

**Daisy Muir -
A Remarkable Influence in the Deaf Community**

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DAISY MUIR



A Remarkable Influence in the Deaf Community

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Table of Contents	i
Summary	ii
Statement of Authorship	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 ~ Background to the Research	5
Chapter 2 ~ Damman Background	9
Chapter 3 ~ School Days at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution	19
Chapter 4 ~ Daisy’s Involvement with the Deaf Women’s Guild	32
Chapter 5 ~ Daisy and John Muir	49
Chapter 6 ~ Warburton - “Hazel Park” and “Moncrieff”	58
Chapter 7~ Betty Wilkinson now known as Nora Mansfield: Companion in Warburton	66
Chapter 8 ~ Daisy Muir through my eyes	71
References ~	88
Appendix ~	93

SUMMARY

This research study is entitled “Daisy Muir - A Remarkable Influence in the Deaf Community” and describes the life of Daisy Muir (nee Damman) and her involvement in the Deaf Women’s Guild and the Deaf Community in the early 1900s. During the time of her involvement in the Deaf Women’s Guild, there was a Women’s Movement, which started in early 1900. She was not really a feminist but she had her motives and encouraged young Deaf women to become independent of their families and to participate in the Deaf Community. Mostly, parents kept their daughters away from the Deaf Community. Daisy managed to persuade the parents of young deaf women to allow them to meet with other deaf people.

I have chosen to research Daisy Muir because there are no history books about Deaf Women in Australia. It is very important for many deaf people today to know about their history and particularly about Daisy Muir because she was a hard worker and held the first positions of two organisations - the Deaf Women’s Guild as Secretary 1901 and the Deaf Worker’s Group 1920 as President. Also, she was the first Deaf President of the Deaf Women’s Guild nine years after it was established.

In 1902, she married John Edward Muir who also gave sterling service to the Deaf Community. Other deaf married couples voluntarily involved in the Deaf Community also included Solomon Moss and his wife Lucy Lewis and Frank and his wife Clara Briner. John was born deaf and elder brothers, Adam Cairn Muir and William Patterson Muir. The Muir brothers played a major part in founding the Adult Deaf Society of Victoria, beginning with Sunday church services conducted in sign language for the deaf. Services began at the Young Men’s Christian Association building in Russell Street on 20th July 1879.

Daisy’s later years in Warburton are also important, for they show us the sort of life that this pioneer led after her retirement. She was a respected member of the local community. In later years, Daisy had a young companion, Betty Wilkinson, now known as Nora Mansfield.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the essay, this essay contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or part from an essay by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the essay.

This research essay has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Melissa Anderson

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INTRODUCTION

My initial research focussed on Deaf women's organisations and I chose the Women's Guild as it was the longest serving body and is still in existence today. It was fortunate that both Beryl Beard and Marjorie Dyson, (both deceased) long standing and well known members of the Deaf Women's Guild and the Women's Auxiliary respectively, were at a meeting the day I visited to collect information and photographs. Bearing in mind that I had planned to do research on the Deaf Women's Guild, I asked questions as to the difference between the Women's Guild (formed in 1901) and the Ladies Auxiliary (formed in 1949). The conversation quickly shifted to the three Dow sisters, Rose, Mabel and Ethel. Then the name of Mrs. J. E. Muir was mentioned and both Beryl and Marjorie said that she had the manners and characteristics of a Queen with everyone willing to please her.

This sparked my interest so I read through all the Minutes of the Deaf Women's Guild for information on the Dow sisters and Mrs. J. E. Muir whose christian name was Daisy. The Minutes of the Women's Guild (Victoria), soon revealed that Daisy Muir was indeed an intelligent, regal looking woman, wanting nothing but the best for her fellow deaf. Her main ambition was to involve more Deaf women in the Deaf community. I found Daisy Muir to be a most remarkable woman; she had given so much to the cause of improving the lives of Deaf women through the decades. Some women today probably feel that being Deaf, and female, was doubly difficult, but Daisy showed pride in being both. She seemingly worked tirelessly to achieve what she set out to do: to improve the lives of Deaf women in the Victorian era (1830s – early 1900s).

During my research, I came across the following statement which was quoted in "Our Monthly Letter" (known as 'the Organ of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria and posted to all Deaf Mutes in Victoria at no charge and to hearing friends for one shilling'), Volume 6, Number 4, dated December 1909:

"On Wednesday August 18th 1909, Mrs. Abraham and her son landed from the Otway coming back from a trip to

England. The following day Thursday it was arranged to give her a welcome home social. Mrs J. E. Muir was evidently at her best for she made perhaps the best speech that has ever been given by a deaf person in our building. She had many a sly dig at poor men folk, not excluding her husband the worthy chairman who poor fellow, had to grin and bear it although he might have pronounced her 'out of order'. She spoke kindly and affectionately of Mrs. Abraham and in the name of the deaf welcomed her back to Australia”.

This made me wonder. Was Daisy Muir a feminist who fought tirelessly for the uplift of Deaf women in Victorian times? Was it her main ambition to involve more Deaf women in the Deaf community?

I proceeded to look for literature on Deaf women and read books as described in the chapter. I felt that to tell the story of Daisy Muir and her early work in the formation of several groups within the Deaf community was important for deaf people in Australia as it is part of their history and their heritage. So I did some research and began a collection of available information. It turned out to be an enlightening experience for me and I wish to share this with others who may be interested in knowing their Deaf heritage.

Beryl Beard had informed me that a companion who had lived with Daisy, after the death of her husband John, was still alive and living in Sydney. The companion was Nora Mansfield (nee Wilkinson). Later, I put a call through to Peter Bonser at the NSW Deaf Society asking how to contact Nora Mansfield. Peter's mother, Betty Bonser, responded and advised that Pat Johnston was the best person to assist with my research as her family used to look after Nora at weekends as she was adopted.

It was Pat who took me to see Nora Mansfield who was extremely helpful and she produced many photographs and details about Daisy. Pat also introduced me to Daisy's nephew living near Brisbane whom she had kept in touch with over the years. So began

my long and interesting journey into Daisy's fascinating life, as shown in the following chapters.

Chapter One contains information on research previously conducted in the history of Deaf women overseas to give an insight of how writers portrayed Deaf women. Chapter Two delves in Daisy's family background and the importance of the two male figures who sailed to Australia from Germany to set up a tobacco business. Daisy's time at school is the subject Chapter Three and Chapter Four records Daisy's involvement with the Deaf Women's Guild. Daisy and John Muir is the theme for Chapter Five which also describes the three Muir brothers: Adam, William and John. Chapter Six looks at Daisy and John's move to the country in Warburton and Chapter Seven discusses the role played by Betty Wilkinson aka Nora Mansfield in Daisy's later life. Chapter Eight gives a portrayal of Daisy Muir through the writer's perspective.

Before we begin the first chapter, I would like to make some reference in regard to education and language. It appears that Daisy Muir had a good education. I saw a letter she wrote (see appendix 1) to her mother on 26 September 1901. She was then twenty seven years old and her command of the English language was simple but excellent. Later reports reveal that Daisy had infinite patience and taught her hearing friends to fingerspell. Daisy was without speech and one can only guess that she used fingerspelling following English grammatical structure. Daisy enjoyed the beauty of art and in fact her nephew has a painted plate in his possession.

Living in the Victorian era, one can only surmise from the statement quoted from 'Our Monthly Newsletter' that Daisy Muir did not live the life of other women in that period, when one was expected to be a housewife, a homely, contented, unambitious, unpretentious woman who thinks of little except her husband and children. Since Daisy and John were childless, they devoted much of their time to their fellow deaf.

Now let us take that path to the following chapters into the life of Daisy Muir. Firstly, I will examine other research that has been done on Deaf People and the Deaf Community and briefly give comments on the books I have read for this study. I will

Introduction

also briefly explain how I conducted my research into "Daisy Muir - A Remarkable Influence in the Deaf Community".

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Chapter One gives an insight into research carried out in Deaf History, especially concerning deaf women. Where there is mention of such history, it is generally written by people who are not deaf and therefore does not contain the writings of history from a deaf perspective. I will proceed to structure the following information retrieved from books and papers in chronological order:

A writer named Bernard Truffaut, of St Jean de La Rouelle, France, wrote a paper about a deaf person titled “Etienne de Fay and the History of the Deaf”. He presented his paper at the 1st International Conference on Deaf History held at Gallaudet University in 1991. It was published in *Looking Back*, edited by Fischer and Lane (1993). He claims in his introductory paragraph that many writers wrote about hearing people who worked for or became involved with the Deaf but not so many had written anything about Deaf people and their achievements in the early years. Truffaut showed that Deaf people were not given due recognition in historical days and this needs to be rectified. If there were no Deaf people on this Earth, people such as Abbé de L’Epée, Thomas Gallaudet, Abbé Sicard etc., would have no standing or recognition by either society - the deaf or hearing.

Margaret Bettison and Anne Summers compiled a book called *Her Story - Australia Women in print 1788 - 1975*, which researches and contains a list of biographies and references that cover Education, Employment, Recreation, Marriage, Family, Sexuality, Health, Public Life, Aboriginal Women, Rural Women, and Arts, etc. However, there is no mention of Deaf Women. Again the history of deaf women is overlooked by society.

Maryse Bezagu-Deluy in a paper entitled “Personalities in the World of Deaf Mutes in the 18th Century Paris” and quoted:

“In the same manner, the Tomb for the Unknown soldier in Paris is a symbolic homage to the deaf in all wars. For, up until recent time, the heroes in the history of the Deaf and Dumb were the

forgotten ones: women, men, children and adolescents deprived of hearing, destined to an early death on the straw of villages and on the cobblestones of cities” (Looking Back Chapter 2 P.26 Eds Fischer & Lane 1993).

Although *Looking Back us* an excellent source on Deaf History for the world, but there are almost no stories about Deaf women such as Sarah T. Adams (Deaf teacher), Alice Cogswell (pupil of Thomas Gallaudet), Laura Bridgman (Deafblind), Suzanne Lavaud (first Deaf mute woman in France and Europe to receive her Ph. D), tc. Only pictures of them were shown without any stories. The sole inclusion of women’s history is a chapter by Joachim Winkler, of Leipzig, entitled “Anna Catherina Elisabeth Heinicke (1757-1840)”. She was the first female principal of a German school for the Deaf. It must be noted here that Anna was a hearing woman who had two Deaf brothers. It is very difficult to do research on Deaf women in history where the society did not see Deaf people as important. They were not given the recognition they deserve.

The book *No Longer By Gaslight: The First 100 Years of the Adult Deaf Society of Victoria* by John W. Flynn (1984) records the first one hundred years of the Victorian Deaf Society. It would seem the writer either did not consider the role of women or found few written records of the deaf women in history and their achievements. One reason for this assumption is an article, an obituary, that appeared in a publication by the Victorian Deaf Society as follows:

Obituary - Daisy Muir

“She was a pioneer, in our little world, and by her way of life, her active concern and interest, she has left an example to all deaf”

(Deaf Talkabout, September 1970)

It is a pity that the writer did not elaborate or research more about this woman who did a lot of voluntary work for the deaf community and was one of the hardest workers in her time. Many of her achievements were not fully recognised or were just given scant reports.

There is very little written history about women in the 1700s through to the 1900s. This may be due to women getting married and changing their names (to the spouse's surname). Anne Summers mentioned in her book *Damned Whores and God's Police* (1994) that she noticed most books about Australia scarcely involved the history of women, or the writers would generally use the terms either 'Australian' or 'male' rather than specify 'women'. Anne Summers also wrote that in the late 1890s and early 1900s, many groups were established to promote women and their rights. These groups included Woman's Suffrage Society, Dawn Club, Womanhood Suffrage League, Women's Federal Political Association, The Women's Christian Temperance Union, Women's Equal Franchise League, Australian Women's National League, Australian Women's Franchise Society. These movements promoted the recognition of the role of women to a degree but still women were largely ignored in histories.

Daisy Muir achieved a great deal for women in the Deaf community mainly through such groups as the Deaf Women's Guild (previously known as the Women's Friendly Society), the Ramblers Club (for both Men and Women) and the Deaf Workers' Club (later named Deaf Ladies Auxiliary) and also the Young Women's Society.

In another book, *The Story of Betty Steel: Deaf Convict and Pioneer* (Branson and Miller, 1995) the writing is based on a mixture of myths and true facts gathered from trips to England, Sydney and Norfolk Island following the path of Betty Steel. The authors were able to obtain many details from their trips but it was not possible to get a personal account because very little was known about Betty Steel until her tomb was discovered buried underneath the Sydney Town Hall a few years ago. This must have been a very difficult research with so little to follow up on but both Branson and Miller were able to write up so many things in their book and give something to the Deaf community by way of Deaf heritage in Australia such as the very first beginnings of Deaf people living in this country.

We see therefore that the history of the deaf is often written from a hearing perspective, ignores women, and contains very little information. It is hoped that my writings on Daisy Muir will be the beginning of "*a series of personality profiles of Deaf women in Australia*". This thesis quite deliberately tries to redress this balance by focussing on

one important Deaf woman in a way that reflects the “oral” tradition of the Deaf community. Each chapter is therefore told as a story in itself and uses many of the mnemonic devices, particularly that of repetition, which are found in many cultures which do not have a literate form of their language.

SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The research on "Daisy Muir - A Remarkable Influence in the Deaf Community" was done through personal interviews by either video or audio tapes, written conversations in papers and telephone interviews as well. People I interviewed lived a long way from Melbourne - Queensland, New South Wales, Warragul, Ararat, and Warburton in Victoria. Archival sources included Annual Reports of the Deaf Women's Guild, the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria, The Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, Newsletters such as Our Monthly Letter, British Deaf-Mute and the British Deaf Monthly, and reports from the Damman Family History and the Muir Family History.

The photos and pictures I used were from family members of Daisy and John Muir, and also from Nora Mansfield, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, *No Longer by Gaslight*, the Deaf Women's Guild and the Victorian School for the Deaf Children Inc History Room.

I made visits to the National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research at LaTrobe University. This is where many history papers, photos, minutes, annual reports are kept. Many of these records were from the Victorian Deaf Society and were transferred LaTrobe University.

DAMMAN BACKGROUND

In order to understand the brilliant and high achieving person that Daisy Muir was, it is essential to examine her own family background. It has not been extremely difficult to find out her family background. Her family has an impressively maintained genealogy which is tended to by Daisy Muir's nephew Peter. They have extended every possible courtesy, welcomed me into their homes and patiently answered every question asked. It is not possible, however, to examine these records outside the family without a member of the family present.

Daisy Muir was born on 26 September 1874 at home, at 49 Caroline Street, South Yarra. She was the sixth of eight children born in Melbourne to German-born Settlers parents – Gustave Martin Jacob Damman and Mathilde Margarethe Johann Möller. The parents were not immigrants but were first class passengers on what in those days were a rarity, steamships. The baby's full name was Daisy Dorothea Charlotte Damman. She was christened on 6 December 1874 by Lutheran Pastor Herlitz, who was later to feature in many family occasions. Her godparents were Frau Charlotte Möller (grandmother in Schleswig) and Herren Georg Degner (business friend of Gustave in Melbourne)¹.

Daisy's father Gustave, originally known as 'Martin Jacob Gustave Damman, was born in 1833 at St Margareten in Holstein, in Germany. The German Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were governed by Denmark from 1490 – 1866². Gustave's father, Jürgen Damman, was a school teacher in Husum in Holstein, the small town where the now famous botanist, Ferdinand von Müeller, was the chemist.

Gustave's elder brother Georg left Holeystein in 1853, when he was aged 22. He sailed from Hamburg on the ship 'Wilhelmsburg', under Captain J.C.H. Müller, and arrived in Melbourne on 24 August 1853. Georg set off for the goldfields to sell the small quantity of pipes, tobacco and snuff which he had bought in Hamburg. He met with success and sent for his younger brother Gustave³.

¹ Damman Family History, 1995

² Damman Family History, 1995

³ Damman Family History, 1995

When Gustave was 20, he travelled from Hamburg on 20 May 1854 to Hull in England, on the steamer 'Archimedes'. On 17 June he left Liverpool on the 'Queen of the Seas', under Captain Charles Gardiner, who was employed by the Fox Line and arrived at Hobson's Bay on 10 September 1854⁴.

By 1858 the brothers has opened many stores catering for smokers in north-west and north-east Victoria, and Georg had anglicised his name to 'George'. Their father, Jürgen Damman, had moved to Hamburg to handle the supply of tobacco, pipes and snuff to their business in Australia, aided by his spinster daughter Wilhelmina [Daisy's Tante Minna], who carried on this business after her father's death. Jürgen's eldest daughter, Rosa, married Hans Andresen in 1854, however, he died in 1861 after only 7 years of marriage. They also had another sister named Auguste who married the Merchant Claus Delefsen of .

In April 1858 George Damman purchased a retail store on the south-east corner of Collins and Swanston Streets, opposite the Melbourne Town Hall. George conducted the business of many branches from this Melbourne shop while Gustave managed the stores in north-western Victoria. [In 1885 this Melbourne shop would move to the north-west corner of the Town Hall intersection, then to the north-east corner from 1909 to 1964. 'Damman's Corner' became almost as well-known a meeting place as



'Under the Clocks' (Flinders Street Railway Station).]⁵

Damman and Co Tobacconist 1858 – South-Eastern Corner of Collins and Swanston Street (photo: Damman family)

George joined in partnership with a friend, Heinrich Ludwig Raecke. They opened and controlled branches (26 shops) in many goldfield areas: Beechworth 1858-59, Woolshed 1858, Chiltern 1859-68, New Ballarat 1859, Indigo 1860, Rutherglen

⁴ Damman Family History, 1995

⁵ Damman Family History, 1995

1861-68, Castlemaine 1867-70. In 1862, they moved into New South Wales and opened a shop at Forbes on the Lachlan River where there was a large gold strike⁶.

Other early country stores were at Ararat 1857-63, Avoca 1858-59, Back Creek (Amhurst) 1859, Burnt Creek 1861-62, Creswick Creek 1858-70, Daisy Hill 1859, Dunolly 1859-60, Emu 1859-60, Glasgow Lead 1862, Great Western 1858-59, Inglewood 1860-62, Lamplough 1859-60, Landsborough 1860-63, Majorca 1863, Mountain Creek (Moonambel) 1861, Pleasant Creek (Stawell) 1858-59, and Redbank 1861-62⁷.

In Melbourne on 19 October 1861, seven years after his arrival, Gustave and George became naturalised British subjects⁸.

