

CHARLES



R. COLLER



**PIONEER
FAMILY
SERIES**

CHARLIE ROYLAND COLLER

CONTRIBUTORS

Ross & Nancy Collier
Ken Collier
Norma Newman
Noel Collier
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Andrew Collier
Barry Collier
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Artworkz

Based on research by the © Collier Family

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COLLER HISTORY

HISTORY

Name: Charles (Charlie) Royland Collier
Charles: Born 1909, Died 1999 (91)
Married: Lorna Burness, 20 February 1937
Lorna: Born 1916, Died 2002 (86)
Known for: Early district farmer

Charles was the youngest son of Charles John Collier and father of Merle (dec.), Ross, Barry and Ken Collier. He farmed at Eildon until 1950 when he moved out to Acheron after his land was acquired by the Government for the new wall.



Early life

Charles (Charlie) Royland Collier was born on the day his grandmother (Annie) died 17 February 1909 at Alexandra. He didn't attend school until he was seven and a half, and even then he had to milk cows before leaving for school. His teacher was a Miss Fairbum who virtually taught the children nothing. At this time, school was only part-time (Eildon School). At 11 years of age he was sent to Melbourne to live with his Aunt Agnes Pinkston (his father's sister) to go to school there. Because of family problems he later

COLLER HISTORY

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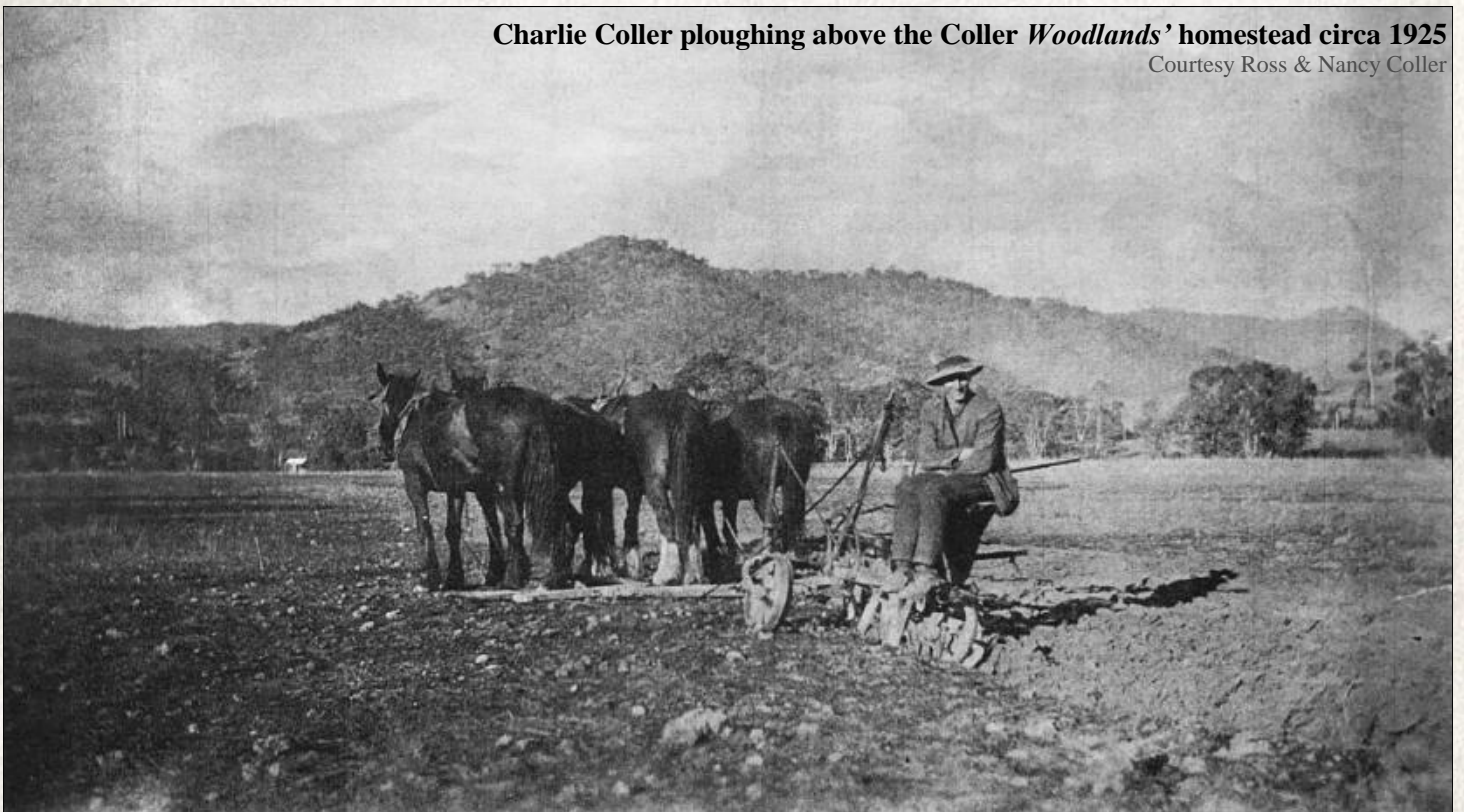
went to stay at his Aunty Lil Thompson's (his mother's sister). He did not like Melbourne and was brought home when 12 years and went to Eildon School where he was put back a grade. He lost interest and then left school at 14 years of age.

