

MARY ELLEN HOUNSLOW: MEMBER OF PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION, 1956



Mary Ellen Lewis was born in St Albans in 1908, and attended St Albans Primary School from 1915 to 1919, after which she went to a private secondary school. Mary was the eldest child of Elizabeth Ellen Johnston (of Deer Park) and Thomas David Lewis (of St Albans). The Johnston family were from Kidderminster, Worcestershire, England, in the 1840s, and emigrated to Victoria possibly in the 1880s. The Lewis family were from Llanfyrnach, Pembrokeshire, Wales, in the 1820s, and emigrated to Victoria in the 1880s. Elizabeth Ellen Johnston married Thomas David Lewis in 1907 and they had 11 children, with Mary Ellen being their first born.

The Lewis family had moved to St Albans in 1892. At this stage the neighbourhood was quite small with 200 people settled on farmlets clustered around the railway station and a couple of shops. The family became well known locally as they extended their kinship networks through marriage to several other families in the district, including the McIntyres, Priests and Erringtons. Thomas Lewis established a poultry farm in Walter Street between William and Henry streets. He was also a superintendent at the Sunday school of the local Presbyterian church. In the 1930s he was particularly active as Chairman of the St Albans Severance Committee, but their ambition for the district to separate from Keilor and join Braybrook was not successful.



In 1937, Mary Ellen Lewis married Raymond Hounslow of St Albans, whose parents were William James Hounslow and Amy Alice Day. William was born in 1868 in Broadmeadows, New South Wales. Amy was born in 1873 in Walhalla, Oconee, South Carolina, United States. By the late 1930s the St Albans village had grown to 400 people, eight shops, two churches, a Mechanics Hall and a primary school. The district was slowly recovering from the Depression that had effected local buinesses.

Raymond Hounslow was a carpenter-builder and had established a small furniture factory with his father William Hounslow in Main Road East. He also had the first petrol pump in the village but the businesses folded with the Depression and Raymond went to work as a storeman at Nettlefolds.

Mary Ellis and Raymond Hounslow had three children: Coral (1939), Raymond (born and died 1941), and Wendy (1944).

Raymond Hounslow died in December 1961 at age 58 years, leaving his widow with a teenage daughter to support. However, the Lewis-Hounslow families were resilient people who helped each other out and survived.



Coral Mary Hounslow was born in 1939 and started at St Albans State School in 1945; at that stage her father was working as a storeman. Coral left primary school at the end of 1952 and continued her education at Footscray Girls' High School as there was no secondary school in St Albans at the time. In 1961 Coral married Kevin Patrick Jennings who was from Bundaberg in Queensland, though his family history goes back to 1856 in Bendigo, Victoria. Coral and Kevin settled in Chapman Street, Sunshine; Coral worked as a typist and Kevin as a driver. By 1967 they had moved to Point Cook and Kevin was working for the RAAF. By 1972 they had moved to New South Wales and Kevin was still with the RAAF. Kevin died in 2016 at age 79 at Sanctuary Point, New South Wales.

Coral Mary Jennings nee Hounslow died in 2018 at age 78 at Wollongong, New South Wales. It is not known if they had any children.



Wendy Elizabeth Hounslow was born in 1944 and started at St Albans State School in 1949 and at the newly-established St Albans High School in 1956, which was temporarily located in the Presbyterian Church Hall in Anderson Street, Sunshine. She was in the all-girls Form 1B (mostly of migrant background) who described themselves as "30 talkative, mischievous girls". Her classmates included Vanda Viti, Ytje Hovenga, Vejuna Kepalas, Gundula Skowron, and Attje Tjepkema.

Wendy's parents supported the new school from the very beginning - her father was on the school's inaugural Advisory Council and her mother was on the inaugural Parents and Friends Association.

Wendy Hounslow married Philip George Taylor in 1965 and they moved to Colverdale, Perth, West Australia; she worked as ledger machinist, he was an airman. When they returned to Victoria they settled in Hoppers Crossing and later Wyndham Vale.

After her husband died in 1961, Mary Hounslow continued to live in the family home at 33 Main Road East (opposite the Collins Street and Main Road East intersection). The property was sold in 1966 to Safeways and the Woolworths supermarket is now on the old site. Mary was now in her late 50s and may have moved to Laverton and later to live with her daughter Wendy in Hoppers Crossing.

Mary Ellen Hounslow née Lewis died in June 1987 at a retirement home in Queenscliff, at the age of 79 years.

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Lewis family of St Albans.

Information and photographs provided by Wendy Taylor.