

Cathrine Livina KING

Cathrine Livina KING (nee POWEL/L) signed the petition in South Warrnambool.

She was born in Warrnambool on July 20, 1871, the eldest of 7 children of Lavinia HAIGH and Andrew POWEL (Andrea Pollo) who was born in Barcelona and went to Chile aged 4. Lavinia HAIGH was born in India in 1848 when her Yorkshire parents were stationed there in the British Army. They arrived in Warrnambool in 1854.

Cathrine's father, a labourer and fisherman, deserted the family around 1886/87 and is believed to have drowned in a shipwreck on his way back to Chile.

When Cathrine was 2 months off 18, on 22nd May 1889, she married Albert Henry KING who was a bootmaker at Wainwrights' Boot Factory. On her Marriage Certificate Cathrine entered 'Machinist' for her rank or profession and, as none of her living descendants have ever heard of this, the writer assumes she also worked at the boot factory and met Albert there.

Poor Cathrine spent most of the first 25 yrs of her married life 'with child' and reared 12 children out of 16 pregnancies. It's believed all but one of her children were delivered by the midwife 'Granny Mitchell' from South Warrnambool. That baby girl was sent home from hospital 'to die' as she was so tiny.

She lived to 97! Most of the children were healthy, four living into their nineties and one to 105.

When they lived in Warrnambool, they were a happy family. They owned a piano and hosted many musical evenings. Several of the children played a variety of instruments and possessed good singing voices. Father, Albert, was a member of Louis Bayer's Orchestral Society and was clarionetist in the Garrison Artillery and Warrnambool Town bands for 26 years.

In 1913, Wainwrights moved to Clifton Hill and the Kings went too as Albert was now a foreman.

Unfortunately, when he moved to Melbourne, Albert became 'stone deaf' which was devastating. But he continued his writing of poems which had been published in Warrnambool newspapers.

Cathrine, like thousands of other Australian women, had the worry and trauma of having their families away at war. Her brother George served in the Boer War and WW1

Two of her sons served in WW1, William being wounded twice at Gallipoli and invalided home, and Albert jnr. was on the 'Southland' when it was torpedoed in the Dardanelles, landed at Gallipoli and later contracted enteric fever. He was sent home on leave and then returned, this time to France. As the driver of a gun-carriage, he was wounded and died on the first day of the 3rd Ypres Offensive on 31st July, 1917. He was only 23.

One of Cathrine's grand daughters picked a rose from Albert's grave in Belgium, pressed it and had it placed in Cathrine's grave at Preston Cemetery in 1956.

When she was about 40, Cathrine was stricken with rheumatoid arthritis and eventually became blind because of cataracts which weren't removed. She spent years with a cradle over her badly deformed knees.

She was a loving grand mother who was always happy and delighted to greet her extensive family. She never complained about her health nor being unable to see the younger generations.

Albert died in 1944 and Cathrine was cared for by married daughters and then into nursing homes, eventually dying at Northcote on 27th December 1953.

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