He worked on the farm at home and then cut and carted wood with his brother Brent to the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission on contract during the building of the first wall in 1923. They also supplied wood to the State Rivers during the repairing of the slip of the dam (the first dam wall) in 1929. One contract was 3000 tonnes, size was 6' x 3' (6 feet x 3 inches). He worked on the farm clearing paddocks and fencing and amongst other things he worked with his brother Brent widening the Acheron Cutting.

Charlie was an excellent horseman, he broke in horses and often rode in buck jump shows to earn some extra money. He enjoyed his riding. In his younger days he started playing football with Eildon when 16, he was an excellent player and played for nine years with Eildon and then Thornton. He was a left foot kick. He also played tennis a lot at the Guesthouse. Charlie had some good working dogs he had trained himself.

Charlie Collier ploughing above the Collier *Woodlands*' homestead circa 1925

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier

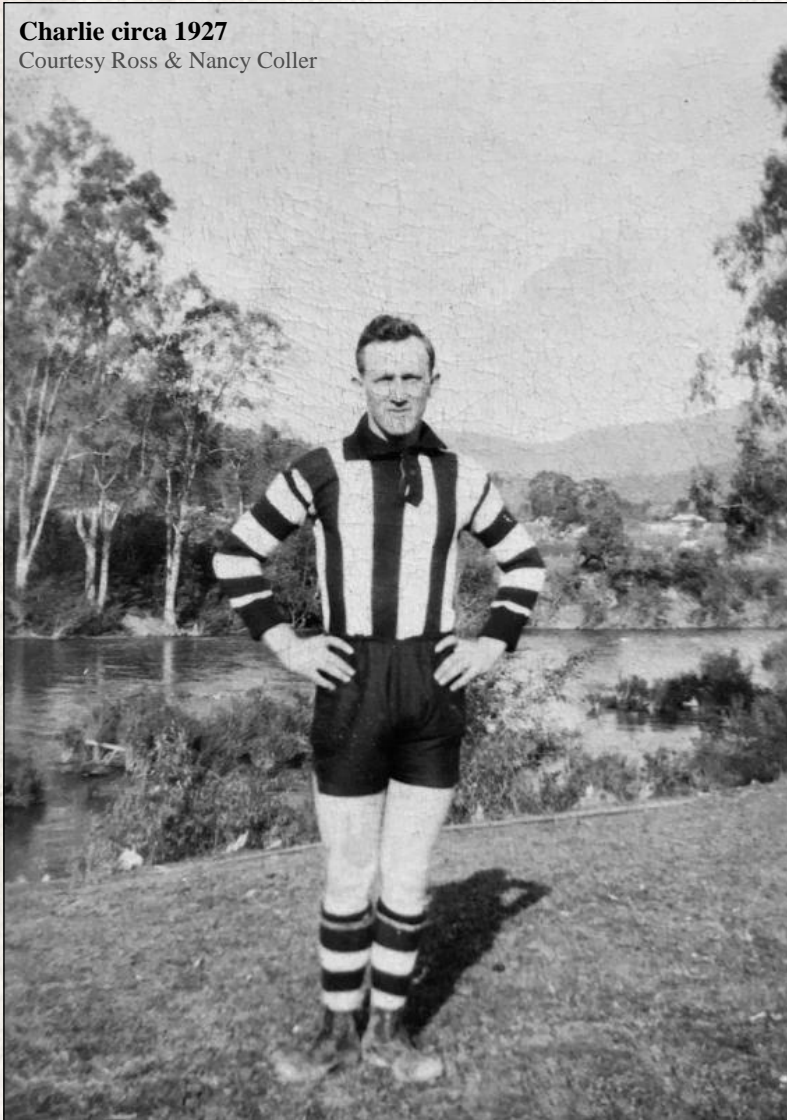


COLLER HISTORY

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Charlie circa 1927

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier



He spent 12 months out the back near the lake fencing off a block that his parents had acquired, beating Taylors to it. He lived in a hut that was built by Bill Richardson on Collier's land. Charlie helped build it and later put an iron roof on it. The Collers had supplied the materials for the hut. Charlie was about 20 then and was playing football and came home each weekend.

While out there he did some rabbiting and had around nine dogs with him. Young Bert Moschetti helped Charlie fence for awhile and then went off to the war. Joe Kirkham worked out there for awhile, but found it too lonely and came home. He had a hut near Matt Allen's. Allen's place was bought by Bill Richardson. When out the back fencing, Charlie had a draft horse called Dick, that used to pull posts up the steep hills one at a time for him. Charlie built a netting fence

