Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6118

Moo, Lu

(1884 - 1980)

Born	18840101
Died	19800820
Occupation	Businesswoman

Summary

Lu Moo experienced life in Darwin for more than eighty years, living through three major cyclones and a war. More familiarly known as Granny Lum Loy, she was a well-known figure of the Darwin community.

Details

Lu Moo was born in Shekki (China) around 1884 and arrived in Darwin when she was approximately 10 years old. She was one of two adopted daughters of a Chinese family who started a grocery and general store in Darwin's Chinatown. Lu Moo worked at her family's store for several years, where she came to know many of the local people, including many Aboriginals.

In approximately 1901 Lu Moo married Chinese mining engineer Lum Loy. Together they travelled to Wandi, a mining camp near Pine creek, where a large deposit of wolfram had been discovered. Later they moved to Brock's Creek.

In December 1906 she gave birth to a daughter, Lizzie Yook Lin and when her husband died in 1918, they both returned to Darwin. Eventually Lizzie married a prominent Chinese businessman and together they had nine children; many of which were delivered by well-known Chinese midwife Sarah Lee Hang Gong.

In order to support herself, Lu Moo rented ten acres of land and single-handedly turned into a mango orchard of approximately 200 trees. Four years before the outbreak of the Second World War she sold the orchard and moved back to Chinatown to help her daughter run a café, while her husband was in Hong Kong for business. Upon her son-in-law's return she rented another block of land and this time raised chickens and sold their eggs on to a local café.

After the bombing of Darwin, Lu Moo was evacuated and moved with her daughter and grandchildren to Katherine. Soon after they moved on to Alice Springs, Adelaide (where they opened a fruit shop) and finally Sydney, where Lizzie eventually passed away.

Lu Moo moved back to Darwin after the war. Her grandson Ron built her a house on a block of land given to her by her son-in-law. Here she set about building a garden which, unbeknown to her, would later be destroyed (and subsequently rebuilt) after Cyclone Tracy in 1974.

Lu Moo passed away in 1980 at the age of 96 and her funeral was one of the largest seen in the community for many years.

Author Details
Alannah Croom

Created 4 January 2018
Last modified 23 January 2018