

Entry type: Person
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Taverner, Lesley Ellen

(1925 - 2012)

Born	19250220, Griffith New South Wales Australia
Died	20120826, Canberra Australian Capital Territory Australia
Occupation	Homemaker, Pool Manager

Summary

Lesley Taverner was recognised, together with her husband Owen and son John, for her contribution in managing and conserving the buildings and grounds of Manuka Pool in the Australian Capital Territory from 1955 to 2012 by their inscription on the ACT Honour Walk in 2016.

Lesley Taverner was inscribed on the ACT Women's Honour Roll in 2016 following the Taverner family inscription on the ACT Honour Walk.

Details

Lesley Ellen Taverner was born on 20 February 1925 in Griffith, NSW, the fifth of fourteen children of Margaret Gladys (nee Wilson) and Arthur Kelly. When she was two, the family moved to Boorowa, where Arthur had a butcher shop. They then moved to Queanbeyan and Canberra, where they initially lived in the former Molonglo Internment Camp in Fyshwick, and Lesley began school. When they later moved to The Causeway, she attended St Christopher's School in Manuka. Her father initially worked at the Yarralumla Brickworks until 1937, then later at the Kingston Power House, where he stoked the furnaces. Her family lived in one of the three weatherboard cottages on site until Arthur died in 1942. Lesley left school at 15 and worked as a waitress in a cafe in Kingston where she met Owen George Taverner, at that time enlisted in the Army. They married in 1943. On his discharge from the Army in 1945, Owen worked in Canberra as a bricklayer and builder. He was a volunteer lifeguard at Casuarina Sands on the Cotter River and from 1947 at the Manuka Pool.

After the Olympic Pool opened in Civic in 1955, the Department of the Interior leased Manuka Pool and in 1956 Owen became its first leaseholder. At that time the Taverner family lived in Bougainville St, Manuka. As the mother of three children, Lesley was busy with home duties during the week but on weekends, when the pool was often crowded, she worked as cashier and sold ice creams at the pool. As the pool initially had no refrigerator, the ice creams were kept cold in canvas bags filled with dry ice. In 1980 their son John, previously a gardener at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, was recruited to help manage the pool. When Owen retired in 1990, John became its second leaseholder. Owen died in Canberra in 1999 aged 75. Lesley died in Canberra on 26 August 2012 aged 87. The contribution of the Taverner family to Canberra in managing and conserving its buildings and grounds from 1955 to 2012 was acknowledged by their inscription on the ACT Honour Walk in 2016.

Archival resources

[Interview with Lesley Taverner](#)

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