Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE1198

Stewart, Eleanor Jessie

(1887 - 1977)

Born	18870218, Ebenezer Mission, near Lake Hindmarsh Victoria Australia
Died	19770529, Swan Hill Victoria Australia
Occupation	Aboriginal storyteller, Linguist

Summary

Eleanor Jessie (Nellie) Stewart, of Wergaia descent, was born Eleanor Pepper at the Ebenezer Mission in western Victoria. Her family travelled widely, spending some time at Coranderrk before settling at Lake Boga near Swan Hill. There Eleanor learnt housekeeping and cooking skills from the wife of the local baker, A.C. Stone, who was friendly with Aboriginal people.

Nellie married Jackson Stewart, of Wemba Wemba descent, and they lived and worked around the Riverina and raised a large family. Nellie worked as a shearers' cook, and was able to save enough money to buy a house in Swan Hill. In about 1960 she was visited by Alan Marshall, a well-known author, and they planned to write about the early days in the Wimmera. Eleanor also remembered and recorded in writing some Wergaia words, the lists of which are now deposited with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra. The Institute also holds audio-tapes of the stories and vocabulary she recounted for C. J. Ellis and Luise Hercus.

Published resources

Photograph
Serviceman and Servicewomen in uniform during World War II and community portraits in Victoria, Garwood, Alana

Report
Victorian Protection Board Report for 1887, Victorian Protection Board, 1887

Edited Book
The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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