On 1 March 1862 George and Gustave left for Hamburg on the 'Norfolk', with Captain Atwood. George was away for more than 18 months and returned late in 1864. Gustave returned after nearly three years, on 10 December 1865 on the 'Donald McKay', with Captain Watson.⁹

December 1866 would see the start of a new branch of the Damman family. While he was in Europe, Gustave had become betrothed to Mathilde Margaretha Johanna Möller, who was born in 1844 in Schleswig, just north of Holstein. Gustave met Mathilde in Glinde a suburb of Hamburg at her sister's home (Louise Diestel). They would be married on her arrival in Melbourne in the Lutheran church¹⁰. Mathilde appears to have been enthusiastic about her impending marriage to Gustave and she bought a wedding dress as a surprise for Gustave. As it was often in those days, Mathilde was not able to see her beloved Gustave for a year before she made the trip on the "Lincolnshire" which arrived Melbourne on 20 December 1866.¹¹ During her

⁶ Damman Family History, 1995

⁷ Damman Family History, 1995

⁸ Damman Family History, 1995

⁹ Damman Family History, 1995

¹⁰ Damman Family History, 1995

¹¹ Damman Family History, 1995

journey to Australia, unfortunately, someone stole her dress in the ship and she had to buy a ready made wedding dress in Melbourne which was dark coloured.¹²

They got married by Pastor Matthias Göethe on Christmas Day in 1866 with George as a witness. Mathilde was 22 when she married Gustave who was 33 years old.¹³ The ideal age for marriage was considered by marriage manuals to be about twenty to twenty-five for women and twenty-three to twenty-eight for men. (Ref: *Women Marriage and Politics 1860 - 1914*, Ed Pat Jalland 1986.)



Gustave and Mathilde's Wedding on 25 December 1866 at German Lutheran Church, East Melbourne, Gustave's brother Georg on right (photo: Damman family)

They rented a house in Collingwood for seven weeks. Then some time in February 1867, they purchased a house at an auction for 250 pounds at 49 Caroline Street, South Yarra.¹⁴ The house does not exist now. While they lived in the house, Gustave's brother George boarded at their house.¹⁵ This demonstrates the two brothers' close relationship, having emigrated far from their family and only having each other in Australia.

¹² Mansfield, Nora, 1995

¹³ Damman Family History, 1995

¹⁴ Damman Family History, 1995

Mathilde gave birth to George William on 24 December 1867, one day before their first wedding anniversary. The first seven of their children were born at Caroline Street South Yarra. They employed a nurse named Mrs Fuhr to care for their newborn son George. A servant was employed from 1868. Brother George was then still boarding at the Caroline Street house. George William was baptised on 9 February 1868 by the Lutheran Minister, Pastor Herlitz. His godparents were Jürgen (grandfather in Altona, Germany) and Georg Damman, and Rebecca Nordsp. Georg remained a bachelor. On 9th June 1868, Gustave and Georg's mother Cecilie died in . In June 1869, Mathilde's brother Franz Möller arrived in Melbourne and worked for G. Damman and Co, and boarded at the house in Caroline Street.¹⁶

The second child was born on 6 July 1869. It was a girl named Marie Therese Auguste. Sadly, when she was 3 months old, she died of dropsy of the brain and was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery in the Lutheran Section. After their loss Gustave and Mathilde visited Castlemaine, in order to deal with their sorrow. A family excursion is noted also in family records to Fern Tree Gully in March 1870.¹⁷ The means of transport is not recorded although it may have been by horse and wagon as the railway to Ferntree Gully was not established until 1889. In April 1870, the boarders, Georg and Franz moved out of the Caroline Street house¹⁸ as Mathilde was expecting another child and the task of running a household became too onerous.

Their third child was born on 25 July 1870. Her name was Mathilde Louise Wilhelmine, after her mother Mathilde. The third name was after Gustave's spinster sister. Her godparents were Aunt Louise Diestel, Aunt Wilhelmine Damman and Uncle Franz Möller. Family records again note that during February 1871, Gustave and Mathilde had their holidays at Schnapper Point near Mornington for sixteen days.¹⁹

¹⁵ Damman Family History, 1995

¹⁶ Damman Family History papers, 1995

¹⁷ Damman Family History papers, 1995

¹⁸ Damman Family History papers, 1995

On 7 August 1871, their next child was born and it was a boy (4th child, 2nd son) - Gustave Melbourne (father of Ron Damman) - named 'Gustave' after his father, and 'Melbourne' probably because of the Dammans' and Möllers' adopted home city of Melbourne. Again, Uncle Franz Möller was godfather to Gustave jnr. Another holiday is recorded and Gustave and Mathilde took their children with them for a holiday in Mornington which lasted for 14 days in December 1871 to celebrate Christmas and New Year's Day. They stayed at Coleman's Hotel and took their servant Jane with them. Georg and Franz returned to Hamburg in July. The Dammans' 3rd daughter and 5th child, was born on 8 May 1873. Her name was Anna Marie Henriette after Captain Henry Shinner who was included among the godparents for Anna.²⁰ It would be interesting to speculate about the circles in which the family moved as they included a Captain. Captain Shinner was master of the 'Lincolnshire' which brought Mathilde to Australia and did many trips to Australia.



Their financial situation was obviously improving and they now owned a horse which they bought some time in May 1873. A groom was also employed. The 4th daughter and 6th child was born on 26 September 1874. Her name was Daisy Dorothea Charlotte. This child was to become Daisy Muir, the subject of this thesis. Daisy was baptised on 6 December 1874 and her godparents were Grandmother Charlotte Möller and George Degner (business friend). Daisy was considered the beauty and later was called the clever one in the family.²¹ She was baptised by Pastor Herlitz. (see photo on left). The family continued their tradition of holidays during February, in 1875 visited

Queenscliff, and Sorrento during 1876.²² One can speculate that these holidays were ample opportunity for the growing family to seek relief from the oppressive Australian heat.

¹⁹ Damman Family History papers, 1995

²⁰ Damman Family History papers, 1995

²¹ "Some Memories of Lenhurst" 1996 by Sheila (Damman) Catton

²² Damman Family History papers, 1995

Again there was another baby born, a 3rd son and the 7th child - Percy Charles George (father of Peter Damman) born on 7 May 1876. He died on 28 February 1970 at 72 Queens Road, Albert Park aged 93. Birth of the 4th son and 8th child, Oscar Carl was on 23 November 1879 and died on 22 July 1949. Gustave Damman died 19 April 1902 at 33 Queens Road aged 68²³.

In all, Gustave and Mathilde raised seven children: George (1867), Lillie (1870), Gustave who was deaf (1871), Anne (1873), Daisy (1874) who was also deaf, Percy (1876), Oscar (1879). It is recorded in the 20th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1882 – List of Pupils on page 28 that both Gustave and Daisy were born deaf. There is no other known family history of deafness.



*Back Row: Annie 5, George W 11, Gustave M 7
Front Row: Daisy 4, Percy 2, Lillie 8
(photo: Damman Family)*



*GUSTAVE & MATHILDE DAMMAN & FAMILY
Lillie 18, Annie 15, Gush 17, Oscar 9, Percy 12,
George 20, Daisy 14.
(photo: Damman Family)*

Daisy lived in Caroline Street South Yarra for the first 3 years of her life. From there the Dammans moved to Dalgety Street and also on to Crimea St in St Kilda. Fifteen years after they married, the Dammans bought land at 33 Queens Road Albert Park in May 1881. The 14 room house was built from 21 July and finished in

²³ Damman Family History papers, 1995

February 1882. The Damman family moved in on 27 February 1882. The property 'Uhlenhorst' had a summer house, ballroom which included brackets and cathedral glass, a tennis court and a fernery. The house was not fully completed till 1887, five years after they moved in.²⁴ Uhlenhorst meant "Roost of the Owls"



UHLENHORST - 33 Queens Road, Albert Park (photo: Damman Family)

This house was named after the garden suburb of Uhlenhorst, Hamburg overlooking the Aussen Alster Lake.²⁵ During the World War 1 the name of house was changed to "Lenhurst" as a result of anti German sentiment.²⁶ The Damman family employed maids, servants and gardeners at their Lenhurst home.²⁷ It is of interest that this house was situated near the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution. It could be suggested that it would have been seen as an advantage for the Damman family. It would be interesting to speculate whether this was the reason as Gustave jnr was only eleven years old and Daisy eight years old when they lived at 'Uhlenhorst'.

²⁴ Damman Family History, 1995

²⁵ Damman Family History, 1995

²⁶ Damman Family History, 1995

²⁷ "Some Memories of Lenhurst" 1996 by Sheila (Damman) Catton



“Uhlenhurst Ballroom”. Circa 1890. Photo taken by Gustave M.Damman (on left side – tennis court, on right side – garden, in middle – fernery) {photo: Damman Family}

Daisy's brothers Percy and Oscar managed Damman and Co Tobacconists after the death of Gustave in 1902. Later Percy owned the branch at 79 Elizabeth and Oscar owned the branch at 7 Elizabeth Street. Mathilde owned the business until 1935 when she died.²⁸



Damman and Co Tobacconist - Corner of Collins and Swanston Street.(South Eastern) Circa 1930
You will see the wording Dam(man & Co) on the left. (photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria)

‘Lenhurst’ was sold by the Estate of Mathilde in 1935 after the death of her husband who had died thirty-three years earlier on 19 April, 1902. The sale of the house

²⁸ Damman Family History, 1995

occurred at the height of the Depression and the value of the house was very low. It was sold for £4,000, indicating a dramatic slump in the value of the house, having been valued at £5,358-5-10, forty-eight years earlier, in 1887.²⁹

Mathilde has lived in Australia for 69 years until her death in 1935 at the age of ninety-one years³⁰.

Conclusion

In summary, I have shown in this chapter the humble beginnings and background of the Damman family in Holstein, Germany, starting in 1833 with the birth of Martin Jacob Gustave Damman (father of Daisy), and leading up to the arrival of Daisy Dorothea Charlotte Damman in 1874 as well as the improvement in their financial status, and finally concluding with the family's move to their home situated near the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in St. Kilda Road, Melbourne, near the picturesque Albert Park Lake. The next step in understanding Daisy Muir is to examine her school days. This will be dealt with in the next chapter, which commences with her first days at the Victorian College for the Deaf, the then Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution.

²⁹ Damman Family History, 1995

³⁰ Damman Family History, 1995

SCHOOL DAYS AT THE VICTORIAN DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION



Classroom at Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution circa 1880s (photo: Victorian School for Deaf Children Inc)

Daisy was enrolled as the 217th student at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution (now known as the Victorian College for the Deaf) in March 1882 at the age of seven years.¹ It is likely that, she did not feel lost or scared about going to school for the first time because her older brother Gustave (called either as Gush or Gushie) had earlier been enrolled at the deaf school in September 1876 as a private pupil.² He finished his school days in December 1888 at the age of seventeen years, after having been a pupil of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institute for twelve years. He was the 162nd student³ who enrolled after the opening of Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in 1860 by Frederick John Rose, born in England and profoundly deaf since early childhood. F. J. Rose was educated at the Old Kent Road Asylum for the Deaf in London for five and half years

¹ 20th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1882 – List of Pupils, 1882 p.28

² 15th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1877 – List of Pupils, 1877 p.35

³ 15th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1877 – List of Pupils, 1877 p.35

and came to Australia in 1852⁴. Later on, during the year 1878, there were 85 pupils (48 boys and 34 girls and 2 adult females). *ref : (Sixteenth Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution Ending 31st August 1878).*

Mr F.J. Rose was still the head teacher then.



*Frederick J. ROSE, Founder of the Deaf and Dumb Institution.
(photo: Utmost for the Highest)*



*David PIPER
He was a deaf man
Pupil-Teacher in 1877
(photo: No Longer by Gaslight)*

David Piper who was deaf, had been appointed as a pupil-teacher in 1877. But he only stayed in the school for a few years. The reason for having him as:

“a pupil-teacher was that he was formerly a scholar in the school and was indebted solely to the Institution for his education; he manifested considerable aptitude in teaching his fellow deaf mutes and promises to become in course of time an efficient teacher.”

ref : (Sixteenth Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution Ending 31st August 1878).

⁴ Utmost for the Highest, p. 70-71

It was fortunate that Gush had deaf teachers such as Frederick J. Rose and David Piper in school. There were many excursions for the pupils, which included trips to Portsea by the steamer 'Williams'. The Captain was J. Deane. This trip was given by the Honourable Commissioner of Railways without charge.⁴

In 1878/79, the school employed an additional teacher on a trial basis for a few months, Mr E. O Hutchinson who was an instructor of lip-reading and articulation. Mr Hutchinson at one time was himself dumb, and a pupil of Mr. Van Asch, a teacher of the German system in England.⁵ The following year of 1879-80, the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for the Year ending 31 August 1880 reports that:

“ his class is composed of 6 pupils, four of whom have now been nearly two years, one for a year and half, and another for about 6 months under his tuition. But at present the result is not such as to enable the Committee to form a decided opinion as to the relative merits of the system taught by Mr Hutchinson.”

I see in this comment in the Annual Report that the committee did not yet have full confidence in the new lipreading tuition at that time. It is interesting to note that the lipreading session was at all mentioned. It is probable it was because the Superintendent Frederick J. Rose was himself deaf and perhaps did not fully support this method.

It is interesting to note that during the year 1881 there were some donations recorded in the Eighteenth Annual Report dated 21 September, 1880, of cricket equipment donated to the School. One can only wonder whether these donations of cricket bats and balls were related to the subsequent establishment of the Victorian Deaf Cricket Club. There were also donations of admissions to Athletic Sports at the Melbourne Cricket Club.

⁴ 16th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1878, p.7

⁵ 17th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1879, p.6

Incidentally, there was a bad attack of whooping-cough in November 1879 which afflicted many pupils. Since many pupils were affected, the medical officer gave the advice to break up one month earlier than usual for the Christmas holidays.⁶

David Piper was no longer a pupil-teacher by the time Daisy arrived at school. He finished in the year of 1881/82. There was mention of Mr Hutchinson continuing to teach articulation and lip reading and that he was a fully appointed and a non-resident teacher which earned him 250 pounds per annum.⁷ The school gave him the authority to continue teaching the oral and lipreading system with 17 pupils, 14 of them having been already educated by the manual alphabet and sign system. The other three who had no manual alphabet and sign skills at all, were educated in oral and lipreading system by Mr Hutchinson. The course included spelling, reading, writing, grammar, history, geography, arithmetic and general useful knowledge.⁸

The Nineteenth Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for the year ending August 31st 1881 reports that:

*“The isolation of this class from the rest of the pupils has proved advantageous, and the progress made by some of its members in speaking and in lip-reading is very satisfactory and encouraging. Nevertheless the efficiency of the system, as a means of imparting knowledge and of educating the mind is not yet established, and some time must elapse ere it can be favourably compared, if ever, with the French or sign system, which has hitherto been so successfully carried on by Mr. Rose and his assistants, under whose tuition the large majority of the pupils still remain’.*⁹

The oral system seems to have gained credence over the manual method in some quarters, and at the same time there were no reports on the progress of pupils using the

⁶ 18th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1880, p.5

⁷ 19th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1881, p.5

⁸ 19th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1881, p.6

⁹ 19th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1881. P.6

manual alphabet and signs. It is interesting as if examined from a current perspective, it points to a bilingual approach in teaching.

During his days at the school, Gush became interested in the camera and was a professional photographer for a short time after he left school.¹⁰ Gush's interest arose from an excursion, some time in the year of 1881, when the school attended the Camera Obscura, with free admission.¹¹ He became a very skilled photographer and built up a significant collection of half-plate glass slides and a beautiful album of his photograph. He often accompanied von Müeller, the distinguished botanist into the bush. Twelve of Gush's photographs are in the book "Warburton Ways". He won many prize cards for horticulture and agriculture and was prominent in rifle, shooting, tennis, football, cricket and golf.¹²

Changes during Daisy's time at school.

The main issue I will be introducing is Daisy Damman's school progress while she was a pupil. She enrolled as a Private pupil in March 1882 - the 217th student since the establishment of the deaf school.¹³ She left school in July, 1890¹⁴ at the age of 16. She had been there for 8 years as a pupil. It was probably a very exciting time for Daisy, for it would have been the first day she could attend the school which her brother Gush attended. Her parents would have probably been very proud of her and had very high hopes for her. It is interesting to note that on Daisy's first day at the Deaf school, she was 7 years old, while her brother Gustave first attended at the age of 5. It is not known why both started school at different ages. She was probably escorted by her parents, travelling from 'Uhlenhorst', Albert Park in a horse and cart with her brother, Gustave. She was almost certainly greeted by Mr Frederick J. Rose and his wife.

It was reported in the Twenty First Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in 1883, page 8, that "*In consequence of the great difficulty of obtaining qualified instructors of Deaf Mutes, either from Europe or America, the Committee*

¹⁰ Damman Family History, 1995

¹¹ 19th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1881, p.12

¹² Damman Family History, 1995

¹³ 21st Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1883 – List of Pupils, 1883, p.28

¹⁴ 29th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1891 – List of Pupils, 1891, p.28

decided to commence the systematic training of teachers in our own School, and in September last, appointed Miss Mabel Stokes and Master Harry Witchell, as pupil teachers". Years later, Mr Witchell left to become superintendent and teacher of the West Australian Deaf and Dumb Institution and he introduced the American one-handed alphabet system as a mode of communication. This was later discontinued in 1927 when Mr. John Love decided to conform with the rest of Australia in using the two handed alphabet (British system). Mr. Love became superintendent after the death of Mr. Witchell.¹⁵

The six teachers in attendance at the school in 1882, when Daisy first enrolled, were Mr Samuel Johnson, Mr William Cook, Mr H. H. Witchell, Miss Christina Hutchinson, Miss Emma Rose and Miss Mabel Stokes. There were also other teachers including an instructor in Articulation - Mr Hutchinson, Drawing Master - Mr J.P. Peppercorn, Trade Instructors: Bootmaker - Mr T. Minahan, Gardener - Mr W.Smith and Tailoress - Mrs M.A Guy. It is interesting to note that the ratio at that time worked out an average of 7.2 pupils for each teacher.¹⁶

It should be noted here that during Daisy's time at school between 1882 and 1890, she had three different headmasters, namely F. J. Rose (superintendent-headmaster 1860-1891), Samuel Johnson (headmaster 1882-1885), and William D. Cook (headmaster 1885-1927). F. J. Rose never declared if he was a trained teacher or not, whilst Samuel Johnson trained as a teacher at the Claremont Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in Dublin, Ireland. William D. Cook who grew up in South Gippsland, came from a family of teachers.¹⁷ To give an insight of Daisy's headmasters, here is a brief description of each: F. J. Rose was *'a stern disciplinarian'* and *'both teachers and pupils had a wholesome respect for him'*¹⁸

Samuel Johnson was *'an efficient headmaster'* and *'wished to teach speech to his pupils, but this the committee would not permit, as it seemed to consider itself under contract to Mr. Hutchinson....'*¹⁹ William D. Cook was *'a man of marked ability and of*

¹⁵ "The House on the Hills" The First Hundred Years of the WA School for Deaf Children.p.49

¹⁶ 21st Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1883, p.3

¹⁷ "Utmost for the Highest" p.70-74

¹⁸ "Utmost for the Highest" p.71-72

¹⁹ "Utmost for the Highest" p.73

a kindly disposition with a keen sense of humour, but like most humorists had a tendency to moodiness at times'.²⁰

There were some concerns about Mr Hutchinson's position as Articulation and Lip Reading Instructor which was considered to have a fair amount of success. The number of pupils with him was too many for him at the start of the year and was reduced from 18 to 8. Finally one student was withdrawn at the request of his parents. So Mr Hutchinson was left with 7 pupils. The Committee was not able to give a definite opinion on the practical outcome of their attempt to introduce the oral system but decided to give him another year's trial to the end of the year 1883.²¹

It was recorded in the Twentieth Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in 1882 that:

“The Manual Alphabet and sign system is still adhered to as the principal method of education. An articulation and lipreading class however, is still maintained, which is composed of eighteen pupils, the majority of whom have not been taught the sign system. The teacher had been very painstaking and persevering in his efforts, and is still sanguine of ultimate success”.