to keep the rabbits out. Later Jim Broderick lived in the hut and burnt charcoal for Fred Slade who used to come up from Melbourne and collect it. It was used in engines.

After Brent married Phillipa Johns (Phil) they moved into *Lyndhurst* and after some years Charlie was told by his parents to help Brent on his farm. He worked there for three years without receiving anything but his meals and because he wanted to get married soon he was building a cowshed for himself near the Guesthouse. Phil (Brent's wife) became annoyed that Charlie was not spending enough time at their place and shearing had started and she complained to Mabel about this. Charlie only worked there for a short time after this.

COLLER HISTORY

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Eildon St Paul's Church

Charlie married Lorna Marion (née) Bumess on 20 February 1937 at Eildon St. Paul's Church. He was 28 and Lorna was 21. They were the second couple married at the wooden St Paul's Church at Eildon, which is interesting in that Charlie's great grandfather John Collier, was one of the first married in Melbourne's first St. Paul's Bluestone Church in 1853, the year after it was consecrated. The first couple married in the Eildon St. Paul's Church was Bub Boyle and Lizzie Brooks. Bub worked on the construction of the wall.

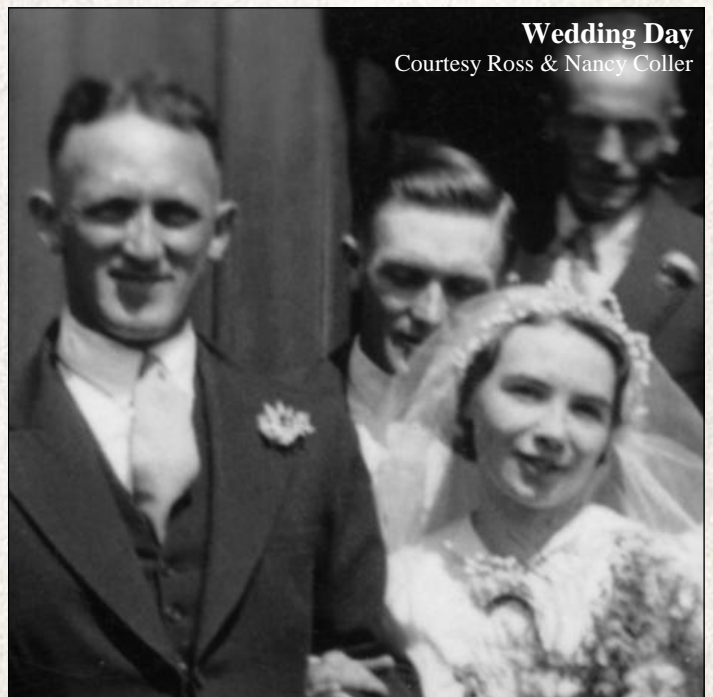
The church was built in 1923 during the construction of the first dam wall (Sugarloaf Weir) and Rev. Ball was instrumental in the organising and building of the church, with help from the parishioners. The church was built for all denominations and the builder was a Mr Anstey. The first christening at the church was twins George and Gordon McKay in 1923. Helen Hyatt (née) Burness was christened as was Noel Collier in 1931. Viv Hyland and Thelma Burness, Carl Hyne and Mabel Burness were also married in this church.

