

MY STORY by Deanna Davison (Aunty Daught)

(23 Dec. 1941 – 3 May 2020)



I was born on the 23rd of December 1941 in Page Avenue North Nowra in a rundown old house. The day I was born Dad was going around saying "*I've got a daughter. I've got a daughter*". My brother Alex picked up on what Dad was saying and then he was running around telling all the kids that he had a daughter so that's how I got the nick name "Daught".

My father is Reginald Oswald Walker; a Walbunja man born 9-th February 1909 at Wallaga Lake (registered as Tilba Tilba) and died of congestive cardiac failure on the 16-th of December 1971 at Bega, his usual residence was Wallaga Lake. My mother is Iris Elizabeth Walker nee Brindle she was a Monaro Ngarigo woman born on Delegate Mission in 1909. Mum wasn't a well person, she used to suffer from asthma, which she didn't have until after she had Dennis. She died on the 18-th of February 1961 at Moruya at fifty - two years of age. Usual place of residence was Nerrigundah.

Dad's father was Edward Walker born 1873 in Bodalla. Dad's mother was Mary Jane Walker nee Johnson who was a Broulee woman; she was born in 1880 at Ulladulla. They were married at Turlinjah, in the presence of Henry Chapman and Alice Bolloway on the 29-th of July 1898.

Grandfather Edward Walkers nickname was "Feather". Edward Walker swallowed a bone with his food and it perforated his bowel. He died on the 8-th of December 1937 at the David Berry Hospital in Berry. Granny Mary Jane later married Bert Penrith at the All Saints Church in Nowra on the 7-th of February 1942. His children were Charley and Ruby. Charley was father to Burnuni Burnum and Ruby is Mervyn Penrith's mother. I really loved Aunty Ruby.

Grandfather Edward's mother was Jane Hoskins/Austin; his father was James Walker born 1846, they were married at Kianga. James died in 1921 at Batemans Bay. James father, Edward Walker, was born in 1815 and died on the 4-th of February 1900 at Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Station. He owned the white bullock team. Dad said that the bullock teams were the carriers from Tilba to Bateman's Bay and back. Edward was the son of Tunungeranbrun. Tunungeranbrun was born in the Moruya district (exact locality is unknown). They are both mentioned in an article in the *Moruya Examiner* of February 9-th 1900 as follows:

Death of an Aboriginal.

Just as we are going to press, we regret to say that we have received news of the death of Edward Walker, aged 85, son of Tunungeranbrun, king of the Moruya aboriginals, at Wallaga Lake Station. He must have seen many strange sights in his time and could remember the district before the first white man came. He leaves two children; Murrins aged 65 and Jimmey Walker, aged 60, to mourn their loss.

(The 'Murrins' referred to is actually 'Murrina', which is the tribal name of Louisa Walker who married Richard Bolloway).

Mary Jane Johnson's parents were Donald Johnson born 1845 at Broulee and Mary O'Brien born 1860 at majors Creek. They were married on the 22nd of June 1895 at Turlinjah. Donald Johnson's parents were Henry Johnson and Mary Johnson nee (unknown). Mary O'Brien's parents were John O'Brien and Sarah Cook.

Grandfather Edward had a brother Robert (Bob) and sisters Emily who married a Stewart, Dolly who married a Cruse and Vicki who married a Lang. Grandfather Edwards's sister, Aunty Emily Stewart, had a big mob, they are: James, Frank, Christie, Mable, Laddie, Arthur, Werge, Aunty Glady, Percy, Richard, Aunty Ruth, Alan, Emily and Robert. Aunty Ruth married Donnie Walker senior, they had Patsy, Donnie junior and Jun. Aunty Ruth and Uncle Donnie Walker split up and Aunty Ruth got with Uncle Alf Penrith, I lived with them for a while as a teenager when they lived in Sydney, they moved to Tomerong then

Mogo. Their home was open to anyone and everyone. We always visited Aunty Ruth, June and Palsy in Mogo, by this time Patsy was married to Keith Smith.



Picture taken outside Bodalla Pub: Jimmy Little senior, Dora Williams, unknown women and Reg Walker.

Dad's older sister was Ethel his older brother was Ernest, then there was Dad, his younger brother, was Miles, (nickname "Smiler"). Dad saw the last corroboree on Wallaga; he was only a boy at the time. It was held down the side of the hill behind the hall. Dad's family moved from Mosquito Bay, Wallaga Lake to Hilltop Farm at Tilba when Dad was young. While in his teens Dad got hit in the knee with a cricket ball and ended up in Sydney Hospital for a long time. The family moved to Kiama to be close to the trains so that they could visit him in Sydney Hospital after he injured his knee. That injury left him with a limp but it was never a handicap.

Dad met Mum in Sydney and they were married in Kiama on the 30th of March 1931. He worked in the mills cutting timber, he did seasonal work picking peas and beans, he cut sleepers in the bush and he was also a fisherman. He used to joke that he was a jack-of-all-trades, master of none.

