

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: SF84308
Name: Daphne Grimble ROEDIGER
Nickname: Daph



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star

Defence Medal

War Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Rank: Lance Corporal

Service: Army

Enlisted: 10 Dec 1942

Discharged: 19 Nov 1945

Daphne was born at Port Lincoln on 4 Apr 1914 to Herman Heinrich Roediger and Emma Sophia Roediger (nee Dennis). She was the youngest of 9 children, 2 boys and 7 girls. Her father was a pioneer farmer, having acquired a 2200 acres (approx 900ha) scrub block at Stokes in 1905 after moving from Gladstone. He travelled overland with his horse team and wagon; the family came over aboard the steamer “*Herman*” after the house was built. They landed at Tumby and were taken to Stokes by their dad in the wagon. The block is now owned by the Wilkins family.

She started school at Ungarra (which was in the church) and spent the early years of her life on the farm, before moving to the Tumby Bay School when her mother and two sisters acquired and reopened the boarding house in Lipson Rd, Tumby Bay. The boarding house had been built in 1906 and was originally operated by a Mr Thomas. The idea being to allow the children to go to school and to assist with expenses until the farm came into production. She left school at the end of Year 7 to assist with the running of the boarding house.

In the early days, Tumby Council allotted two paddocks in the township for people with cows. The smaller paddock was located near where Bawden’s Garage is today, whilst the second larger one ran out to the cemetery. Daph was responsible for bringing their cow into the smaller paddock each day for milking. Sometimes someone would leave the gate open and all the cows would get out! On one of these forays to retrieve the cows she was able to assist John McNair when he was badly burnt on the legs whilst cleaning up around the cemetery as part of a volunteer working party: the men in the working party had wrapped kerosene soaked rags around the tops of their boots because the ants were so bad. Unfortunately John’s caught alight whilst they were burning rubbish.

In 1934 her father died and she moved to Adelaide with her mother and sister; they acquired another boarding house and accommodated local country girls going to secondary school. As usual, employ in any family business was for keep and sometimes a very meagre wage. Daph did not think highly of this arrangement, so she was more than willing to enlist when the time came despite the objections of her mother and sister.

Daph enlisted in the Army on 10 Dec 1942 at Wayville (SA) and undertook her training at Wingfield (SA), before being posted as a signaller to 55th Search Light Battery in Perth and Fremantle (WA) for a period of 20 months: the unit had a total of 15 searchlights set up in these two locations. She was then detached to Darwin for a short time, before being sent to Melbourne. Her sister, Lin, made application for her early discharge to assist with the running of the boarding house, so she returned to Adelaide and took her discharge on 19 Nov 1945.

On return to the boarding house her sister expected her to resume work for the same meagre wages as before. However, Daph had had a taste of freedom and baulked at this; she demanded a wage equivalent to the board of one of the girls plus her keep. In her own words “this was given, but with very bad grace”.

After 12 months working in the boarding house she decided that she would move to New Zealand. Through a friend she was able to get a first class ticket on the “*Wanganella*”; unfortunately the ship ran onto Barrett’s Reef and all of the passengers had to be taken off in life boats. After waiting some weeks for her luggage to be recovered, she then moved to Kawakawa (NZ) and took employ in the Star Hotel.

She met her husband to be, Cliff Hindle – a NZ ex serviceman – at one of the many sporting events that she attended. They were married after a rather short courtship and she stated that there were many who made the guess that it was a matter of “had to”, but they were proven wrong!

When her husband died she came back to South Australia and again took residence in Tumby Bay. She remained here until her death in early 2002 and her ashes are interred in the Tumby Bay Cemetery.

Daph was a very staunch supporter of the NZ RSA (the equivalent of our RSL) and

the local sub branch of the RSL. She left a bequest to the Tumby sub branch that allowed the purchase of a Public Address system for our club.