Later when the church was moved to the new town, Ken Collier and Julie Teague were married in this church in 1976 (Ken being the son of Charlie and Lorna Collier).

The church was finally moved to the rear of the Eildon Information Centre on 16 May



Lorna Burness
circa 1834
Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier



Wedding Day
Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier

COLLER HISTORY

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2013 and today has been incorporated into the Eildon Museum.

After honeymooning at Portsea they took up residence in a house shop that Mabel (his mother) had bought off Frasers. They took out the shop area and turned it into a kitchen. This house was situated where the switch yard is now (2018) near the new wall. They both milked cows by hand and sold cream and milk and worked on the family farm as well.

When Charlie got married he never had anything to his name. His father Charles John, gave him four cows and he bought some more and bred more.

Lorna's father Bert Burness helped Charlie build his cowshed. He used the paddock next to the Guesthouse along the river for his cows.

Charlie and Lorna only existed with the help of Lorna's parents who gave them handouts from time to time. When Charlie and Lorna's son, John Ross had suspected scarlet fever in 1943, the dairy farm was quarantined until such time as Dr Wilkins was sure it was safe. They had to throw milk away for around two weeks. In hospital where Ross was, Charlie and Lorna could only talk to him from a distance. This was the only case of scarlet fever in Eildon at the time. They milked cows and helped with the family sheep until 1950 when they were forced to sell their land to the State Rivers.

Before the war, in Charlie and Lorna's early married life, George Petersen worked on their farm milking cows and doing anything he could. He wanted to work and would have done it for nothing, but they managed to pay him around five shillings per week. He was 15 years old. He worked for Brent Collier for awhile and was accidentally killed when out shooting.

When Orm (Charlie's brother) and Daisy left *Woodlands* and went to Melbourne to work



Church being moved to the back of the
Visitor Information Centre in 2013

COLLER HISTORY

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and live, Carl Hynes rented this property, and milked cows he had bought off Ormy for awhile. Then when war broke out, Carl left for the war in 1939 and Charlie and Lorna took over his cows with the help of Gordon McKay. They had to put in milking machines then, to cope with the extra cows. Charlie and Lorna took over Ormie's milk run and used to get around threepence a pint.

George Petersen's mother May Peterson often helped Charlie and Lorna to milk the cows. Gordon and George McKay also helped with clearing fence lines and tea-tree on Charlie's property.

The Collers who all worked on the family farms were only able to become independent and work their farms for themselves when Mabel died and the will was finalised. Charles Snr had died some three years earlier.

Soon after moving to a farm they bought at Acheron, they bought a Ferguson tractor, this made a big difference with growing crops and at harvest time. They eventually bought more machinery and life was even easier. Eldest son Ross farmed with his father and they milked cows and ran sheep until his father retired in 1988 and moved into a house built by their son Barry, on property once owned by them at Eildon.

Charlie and Lorna had four children. The first was Merle, who married Ian Evans and later died of kidney failure when aged 26. The second was Ross who married Nancy Roberts and they had four children: Debbie, Jennifer, Glen and Ian. They also have six grand children, and soon to be—four great grandchildren. Ross, having first worked on the family farm, then worked as an electrician with Arthur Pickering at Buxton, and then managed Fleming's cattle at Glendale Lane, Taggerty. Charlie and Lorna's third child was Barry, who married Pat Bellman and had one child Laurene. He was a builder and renovator at Eildon, having completed his apprenticeship under Wally Searle of Alexandra. Their fourth child was



HISTORY

Ken who lives with his partner Marion Williamson, and has two boys from his previous marriage: Bradley and Donovan. He has seven grandchildren. Ken became the reservoir keeper of the new Eildon Dam in 2003, and was later the reservoir controller. He retired in 2012. As of 2019, Ross currently lives in Alexandra, and Barry and Ken both live in Eildon.