Mum's father was Alexander (Alex) Brindle and her mother was Daisy Bradshaw/Rutherford (she used both names). Grandfather Alex was born in the Snowy Mountains at Jindabyne about 1888 and he died of pneumonia at eighty years of age, on the 29-th of August 1963 at Lidcombe State Hospital and Home, Lidcombe. As a young man Grandfather Alex Brindle became a black tracker and he worked with the Cooma, Dalgety and Bombala Police. Grandmother Daisy was born in 1887 at Delegate and died on the 22-nd of September 1915 at Cooma District Hospital. Grandfather Alex's mother was Emily Ellis-Peters born 1853 and died about 1905 His father was James Brindle born 1852 in Victoria at Cann River or Monaro. James died on the 14-th of August 1906 in Gippsland Hospital.

Grandmother Daisy's father was (Black Harry) Henry Brad (y)sh born 1860 and died before 1925. Her mother was Lucy Bradshaw; Lucy was born in 1862 on 'Cobbin Station' at Jindabyne. Lucy later married Billy Rutherford, hence Daisy's use of the name. Lucy died on the 27-th of July 1935.

When Grandmother Daisy passed on, Grandfather Alex married Ethel Pegram (a non - Aboriginal woman) on the 17-th of April 1920, and they had a big family. Grandfather Alex was registered on the Eden-Monaro (Cooma) electoral roll since 1906.

When my Mum Iris and her sister Mary were ten and eight years old they were taken by the welfare to Cootamundra Girls Home. When mum turned fifteen she was put out with a wealthy family in Sydney and worked as a domestic servant. Aunty Mary, when she left Cootamundra Homes she was put out around Cootamundra area where she fell pregnant and had cousin Kenny Brindle. By the time she met up with Mum again (must have been on the South Coast) Mum was married and had Dennis, my older brother. When mum would baby – sit Kenny she would breast-feed both Kenny and Dennis. There were eight other children to follow Dennis, they are Ronald, Margaret, Alex, myself, Mary, Billy, Bobby and Regina.

We lived at North Nowra on a property belonging to my Uncle Ernie Walker. He was George Brown's father. Dad used to take my brother Dennis out sleeper cutting. Dennis cut his leg while they were out in the bush; he got tetanus in the wound'Dad got him back to the hospital where he passed away. He was only a young man. seventeen years of age when that happened. He was a well - liked person in the Nowra community; the scouts formed a guard of honour at his funeral. They said that Dad went grey in a week. Mum lost three other children, Ronald, Margaret and Mary. They were only young when they passed

away. Mary got gastroenteritis. That left Alex, myself, Billy, Bobby and Regina.



Pictured: Regina and Iris Walker.

I started school at Nowra Primary School and shortly after that we moved from Nowra to Wreck Bay, when I was about six or seven. While we were living at Wreck Bay. Mum's sister Mary Brindle passed away, she was living at Cooper's Island at the time. She was at the camp and had a heart attack that was in 1952. She was buried in Moruya cemetery but we don't know where. We have tried to find her but there doesn't seem to be any records.

At Wreck Bay I went to school. It was the best years of my life living on Wreck Bay. All the things we had to do, we'd run through the bush, pick flowers, run round the rocks, all the kids around my age would go for walks on the weekends. I remember some of them: they were Fay, Ronny and John Ardler, Mary Roberts, Lurline Moore, Neville and Patsy Bloxsome and Amby Brown. We'd take matches to make a fire, eat berries out of the bush, and catch pipis. We could go away all day and just live off the land or the ocean and never go hungry. I loved the school there; we would do all sorts of craft as well as school work. I remember the day we left Wreck I was twelve and the manager took us in his truck to catch the train. As we were leaving Wreck Alex and me were on the back of the truck. I was crying my eyes out, broken hearted.

We moved out to Cowra. Mum and Dad lived there for four years. I went to high school there then moved to Sydney. I lived at La Perouse with Uncle Benny and Aunty Sarah Cruse.

I worked at the Prince Henry Hospital as a domestic. Mum and Dad moved to Falls Creek outside Nowra and asked me to come home. I had my daughter Iris just before my eighteenth birthday in 1959 at Paddington Hospital in Sydney. Then I moved home with Mum and Dad at Falls Creek.

I met Jimmy Davison in 1960. Jimmy was born in 1937 at Armidale. His father is Colin James Davison and his mother is Kathleen Jane Callaghan. We married in 1966. Our children are Colin, Derek and Dennis; they were born at Crown Street. Hospital in Sydney. We moved to Wallaga when Dennis was a baby in 1963. Michelle and Cheryl were born at Bega Hospital and Jason, Leslie and Lucy were born at Moruya Hospital. Jimmy worked as a handyman on Wallaga for the Manager George Budworth. Jimmy also worked on the Forestry at Bermagui.