I believe Mr Hutchinson was worried that maybe some teachers thought the oral method was not that successful. His position was terminated on the 31st December 1887 and the vacancy was filled by:

“Miss Florence A. Vardon who was a certificated teacher of the Pure Oral System and was trained at Ealing College in London and her aim was to isolate her class from other pupils in the dormitories and dining room.”

(Ref: The Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for the year ending 30th June 1888, p.8.)

²⁰ “Utmost for the Highest” p.73-74

It is surely an oppressive environment where a Deaf child taught by the oral means is kept at a distance from other Deaf children who were taught the manual method. One can only wonder at the frustration these students would have felt.

There was a section in the Annual Report with a list of Articulation Class members, and Daisy was not one of the pupils who received an education in the oral and lipreading method. Her communication method was the Manual Alphabet and signs. The first classmates she was with were Mary Snellings, George Burgess, Emily L. Williams, Albert E. Eustice, Richard Hanna, Bridget O'Brien, Martin Graham, Bruce Robert, Ernest Smith, Samuel Mitchell, Frances C. McLean, Oazie A. Ashby and Annie May.²¹ I wonder who was her first school friend. Was it one of these girls - Mary, Emily, Bridget, Frances or Annie? After a few years, Mary Swallow who enrolled as student no. 253 in 1886, was later to become Daisy's friend. Mary later married Adam Muir, thereby becoming sister-in-law to Daisy. Mary (friends called her 'May') was reported to have been a very timid lady.²²

In 1882, while Daisy was a pupil of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, Frederick Rose's eldest daughter Emma L. Rose was appointed as a teacher to fill in for the assistant teacher who had resigned owing to ill health. Frederick Rose was the superintendent - father and daughter worked in the same school, at the same time. Mr William Cook, was appointed as the other new teacher.²³ One of his family members A R. Cook was also a teacher in 1920 and then became Headmaster in 1950 until late in 1960.²⁴

The pupils had great many excursions, which included visits to the Zoological Gardens and the Circus. In April 1886, the whole school population and about 40 ex-pupils together had a day outing cruising round the bay in the "The Lonsdale" steamboat.²⁵ It was great that the present and former pupils were to mix for a day and the young pupils could learn from them for the future. Many of these people were later to shape the Australian Deaf Community as we know it today.

²¹ 20th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1882 – Pupils in their respective classes, for the year 1882, p.10.

²² Ramsay, Meryllyn, 1995

²³ 21st Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1883, p.8

²⁴ Utmost for the Highest, 1964, P.216-217 & Appendix 13

²⁵ 24th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1886, p.7

The number of pupils increased from 70 to 80 during Daisy's time at school. The staff and superintendent were very pleased with the progress of dactylology, reading, writing, arithmetic and history. Both Gush and Daisy left school in February 1884 and then were re-admitted the following year 1885.^{26 27} They lived in 33 Queens Terrace (now known as Queens Road)²⁸ which was not far from the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution. The reason for their absence is not known and a possibility is that their ambitious parents tried an early form of integration and enrolled them in another school. Gus and Daisy could easily walk to school each day in about 5 - 10 minutes, and throughout their school days, they were day students.

In December 1885, there was a Colonial and Indian Exhibition, in London, which showed students' work in written language, arithmetic, penmanship and drawings. The school work was returned after a year in the Colonial Museum, London and a Diploma and Commemorative Medal awarded by the Commissioners was received.²⁹ Maybe one of the works was done by a young Daisy Damman.

During the Annual meeting of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution's of 1885, Mr Matthew Miller (a former pupil) completed a copperplate engraving of the Institution for the frontispiece of an Annual Report which was published in 1887. It is a wonderful and fine piece of work.^{30 31}



Matthew Miller (printed: No Longer by Gaslight, J. Flynn)

²⁶ 22nd Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1884 - List of Pupils, p.27 & 29.

²⁷ 23rd Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1885, p.6

²⁸ Damman Family History papers, 1995

²⁹ 24th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1886, p.8

³⁰ 24th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1886, p.8

³¹ 25th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1887, p.2

In 1886, Frederick Rose, who had been suffering for some time from failing health, requested a leave of absence which was granted, and with his wife he travelled to South Australia. The committee granted leave to both of them because they had made a large contribution to the Institution during the last 24 years.³² The committee was concerned about both Mr and Mrs Rose's health and granted one year's leave. The Acting Superintendent and acting Matron were Mr and Mrs W. Jones in the absence of Mr and Mrs Rose. Mr W. Jones was former assistant secretary of Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for 15 years.³³ After one year, both Roses returned to their positions as Superintendent and Matron in 1889.

Frederick Rose went to Europe on behalf of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution to visit deaf schools in Great Britain to acquire some ideas from deaf schools of deaf mutes in Great Britain. It was mentioned in the 27th Annual Report 1889 that:

“... he found that the course of instruction, and the methods employed, were similar to those of our own school, and that latter, in its operations and results, compared favourably with the former.”

(Ref: Twenty Seventh Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for the year ending 30 June 1889).

There were many events for the Rose family in the year of 1890. Due to ill-health, Mrs Rose tendered her resignation as Matron in December 1890. Their daughter Emma resigned as teacher. Mr Rose decided it was time for him to reside away from the Institution and to relieve his position as Superintendent and be appointed non-resident Principal of the School. Mr and Mrs William Jones were appointed as Superintendent and Matron from 1 January 1891.³⁴

Daisy was a very intelligent pupil and more than once she was moved up to the class with her brother Gush³⁵, the ages difference between them being 3 years. They were in

³² 24th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1886, p.8

³³ 26th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1888, p.9

³⁴ 29th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1891. P. 9

³⁵ 23rd Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1885 – Pupils in their respective classes for the Year 1885, p.9

“3rd class 1st Division” class. This indicates that she was doing very well in her education. We can see that during her adulthood she loved reading and writing.

The year of 1886-87 was not a healthy year because some pupils and teachers suffered severely from an outbreak of "Roseola" or "German Measles". Later, four boys were attacked with Typhoid fever. There were other illnesses as well but not as serious as the above diseases. Doctor Harricks was very pleased with the successful treatment, and the school appointed him a Life Governor for his valuable services.³⁶

Daisy's love for painting could have been influenced by Mr. W. Cook who took over drawing classes from Mr Peppercorn. Mr Cook was the Head and he had a certificate of competency in teaching drawing.³⁷ Former pupils of many years from 1885 to 1970 were very impressed with both Mr W. Cook and Mr A R. Cook's drawings. Mr A. R. Cook could do excellent drawings with either hand. Many deaf people will never forget the experience. It will never be a 'Myth', but will become a 'Legend' because it was true and was witnessed by many deaf people for over 80 years.

In the education of 1889/90, in the school curriculum, the students in both Manual and Oral departments were encouraged to learn the subjects of reading, writing, arithmetic, natural history, language, general knowledge, divisions of time, drawing, geography, composition, lessons in the Old and New Testaments. In addition, in the Manual department, the students learnt about map-drawing, the use of the atlas, and leading events in the world's history while in the Oral Department, the pupils were taught in articulation and lip-reading. More pupils used the manual alphabet and sign methods than the oral methods.³⁸ We will see later in the section on Daisy's public speaking how her school days influenced her topics.

The numbers of pupils had decreased to 55 as of 1st July 1890. The number of Manual Department pupils was 38 and Oral Department 21.³⁹ In the 29th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution for the year ending 30th June 1891, pages 7-8, quoted:

³⁶ 25th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf & Dumb Institution, 1887, p.6

³⁷ 25th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1887, p.8

³⁸ 28th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1890, p.8

³⁹ 29th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1891, p.7

“...After careful consideration, the Committee, guided by the opinions of experts, both in England and the United States, determined that it was not necessary to keep the pupils of the Manual and Oral Systems separate outside of school hours. The Committee have decided that in case of new pupils the advice of the Honorary Medical Officer be obtained as to whether they should be instructed under the Manual or Oral System.”

This is the start of a long period of medical intervention in the education of the Deaf⁴⁰. To this day, Deaf people are not seen as experts in the education of the Deaf and the medical and audiological aspects are taught with primary importance in teacher training programs for educators of the Deaf.

It was interesting to note in the 29th Annual Report of the school in 1891 that the Institution had the telephone installed and connected with the Melbourne Exchange free of cost. The telephone number was 872. It was required by the Public Health Department in case of fire, and was of great advantage in other ways.

Conclusion

My concern in this chapter was focussed on the educational concepts during Daisy's time at school. As we have seen here, there were other theoretical ideas (such as the oral method) nurtured by those in authority which are nowadays not favoured by the Deaf community at large; but fortunately this did not impact on Daisy's learning. By the time she left the school in 1890, the oral method was becoming more prominent but Daisy had not been in the oral class.

⁴⁰ This continued to when I was a pupil of St Mary's Delgany School for Deaf Children from 1959 to 1964, my parents took my sister Vikki and I from St Mary's and to a place somewhere in Richmond where they tested us to find out if we were able to speak with fluency. They suggested to my parents to enrol us in Victorian School for Deaf Children. While I am glad I attended the school, it was not my parents decision, but a decision made by medical authorities.

In 1910, F. J. Rose wrote to a friend of his delight in ‘...seeing so many intelligent deaf around me. They are indeed ladies and gentlemen in intelligence and useful citizens of this grand country, which is a great gratification to me’.³⁷

We must also note the importance that had been given to drawing classes during her time at the school, as we move to the next chapter to examine Daisy’s life after she left the school.

³⁷ “Utmost for the Highest” p. 72

DAISY'S INVOLVEMENT WITH THE DEAF WOMEN'S GUILD



Daisy Muir - First Deaf President of Deaf Women's Guild (photo: M. Anderson)

Daisy Muir spent her life associated with Deaf groups in Victoria. A notable example of this is the Deaf Women's Guild (previously known as the 'Women's Friendly Society' formed in 1901, however, this was quoted as 'The Women's Guild' in the book 'No Longer By Gaslight'), which is still in existence today; the "Ramblers Club" which was first mentioned in 1911; the "Deaf Workers' Club" formed in 1913; and the "Deaf Ladies Workers Club" formed in 1950, which changed its name to the "Deaf Ladies Auxiliary" two meetings later.

This chapter will attempt to show the workings of each group except the Ramblers Club where more research work needs to be done. However, before I do so I would like to bring your attention to an article written by Matthew L. Miller in *"The British Deaf Monthly"*, Vol. VII No. 77 March 1898, p.92. There is mention of a bike ride by a party of six comprising of three deaf young men, two deaf young ladies and the missionary, to Fern Tree Gully, a distance of 23 miles from Melbourne. It is surely a credit especially to the two young ladies to have cycled the 23 miles to Fern Tree Gully and another 23 miles back to Melbourne.

To give you an idea of statistics of the number of Deaf people in Victoria around 1900, there is an article which appeared in *"The British Deaf Monthly"* Vol. IX No. 104 June 1900. This article states that there are about 250 deaf people living in the colony of Victoria with 41 marriages and of these 24 are between deaf and deaf. There are 43 children born, all hearing. Out of the marriages between deaf and deaf, only two couples were born deaf and dumb. One of the couples had 2 hearing children. The remaining 17 marriages were mixed, i.e. deaf and hearing (13 deaf men to hearing wives and 4 deaf women to hearing husbands). Of all the 62 children born in these mixed marriages, only one, a girl, was deaf.

Now with these statistics in mind, I shall proceed with the discussion of the formation of the first Deaf Women's Group.

The Deaf Women's Guild was formed on 28 May 1901. Mrs Lewis who was the mother of the first pupil of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, Lucy Lewis, wrote to the 'Argus' newspaper in 1884 requesting the establishment of a group for young women similar to that of the 'Mutual Improvement Society for Deaf and Dumb Young Men'¹ formed in December 1883 (this was changed to the "Deaf Men's Guild" on 23 February 1909 and today it is known as the "Victorian Deaf Senior Citizens Club"). This motivated the newly formed Young Women's Group to act. Mrs Luke, who could sign and gave bible classes, invited some ladies both hearing and deaf to her house at Jolimont Terrace where the formation of what was then known as "The Deaf Women's

¹ No Longer by Gaslight, 1984 p. 115

Friendly Society" took place. Mrs Luke became its first President and Miss Daisy Damman (who became Mrs J. E. Muir in 1902) was the first Hon. Secretary.²

The aims of the Society were clarified in *The Argus, January 1, 1904* and reports that:

"A women's conference in connection with the Australian Deaf and Dumb Congress sat in the Independent hall last evening. There were about 50 delegates present. Mrs Luke presided, and in the course of a brief address made allusion to the Melbourne Deaf Women's Friendly Society, drawing attention to the fact that in connection with the body there were ladies willing to teach gratuitously any branch of needlework to deaf girls - in fact to those ready to learn almost anything would be taught. Any help that was required in reading would be readily given, and books would be recommended to those taking up particular subjects."

Daisy often gave an educational paper (*refer to Appendix 2*) at the Melbourne Deaf Women's Friendly Society (later the Deaf Women's Guild) averaging 28 members present. Meetings were held twice each month, games being indulged in for an hour and a half, after which Bible lessons were given and papers read on interesting subjects. The object of the society was to permit the deaf helping the deaf, and to promote sympathetic social intercourse. Those who could afford it paid 1d at each meeting and that was the only revenue of the society that had by then been in existence for two years.³

A congress of the Australian deaf and dumb was held in Melbourne from 24 December 1903 to 2 January 1904 which was the first ever held in Australia and there was a great deal of interest and enthusiasm among the 200 deaf adult and dumb who attended from other states and Victoria. The object of the congress was *'to advance and protect the interests of the deaf and dumb, and to make an endeavour to have the various*

² Deaf Womens' Guild Records, 1995

³ The Argus, 1st January 1901

*injustices under which they labour removed.*⁴ The Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Reports (1902-1912), shows that there were meetings held over two days, namely the 28th and 29th December 1903 and other activities included socials, a picnic, a sporting meeting, cricket matches, other festivities for the entertainment of the guests and also an exhibition of arts and crafts of the Deaf. The meetings were chaired by Mr. E. J. D. Abraham, Missioner at the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission.⁵

In the Mission reports for 1904, the Deaf Women's Friendly Society is reported to have met twice a month. 'Bible lessons and instructive papers with indoor games were very much enjoyed by the members.' On the second anniversary of its establishment, a social evening was celebrated. Young girls were invited to try and brighten their leisure hours.

It is interesting to note this as these young girls were probably never short of excellent language and sociocultural role models.

After the establishment of the Society, Mrs Luke remained President for the next four years and was eventually replaced by Mrs Martin who served for two years and then Mrs Abraham who also served for two years. In 1910, it is recorded that Mrs J. E. (Daisy) Muir took over and was President for 7 years until 1917 before Miss Rose H. Dow took over. Looking through the records (*refer to Appendix 4 – Presidents and Secretaries of the Deaf Women's Guild*), it would appear that three women stand out as making the most valuable contribution to the Women's Guild: Miss Daisy Muir, who put many, many hours into preparing her talks; Miss Mabel Dow (President for 23 years from 1938-1941, 1942-1954, and 1957-1962); and Miss Beryl McCullough, known widely as Mrs Beryl Beard (President for 20 years from 1973-1985 and 1986-1992, and Secretary for 24 years from 1954-1971, 1972-1973 and 1985-1988). There were also other women who contributed greatly in many ways, such as Miss Rose Dow and Miss Doris Hickey, and Mrs Frank Frewin in the Bible and Education Classes. Daisy Muir was always impressing on the women's minds the value of reading and cultivating the habit of letter writing and she promised to help them obtain foreign

⁴ Extracts from 16th Annual Report of the Deaf Sub-Committee, 1904 (Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1904) p.7

⁵ Extracts from the 16th Annual Report of the Deaf Sub-Committee, 1904 (Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1904), p.7-8

correspondents through her overseas contacts.⁶ It is interesting to note that the Guild's first two patrons were both hearing – Mrs Abraham and Mrs Luke, appointed in 1916. The next person appointed patron was Mrs Daisy Muir but this did not occur until 50 years later in 1966 when Daisy was 92 years of age!⁷



Deaf Women's Guild's 35 years Anniversary - 22 September 1936 (photo: The Sun, 23 September 1936)

An example of Daisy's character is evidenced here when an article appeared in 'The New Idea' magazine on 6/4/1906 written by a hearing person calling herself "ALPHA". 'Alpha' had received an invitation from the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria, to attend the "Home" of the deaf and dumb (Adult Deaf and Dumb Building). 'Alpha' accepted the invitation with reluctance, as 'Alpha' had never met any deaf people before. She was horrified and had imagined the deaf mute to be an unfortunate creation, mentally imperfect and somewhat uncanny. When 'Alpha' entered the building, 'Alpha' put on a sympathetic expression and was wondering what to say to the poor things. It stunned 'Alpha' when she saw a crowd of merry, laughing girls and women, and 'Alpha' was confused, as it was not what 'Alpha' was led to believe by the society. 'Alpha' enjoyed the day there and had conversations on paper with the deaf girls and women. 'Alpha' mentioned Daisy Muir in the article:

⁶ Our Monthly Letter. The Organ of the Adult Deaf & Dumb Society of Victoria February 1913 Vol.9 No.6

⁷ Deaf Women's Guild Records

“a talented deaf lady and perhaps the most popular and best loved, if one can say so where there is so much harmony and affection, of all the deaf mutes. Her home is a miniature art exhibition, and she is quite as nimble with her fingers. She is an excellent organiser and for many years she has been one of the leaders of the deaf women's movement. Mr. J. E. Muir, her husband, is an expert draughtsman in one of the Government offices. They both devote a very large portion of their leisure to the welfare of their less fortunate brethren.”

It would be remiss of me to omit mentioning four members of this group who were hearing: Mrs Abraham, Mrs Alex Wilson (who usually gave Bible lessons), Miss Empsom and Miss Williamson. It was not unusual in this time and age for hearing people, usually connected through their work or friends/families, to be involved.