In 1950 when the Wall was to be built a lot larger by Utah Construction Company, the State Rivers needed to obtain more land for wall materials etc, they acquired the Collier properties by demand of Charles, Brent, Yutha (Broderick) and Mavis (Austin) who owned the Guesthouse.

They were not adequately compensated and this made it difficult to purchase another farm, as farms were priced higher during that period. The Government valued the land very low to suit themselves, and Charlie and Lorna had to take the price they gave. They contested in court for a better price and got a small amount which went in court costs. They were given only six months to get out.

Charles' property was close to the wall and Brent's property was *Lyndhurst* where the majority of the town is today, Yutha and Jim lived at *Woodlands* and Mavis and Bill had the Guesthouse which was situated near where the Power Station is now. Charlie owned from the Darlingford Nursing Home, Tank Hill, the Eildon Caravan Park, the Eildon Boat Harbour, Boat Club areas and Sugarloaf Hill, right down to the old Lakeside.

Charlie suffered a bad hip injury when a horse he was riding rammed him against a fence post in his younger days. In later years this injury brought on osteoarthritis. He had three hip replacements in all, the last one at the age of 89. He mended well, but suffered arthritis in the knee of his hip operations. It was too big an operation to have his knee reconstructed at his age. He lived at home with wife Lorna, gardening and reading. Lorna had osteoporosis and suffered bad back pains and seizures but managed to look after Charlie.

Lorna Burness (Charlie's wife) was born at Oakleigh in 1915, then moved to Chewton, Castlemaine and then to Enochs Point. As a young child they moved to Eildon and she went to school at the Eildon School opposite their family home at four years of age. She got her merit certificate at 12 years of age. Too young to leave school, she stayed on to help teach the younger children for 18 months. She left school when she was 13 ¹/₂ years old and helped in the household until she went to town at 15 and worked in households

COLLER HISTORY

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until her sister Mabel got her a job in a hospital at Brighton doing domestic duties. She worked in town until she was going out with Charlie. She came back and was married when 21 to Charlie. She wanted to be a teacher but there was never enough money for her to learn. She settled into farm life with Charlie.

They had four children: Merle, Ross, Barry and Ken.

Death of Charlie and his wife Lorna

Charlie died on 23 November 1999 being well into his 91st year. He was living in Eildon at the time of his death, but passed away at the Alexandra & District Hospital.

Lorna died two years and eight months after Charlie. She suffered severe osteoporosis, had renal failure, followed by bronchopneumonia. She also passed away at the Alexandra & District Hospital, on 19 July 2002, aged 86. They are buried together at the Alexandra Lawn Cemetery.



Barry, Ken and Ross Collier in 2018
Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier

TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS



COLLER HISTORY

BASIC TIMELINE

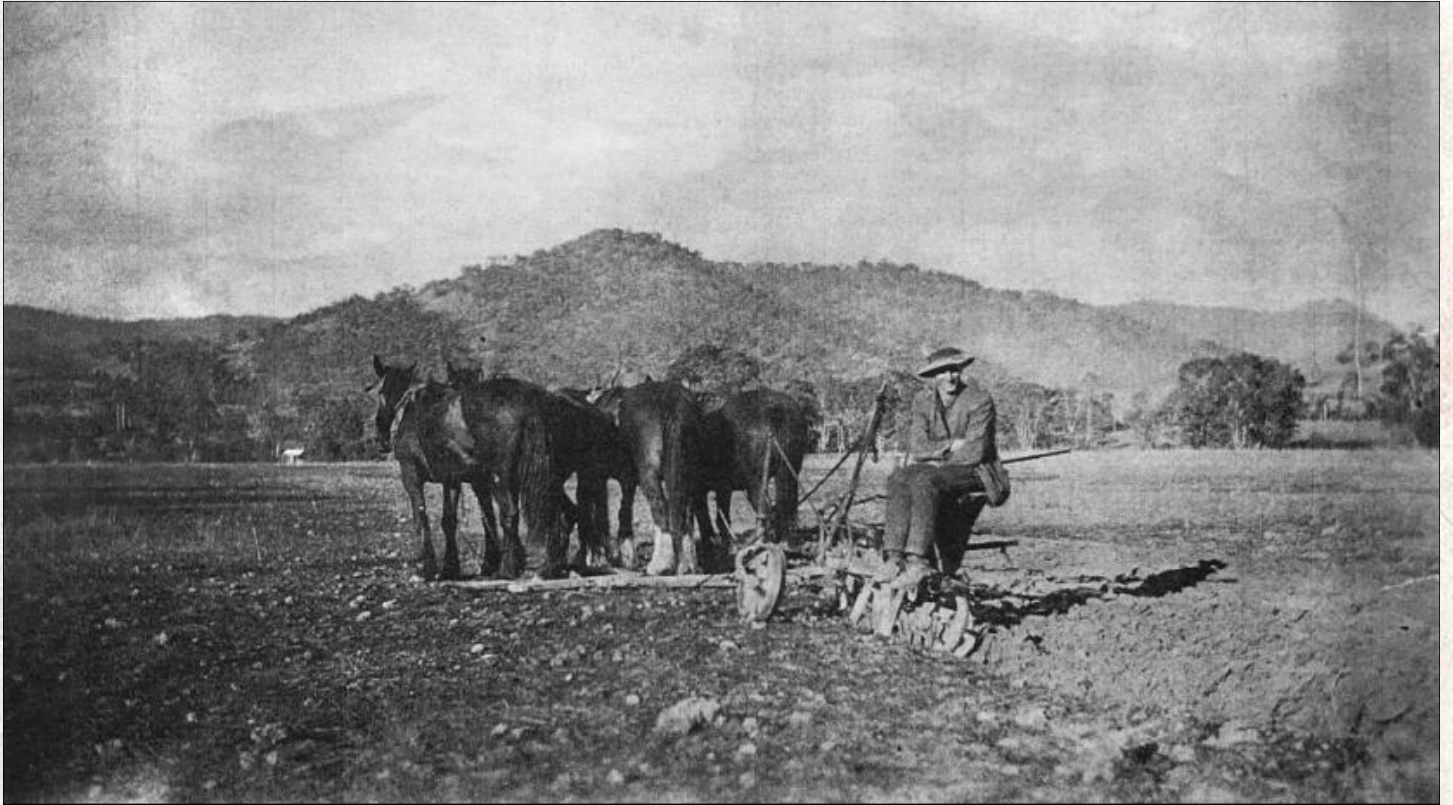
17 February 1909	Charles Royland was born.
23 September 1916	Lorna Marion (née) Burness was born.
29 February 1937	Charles and Lorna were married at Eildon.
1943	The dairy farm was quarantined for two weeks due to son Ross having scarlet fever. Ross was quarantined at the Alexandra & District Hospital.
1950	Charles and Lorna moved to Acheron when the State River and Water Supply Commission (SR&WSC) took over their land.
1964	Merle Collier died in Melbourne, aged 26 years, after her kidneys failed, following a 10 year battle.
1999	Charles died at Alexandra, aged 90 years.
2002	Lorna died at Alexandra, aged 86 years.

