

Leila Stodden – WW2

Leila Jean Stodden was born on the 24th March 1924 and is the eldest of 2 children to George Arthur Stodden and Lillian Bertha Martin. She is one of the great grand children of Bridget Carrucan and John Coleman.

Leila grew up in a house next to a church on Grant Street Ballarat. She went to Ballarat State School for her primary school years before attending Ballarat East Girls School until she was 16 years old. When she finished school, Leila went to work as a Fancy Hand Worker on baby clothes for Gower's in Bridge Street Ballarat. At 18, Leila enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS). She was sent to Melbourne, then Wagga, learning about searchlights, and when her training was finished Leila was sent to Seventeen Mile Rocks in Brisbane on searchlight duty and then to Rottnest Island in Western Australia.

While stationed in Brisbane, Leila met Frederick Bernard (Bernie) Ammerman, a ration supply officer. Bernie then courted Leila throughout the war years. After the war, they were married at the York Street Church in Ballarat, and had a wedding reception at The Wattle Centre before leaving for their honeymoon along The Great Ocean road. Afterwards they moved to Pinkenba in Brisbane where they started a family.

Bernie and Leila had 5 daughters, Glenda Margaret – 11th October 1948, Eileen Frances – 17th May 1950, Kathleen Lillian – 15th May 1952, Leila Jean – 26th April 1954 and Janice Maree – 13th November 1955.

On the day that man walked on the moon, Leila returned to the workforce in the spare parts department for Rover Mowers. She worked there for 13 years before retiring.

Leila still lives at Pinkenba Brisbane. Her husband Bernie has died.