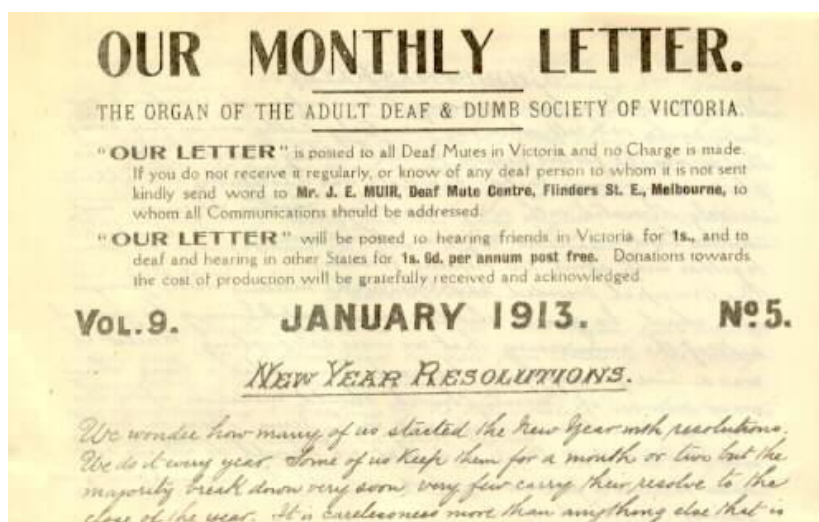
A very significant milestone in the history of the Deaf Women's Guild would have to be the one that took place on 3 August 1911. At this meeting, Daisy Muir suggested that her Educational Classes and Mrs Wilson's Bible Classes be discontinued. The purpose of this was in order to give the women the opportunity of reading more papers. After a long discussion, the women decided to hold the Bible Classes on some nights only and further discussion on the Educational Classes was to take place at the next meeting. Daisy stipulated that if these classes were to continue then it would need to be done in rotation amongst the members.⁸

It was carried unanimously at the next meeting (22/8/1911) to continue with the Educational Classes on a rotational basis. Since then more of the younger members participated and they included women such as Misses Rose Dow, Doris Davis, Doris Hickey and Lottie Fletcher.⁹

⁸ Deaf Women's Guild Committee Minutes, 3rd August, 1911

⁹ Deaf Women's Guild Record Book, 22nd August, 1911

Not only was Daisy involved in committees, she was also involved with the publication of 'Our Monthly Letter' working with her husband John Muir, a lithographer and Matthew Miller, a Deaf engraving artist in 1905 and 1906, when it was printed by hand with a circulation of 400-450.^{10 11} They wrote the lithographic transfers each month.¹²



Copy of the first page - 'Our Monthly Letter' - January 1913

In 1908 both John and Daisy were appointed Secretaries for the Stall and Town Bazaar to raise funds for the Farm and Home scheme.¹³ It was required that two thousand pounds be raised and this was done in order to receive a grant supplemented by Government funds. The Farm opened officially on Saturday 27 November, 1909.¹⁴ Daisy's appointment as Hon. Secretary would suggest that she had certain administrative skills.

Daisy was also a capable artist; she taught painting from at least 1907 and held educational classes and classes in dressmaking for women, which were 'well attended' for many years.

Numbers have slowly dwindled in this group and today they are struggling to keep active. The members usually numbering 14-16, meet on a Saturday afternoon each

¹⁰ Extracts from 23rd Annual Report of the Deaf Committee, April, 1911 p.13 (Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Reports 1902 – 1912)

¹¹ Extracts from 24th Annual Report of the Deaf Committee, April 1912, p.9 (Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Reports 1902 - 1912)

¹² Extracts from 24th Annual Report of the Deaf Committee, April 1912, p.9 (Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Reports 1902-1912)

¹³ No Longer by Gaslight. P.49

month to take part in activities such as playing cards to raise funds towards the Children's Christmas Party which is held every year early in December at the premises of the Victorian Deaf Society. It still exists today though it is a very small group.¹⁵

There is a list of the Guild's discussion activities in its early years (see Appendix 2 for 1909). The importance of Daisy in the development of the Deaf community is very clear. From 1909, Daisy along with Matthew Miller and her husband John, took full control of bible classes until 1910 in the absence of the chaplain. At its twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting in 1909, the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria changed its name to the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria, heralding the start of an awareness of Deaf people as a group of people who were a society in itself rather than as a mission of people needing saving in the name of the Almighty. (see Appendix 3 for 1910 – 1912).

Due to the various activities over the years between 1909 & 1912, Daisy had become a most accomplished public speaker. At the second Congress of the Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association, attended by people from every state and New Zealand, held at the Deaf Centre in Flinders Street, Daisy gave a paper on "Language: Argument - That grammatical construction of sentences should be one of the most important, if not the chief, subject on the curriculum at Deaf Schools". Her paper was very ably thought out and met with general approval. (*refer to Appendix 3*). The 28th Annual Report of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society in 1911-1912 (page 5) also reported that:

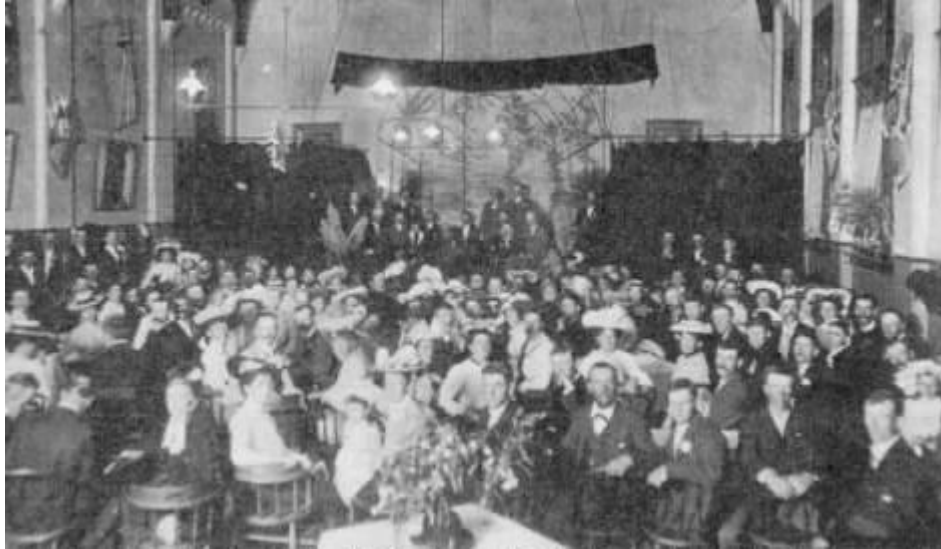
“ ‘Uniform System of Sign and Finger Language for the Deaf of Australasia’ was the title of the paper read by Mr J. E Muir. One was also contributed by Miss M O. Wilson, of Queensland. Mrs J. E Muir’s paper on ‘Language’ was very ably thought out, and met with general approval..... ”.

Matthew Miller gave a paper on ‘Deaf Tramps and Imposters’ which was reported as ‘timely’. The Conference was held from 24 December, 1911 till 1 January 1912.

¹⁴ No Longer by Gaslight. P.53 - Programme

¹⁵ Beard, Beryl, 1995

Matthew Miller was appointed as Honorary Secretary, John Muir was Honorary Treasurer and Ernest J. D. Abraham was the President.¹⁶



Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association Congress at Congregational Church Hall Dec/Jan 1903-04 (printed: No Longer by Gaslight - J. W Flynn)

It is also recorded that in 1912 Daisy donated her painting of the Blackburn Lake to the Home at Blackburn. One wonders about its exact whereabouts nowadays (see Appendix 5 for 1913-14).¹⁷

Another record is from the Adult Deaf and Dumb 1916 Report :

“Mrs J. E. Muir's work among the deaf women is invaluable. A lady of refinement and considerable artistic skill, she has endeared herself to all by her unselfish example, tactful, original and impressive methods of instruction. Her classes are very popular amongst the young, and her lessons such as every mother would delight to know her daughter was receiving. Her own refinement is mirrored in everyone who comes under her influence. The educational classes are held by Mrs Muir at every alternate meeting, they being very instructive and of great value to the members, especially the younger. The varied topics for

¹⁶ Extracts from the 24th Annual Report of the Deaf Committee April 1912, page 9 (Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Reports 1902 – 1912)

¹⁷ Adult Deaf & Dumb Mission Reports 1902-12

the year of 1916 - 1917 are listed. Daisy spoke (using signing) on Domestic Economy, Idioms, and Scandinavian Mythology. The Wandering Jew, How to Save, Magazine Wedding, The Sphinx, Bushy Myths, All About Me. Topics by other speakers included - The Ten Lepers, how Animals Bluff Their Prey, Warfare, Destiny of Christ, Keepsake, Ruth, Friendship, Charity Believeth All Things, Gnats and Their Methods. The Ramblers Club had then operated for three years. Its object was described.... to make the members better acquainted with each other, cultivate friendship; and while giving opportunities to visit the many beauty spots within easy reach of Melbourne, also tends to be informative and widens their outlook. Mrs J. E. Muir has proved herself an admirable President”.

Little is known about the Deaf Rambler's Club except for small mentions in the Minutes of the Deaf Women's Guild. All I know at this stage is that it was formed in either 1912 or 1913 and the first President was Mrs J. E. (Daisy) Muir. It was planned to have outings once a month with the first one scheduled for 1 June 1912. It is possible, however to examine the Treasurer's Reports (by Mabel Dow). By 1928 the Ramblers Club was under the auspices of the Women's Guild. On 10 May it was decided to form an independent Ramblers Club on the lines previously adopted when the club came into existence.¹⁸ It is hoped that research into this group shall be pursued in the future.

Daisy also founded another group, the Deaf Worker's Club composed of deaf ladies only. The inaugural meeting was held on 19 August 1913 at her Malvern residence while she was also President of the Deaf Women's Guild. This group was formed with the aim of 'helping and supplying the Blackburn Home with one or more useful articles (gifts) annually; particularly of their own making' and, 'to support the appeal set up by the Lady Mayoress of Melbourne (Mrs Hennessy) for making hospital comforts for the

¹⁸ Our Monthly Letter, May & June 1928.

soldiers on active service'.¹⁹ Members were also asked to contribute groceries and goods from the chemist every month for the soldiers. Money was collected for Belgian Deaf Refugees and for the Patriotic Fund, garments were made for soldiers and the Red Cross. By 1916 there were 84 members of The Deaf Workers' Club, 52 men having joined.²⁰

On 11 August 1914, mention was made at the meeting of the 'Great European War' and the women members were advised to 'keep away from the sentries'.²¹ On 9 February 1915, mention was made of this group working together with the Deaf Workers Club 'to make more garments for the soldiers'.²²

A letter was sent to Mr J. E. Muir, Secretary of the Deaf Committee, to consider the advisability of a club for men to provide for the deaf men at the Home and Farm at Blackburn and also to keep up the spirit of generosity as done in Ohio, U.S.A. where it was reported that the Ohio Home for the Aged had over 30 deaf inmates who were solely supported by the Deaf of Ohio²³.

Mrs J. E. Muir and Mrs Smith were appointed to purchase materials. Mrs J. E. Muir, Mrs Smith and Mrs A. Williamson were appointed to take charge of the cutting and giving out of the work to be done. The Secretary was then requested to write to the Secretary of the Deaf Committee (Mr J. E. Muir, Daisy's husband) advising that the "Ladies of the Club" were willing to undertake the arrangements for catering at socials and rallies.

It is well worth examining the roll of office bearers of the Deaf Women's Guild to see the extent of Daisy's involvement (refer to Appendix 5).

Another significant history making event took place at a meeting on 15 October 1912 with the letters from Miss Connell, Mrs Frewin and Mrs Gladman, in regard to a clause in Rule 5 which was raised on 22nd August 1912 at a Committee Meeting.²⁴ This is

¹⁹ Deaf Workers Club Minutes & Report, 19th August 1913

²⁰ Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria Report, 1917

²¹ Deaf Women's Guild Record Book, 11th August, 1914

²² Deaf Women's Guild Record Book, 9th February, 1915

²³ Deaf Workers Club Minutes & Report, 15th September 1915

²⁴ Deaf Women's Guild Record Book, 2nd July, 1902

where the mystery begins as it is not clear what this clause is and two pages of the Minutes Book have been glued together. It may be that these pages would hold the clue to the mystery. To heighten the suspense, the President Mrs J. E. Muir stood down from the chair at this same meeting and Mrs Abraham agreed to step in to take charge of the proceedings.²⁵ Mr E. Abraham had some involvement in that he sent a letter to the Guild on 18 June 1912 about Miss Connell, which the committee disagreed with but then decided later that he was perhaps not mistaken.²⁶ Could this course of action have been the beginning of a Deaf/hearing power struggle where the then Missionary, Mr. Ernest Abraham was in charge of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission?

It is unfortunate that it is not possible to locate the Minutes of the Deaf Women's Guild (Deaf Women's Friendly Society) from 1901 to 1909 and it is hoped that these missing documents shall be located. However it is recorded in the Minutes of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria dated 27/9/1901 that “ the Ladies Subcommittee had the use of a room at the Collins Street Baptist Church for the Deaf Women's Friendly Society for which they paid 2/6 per night for gas and £1 per annum to the Caretaker. The Committee resolved to defray this expense as asked by Mrs Luke”

It is recorded that in 1908:

“F. J. Rose received a gold medal as a token of esteem, and for his 25th year of work among the deaf, and 6th year in Australia, also in recognition of his successful efforts to establish a farm and home for aged and infirm deaf mutes in Victoria. ” Ref: Adult Deaf & Dumb Mission Reports – 20th Annual Report of the Deaf Sub-Committee, 1908.

For the modern Deaf Community, Frederick John Rose is but only a figment of the imagination, a legendary figure who achieved much but received little in his life. He was probably a very wise Deaf man to associate with, having faced the vagaries of running a school in the face of hearing people who were reluctant to give him full control. He would have had much to advise about running an organisation and making contacts with hearing people.

²⁵ Deaf Women's Guild Committee Minutes, 10th October, 1912

²⁶ Deaf Women's Guild Committee Minutes, 10th October, 1912

The 12th Annual Report of Deaf Women's Guild for Year ending June 1913 was presented on 12th August 1913. Compliments were raised about Daisy:

"It is congratulatory to have such an excellent President in the person of Mrs J. E Muir who has always something very interesting to say at meetings and also by her sound advice, which is much appreciated by the members. We are greatly indebted to this lady for the valuable assistance rendered at all times and desire to convey to her our sincere thanks for her splendid services".

It was recorded in the Deaf Women's Guild's Minutes Report (21 March 1964) that Mabel Dow reminded the members of Daisy Muir's 90th Birthday that year. It was decided to give her a party and the cost to be shared by both the Ladies Auxiliary and the Deaf Women's Guild²⁷. The party was organised for Daisy on Saturday 26 September 1964, at the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria in the Assembly Hall. The two organisations invited over 80 guests to the party which was attended by her family, friends of the Deaf Women's Guild, Deaf Ladies Auxiliary and Social Club plus three Board of Directors of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria and their wives²⁸. The cost of the party was £27-0-9p²⁹. In the Deaf Talkabout Newsletter dated September 1964, page 5 & 6 mention was made about her birthday party:

"A happy birthday party was organised by members of the Deaf Women's Guild and the Deaf Ladies Auxiliary, Saturday 26th September, and over 80 friends and relatives met to wish Mrs. Daisy Muir congratulations on her 90th birthday.

Our Hall was tastefully decorated and individual tables were set up, the floral table decorations adding a bright dash of colour. Among the hearing friends and relatives in attendance were Mr. & Mrs. P. Damman, Mr. & Mrs. D. Damman, Mrs. E. Damman,

²⁷ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report, 21st March 1964

²⁸ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report, 14th July 1964

Miss J. Damman, Mrs. O Damman, Mr. & Mrs. Leeman, Mr. & Mrs. I. Scott, Mrs Geoff Damman, Mr. G. Wigney, Mr. & Mrs. F. Wardrop, Miss E. Doran, Mr. & Mrs. H. Parkinson, Mr. M. Dyson and Mr. E.A. Reynolds. Mrs Muir looked much younger than her years in a flattering pink hat with an orchid on her coat.

Mr. E. A Reynolds rendered the National Anthem in the language of gesture, and Mrs. F. O'Connor, President of the Deaf Women's guild, extended a cordial welcome to the guest of honour and all deaf and hearing friends. Mrs. A. Beard, Hon. Secretary of the Women's Guild, read the list of apologies which came from deaf and hearing friends in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. Mrs. M Dyson, President of the Deaf Ladies Auxiliary, and Mrs. C Griffiths, V. President of the Deaf Ladies Social Club, in nicely worded speeches wished Mrs. Muir "Happy Birthday" and presented her with flowers and presents, from the Guild, Auxiliary and Social Club. Many other gifts from friends and relatives were on display. It was an added pleasure to have Mrs B. Mansfield of New South Wales at the function.

Mr. David Damman, a nephew of Mrs. Muir, read the congratulatory telegrams and cards. Mr E. A Reynolds interpreted on behalf of hearing and deaf friends.

Miss Mabel Dow, in proposing a toast in honour of Mrs. Muir, spoke feelingly of the early days of the Guild when Mrs. Muir was known to the young girls as "Mother Hen": that Mrs Muir had named her "Miss Muffet". She told of her kindly advice, guidance and interest given to the girls and of the appreciation of the girls of her care for their welfare. Mrs. Muir rose to respond and was given great applause. She also spoke feelingly and thanked one and all for arranging the party, of the pleasure she had in having so many good friends, of being a member of the Society for 74

²⁹ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report 6th October 1964

years and being connected with the Guild for 63 years, and concluded by thanking all who had made the day so happy.

Mr. H.S. Parkinson wished Mrs. Muir a happy birthday and congratulated her on being a member of the "Nonagenarian Club", a very selected group of deaf.

Mr E. A Reynolds extending his birthday wishes, spoke of his early days at the old headquarters in Flinders Street where he attended with his parents. Mrs. Muir added that he was then a baby. After a few humorous remarks, Mr. Reynolds thanked Mrs. Muir for the help and advice she had given him both as a young man and in is position as Welfare Superintendent.

Birthday greetings were read from Mr. H Powell, Supt. Secretary of the Victorian School for Deaf Children, who is at present on a world tour investigating work on behalf of deaf children. Mr. G Wigney, President of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria, on behalf of himself and Members of the Board of Management, expressed pleasure at being present on such a happy occasion and congratulated Mrs. Muir on her birthday and thanked her for the years of loyal service she had rendered the Society and deaf community and presented her with a sheaf of flowers as a token of appreciation.

Mrs. Muir then cut the birthday cake, which was distributed among the guests. Mrs. Percy Damman, on behalf of relatives and friends, thanked Mrs. O' Connor for making possible such a happy occasion. The meeting then closed and deaf and hearing friends joined in happy conversation."



