Lia LOOVEER (née Saarepere)  BEM JP (1920-2006)

AUSTRALIA LOSES A GREAT LADY

FUNERAL SERVICE
Wednesday, 8 November 2006, 10:00 a.m.
Old St Paul's Chapel
221 Old Northern Road (corner Francis St)
Castle Hill

Photo: 1979
LIA LOOVEER ~ PRINCIPAL AWARDS

22 March 1961  Gold Badge, Estonian Society of Sydney
21 February 1969  Life Member, Estonian Society of Sydney
31 December, 1975  Justice of Peace, Certificate of Appreciation
31 December 1978  British Empire Medal, Australian New Years Honours
24 October, 1987  Good Citizen award, Festival of Light
1991-2  Woman of the Year, International Biographic Centre, Birmingham, England
3 June 1995  Republic of Estonia. Freedom Fighters Centre, Canada, Freedom Medal, 2nd class
15 June 1998  Medal, Defence Department, Estonian Republic
24 February, 1998  Estonian Republic White Star, 5th class; awarded by Estonian President Lennart Meri on visit to Sydney on 5 July 1998
22 June 2002  Heritage Award, Liberal Party of Australia, NSW Division; member over 40 years.

LIA LOOVEER ~ MILESTONES

Born 5 October 1920, Narva, Estonia
April 1928 – father Aleksander Saarepera died
Autumn (August) 1928 – Spring (May) 1938 – attended E. Lender Private School for Girls (Estonia)
1933-8 Organised a youth club for the YWCA in Tallinn, Estonia
1937, March 27 – confirmed in Lutheran church
August 1938 – 1943 Law School, University of Tartu, Estonia
August 1938 – joined the Ladies sorority Filiae Patriae, Tartu - a member of the Sydney branch till 2006
1940, December 31 – engaged to Mr Robert Tasso. Mr Tasso was arrested by the NKVD and deported; spent 15 years in Siberia
1941-44 - announcer/broadcaster State Broadcasting company, Tallinn
1944 (September 19)– escaped from Estonia to Germany
1944, September 30 – married Leonid Looveer in Danzig
1944 –1945 – Baltic Radio, Reichskunfunkt, Germany, Thorn, Poland
1945, July 3 – daughter Hille Reet born Braunau-Am-Inn, Austria
1949, June 6 – arrived in Sydney. Spent 6 weeks in Bathurst; then to Greta Migrant Camp; worked as interpreter & clerk in the main office; spoke 8 languages at that time;
On 24 February 1950 Lia organised an exhibition of Estonian culture and Folk Festival
March 1952 - moved to Sydney
1952, April 28 – son Juho Mart born
1952 – 2002 member and Secretary – Joint Baltic Committee of Sydney
1953 – 1967 – Member of the Board, Estonian Society of Sydney
1953 – 1957 – worked at the Dunlop Shoe factory, Bankstown as a clerk
1953 – appointed to NSW Parliament Migrant Advisory Committee by the Hon Eileen Furley MLC, Founder of Liberal Party in NSW
1953 – joined Liberal Party of Australia, NSW Division
1953-2003 – organised annual concert for the commemoration of Mass Deportation from the Baltic States, traditional conducted at the Latvian Hall in Strathfield.
1954 January 1-3 – first Estonian Days of Australia (Festival) in Sydney; main announcer; translated the programs into English
1955, February 24 – organised and Opening the commemoration of the 37th Estonian Day of Independence
1955-1960 – member, Club of the World, YWCA Sydney
1955 – 2003 – member, Liberal Party of Australia, NSW division – various branches, various positions
1956-66 - Office Manageress, “Meie Kodu” Estonian weekly Newspaper in Australia
1956, May 11 – organiser a concert ball for the United Council of Migrants from Communist Dominated Europe
1956, December – assisted organising the YWCA Xmas exhibition; joined the World Fellowship Committee, organising a monthly meeting with a talk about a different country, a sampling of its food and culture.
1958-1969 – member of the Board, Sydney Estonian Society
1957 – December 1985 – Royal Alexandria Hospital for Children city office; Public Relations section – Manageress, Assistant PRO.
1960, November 6 – husband Leonid Looveer died
1959, November – announced as the Migrant of the Month, delivering a speech to the Women’s Group of the NSW Liberal Party.
1960 – with Douglas Darby MLA, founded the Captive Nations Council of NSW and served as Honorary Secretary for the entire life of that body, which continued its work until after the liberation of Eastern Europe. Organised many successful events including numerous large demonstrations against Soviet imperialism.
1961, December 27-31 – Chief Secretary, IV Estonian Cultural Festival in Australia
1963, October 6 – festival and gymnastics display by the famous Ernst Idla Gymnastics
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1963, October 6 – festival and gymnastics display by the famous Ernst Idla Gymnastics
1965, October 30 – “Folksongs of the Baltics” at Sydney Town Hall
1967, February 24 – organised and opened the commemoration of the 43rd Estonian Day of Independence
1967, October – produced English edition of “Meie Kodu” (weekly Estonian newspaper in Australia)
1967, October– 2nd “Folksongs of the Baltics” at Sydney Town Hall
1968, July 14-19 – Arts and Crafts exhibition, Captive Nations Week, Curzons
1969, April – organised first folk-dancing to Sydney Easter Show (Royal Agricultural Show); also exhibition of handcrafts for Joint Baltic Committee; these continued for many years
1974-1986 - Secretary Narwee branch, Liberal Party of Australia
1975, July 27 – foundation member of the Ethnic Affairs Council of NSW (this followed three years of planning and preparation for this)
1976-1981 – member, Advisory Committee on Ethnic Affairs to Hon Steven Maugher, Minister for Youth and Ethnic Affairs (NSW) and Premier Neville Wran Q.C. M.P.
1976-1978 – member, Advisory Committee on Ethnic Affairs to the Hon Michael McKellar, M.P., Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (Australia)
1979 – With Liberal Ethnic Council president, Lyenko Urbanchich, organised highly successful Liberal Ethnic Concert in Sydney Town Hall in July in support of then Leader of the Opposition John Mason MLA.
From the time of her arrival in Australia, Lia cared for her mother-in-law and her daughter, until their deaths in 1993? and 2000? Respectively
For the greater part of her adult life, Lia was burdened by poor eyesight requiring her to wear thick glasses. Laser eye surgery in 1990? allowed her to discard her spectacles, even for driving, and enhanced her enjoyment of her later years.
Lia is survived by her son Dr Juho Looveer and daughter in law Denise, and their children Krister, Katherine and Cassandra.

(Material kindly collated by Dr Juho Looveer PhD)

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