

FRANK BIRRELL PRINGLE: CHAIR OF PARENT-TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL, 1968 - 1976.



Frank Birrell Pringle was born in 1914 in Terang, Victoria, to Frank Pringle and Lily Birrell. The Pringle ancestry goes back to 1773 in Easby, Yorkshire, England; a relative, Frank Pringle, emigrated to Victoria in 1911. The Birrell ancestry goes back to 1831 in Dumfries, Scotland, United Kingdom; George Birrell emigrated to Victoria in 1852. Frank Pringle senior and Lily Birrell married in Darlington Victoria in 1913. Their son Frank Birrell Pringle was their only child.

In 1934 Frank Birrell Pringle was working as a dairyman at Terang who voluntarily enlisted in the Australian Militia Forces. He was with 23/21st Battalion. Attained rank of sergeant in 1936 and appointed lieutenant (probationary) in 1939. Seconded from 23/21st Battalion and appointed lieutenant 2nd Reinforcements 2/7th Infantry Battalion Australian Imperial Force in May 1940.



In 1940 Frank Birrell Pringle of Melbourne was with the 2/7th Australian Infantry Battalion. He embarked for overseas service to the Middle East (1940-1942) and was promoted to Captain in 1942. He also served in New Guinea (1942-1943). He returned to Australia in 1943 and allotted for duty as Company Commander 17th Infantry Training Battalion. Appointed Company Commander 1st Australian Reinforcement Training Battalion (Jungle Warfare) in 1944.

Transferred to Tatura Internment Group as captain. Embarked for England with Australian Army Staff (United Kingdom) in 1945 and returned in October. He was discharged in November 1945. His awards included the Africa Star, Pacific Star, Defence Medal, War Medal,

Australia Service Medal, Efficiency Decoration, and he was Mentioned in Despatches: "His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve that the following [Capt. Frank Birrell Pringle] be Mentioned for having rendered gallant and distinguished service in the South-West Pacific Area."



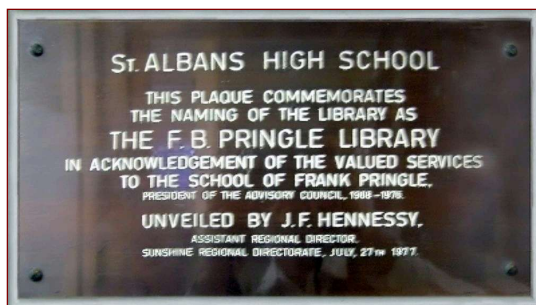
Frank Birrell Pringle had married Jean Roma Ward in 1943: "A gown of fine white lace and net over taffeta, and a tulle veil held in place with a coronet of seed pearls, were worn by Jean Roma, only daughter of Mr and Mrs W. Ward, York st, Caulfield, at her wedding to Capt Frank Birrell Pringle, AIF, returned, only child of Mrs L. Pringle, Belgrave, and the late Mr P. Pringle, which was celebrated at St John's Presbyterian Church, Elsternwick, on Saturday. Rev J. Jones officiated. Miss Jeanette Grant was bridesmaid, and Capt J. Menzies, AIF, returned, was best man."

Jean's parents were Helen McMeekin Beighton and William Roland Ward who served at Gallipoli. The Beighton heritage goes back to 1811 in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England, United Kingdom. The Ward heritage goes back to 1835 in Dublin, Ireland.

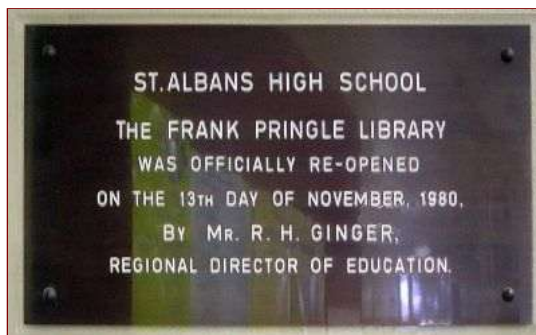
In 1946 Jean and Frank living at "Girranheen" in Wattle Avenue, Belgrave, and Frank was working as an Assurance Consultant and an Inspector of the Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Company. They had moved to Elsternwick by 1949, and in the early 1950s they were living in St Albans Road, Sydenham. They had four sons and one daughter: David, Philip, Clive, Howard, and Jeanette.

Frank became involved in community activities in Sydenham and St Albans soon after settling in the district. In 1952 he was President of the Sydenham Mechanics Institute Hall and cooperated with the Sydenham and District Progress Association. He started protesting about a plan to use a disused quarry near his home as a garbage dump. He was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1961 and this would have added prestige to his standing in the community. His particular activities in St Albans included the RSL and St Albans High School.

Frank Pringle was a member of the Footscray RSL and was trying to start some new networks. According to the late Alie Missen, the foundation members of the St Albans Sydenham Sub-branch of the Returned & Services League were Frank Pringle as President, Bill Brothie Secretary, and committee members included Lance Gliddon, C Kerr, T Lynch, and J Watson. The St Albans sub-branch was formed in 1960 and functioned for about a decade. They had ten members and hoped to build a meeting room in East Esplanade, but this did not eventuate. They had acquired some field guns which were transferred to the grounds of the old public hall in Sydenham.



Frank Pringle was the second President of the St Albans High School Council. Cr James Eddie was the first President from 1956 to 1967. Pringle took over in 1968 and continued through to 1976. One of his biggest challenges was the erection of the Assembly Hall. Mr Bruce Alcorn writes in his silver jubilee review 'Where The Wind Blows' that: "Mr. Torpey (Principal 1962-1968) saw the need to have the hall, and, with the backing of the Advisory Council and the Parents' and Friends' Association, set about organising the programme to obtain one. The St. Albans High School Co-operative Society was set up to raise the necessary funds. Mr. Frank Pringle gave much time and expertise to the task of co-ordinating the activities of the Society."



He must have done an excellent job, because in 1977 the school library was named the F.B. Pringle Library in recognition of his services to the school, with a suitable plaque. The library and resource centre was damaged by fire in 1979 and restored in 1980. A ceremony and new plaque marked the building's return to full service and rededicated to Mr Pringle by the Regional Director of Education, Mr R H Ginger.

Frank Pringle died in 1991 at age 77.

Jean Pringle died in 1991 at age 70.

Menu

[People](#)

[Photos](#)

[History](#)

[Albas](#)

[Top of Page](#)

[Home Page](#)

Article written by Joseph Ribarow.

Ref: Alie Missen, Sydenham Memorial Moments : A discovery Tour of Local People and Places, Prahran Mechanics Institute Press, Windsor Vic, 2008.

Family photos courtesy of Ancestry.com