The above article showed that Daisy started her involvement in the Deaf community at the age of 16 and joined the Deaf Women's Guild when she was 27 years old. A small article about her 90th Birthday party was printed in "The Herald" newspaper on 26 September, 1964. It was quoted "Happy birthday (quietly)". (see newspaper article below).

After I read most of the Deaf Women's Guild Minutes Reports and also their Annual Reports over the years I must admire Miss Mabel Dow for her lifelong work with the Deaf Women's Guild and the Deaf Ladies Auxiliary which she was involved with for about 50 years. In the Minutes Report dated 25th October 1969, it stated that in the event of unveiling a picture in memory of Miss Mabel Dow after her death, Mrs Luffene, President of the Deaf Women's Guild, spoke highly of Miss Mabel Dow's work associated with the Women's Guild and she gave sterling service and was a good example of the Deaf people. It would appear that Mabel Dow was a

protégé of Daisy Muir and I have seen several photos of them together at gatherings and playing golf in Warburton.

Conclusion

Investigation for this chapter indicated that Daisy was a vital influence on the development of the Deaf community. She took an active role in founding and developing organisations for women. She also led by example. Daisy was a very public figure who worked tirelessly and selflessly for the good of the Deaf community in Melbourne. Daisy was involved in furthering the education of the Deaf women, but

Chapter 4 ~ Daisy's Involvement with the Deaf Women's Guild

let us now turn to Chapter 6 to discuss her marriage and her life thereafter with her husband, John Edward Muir.

DAISY AND JOHN MUIR

It is assumed that Daisy Damman met John Edward Muir, a deaf man, through the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission in the Congregational Hall, Russell Street, Melbourne. John worked as a lithographic draftsman in the Railway Construction Branch of the Board of Land and Works, from 1896 to 1903.¹ John was born deaf and had two older deaf brothers named Adam and William – identical twin brothers who also had a lot of involvement within the Deaf community. They were co-founders of the Deaf Society and also of the Deaf Cricket Club, which has been running for over 117 years.² Deaf Sports & Recreation Victoria has a trophy for ‘Best Sportsman of the Year’ named after Adam Muir for his contribution to deaf sports in his time.



*John Muir
(photo: No Longer by GasLight -
J.W Flynn)*



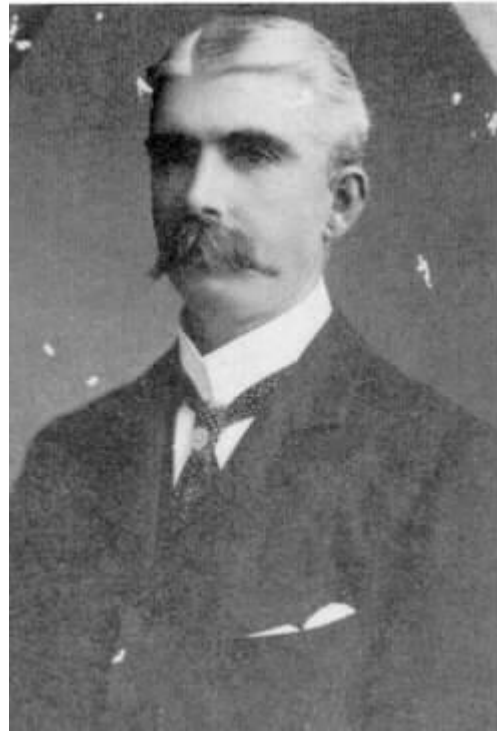
*John Muir 5 years old 1869
(photo: M. Ramsay - Family)*

¹ Ramsay Family History papers, 1995

² No Longer by Gaslight, 1984



William Muir
(photo: *No Longer by Gaslight* – J. Flynn)



Adam Muir

The parent of these Muirs were hearing and came from Scotland. William Patterson Muir Senior was born in Ayrshire and was a merchant in the West Indies, Glasgow, and Melbourne, then become General Manager of the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria. His wife, Elizabeth Mary Cairns, born in Fife, was the second daughter of the Rev Dr Adam Cairns who came to Melbourne with his wife and six children and three other Church of Scotland ministries, in 1853. He was a well known minister of Chalmers Church in Gipps Street West (now named St Andrews Place), East Melbourne. William and Elizabeth were married on 7 November 1856, at Chalmers Manse, beside the Church. After Rev. Adam Cairns' death, Cairns Memorial Church was built in Powlett Street, East Melbourne. It was gutted by a fire in 1988. Residential units have been built within its stone walls.³ John and his brothers had Waardenburg Syndrome.⁴ Most likely this ran in the family. John's brother William had three deaf daughters, named Jessie Cairns Muir (married name - Bragg), Alexandria Renton Muir, and Wilhemina Patterson Muir (married name - Rees), and two daughters who were not deaf.⁵ Deafness seemed to run in the family as Janet Muir, the eldest sister of William Patterson Muir Senior, married

³ Ramsay Family History, 1999

⁴ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

James Sloan. Two of their six children were deaf. Christina and James Sloan were enrolled at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in July 1863, when aged 10 and 6.⁶

Before continuing with the description of the Muirs, I should explain what is "Waardenburg Syndrome". WS - short for Waardenburg Syndrome - is a gene that affects the body in three areas: hearing, pigmentation (colouring) of the skin, hair and eyes and facial structure. Another consequence is deafness. There are many different types of deafness caused by WS; either totally deaf, or deaf in one ear and yet other ear has completely normal hearing. Often with the eyes, there is one blue and one brown eye. With the hair, usually, they have a white forelock - a patch of white on the front of the hair. When they are in their twenties or thirties, they will have white hair all over. But it does not mean that people with WS have all these characteristics. Their facial structure will have a certain kind of look noticeable to the trained eye but not so unusual. The main feature is that the eyes appear to be more widely spaced than average. Not all WS people have hearing loss.⁷



Daisy and John were not enrolled at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution at the same time. John was admitted on 24 April 1871 (student no 104)⁸ and discharged on 21 November 1879.⁹ Daisy enrolled in 1882. So John was not a pupil at the school when Daisy arrived. They knew each other at Deaf Social activities.

Adam and William Muir 18, (twins brothers) taken in Glasgow, 1878 (photo: M Ramsay - Family)

Daisy was 27 when she married John who was 38, on 6th August 1902, a few months after Daisy's father Gustave died in April 1902. They were married by Rev. Henry W.H Adeney at "Uhlenhorst", 33 Queens Road,

⁵ Ramsay Family History, 1995

⁶ Ramsay Family History, 1999

⁷ EncartaTM'95

⁸ 13th Annual Report of the Committee of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1875 - List of Pupils, 1875

⁹ 18th Annual Report of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, 1880 - List of Pupils, 1880

Albert Park. The witnesses were her mother and brother Percy.¹⁰ It was where Daisy and her family lived. Daisy wore a lovely and unusual wedding dress in two pieces. John looked handsome in very smart clothes.



Daisy and John Muir on their Wedding - 6 August 1902 (photo: Damman Family)

John Muir was born in 1863 at Moncrieff Place, Erin Street, Richmond. His brother William, 13 enrolled at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution at the same time as John aged 7 who started school in April 1871.¹¹ William's twin brother Adam was hearing until the age of 14 when a horse kicked his head and he became deaf.¹² He was first enrolled at Scotch College in East Melbourne, next door to his grandfather's manse and church, and then transferred to Wesley College, situated next to the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution.¹³ Perhaps it was so that William, John and Adam could travel together.¹⁴ William only stayed at the Institution until the end of 1872. On 17 January 1873, three days after their 14th birthday, William and Adam left Melbourne on the

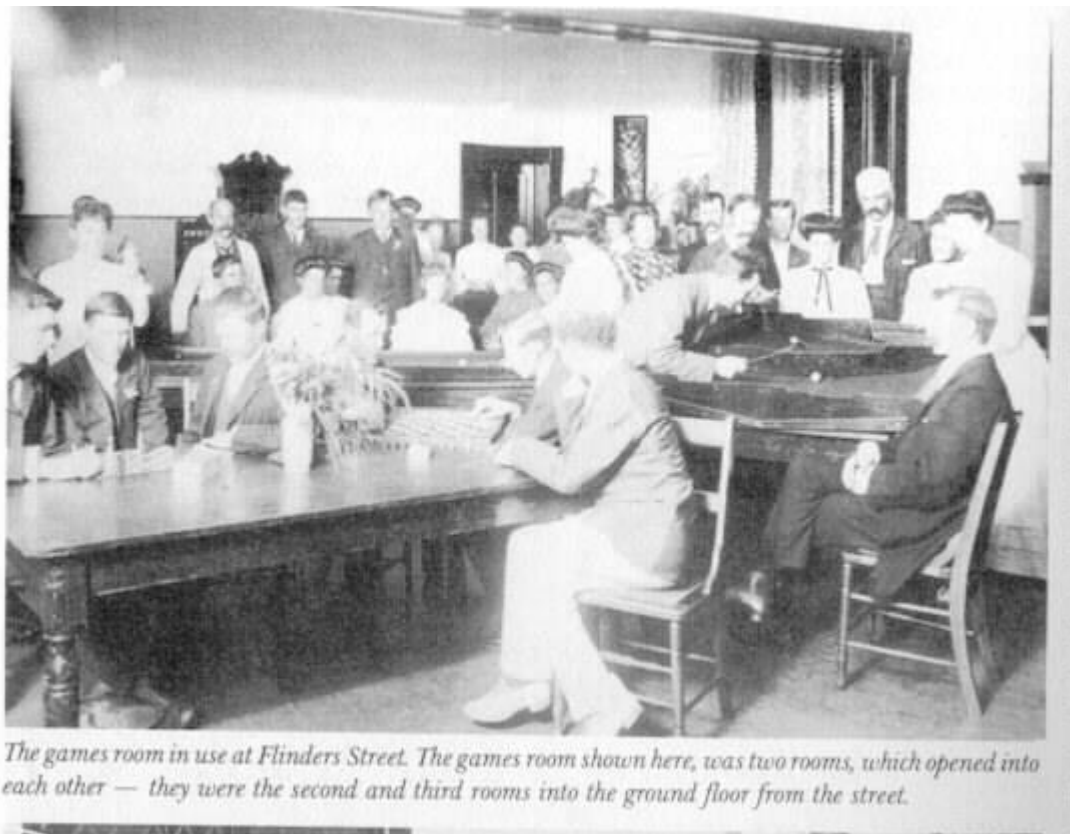
¹⁰ Damman Family History papers, 1995

¹¹ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

¹² Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

¹³ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

‘Loch Lomond’ ship for Scotland. They both attended the Glasgow Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, Scotland for the next 4 years. Their parents probably intended John to join his brothers as a pupil in Glasgow in 1874. The family’s passage on the Great Britain was already booked when their father died very suddenly in December 1873. Their mother died in 1879, leaving eight surviving children between the ages of 6 to 22 years old. Adam and William returned to Melbourne in August 1878.¹⁵



Can you see both Daisy and John Muir at the back and on the right side of the photo at the Deaf and Dumb Building? (photo: No Longer by Gaslight - J. W Flynn)

From well before they were married, both Daisy and John were very busy, involved in deaf organisations like those outlined in the previous chapter. John was involved in the committees such as the Deaf Sub-Committee, in Bible Study and Divine Service, and in Pantomime - John often took humorous parts with Matthew Miller. John and Daisy were therefore a very active couple and loved to be involved with Deaf people and the Deaf community. Adam was the driving force in starting the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society, aided by William and John, with assistance from their grandfather and their

¹⁴ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

¹⁵ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

uncle's brother Charles Officer, and afterwards, many other people. Without people like Daisy and John, I doubt if the Victorian Deaf Society or other organisation like the sports clubs would have been formed. They were very important people and provided young deaf people with role models as they do even now. Many people will always acknowledge their tireless work.

After they married in Melbourne, they lived in a house named 'Moncrieff' in Wheatland Road Malvern. It was named after John's boyhood home in Erin Street Richmond.¹⁶ When John became unwell and resigned from his commitments in the Deaf Community¹⁷, John and Daisy decided to live in Warburton where, her father Gustave had bought 130 acres of land some years ago.¹⁸ His land was called Hazel Park (see Chapter Eight). Gush, Daisy's brother and his wife Elsie (Alice) (nee Hair) farmed there and looked after the dairy farm for Gustave and Mathilde.¹⁹ On 26 May 1917, Daisy and John purchased 9 acres from her father's land. Their house was being built while they were living in Melbourne.²⁰



'Moncrieff' - their house in Warburton (photo: N Mansfield)

After the house was completed around 1920 they moved in and again they named their house "Moncrieff". By then they were aged 46 and 57. The reason for moving to Warburton was due to John's health and wanting to have some fresh air in the country.²¹ In 1927 they celebrated their 25th Wedding Anniversary and a "Buick" car

¹⁶ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

¹⁷ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

¹⁸ Damman Family History 1995

¹⁹ Damman Family History, 1995

²⁰ Damman Family History, 1995

²¹ Damman Family History, 1995

with “balloon tyres” was given to them as a 'Silver' gift by Daisy’s parents.²² John had never had a driver's licence²³ but Daisy obtained one and she loved driving everywhere in her car²⁴. So often Daisy drove John to places to visit.



Daisy and John's car - 'BUICK' (photo: N Mansfield)

While they lived there, John worked as a draftsman with the railways at Warburton. He designed the goods lines in the station and the turntable at the back.²⁵

²² Mansfield, Nora, 1995 and 1999

²³ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

²⁴ Damman, Ron 1995 & Fox, Albert, 1995

²⁵ Damman Family History, 1995



Warburton Railway line and Damman Bridge (printed: Warburton Ways - E. Parkinson)

They did not have any children. But I do know they loved children, encouraged the young deaf people to become involved in the Deaf community.²⁶ Daisy once knew a young deaf girl who had been neglected by her own parents. She was left in the shed in old rag clothes. Her parents were very embarrassed because their child was deaf. Somehow, Daisy heard about this girl being kept in the shed in the back of the house by her parents. The shed was filthy and the girl was in shock. Gush was the one who knew about the deaf girl and told Daisy about her. Gush demanded to take her away from her parents. One day, Daisy decided to take her and look after her and asked her brother Gush to go with her because he was a big and strong man. Daisy drove along to the girl's house to get her away from her own parents. The child had never been to school, she had no education and she was unable to communicate or maybe very little. Daisy was astonished to see the condition of the deaf girl. So Daisy looked after her and gave her an education. Daisy brought her up as her own child. The deaf girl later attended the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution.²⁷

Some years after moving to Warburton John became ill with Bright's Disease (kidney disease)²⁸ and he died on 31 January 1931, aged 67. He was buried in the Box Hill

²⁶ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

²⁷ Damman, David, 1995

²⁸ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

cemetery.²⁹ Daisy was 57 years old when John died. Daisy still remained in Warburton after John passed away until the year of 1948 when she sold her property to move back to Melbourne. Daisy would have mourned John deeply as they worked and lived together side by side every day for thirty years. From personal accounts I received from various people in the Deaf community, Daisy would have been the dominant partner in this relationship but on a discreet and respectable level, mindful of her place in society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed Daisy's life as Mrs John E. Muir living in Melbourne and the couple's subsequent move to Warburton. Both Daisy and John continued to work hard for the Deaf community after their marriage and it was rare in those days for a married couple to do so. It was interesting to note that the house built for Daisy and John was named "Moncrieff" by John (after his previous house in Richmond) even though the land was initially purchased by the Damman family. And so we turn into Chapter 7 to look more closely at Daisy's time in Warburton where Daisy and John Muir, Gush and Elsie Damman and their children lived for many years.

²⁹ Ramsay (Muir) Family History, 1995

WARBURTON - “HAZEL PARK” & “MONCRIEFF”

In 1891, Gustave Damman Snr, bought 130 acres of land in Warburton from John Thomas Robinson. Above the channel, which crossed the top of it, it was full of trees. There were many Hazel trees (*Pomaderris Apetala*) in Warburton, so John Robinson named his land “Hazel Park”. Hazel trees are a thin tree and they were used for fishing rods in the early days. The property was partly cleared and was already a substantial dairy farm when Gustave bought it. There was a silo there and they used to cut the hay, bring it down, put it through the chaff cutter which interestingly enough was worked by two horses. They put two horses in a contraption that turned a wheel which then turned the cutter and automatically took the chaff up to the silo. It was quite an up-to-date farm in those days.¹ John Robinson’s son Bert wrote in 1966:



Hazel Park (circa 1890s)

“Just when the road started to come in from Lilydale, I do not know, or when the bridge was built across the Yarra, but I presume about 1880. I was born in 1883. Dad sold his farm to a German named Damman. He had a tobacco business of some kind in Melbourne, and he had a son and daughter both deaf and dumb. The son, who was quite a big man, came to Hazel Park to

¹ Damman Family History, 1995

take care of the farm and Dad stayed there for a while to teach Gustave (the son) to run the farm...”

ref: Warburton Ways, Author: Earle Parkinson 1983. Printed by Signs Publishing Company P.16 Reminiscences A Voice from the Past.

It was quite significant that the local history book mentioned “a son and daughter” in the article. It shows the person who wrote it did not forget them because of their identity as ‘Deaf and Dumb’.

The population of Warburton, just before the turn of the Century, was 150. By 1966 it was 1545² The railway from Lilydale to Warburton was authorised by an Act of Parliament in December 1898. Construction of the 24-mile extension commenced on 28 November 1899. John Muir’s work in the Railway Construction Branch included drafting and lithographing plans for Swan Hill, Collingwood and Ferntree Gully, but the plans and designs for the Warburton line were of particular interest to him. His initials are on many of these plans. Because of the difficult terrain, plans often had to be altered. John’s plans and diagrams included plans and sections of track, station grounds, stonework and bridges. Warburton opened to traffic on 13 November 1901.³

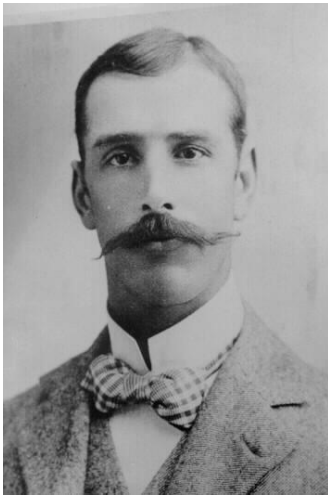


*Picnic on the Yarra River in Warburton 1902
John & Daisy Muir, Oscar, Mathilde, Lillie, Gustave, Anne & Percy (photo: Damman Family)*

² Victorian Year Book, 1973 P.798

³ Railway Construction Branch, Victorian Railways, PROV. 3.21.3 & 3.21.4

The Damman family often travelled to Warburton for the day and had a picnic at the nearby Yarra River near Hazel Park. The surroundings were so beautiful and had a relaxing atmosphere.⁴ It is no wonder they loved Warburton. Usually, they went fishing with a rod made of a hazel tree branch. They had a farm there too and sometimes, the father wished to make a short cut to the farm just before arriving in Warburton from Melbourne. So, Gustave asked the council if he could pay to build his own bridge across over the Yarra River on a bend which was a short cut of about 3 miles. It was approved and the cost was 200 pounds. It was very expensive at that time. He made the bridge and in about 1920, Daisy and John moved to 'Moncrieff' on Hazel Park. Unfortunately, the bridge has collapsed from a flood.⁵ Gush had married Elsie Hair in the 'Deaf Mute Church Melbourne' on 7th November 1908. They had four daughters, two of whom died in infancy, and two sons. Ron, Sheila and Stan shared many memories of their Aunt Daisy.



