**, a nineteenth-century settler in Sydney Town whose business interests included timber, sheep and shipbuilding. In his personal life, Moore was a committed Christian who helped establish several Christian organisations. In leaving his estate to the Church of England he provided for the foundation of a Protestant College, which eventually became Moore College. It still exists 150 years later and continues to thrive.

Alex says it was in the 1940's that the college began its external studies department with a series of evening lectures, the notes of which led into development of a correspondence course. Regular re-writing and revisions are behind the two courses available today by either correspondence or evening lectures.

"The Evening Course is pitched at a higher standard than that for those studying by correspondence," Alex explains. "But there is no time limit for completion or any special entry requirements for the external studies programs," he adds. Many thousands of students from most Christian denominations worldwide now enrol annually for correspondence study.

Alex points out that the Evening Course he took is structured to equip the people of God with knowledge of God's Word so that they can better serve – as described in Eph 4:12 ... 'for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ.'

He explains that there are 16 subjects, eight of which are core subjects. He singles out Biblical Theology as probably the most important of these. "This offers an overview of the Bible and is the basis of the whole Diploma of Biblical Studies course."

The call of time on everyone is real and was no exception in Alex's case. "I took breaks in my studies throughout the period, but always continued when time permitted. If you're able, you can do the course in four years."

Alex gained a new perspective on the life and teaching of the Apostle Paul as part of New Testament Epistle studies. He concedes there were many issues explored and debated with rigour by students during those in-class sessions.

As a professional horticulturist, Alex is acutely aware of the time that's essential if all plants are to grow to maturity. Growth doesn't happen overnight. We're no different. We all need time. The decade of years that Alex has invested in his Diploma of Biblical Studies, he sees, were essential to *his* growth.

"Time will tell," he admits, "how effective the course has been in my life. But as an ordinary, everyday person I do long to positively engage my world for Christ and express my love for Him through good service in my church community; to offer effective witness for Christ; and to defend the hope we have in an ever-changing world."

By **Barry Hatfield**



Alex receives his Diploma from Dr Mark Thompson, Principal, Head of Department of Theology, Philosophy and Ethics, Moore College.

## ULLADULLA FESTIVAL 2015

Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Sunday Sept 27			
Monday Sept 28		2.00pm Tea/coffee 3.00pm Worship Service R Dean	
Tuesday Sept 29	10.30am Worship Service K Gubb Children's Church M Best	2.30pm Adventure Race Z Garratt/J Richardson	
Wednesday Sept 30	10.30am Worship Service H Callaghan		6.30pm 10 Pin Bowling "this is a non-church-sponsored, non-church-supervised activity"
Thursday Oct 1	10.30am Worship Service R Bouchier Children's Church M Bouchier		Funland "this is a non-church-sponsored, non-church-supervised activity"
Friday Oct 2	10.30am Worship Service K Gubb Children's Church M Bouchier 12.30pm Lord's Supper K Gubb	3.00pm Children's Party M & C Wells 3.00pm A year at Sherbrooke 53 mins (in the Hall) Supper R Dean	
Saturday Oct 3		2.30pm Young Adult Led Worship Service Z Garratt Children's Church M Bouchier	7.30pm Bunco Games Night (in the Hall) R Garratt
Sunday Oct 4	Seniors' Trip RDean Breakfast Barbecue/Beach Games Z Garratt/J Richardson		
Monday Oct 5	11.00am Worship Service R Dean	BYO Lunch Fellowship/Farewell (in the Hall)	