

WW2 - Pauric and Mehual Lane

Pauric Lane (1914-1978) and Mehual Lane (1917-1975) were great grand children of Patrick Carrucan and Mary O'Brien and were part of the Western Australian based Lane family.

Pauric spent his first few years in Boulder but lived in Burt Street, North Perth for most of his growing years. He had many yarns regarding growing up amongst the market gardens in the area at the time. Pauric was educated at what has become known as Aquinas, but which was then located on St Georges Terrace. He was a precocious academic talent who matriculated at age 15 but, being too young, was not accepted into university so he returned to school to 'kill' another year. Although still only 16 years, Pauric was accepted into university the following year as he would be turning 17 on March 20th. I think Pauric was in the second intake of law at the University of Western Australia as the department was brand new.

After graduating, and being admitted as a barrister and solicitor, Pauric spent a short while prior to WWII practicing law in Narrogin. Here he found that he enjoyed the company of country people and the yarns of transient workers who would camp in the bush and walk from town to town with their few belongings on their back. He would often give them a ride and hear their stories as he visited clients who lived out of town. After his return from the war, he was sad to see that life had changed and that very few of these people were still around.

Let's follow the boys separately. Pauric was sent with troops to the Dongarra region of Western Australia and spent his days surveying the area. As Pauric had enlisted to see active service he sought a transfer to the RAAF. When this transfer did not appear to be happening, Pauric's enquiries finally led back to his superior army officer who had been sitting on the transfer: Pauric's education and mathematical ability had simply made him an invaluable surveyor and they didn't want to lose him! Eventually his transfer to RAAF happened and Pauric, whose mathematical skills made him an ideal navigator, joined other Australians in 460 Squadron in Binbrook (Lincolnshire) after travelling across America to England. Here he teamed up with a crew who, with the exception of one rear tail gunner who was lost, remained intact for the duration of their raids over Germany which was quite a feat as the lifespan of a heavy bomber crew was very, very short. Pauric's flight training notebooks show his bombing flight records with destinations and loads. Pauric defended pilots facing court martial.

In England he met his future wife Doris Wildman (Jaci), who was in the WAF.

They were married on 5 July 1945 in Luton, Bedfordshire. Pauric was being retrained for the war in the Pacific following Germany's loss to the Allies when Japan surrendered so he did not see service in the Pacific. On return to Australia, Pauric returned to practise law in Narrogin and was joined by Jaci who, in June 1946, arrived on the first available 'War Brides' ship. Apart from the first couple of years, they lived at 26 Jersey St up until 1979 whilst the business, known variously as RD Lane and Son, Lane Buck and Co, and Lane Buck and Higgins, was at 47 Federal Street.

Pauric was a humble person who was a great advocate for the Aboriginal people and did much unpaid work for many individuals for decades before he became the first lawyer for the Aboriginal Legal Services (South – West). He had a remarkable memory for detail and a great gift with words, which, with his easy manner, made him a formidable criminal barrister. He was regarded by his peers as being one of the best in summing up to the jury at the end of a trial.

Pauric was interested in all sports but knew everything there was to know about cricket. He played cricket and hockey and in later years, bowls took his interest.

Pauric and Jaci had one daughter, Georgina.

As for Mehual, it was not quite the same story. He was unfortunately discharged from the army as medically unfit because of kidney stones, and began working for Co-Operative Bulk Handling as a tally clerk on the

wheat bins. There he worked his way up to become General Manager.

He married May Leahy in 1942 and they had one son, Gerard in 1943. Mehaul died of complications following kidney surgery in 1975.