*Gustave (Gush) Melbourne Damman
(Daisy's deaf brother)*



*Gush, his wife Elsie (nee Hair), Daisy Muir
(photo: N. Mansfield)*

It was about 5 minutes walk down to Hazel Park. The Moncrieff house was erected around 1917 and finished around 1920. Everything surrounding their house was bare dirt.⁶

⁴ Damman Family History papers, 1995

⁵ Damman Family History papers, 1995

⁶ Damman, Ron, 1995



‘Moncrieff’ in Warburton (photo: N. Mansfield)

Daisy and John both started the garden and planted some trees. There were many fern gullies around that ran up between Daisy’s place and Hazel Park. From her house, they could see the river Yarra down the valley and also “Mt Little Joe”. Sheila and Stan, daughter and son of Daisy’s brother Gush, who lived next door to Daisy and John after their retirement to Warburton, reminisced in 1995 about Daisy and John.⁷ Sheila wrote that:

“As I recall they were always regarded as a well-read and highly intelligent couple. ...Daisy was a keen gardener and had quite extensive gardens to establish and look after. There was a formal kind of garden with lawn, plus a rockery garden and a little gully which had tracks going through with a little bridge over the creek. As well as this she had an orchard where my main memories are of wonderful Japanese plums - huge they were and the like of which have never been tasted since. There were also pears and quinces (I recall that her dog, a red setter, ate one of these off the tree and was quite ill.)

In the afternoon Daisy would always be in ‘afternoon dress’ and invariably reading a book. Mythology appeared to be one of her main subjects and there were many of these books then in the book case (Art Nouveau) which now have.... Sometimes I would

⁷ Letter from Sheila Catton, (nee Damman), to M. Ramsay 1995

carry her books from the Library secured in leather straps made for the purpose so that the corners of the books weren't damaged.

Daisy's sitting room had a large comfy sofa and chairs upholstered and covered in 'Vieux Rose' brocade which I thought was lovely. There were Aladdin lamps which were ideal to read by and which also shed a soft white light through the shades.

Daisy was one of the early Lady Drivers of automobiles (always with gloves and hat) and in 1928 purchased a Buick which was something I recall because it had what was then called “Balloon Tyres”. My mother, Alice Damman, bought a Dodge soon after, but it did not have “Balloon Tyres”. Daisy's road was not roadworthy after rain and she used to drive across our paddock where she would get bogged often and we'd all have to push. Stan bought the Buick from her after the war so it saw many years of service.

Daisy was the beauty of the family and there was a serenity about her which you don't come across often, especially these days.”

I can imagine Daisy feeling very relaxed in her home as I have been there to see what it looked like. It has now been taken over as a Catholic Retreat.



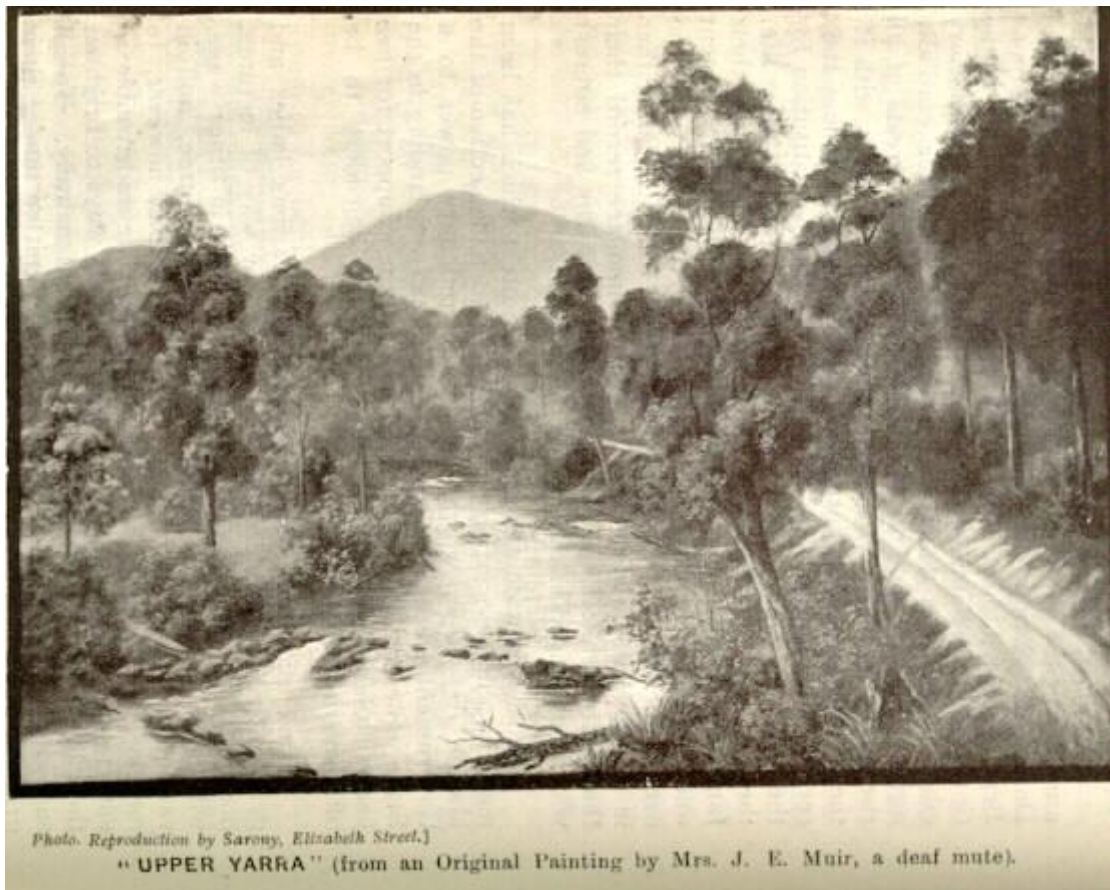
Daisy in her garden, Warburton (photo: N. Mansfield)

To my surprise, it still looks the same but the only difference is that they have extended the front house. When Daisy and John lived there her house had a verandah at the

front, but now it has been built over to become a room and there is no verandah any more. The garden and trees mostly look the same as when Daisy lived there.

Dammans Road run along the northern bank of the Yarra River past Damman's farm and "Moncrieff". At one time Daisy often painted from there. One painting is called "Upper Yarra", with Mt Little Joe in the background and the gravel road along the river.

I have been fortunate to see a photograph exactly the same as what she painted titled "Upper Yarra". It showed that Daisy was a very good painter.



Painting by Daisy Muir "UPPER YARRA" in Warburton (printed: Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission Report 1902 - 12 {22nd Annual Report 1906})

There was a private golf course next to Gush's farm and after John died, Daisy often played golf there and was member of Warburton Golf Club. She played three or four times a week and once a week she entered in the competition. She was not a very good

golfer but she enjoyed her games.⁸ There was a photograph of Daisy with Betty Wilkinson (now Nora Mansfield) and Dorothy Johnston (her married name was Dorothy Shaw). She was very well known in the Deaf Community within Australia. Dorothy later had 3 deaf children - Danielle, Sandra and Bruce Shaw).



Daisy, Dorothy Johnston (Shaw) & Betty Wilkinson playing golf at Warburton Golf Course (photo: N. Mansfield). View of Hazel Park



Street Sign in Warburton named Damman after Daisy's family (photo: M. Anderson)

⁸ Mansfield, Nora, 1995

Conclusion

In summarising the results of my research for this chapter, I can say that Daisy’s life in Warburton is meaningful, for it shows us the sort of life that this important pioneer led after her retirement. She was always seeking knowledge and taking command of her own life. She was proud and confident. She read widely, created a beautiful garden and home, drove a motor car and played golf. She also entertained friends and was a respected member of the local community.⁹ In the next chapter we continue to explore Daisy’s life in Warburton, through her long-time companion, Betty Wilkinson, now known as Nora Mansfield.

⁹ Fox, Albert, 1995

DAISY'S COMPANION BETTY WILKINSON KNOWN NOW AS NORA MANSFIELD

Betty Wilkinson attended the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution and very little is known about her family background. Previous mention was made of Betty in the chapter discussing Daisy and John Muir life at Warburton. The information I have of Betty's early years was provided by Pat Johnston, and members of the Damman family.



It was the middle of 1932 and Daisy was a widow. It had been 18 months since John died of Bright's Disease . Betty Wilkinson was then 16 years old and had a man look after her named Mr Keeble. Betty believed he was her natural father but she has no evidence proving if he was her father or not. In any case, Betty was adopted by the Wilkinson family who took care of her while she was young and attended the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution some time in the 1920s. There is an entry in the school records of "Alice Wilkinson" having enrolled in the year 1923.¹ Usually Betty *(see photo of Patricia with Betty on her right)*

joined the family of a school friend, Patricia Doyle, for the Christmas holidays as Betty's adopted parents could not afford to look after her during school holidays. Patricia Doyle now is Pat Johnston and is the mother of two well-known people in the Australia Deaf Community, Pam Spicer, an Auslan Interpreter in Brisbane and Trevor Johnston, a Linguist and the editor of the Auslan Dictionary. Her husband Eric Johnston had a deaf sister named Dorothy Shaw. They are all involved in the heart of the Deaf community.

¹ "Utmost for the Highest" p.231

After Betty left school at the age of 16, the Wilkinson couple left her and she had no where to go, so Mr Keeble looked for a place for Betty to live. He knew Gush Damman (Daisy's brother) in Warburton. Mr Keeble had been talking to Gush and Elsie and asked if they could mind Betty for a short time. Gush and Elsie accepted. Later, Mr Keeble brought Betty to Gush and Elsie's place in Warburton and they looked after her. After four months at Gush and Elsie's place, Elsie became ill and Betty stayed with her school friends for four months. Gush thought it would be good idea for Daisy to have a companion. Gush went over to her place and asked her if she would like to have someone in her house, because she had been a widow for the last three years. Daisy agreed that she needed a companion. Betty moved into Daisy's place "Moncrieff" from Gush's place "Hazel Park". Betty stayed for 16 years from 1934 to 1950. Betty had never met John Muir.



Daisy, Betty and dog Jack (photo: N. Mansfield)

Both Daisy and Betty worked well together in the house. Betty did the housework like washing the dishes, washing clothes and gardening while Daisy did most of the cooking. Betty thinks of Daisy as a very sweet and very gentle person. She never became angry or annoyed with Betty. Sometimes Betty showed impatience but somehow Daisy always did some smooth talking to make her calm without any hassles. Betty did not pay any board because she did the housework. She earned 5/- per week from Daisy, plus her food. Daisy thought she should earn money so she could buy her own clothes. Betty called Daisy her own "mother".

Then Betty met Edgar Mansfield whom she later married. It was a poignant moment because Daisy was a bit 'sad' that Betty would leave her. Daisy had enjoyed her life with Betty.

Daisy's property in Warburton was sold in 1948 for reasons unknown, and Daisy and Betty moved to live in a flat in East Melbourne. Gustave continued to live on the farm at Warburton. Daisy and Betty lived at East Melbourne till Betty got married and then Daisy's hearing sister, Annie, moved in to live with Daisy. Later, Daisy and Annie moved to a rented flat called "Thirlmere" in St Kilda Road, Melbourne, on the corner of Lorne Street. It was opposite the Victorian School for Deaf Children. The building was pulled down many years ago. While Betty lived in East Melbourne, she had a job in Collingwood with Robertson's Chocolate Factory found for her by Mr E A. Reynolds. She travelled by train to work in Collingwood.



Moncrieff, Warburton {as it exists today} (photo: M. Anderson)

In January 1951, Betty and Edgar were married in the Deaf Chapel at Jolimont Square, East Melbourne, and in the same year, Betty moved to live in Sydney with her new husband, Edgar. The house they bought was in Lane Cove where they lived until 1996. It was pure coincidence that a married couple (Rebecca and Mark Ladd), then in the employ of the Deaf Society of New South Wales, purchased Betty's home when it was up for sale.

Every time Daisy went on holidays in NSW and Queensland, she stayed at Betty's place, then flew to Queensland to stay with Ron Damman, one of Daisy's nephews (a son of Gush). One time when she stayed with Betty, Daisy was very determined to meet Alice Chapman (nee Betteridge) who was deaf and blind. She admired Alice for the way she did many things such as some sewing, knitting, fine needlework, etc., and for the fact that she was a very independent person. She managed to meet her with Betty in Sydney. Alice showed them her work that had won many prizes in the Royal Easter Show in Sydney for over 25 years. Daisy thought that Alice was even more admirable than the famous deaf and blind woman Helen Keller from USA, because Alice was a very independent woman.

Alice married a deaf and blind man, Will Chapman, from Victoria. They had been corresponding with each other for fourteen months. Then she moved to Melbourne. Alice Chapman is indeed very interesting and an important figure in the history of Deaf women. Helen Keller was fortunate because she had a guide Annie with her all the time and she depended on Annie. Alice was far more independent but her story was told in a book called "A Girl Like Alice: The Story of The Australian Helen Keller, (1990)".²She stayed at Lakeside Lodge in Victoria for a while. She was educated at a school in NSW.



Alice Betteridge and Roberta Reid c1910 (photo: A Girl like Alice, Ed Valerie Thompson)



Alice Betteridge (Chapman) in 1954 (photo: A Girl Like Alice, Ed Valerie Thompson)

² A Girl Like Alice, Ed Thompson, V.

Conclusion

I met with Nora Mansfield to pursue the story of Daisy Damman Muir. The outcome of my meetings with Nora takes us a step closer – her unique access in Daisy's later life gave us some insight of her character which was included in this chapter.



Nora Mansfield (Betty Wilkinson), at her Lane Cove house, Sydney, 1997 (photo taken: M. Anderson)

I can say that Betty/Nora's involvement in Daisy's life positively influences the quality of interactions that I had with Betty/Nora. Betty found Daisy very intelligent and a lovely person who cared a lot about deaf young women and would give them much encouragement to do something with their lives. Nora commented on how Daisy would always fingerspell everything and did not like using signs as she saw this being a 'lazy' way of communicating. Betty/Nora did not feel at ease as her English skills was not of the same standard as Daisy's. Sometimes, Betty/Nora would teach Daisy some signs and Daisy would teach her English. Betty/Nora found out much later when applying for a passport to travel overseas with her husband that her proper name on the birth certificate was "Nora". Now in chapter 8, I will summarise Daisy's life. The title is "DAISY MUIR THROUGH MY EYES" since I will, in Chapter 8, imagine myself as Daisy. Please remember it may not be correct in some ways because I am concluding this research essay by imagining what Daisy's life was like in the past.

DAISY MUIR THROUGH MY EYES

This chapter is an imaginative story incorporating historical data, collated from written documents, interviews and family history papers which are listed elsewhere in this research essay.

I was born on 26 September 1874 to Gustave Martin Jacob Damman and Mathilde Johanna Damman (nee Möller) at Caroline Street, South Yarra. My brothers and sisters were thrilled to have another sister, me. I had 4 brothers and 3 sisters. They were George William, Marie Therese who died of dropsy, a brain disorder when she was three months old, Mathilde Louise Wilhelmine, Gustave Melbourne, Anna Marie Henriette, myself Daisy Dorothea Charlotte, Percy Charles George and Oscar Carl. I will tell you about my parents first, then about myself.

I will now tell you the history of my family background. My uncle Georg left Hamburg in 1853 on the ship 'WILHELMSBURG' and arrived in a new country for him, Australia, on 24 August 1853. I try to imagine what it was like to be aboard ship for many months at the sea before finally arriving to set foot on new soil? Many people on the ship eager to see their new country as they sailed into Port Phillip Bay and arrived at



Sandridge (now known as Port Melbourne).

Ships at the pier with many masts at Hobson's Bay (photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria)

There were many masts to be seen at the dock as he waited eagerly to start his new life, while at the same time, he was apprehensive because Australia was a new country for him and he had left his family behind in Hamburg, Germany. At the time, there were no piers built, though they were built in the years to come. The Yarra River was too shallow for any ships except small ones. The larger ships anchored in Hobson's Bay. Passengers were ferried in small boats to Williamstown or Port Melbourne (then called Sandridge).¹ Later, in the mid-1850s two piers were built at Williamstown, and a pier was built at Port Melbourne in 1856.² The first railway line in Melbourne was from Flinders Street to Port Melbourne, not along the river bank. The line opened on 12 September 1854, a year after Georg arrived, 2 days after Gustave came.³



Town and Railway Piers at Sandridge in 1857 (photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria)

Georg then went to the Goldfields to try his luck selling tobacco pipes and snuff to miners and he had great success and became wealthy. He wrote a letter to my father in Hamburg (remember I was not born yet) saying that there was plenty of business to be found and told him to come to Australia.

So then my father, Gustave, left Hamburg on 20 May 1854. Hamburg is near St Margarethen, Holstein was where my father was born in 1833 to parents Jurgen

¹ Don Garden: *Victoria, A History*, p 72-73.

² Michael Cannon: *Melbourne after the Gold Rush*, p 29-35.

³ Patsy Adam Smith: *Romance of Victorian Railways*, p 14.

Damman and Cécilie Hoffmann. My father also had three sisters Rosa, Wilhelmina and Auguste, in addition to his brother Georg who had settled in Australia in 1853.

Gustave was 20 years old when he left for Australia. His first journey was on the Steamship "Archimedes" to Hull in England. And then he boarded his ship, "Queen of the Seas", arriving in Hobsons Bay on 10 September 1854. He was both afraid and excited at the same time because he felt this was his big opportunity and he wondered if he would be successful. Anyway, he was devastated to see so many ships waiting at the piers in Hobsons Bay and such a crowd of people on the pier to greet the new arrivals. It was unbelievable to him to see so many people because Australia was only a new land, not at all like where my father had come from. Holstein and Hamburg were very "old country".

He was met by his brother Georg and they were thrilled to see each other again and chatted about how their family in Holstein were doing. Georg escorted him around Melbourne to familiarise him with his new country and make him feel at home.

During his early days in Australia, my father made a lot of trips to the Bendigo area including Daisy Hill, Ararat, Back Creek, Landsborough, Redbank, Inglewood, etc., looking to establish several stores in the area. My father's father was a teacher and was not wealthy in those days. My father and his brother Georg set up a business - a Tobacconist shop on the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets. His business thrived well. They really loved Australia so they became naturalised citizens at Melbourne on 19 November 1861.