Leading up to the 1967 Referendum, Cousin Kenny Brindle brought Uni students down to Wallaga from Sydney. This was when we started to get involved in politics. Kenny was a regular visitor to Wallaga and we told him about the treatment that the Aboriginal people got from the police and some of the Managers. They use to have a gate outside the Managers residence, when you had a visitor you had to report to the Manager, visitors were only allowed for a set time. When Kenny visited with the Uni students, they purposefully set up sound recordings for when the Manager came in with the Police and the whole conversation was recorded about them being told to remove themselves from my house and off the mission. Just after that we left Wallaga and moved to Nowra. Iris was going to Narooma High School and Derek and Colin

were old enough now to go to high school as well. There were more opportunities for them in Nowra and we wanted to get off the mission.



Pictured at Wallaga are Iris, Cheryl, Michelle, Collin, Derek and Dennis.

We got a house in Bomaderry for a few years then we moved to Tamworth. Jimmy was working for the Family Resettlement Program. We were there for about four years.

Then we moved back to East Nowra. Aunty Jane Ardler approached me and asked me, if they got the Medical Centre going would I work for them. I worked there for over twenty years on and off. When we first got the Centre going, we worked for nothing but we needed to set the service up. Redfern Medical Services gave us a vehicle, a Doctor and some office equipment. There was Aunty Jane, myself, Debbie Luland, May Roberts and Gracy Coombes. We had a room at the Aboriginal Culture Centre, then demountables in the Culture Centre car park, we moved to a building in Berry Street then another in Junction Street. We were in a half a dozen different places before the new Medical Centre was built in Berry Street and that's where it is today.

I live with Jimmy and Regina at Jerrabomberra; it's just outside Queanbeyan. I look after Regina I'm her carer and Jimmy doesn't work anymore. There are only Regina and me left of my family. Now the kids have all grown up. Iris married David White; he is a painter by trade but is working with Anglicare in Moruya at the moment. Iris is a Manager with TAFE; she has also worked for the Aboriginal Legal Service, the Lands Department and ATSIC. Iris won a scholarship in high school and went to the Presbyterian Ladies College in Sydney. She has a Bachelor in Adult Education. They live in Broulee. Their children are Jesse, Zac and Jordon. Jesse has a little girl, Teleah.

Colin has two teenage girls, Acacia and Kalinda. He lives at Batemans Bay with Acacia and Kalinda lives in Nowra with her mother Michelle Ferguson. Collin works as a labourer. He does a lot of writing and has a lot of knowledge; some of it was passed down to him from my Dad.

Derek has four children they are: Melanie, Hope, William and Jemma. Melanie is married with two girls. Alysa and Gypsy Rose. They live in Canberra. Hope, William and Jemma live with their mother Susan Loyd in Narrabundah. Derek loves gardening; he worked in the Botanic Gardens in Sydney and as an electrician at Parliament House. He drove the bus for Winnunga Aboriginal Medical Centre in Canberra until recently. He is a labourer now doing contract work with archaeologists. He has moved to Batemans Bay from Canberra.

Dennis passed away four years ago from motor neuron disease. He was married to Kim Longbottom. They had three children: Aaron, Alyse and Nicki. Kim and the girls still live in Canberra. Kim runs the Aboriginal Youth Centre in Erindale. Her and Dennis set that up, he used to work there as well. Before that he worked with Telecom and before that he was one of Charlies Angels, he worked with Charles Perkins. Dennis did a lot of work with kids. He was a football coach and manager. He also worked in the different agencies and the lockup with youth.

Michelle has two boys Stewart and Shane; they are men now. Their father is Bernie (Buddy) Luland. Shane and Jessica Maynard have two daughters Laela and Kadie, they live in Nowra. Michelle has made her home in Moruya. She works for Family Support but usually works with youth.

Cheryl has a daughter Tamsin to Raymond Doyle of Kempsey. Her partner now is Donald Atkinson, they lived in Eden for ten years but they just moved to Kalaru just outside Tathra. Cheryl is a well-known Aboriginal artist; she runs an art co-op called Kari Valla and works with Auswide in Bega.

All the girls are really good cooks.

Jason is a labourer, his partner is Rachel Wellington, and they have seven children. Adam, Raygan, Issacc, Caleb, Emily, Iris and Seth. They live in Nowra. Jason has been doing some work with archaeologists in Bungendore.

Leslie has worked with the Aboriginal Legal Service as the Senior Youth Officer. He did a Diploma in Law at Tranby College. He worked with Ga du Wadja as an Aboriginal Support Worker for men in Eden. He has worked with youth in Canberra and the Department of Housing in Queanbeyan. He lives in Canberra now.

Lucy is the youngest of nine. Her partner is Peter Thomas, they have three children. Peter junior who will be seventeen next month. Mia who will be ten in May and they've just had a new baby Thomas John Dennis Davison. They live at East Nowra. Lucy's first job was in Coles in Nowra.

I want to move back to Moruya to be close to my kids and grandkids. I would like to see all our people get on together. We just have to save our energy to fight the system, the racism and the negativity instead of fighting one another.

I also want people to know that Iris represents my family with my endorsement.

Daught Davison



Edward Walkers famous Bullock Team.

SOURCE: Coastal Custodians, Vol. 3, issue 3, Feb/March 2007

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/16358670/coastal-custodians-department-of-environment-and-climate-change>