GALLERY

RELATED IMAGERY

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY

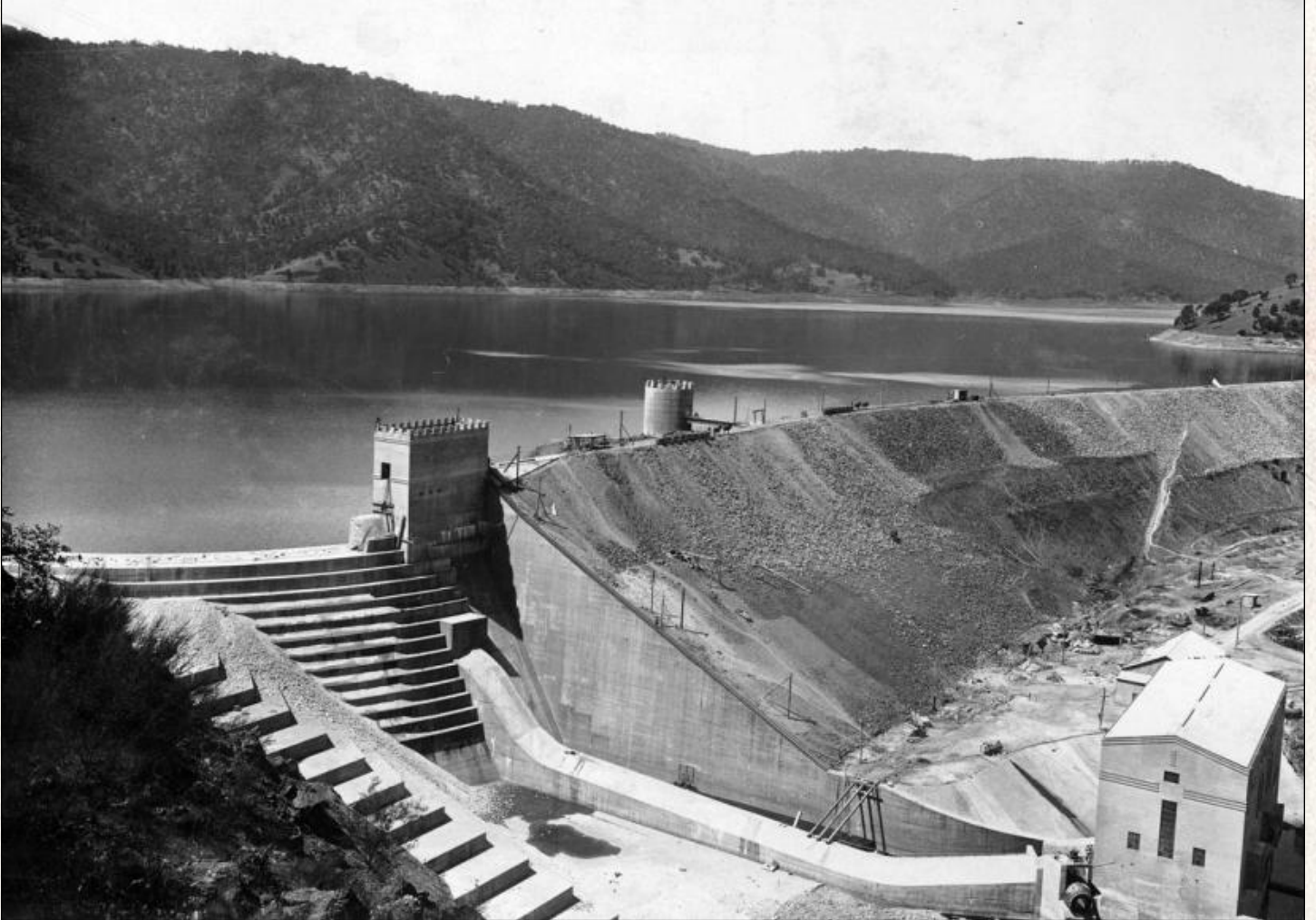


Charlie Coller ploughing above the Coller Woodlands Homestead circa 1925

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

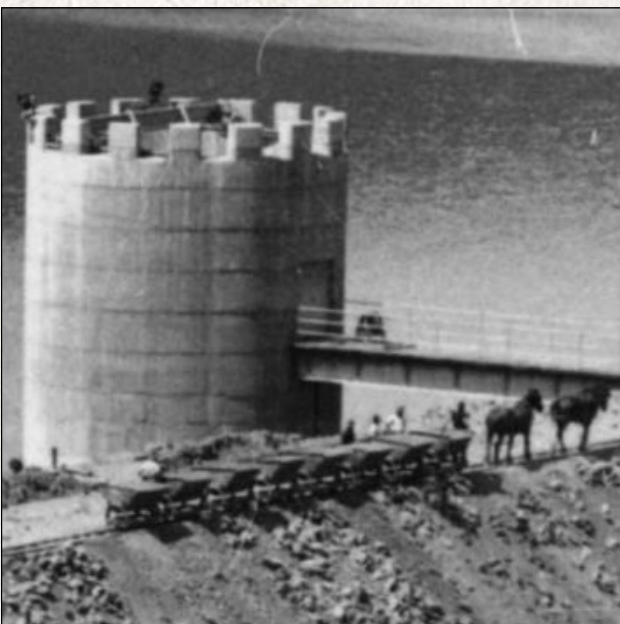
COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Construction of the Sugarloaf Dam Wall circa 1925