They stayed in Melbourne for a few years then made a return trip to Hamburg on the ship - "Norfolk" in 1862. Georg stayed for eighteen months and my father stayed for almost three years. My father fell in love with Mathilde who later became my mother. They became engaged but decided to wait and marry later in Australia. My father decided he needed to return to Australia in 1865 because he wanted to make sure the business was running efficiently. Heinrich Raecke and Carl Buschman had been left in charge, even though both were competent. My father's return journey was the ship "Donald Mackay". Georg returned to Melbourne in 1864.

When Mathilde Möller boarded the "Lincolnshire" in 1866 she was excited by the prospect of seeing her fiance Gustave, again. But the trip was not without incident. She had bought a beautiful wedding dress in Hamburg, and during the trip somehow someone knew she had the dress on board and it was stolen. She was very upset because she had wanted to wear a special dress in her marriage to Gustave. The day of her arrival in Melbourne was 20 December 1866.

My father was very excited to have his fiancee (his betrothed) in Australia and he greeted her on the pier at Hobsons Bay. I am uncertain if my mother missed her family in Germany or if she missed her native Schleswig where she was born in 1844. Not much is known today about her family or her life there. The day of their wedding arrived and it was on Christmas Day - 25 December 1866 at the Lutheran Church, South Melbourne. As far as I know, only one guest was present, my Uncle Georg (my father's brother). They looked beautiful in the photo.

The first house where they lived was a rented cottage in Collingwood; however they could only stay there for 7 weeks. Would you like to know how much my parents paid for rent? Can you imagine - it was 25/- per week, which was quite a lot. Then they bought a house at 49 Caroline Street, South Yarra by auction for 250 pounds. My uncle Georg boarded at my parents' house. It was good that they all cared for each other. They were a close-knit family. My mother became pregnant with George William who was born on 24 December 1867 - one day short of their 1st Wedding Anniversary. My brother had a nurse to look after him. Her name was Mrs Fuher. In addition to Mrs Fuher, my parents also had a servant.

My parents wanted a traditional baptism for my brother and so he was baptised on 9 February 1868. His godparents were Jurgen and Georg Damman and Rebecca Norsdp. My father went to work every day in the city to mind his Tobacconist shop and came back home each night. He played with his baby son.



*Their shop in the city in the early days - Collins Street facing west Circa 1875.
(photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria)*

During this time, another family member from Germany migrated to Australia, my mother's brother Franz Möller (my uncle). My mother was overjoyed to have her brother in Australia because of course, she missed her family. My mother became pregnant again this time with Marie Therese, but unfortunately she did not survive long. Her short life lasted only 3 months before she died of dropsy of the brain. My parents were heartbroken after losing their first daughter. Nonetheless, there were other "additions" to the growing family. My family often went away for holidays or on day excursions. They were wonderful parents and could afford to go anywhere. There were 3 more children before me – Mathilde Louise (25 July 1870), Gustave Melbourne (7 August 1871), Anna Marie Henrietta (26 March 1873). Gustave was born deaf and he died on 10 October 1957 at the age of 86, cause unknown.

Now, it was my turn to come into the world - 26 September, 1874. On 6 December 1874, my parents treated me very specially. It was my Baptism day. My godparents were Charlotte Möller and George Degner and I was blessed by Pastor Herlitz. My parents took my family and me to Queenscliff and it was my very first Excursion day.

Then, something happened to me as I became very ill, although I do not know what caused my illness. It was this illness which caused me to become deaf. My parents were shocked, but deafness was not new to them as my brother Gustave was also deaf.

In September 1877 my parents decided to our house, in Caroline Street South Yarra to enable them to buy in Queens Road. We moved a couple times before my parents bought a block of land in Queens Terrace (now known as Queens Road) in Albert Park opposite the Albert Park lake. The house in 33 Queens Rd was built and completed one and half years after purchasing the land. Finally, my family could move in to a big home with 14 big rooms and also a ballroom. The house was given a name, "UHLENHORST". The house was so huge and beautiful with lovely ivy over the front house. There were beautiful banisters on the stairs, I can imagine me sliding down them. They were curved with polished wood. I can imagine all my brothers and sisters playing this way when our parents were not around!! Sometimes my parents had parties and would invite their German friends to come to dance in the ballroom. I do not remember when I was very little, but I am sure my brothers and sisters and myself would sneak in and watch the people dancing the waltz, fox trots, etc. I believe I did have some hearing until I was three when I became sick. I loved "Uhlenhorst". This was the place where I married John Muir in 1902.

I may have been envious that my brother and sisters went to school, I wanted to go there as well because I loved writing and reading - both skills, which I am very good at. Fortunately, I can communicate with my family easily because they were good at the manual alphabet and knew some signs. They had to learn sign language because of my other brother, Gush, who was deaf and enrolled the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution in September 1876 at the age of five and his enrolment was number 162. I was only two years old at that time. From time to time we walked along St Kilda Road where beautiful Elm trees grew along both sides. Even today, it is one of the most beautiful streets in the world. Also in Queens Road, there is a big man-made lake and golf course.



My family – (left to right) Gush, George, Daisy Lillie, Percy, Annie and Oscar. Front Mother Mathilde and Father Gustave. (photo: Damman Family)



Albert Park Lake (photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria)

Beautiful surroundings! And it was not far from my place to the deaf school. As time went on, I had two other new brothers – Percy Charles George (7 May 1876) and Oscar Carl (23 November 1879). More playmates for me and I am glad that I was not the youngest.

We heard that when my Uncle Georg had died on 21 May 1885 in Hamburg. Poor Father, he did not have a chance to say “goodbye”. They loved each other and had worked together since they had both moved to Australia. During the Bank crash of 1894 my father was forced to mortgage “Uhlenhorst” until finances recovered. I felt sorry for my Father because he had worked very hard to establish a better life for himself and his family. He managed to pay off every debt he owed and he was the one of the few who was able to do so in those times. Fortunately, his Tobacconist business was still viable, but it was not easy. However, he did survive. I wonder how my mother felt when he was struck with such losses? I am sure my mother was a very strong woman as am I.



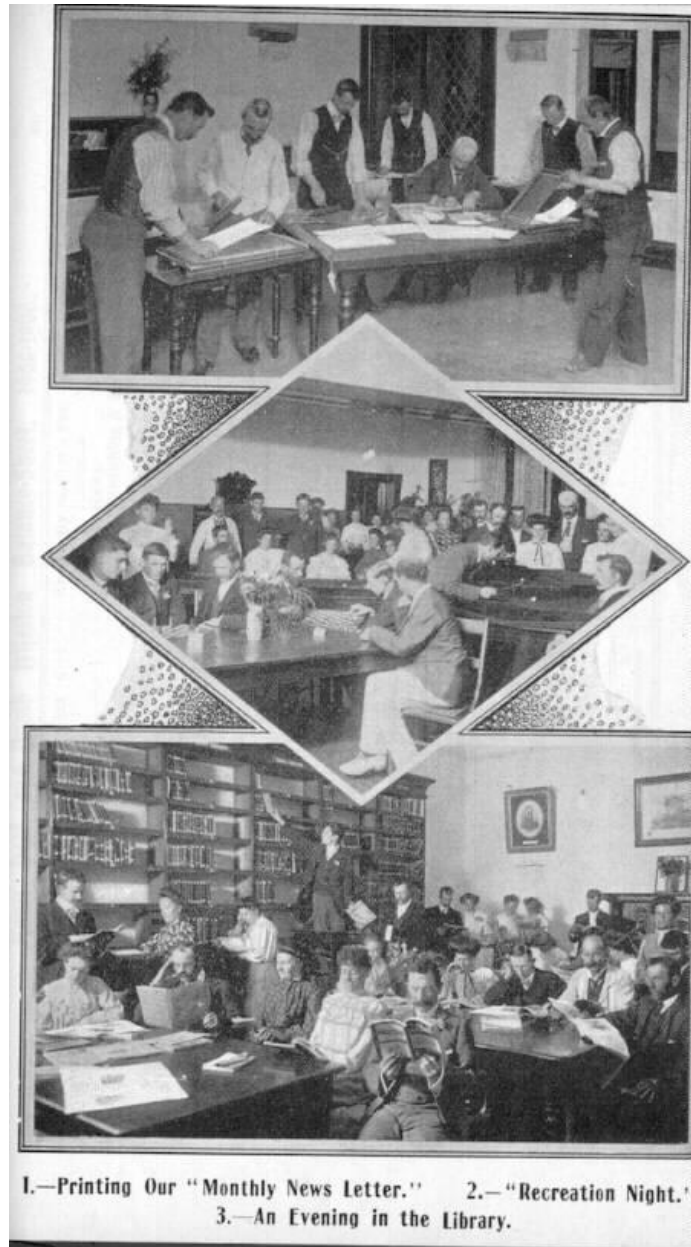
Mary (May) and Adam Muir with their children Kenneth and Beatrice (Daisy) (photo: M. Ramsay – Family circa 1903/1904)

Finally, at the age of 7 just before I turned 8, my parents proudly took me to school at the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, the same school that my brother Gush attended. I was enrolled March 1882, (217th student). My uniform was gingham patterned with a white frilled apron. The girls looked beautiful in the uniforms. Whilst there, I had a governess. I also had a school friend named Mary Swallow (enrolled February 1866 age 11), who later married my husband John's brother, Adam Muir. Mary and I had the same governess.

Mary and I were never in the same class. Mary's highest mark was bottom of third class in 1888. I was in 3rd class in 1886, when Mary was in 1st Class Junior. I was fortunate to have a wonderful teacher named Frederick J. Rose who was also the principal and superintendent. I was a daily student, going home each day as it was not far between my home and the school. I walked to and from school each day with my brother Gush and we always had a good chat during the walk. We shared the same communication - sign language and the manual alphabet. Our parents loved us and were very keen to learn the manual alphabet so they could communicate with us. I think I was very lucky to have them as my parents. I did very well with my school work and once was even in the same class as Gush when I was 12 years old. My school building was enormous and very beautiful having been built in 1866. It is still there today although the name has changed from the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, first to the Victorian School for the Deaf Children and recently, in February 1995, to its present name the Victorian College for the Deaf.

I left school in 1888. I was uncertain where I would go next. I still lived with my parents in the same house and had done for many years. From time to time, I went to the Deaf and Dumb Mission in Russell Street, Melbourne to meet with my friends and go out on picnics. It was during this time that I met John Muir who was later to become my husband. He was employed as a lithographic draughtsman for the Metropolitan Board of Works (Railways) and Victorian Railways Commissioners for many years. He decided to establish his own business in 1903. He opened his own office as a lithographic artist and designer on the 3rd floor of the Premier Permanent Building in Collins Street, Melbourne. I was very proud that he set out on his own this way and that he did not see any barrier for deaf people to have their own business. My husband John and I had a lot of commitments in various organisations like the Deaf Committee, Deaf Women's Friendly Society (later known as the Deaf Women's Guild), Deaf Workers Club, Deaf Cricket club, etc. We both held positions of President, Secretary and provided some classes in Bible Study and painting (I loved painting and I was very good at it), assisted with Divine Services as well

as many others. John played football with the Fitzroy Football Club. He was given a nick name by the Fitzroy Football club - 'Dummy' or 'Snowy' Muir. He was very



(photo: Adult and deaf Dumb Mission Report 1906)

popular with the Fitzroy supporters, and was a tower of strength in ruck play in the early years.

So, can you see how busy we were with so many organisations! I was the first person to take up the positions of:- secretary of Women's Friendly Society which was established in 1901, Deaf President of Deaf Women's Guild in 1910/11, President of Deaf Workers Group which was set up in 1920 after an inaugural meeting was held at my home in Malvern to discuss the establishment of a worker's club. I have so much to tell you, we will have to save the rest for another time.

I married John Edward Muir on 6 August 1902 at my mother's house "Lenhurst" which had been originally named 'Uhlenhorst'. The name had been changed due to Germany's involvement in World War I. The family was embarrassed by the German word (Uhlenhorst), so they changed it to "Lenhurst". The guests who attended the wedding were my family, John's family and a few friends. We both looked beautiful on our wedding day. However, the day was tinged with sadness. My father did not see my marriage as he had died four months previously. After our marriage, we moved to live in Malvern where we stayed for a couple of years, at least from 1904 to 1910. Some time later, John started to feel unwell and he was found to have a problem with his kidneys. As a result we thought it best for us to resign from our involvement with the deaf community and move to Warburton onto 9 acres at Hazel Park which I had purchased in 1917. It was where my father bought 130 acres of land and established a dairy farm for my brother, Gush. He bought the land for Gush from Bert Robinson's father, who had been a farmer until he built the Alpine Retreat Hotel in Warburton. I loved living at Warburton and I found it to be very calm and relaxing. After we bought the land, we had someone build our own house, which we named 'Moncrieff' after John's childhood home "Moncrieff Place in Erin Street, Richmond. The house was completed around 1920 and that was where John lived for the last ten years of his life.



"Moncrieff" in Warburton Circa 1917 (photo: Damman Family)

When we first moved in, in 1920, everything was uncultivated. There was one thing which I liked - the fern gully. I spent a lot of time there. It was not far from my home. As well, I often went down to the nearby Yarra River for fishing. The water in the river was very cold because it came from the high country up near Mt Donna Buang. Sometimes I painted landscapes of the Upper Yarra, the lake, etc. I really loved painting. Once I even painted on china ware.



China ware which I painted, a gift for Ron (nephew) and his wife Mary Damman (photo: M. Anderson)

I often spent my spare time planting flowers and fruits trees. I also grew passionfruit which I sold at the market. My brother used to grow potatoes in Hazel Park and passionfruit, which covered about 5 acres. He also grew many other plants and had orchards. My father lived in Melbourne. He was Tobacco merchant and was never a farmer.

It was difficult for me to leave behind my friends in Melbourne. But it was necessary to do so for the sake of my husband's health. The time we celebrated our 25th Wedding Anniversary. You will never guess what my mother gave me - a Buick car which was only a few months old. I was very excited to have a car. I got my driver's licence and I believe I may have been the first deaf woman to obtain a driver's licence in Victoria - perhaps even in Australia. I had a very good fellow who worked on my car in his garage, his name was Albert Fox.



My car - Buick and dog Jack (photo: N. Mansfield)

Unfortunately, John could not drive, so it was I who drove on outings, some of which were all the way to Melbourne on gravel and winding roads. It would take about 2 hours to drive to Melbourne. It was not very safe to drive because the roads were so winding and narrow. However, I did manage to drive confidently! Once the police stopped me and said that I should not be driving because I was deaf - how dare they say that! The officer claimed that if there were more drivers like me, it would be dangerous. It was blatant discrimination.

John became very ill with a kidney disease known as 'Bright's Disease' and he died on 17th January, 1931 leaving me a widow at the age of 57. He was buried at the Box Hill Cemetery, Presbyterian section. John was 67 years old at the time of his death. We had been married for 29 years. We had had a good and happy marriage. I missed him very much. After his death, I lived alone. I used to correspond with about 40 penfriends from overseas and I spent most of my time writing and reading which were also my hobbies. My penfriends were both deaf and hearing.

How amazing it is that the big world can be small !!!!! My father had a close friend named George Johann Luehmann. They both belonged to the German Club and took a trip back to Germany at some later stage. George and his wife had twin sons, one of them was named Oscar after my brother. My husband John had a brother Adam Muir who married a close friend of mine - Mary Swallow. She went to the deaf school with me and Mary now became my sister-in-law. They had a daughter - Beatrice Daisy Cairns Muir. The second name being after me. One day Beatrice Muir met Oscar Luehmann (who incidentally had changed his name to Leeman because of the 1st World War). They fell in love and got married. Later when I got to know him and asked about his family, I was astonished that I knew his father George Luehmann very well. He used to visit my family's house - 'Lenhurst' and when I was little, I used to sit on his lap. *'Is this coincidence, or was it fate, that these two "namesakes" should one day meet and marry ?' - this quote was written by Mrs J.G. Luehmann (supplied by Ron Damman).*

My family was well connected in high places both here in Melbourne and abroad. One example I can refer to is the meeting of my sister Lillie in Germany with a young army officer who wanted to get engaged. But my father refused, thinking this fellow had no future. The army officer became Field Marshal Paul von Hindenberg and later Chancellor of Germany. He was then succeeded by Adolf Hitler.⁴ Another example were the constant visits we had from the famous Baron von Mueller, the legendary Government Botanist who had so much to do with the development of Melbourne's Botanical Gardens. He was my mother's cousin.⁵ We also have family photos which includes the Brooks brothers including the famous tennis player, Sir Norman Brooks.

⁴ Damman Family History

⁵ Damman Family History

I had a companion named Betty Wilkinson, whose story has already been related to you in Chapter 7, so I won't repeat it again here.

I often had visitors from Melbourne; they travelled by train to Warburton and stayed for the day. We took many photos and I saved them in my albums. I often played golf nearby and had many games with Dorothy Shaw and Betty Wilkinson. I was a pretty good golfer. Frequently, my friends Doris Hickey and Rose Dow would visit and stay for a few days - although, they did not come together.



Back Row from left to right:- Doris Hickey, Alice Shaw (nee Smith), Daisy Muir, Albert Beard, Rose Dow, Mr Hopkins (Hoppy) Front Row from left to right:- Beryl Beard (nee Mc Cullough), Arthur Sutherland, Gwen Peters (photo: N. Mansfield)

I often drove to Melbourne with Betty, visited Deaf clubs and went shopping. I usually stayed at the Victoria Hotel in Little Collins Street. My favourite shop was Buckley and Nunns. I visited my brothers Percy and Oscar in their Tobacconist shop on the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets.

I had two different dogs and I would like to share with you a few tales about my dogs. I had one Red Setter named Paddy, who was a very clever dog. Every night at 7.00pm sharp, Paddy would tap my leg to let me know that he wanted me to take him to bed. I would take him outside to go to the toilet, then put him in the basket in his own room. Then I would return to the lounge room to sit and read my book. How lovely he was.

It was a tragedy that he was killed by a car which ran over him whilst he played "chasey" with a German Shepherd along the gravel road. I was heartbroken. I had another dog - Jack the Fox Terrier to whom I was devoted. Once he chased a wombat into a burrow and became stuck. I was so worried about him, but he managed to get back out.

