

# Tribute to Rana McGlashen, 1914-2010

Rana McGlashen recently passed away peacefully at the Jack Inglis Friendship Hospital after 16 months of residential care.

She was the last of the fourth generation of McGlashen family to settle in New Zealand and never married so has no direct descendants. She is, however, survived by her nephew Kim McGlashen, his wife Gertrud and their family Michelle, Richard, Andrew and Brent.

Rana had been an active member of the Motueka Historical Association and thoroughly enjoyed sharing her considerable knowledge of past events. She loved researching local family histories, searching land titles, photographic records and tracing family descendants.

Her father Herbert Bradley McGlashen was one of 11 children and her mother Wilhelmine (nee Tutbury) was one of seven children. Therefore, Rana had many aunts and uncles and cousins.

The family links of her father's siblings include Inglis, Goodall, Fry, Duncan, Boyce, McNabb, Tutbury, Horton, Rowling and Hunt. Of the same generation, on her mother's side, there are family links to Hickmott, Cook, De Lacy, Shee, Clark and McKenzie.

Many of the descendants of these families still live and farm in the area to which the first settlers arrived in 1842.

Rana was born in Motueka in 1914 and her brother Bruce arrived in 1919 (died 2001). Their family home was at 45 Pah Street and still stands today.

Bert McGlashen owned leasehold title to land in the vicinity of Pah Street and further land at the west end of Poole Street. Over a period the family farmed plums, pears, blackcurrants, tobacco, and hops and raised livestock including draught horses. Further land was acquired at the end of Poole Street in 1928.

Rana left school aged 14 to work and help the family household and farming enterprises. The depression years of the 1930s helped shape her character to be prudent, self reliant and capable. Clothes were mended, dresses were made, seasonal fruits were preserved and providing it could be useful nothing was wasted. Motueka developed in her lifetime from horse and carriage to motorised transport with the associated construction of improved roads and bridges.

Events took hold of her life in her mid-thirties. Firstly, Rana nursed her mother through a long illness until Minnie died in 1940 at age 54.

By then New Zealand was mobilising for the war effort. She supported her father when her brother Bruce left for Italy to join the NZ 23rd Battalion in 1943. She wrote and sent parcels to him almost weekly throughout the war years and kept every letter as if it could be his last. Bruce was demobilised in England at the end of the conflict and returned to the farm in 1945.

Their father Bert died in 1947. Rana inherited the house and continued to live at 45 Pah Street. Bruce married Lorna Wilkinson in 1949 and built a new house on land in Poole Street.

In 1952 Rana and Bruce developed a subdivision with their respective shares of the land between Bennett Street and Talbot Street. The land opposite the house across Pah Street was sold to the Motueka Borough Council for development of the new Bowling Club greens.

Rana was well read in the history of Europe and longed to travel overseas. In 1955 she left Auckland on the ship *M.V. Rangitoto* for England. She worked in London and travelled extensively throughout the UK and Europe.

She returned to New Zealand in 1956 and over the next decade travelled to the Pacific Islands, Japan and Australia. Between trips she would work seasons tying and grading tobacco and some summers as a cook for the youth health camps in Stoke.

In the 1960s she held a permanent position as cook at Salisbury Girl's School in Richmond. She subsequently cooked for the Phillis Moffat Hospital in Motueka during the 1970s for the maternity and geriatric patients and the district meals-on-wheels programme.

In 1974 she sold the old house and purchased a new ownership flat in a new subdivision in Hulbert Street. In her "retirement years" she enjoyed her garden and historical research. She produced records for a number of associations.

In the foreword of the 2008 booklet *'Hotels of Motueka and Districts'*, compiled by Coralie Smith for the Motueka and Districts Historical Association, Rana gave an interesting insight into life surrounding local drinking establishments.

The booklet, with information dating back 166 years, was a summary of a vast amount of material collected by Rana and now held by the Historical Association, along with material gathered by others.

Rana wrote, "In my school days I remember the three hotels in Motueka having large backyards and 'miles' of straight clothes lines. I had seen dozens of white sheets, pillowcases, towels and table napkins flapping in the breeze, the laundry room being down the yard separate from the hotel.

"Until motor cars came along the innkeeper was obliged to supply stabling which included hay and chaff for the horses.

"The inn kept their own pigs and fowls and ran big vegetable gardens as well as a house cow or two.

"The hotels were also a home for the publican, his wife and family - in most cases very large families."

In 1991 when she was 77 years, Rana experienced a series of small strokes that temporarily paralysed her arm and affected her speech. Not short of determination Rana overcame this setback, regained her speech and continued to drive and then walk to town regularly with the assistance of a walker frame until her 93rd year.

She continued to live independently and refused domestic help until a bad fall put her into care with a broken leg at age 94.



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