Jack the Fox Terrier



*Paddy the Red Setter dog
(photo: N.Mansfield)*



*Jack the Fox Terrier
(photo: N.Mansfield)*

I was quite on my own, even at Christmas, but I was happy. However, I missed my family in Melbourne, so I moved back and lived with my sister Anne in a flat in East Melbourne. We were not there long before we moved to 'Thirlmere' in St Kilda Road opposite the Victorian College for the Deaf. Our flat was very nice. After my sister Anne died in 1961, I moved to another place at the Majestic Mansions in Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. It was a small self-contained flat and the residents could either cook their own meals or go downstairs to a hotel style dining room. You may think that I had become old and frail but no - I was still active and was the President of the Deaf Ladies' Social Club. On 23rd July 1955 I was one of the speakers along with His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, General Sir Dallas Brooks who opened the new premises – Assembly Hall at 101 Wellington Parade South, East Melbourne. I was honoured to be asked. At that time I was 85.⁶ When I turned 90, a huge party was held on Saturday 26 September, 1964, in my honour to mark the very special occasion, in the Assembly Hall at the Deaf Club. There were so many people from the Deaf Women's Guild, staff

and members from the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of Victoria attended, and also members of my family. I was thrilled that Betty Mansfield made the trip from Sydney especially to attend my 90th Birthday party. The Master of Ceremonies was the ever popular Ernest A. Reynolds and a young sweet girl who just started working, Gwen Niblock, made a beautiful birthday cake. This wonderful event was filmed by Alex Anderson. I received many beautiful flowers and speeches were started off by Jean O'Connor. It was good to catch up with people there like Mabel Dow, etc. Mabel, in her speech stated that she was a bit scared at meeting me for the first time which surprised me. But it was indeed sweet of her to say that she found me to be charming instead. I had to be admitted to Oranje Hospital in Glen Iris after my 90th birthday. I was saddened to learn that my dear friend Mabel Dow died suddenly. The Deaf Women's Guild invited me to unveil a picture titled "Early Morning on Lagon" in memory of the late Miss Mabel Dow on 25th October, 1969 at the Deaf Club which was accepted.^{7, 8}



I have known Mabel (*see photo Mabel on her right with me*) since she was a young girl when she was involved in the Deaf Women's Guild in 1915 at the time I was the President and she was a very enthusiastic worker. She was another very active Deaf person in the Deaf community. She first became involved in the Deaf Women's Guild on 12 January 1915⁹ and was still active till her death in 1965. I managed to live on and had another party for my 95th birthday which was held at Jolimont Square in 1969 given by the Deaf Women's Guild. It was lovely to know that everyone cared about me and recognised my work with Deaf Women. I always encouraged young deaf women to become involved in the

community.

⁶ No Longer by Gaslight, p.87

⁷ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report 20th September 1969

⁸ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report 25 October 1969

⁹ Deaf Women's Guild Minute Report and Annual Report Book, 12 January 1915



Daisy's 95th birthday party with Miss L. Sanders 75, Miss A. Holcroft 82 (photo: N. Mansfield)

My time had come up and my health was not good. I suffered from a cerebral thrombosis for two days and died of arteriosclerosis on 21 September 1970, five days before my 96th birthday (26 September). My nephews Peter and John organised my funeral service on 23 September 1970, which was held at Deaf Church, Jolimont Square. It was conducted by Rev. Brassington, Anglican Chaplain (he was chaplain for the deaf). The Interpreter was Mr E.A. Reynolds. I was cremated at **Springvale Crematorium or Melbourne General Cemetery** on 23 September 1970. I think I was fortunate to have lived a most remarkable life!

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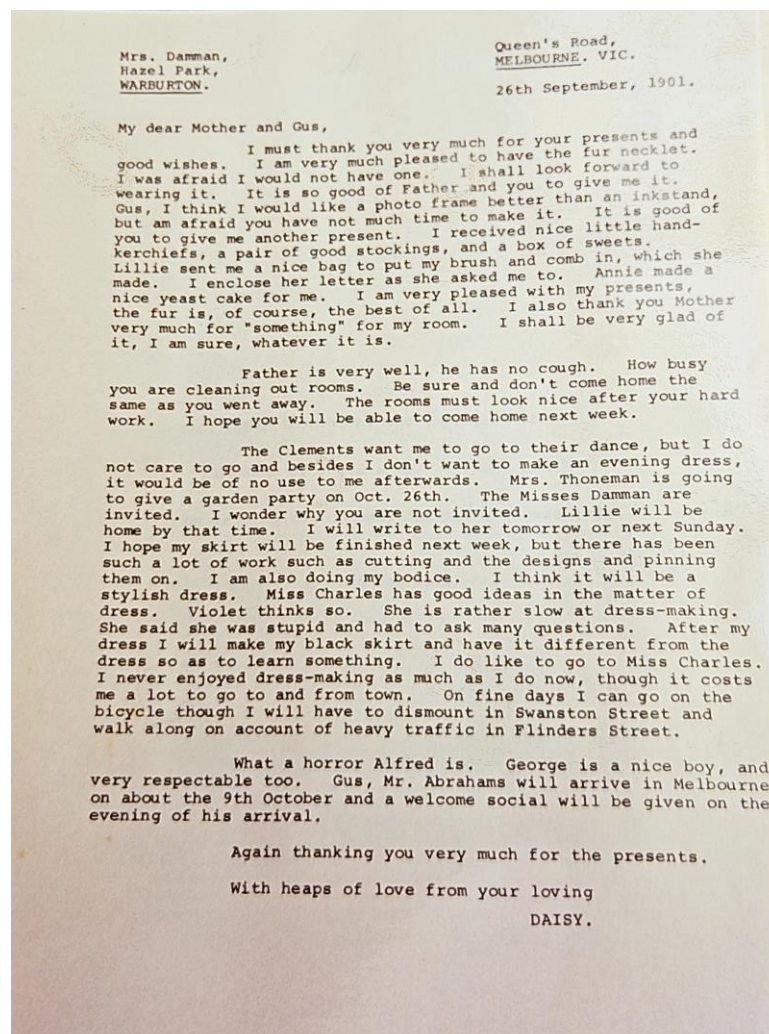
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Appendix 1 (photo of Daisy's letter to her mother)



Appendix 2

1909

- The Influence of Women
by Mr Abraham (hearing)

- What is a good book and how to read it and Nature Notes
by Mrs J. E. Muir

- The Lost Art of Letter Writing and Why it Should be Revived
by Mrs J. E. Muir

1910

The Deaf Women's Friendly Group changed its name to the Deaf Womens Guild.

- Miss Helen Keller

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- English Language: Motions and Amendments; The Benediction; Aesop's Fables (The Fox and The Grapes/The Lion and the Mouse); and 'Sayings'

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Language - Its Origin and Meaning

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Trip to Adelaide

by Mrs J. E. Muir

1911

- The Lives of Three Famous Women: Joan of Arc, Elizabeth of Hungary, and Pocahontas

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- The Flowers of Different Nations

Short history of two Shakespeare's tales "Romeo and Juliet"

and "A Winter Tale"

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Hymns

Shakespearian Tale: Cymbeline

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Causes of the Italian-Turkey War/Women to avoid the use of coarse language

by Mrs J. E. Muir

1912

- Manners

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Good in nature and art of confessions

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Legends and Myths

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Reading extracts of letters from the 'Deaf Cosmopolitan Correspondence Club'

by Mrs J. E. Muir

1913

- Streets and Statues in Melbourne

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Woman's Vote

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- The Ancient Prophets

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Gods and Goddesses

by Mrs J. E. Muir

1914

- Stories from Wagner

by Mrs J. E. Muir

- Home and Public Influences
by Mrs J. E. Muir

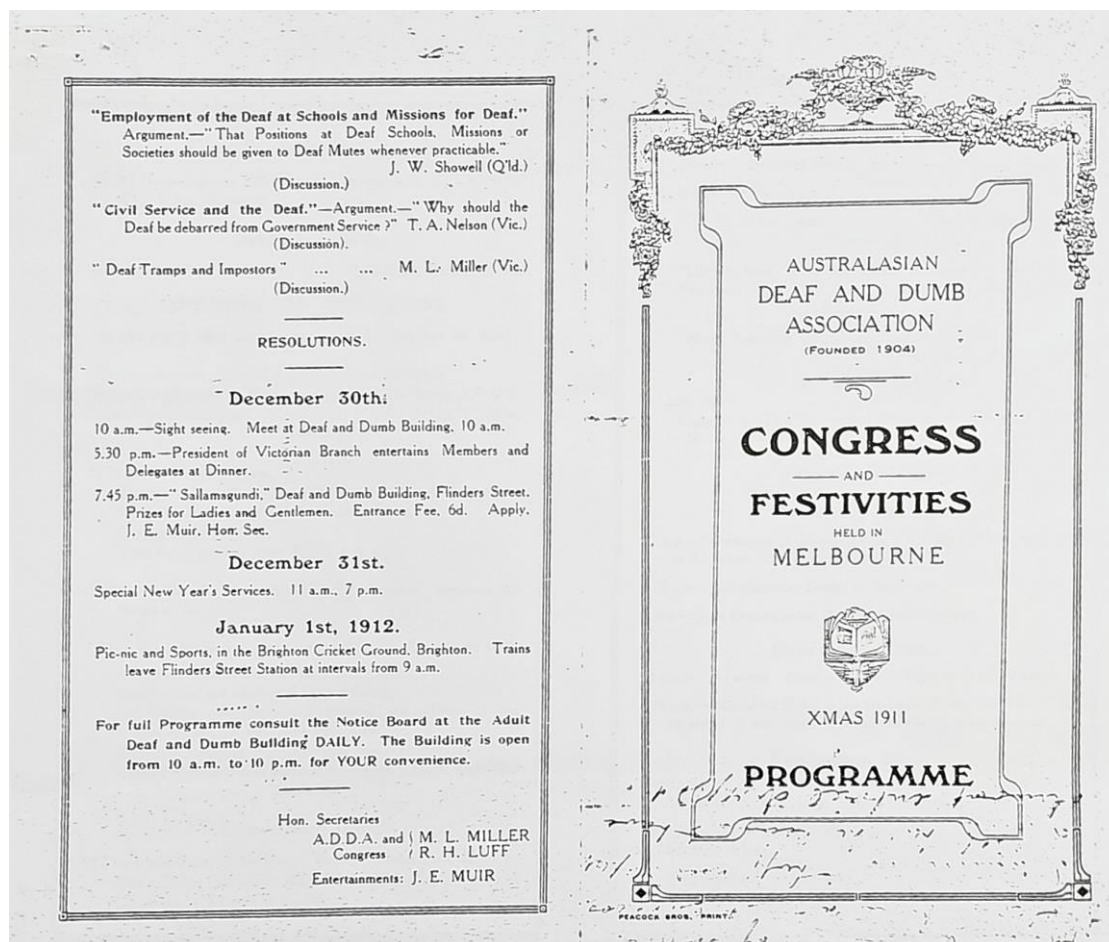
- Recollections of School Experiences
by all

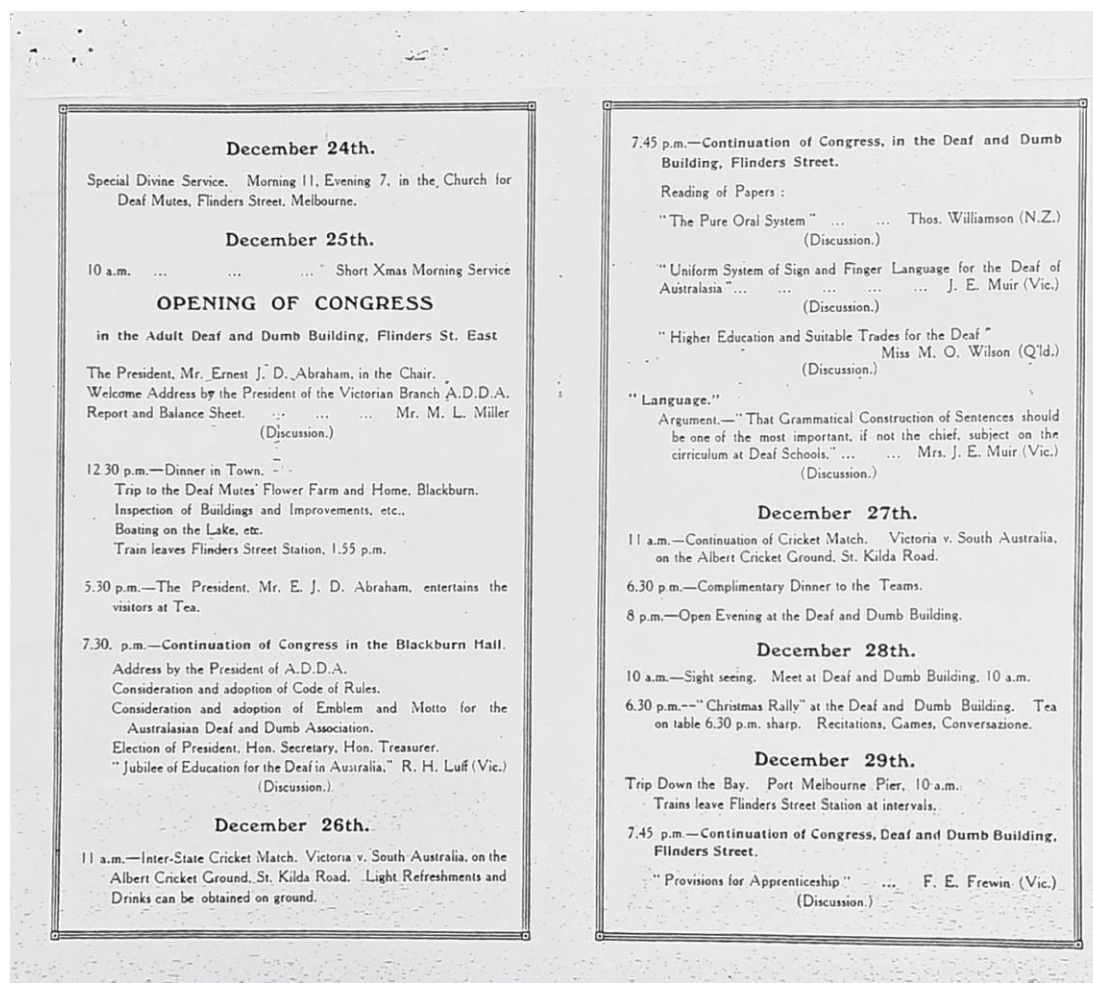
- The Lady of Shallot
by Mrs J.E. Muir

- Kings of the Idylls
by Mrs J. E. Muir

APPENDIX 3

The Congress 1911/12 Programme (see photocopy)





APPENDIX 4

PAST PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES OF THE DEAF WOMEN'S GUILD

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

1901-2 MRS LUKE
 1902-3 MRS LUKE
 1903-4 MRS LUKE
 1904-5 MRS LUKE
 1905-6 MRS LUKE
 1906-7 MRS MARTIN
 1907-8 MRS MARTIN
 1908-9 MRS ABRAHAM
 1909-10 MRS ABRAHAM

MISS D. DAMMAN
 MRS J.E MUIR (nee Damman)
 MRS J.E MUIR
 MRS C.E FREWIN
 MRS C.E FREWIN
 (unknown)
 (unknown)
 MRS BOORTZ
 MRS BOORTZ

1910-11 MRS J E MUIR	MRS BOORTZ
1911-12 MRS J E MUIR	MISS EMPSON
1912-13 MRS J E MUIR	MISS R DOW
1913-14 MRS J E MUIR	MISS R DOW
1914-15 MRS J E MUIR	MISS R DOW
1915-16 MRS J E MUIR	MISS R DOW
1916-17 MRS J E MUIR	MISS R DOW
1917-18 MISS R DOW	MISS D HICKEY
1918-19 MISS R DOW	MISS D HICKEY
1919-20 MISS R DOW	MISS D HICKEY
1920-21 MRS W A PATERSON	MISS D HICKEY
1921-22 MRS W A PATERSON	MISS D HICKEY
1922-23 MRS W A PATERSON	MISS D HICKEY
1923-24 MRS J PIERCE	MISS MAGGIE GIBSON
1924-25 MRS J PIERCE	MISS MAGGIE GIBSON
1925-26 MRS F E FREWIN	MISS MAGGIE GIBSON
1926-27 MISS D HICKEY	MISS MAGGIE GIBSON
1927-28 MRS F E FREWIN	MISS E' O'GORMAN (O'Bryan)
1928-29 MRS F E FREWIN	MISS B HIGGIE (Johnston)
1929-30 MRS T PETERS	MISS M DOW
1930-31 MRS T PETERS	MRS J JOHNSTON
1931-32 MRS T PETERS	MISS C BALL
1932-33 MRS T PETERS	MISS C BALL
1933-34 MRS T PETERS	MISS C BALL
1934-35 MRS T PETERS	MISS E LEBER (O'Grady)
1935-36 MRS T PETERS	MISS E LEBER
1936-37 MRS T PETERS	MISS E LEBER
1937-38 MRS T PETERS	MISS M SANDON (Dyson)
1938-39 MISS M DOW	MISS M SANDON
1939-40 MISS M DOW	MISS M SANDON
1940-41 MISS M DOW	MISS E LLOYD (Mrs A Hately)
1941-42 MRS A SUTHERLAND	MISS I BOAST (Calder)

1942-43 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1943-44 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1944-45 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1945-46 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1946-47 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1947-48 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1948-49 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1949-50 MISS M DOW	MRS J MCMILLAN
1950-51 MISS M DOW	MISS P MARSHALL (Mrs DeBoe)
1951-52 MISS M DOW	MISS P MARSHALL
1952-53 MISS M DOW	MISS P MARSHALL
1953-54 MISS M DOW	MISS P MARSHALL
1954-55 MRS H PUDDY	MRS A BEARD
1955-56 MRS H PUDDY	MRS A BEARD
1956-57 MRS H PUDDY	MRS A BEARD
1957-58 MISS M DOW	MRS A BEARD
1958-59 MISS M DOW	MRS A BEARD
1959-60 MISS M DOW	MRS A BEARD
1960-61 MISS M DOW	MRS A BEARD
1961-62 MISS M DOW	MRS A BEARD
1962-63 MRS F O'CONNOR	MRS A BEARD
1963-64 MRS F O'CONNOR	MRS A BEARD
1964-65 MRS F O'CONNOR	MRS A BEARD
1965-66 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS A BEARD
1966-67 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS A BEARD
1967-68 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS A BEARD
1968-69 MRS L TREFFENE	MRS A BEARD
1969-70 MRS L TREFFENE	MRS A BEARD
1970-71 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS A BEARD
1971-72 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS J TAGELL
1972-73 MRS H GREENSMITH	MRS B BEARD
1973-74 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE

1974-75 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1975-76 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1976-77 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1977-78 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1978-79 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1979-80 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1980-81 MRS A BEARD	MRS L TREFFENE
1981-82 MRS A BEARD	MISS M STEPHENS
1982-83 MRS A BEARD	MRS E BUNTING
1983-84 MRS A BEARD	MRS E BUNTING
1984-85 MRS J TAGELL	MRS B BEARD
1985-86 MRS A BEARD	MRS B BEARD
1986-87 MRS A BEARD	MRS B BEARD
1987-88 MRS A BEARD	MRS B BEARD
1988-89 MRS A BEARD	MRS B BEARD
1989-90 MRS A BEARD	MRS SCOTT
1990-91 MRS A BEARD	MRS J TAGELL
1991-92 MRS A BEARD	MRS J TAGELL
1992-93 MRS J TAGELL	MRS J TAGELL
1993-94 MRS J TAGELL	MRS GOODING