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2018



COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



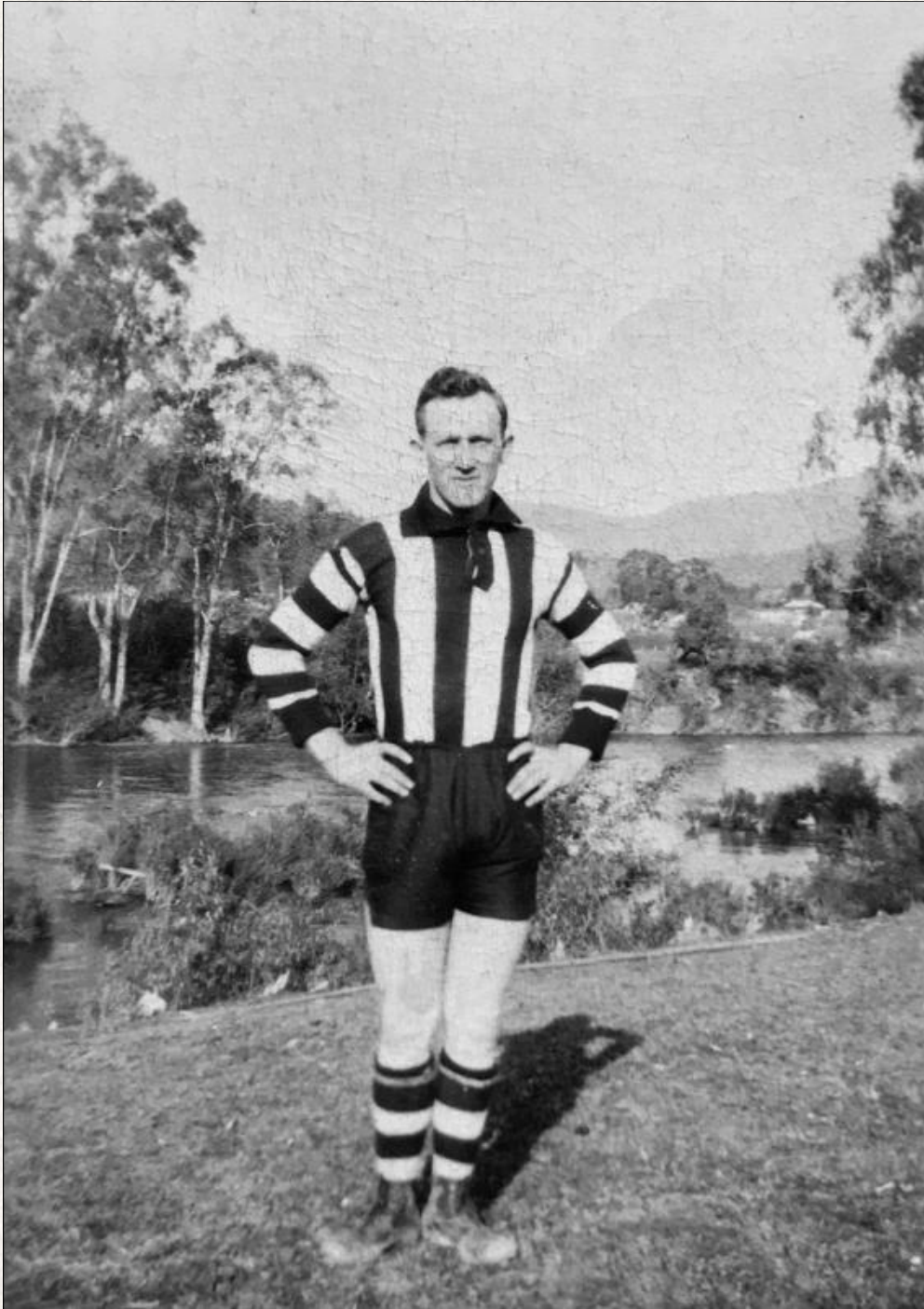
Construction of the Sugarloaf Dam Wall circa 1925

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2018



COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie in his football uniform circa 1927

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Coller's Hut was built by the Coller family down from the Boat Club, but is under the lake water today. Charlie is seen here aged around 20 years, circa 1929. He spent a year at the hut while fencing.

Photographer Derek Falconer
Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie performing riding tricks circa 1930

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie with his horse circa 1932

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Lorna Burness when she was aged around 18 years circa 1834

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



A 1934 photograph of friends Lorna Burness and Charlie Coller

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY

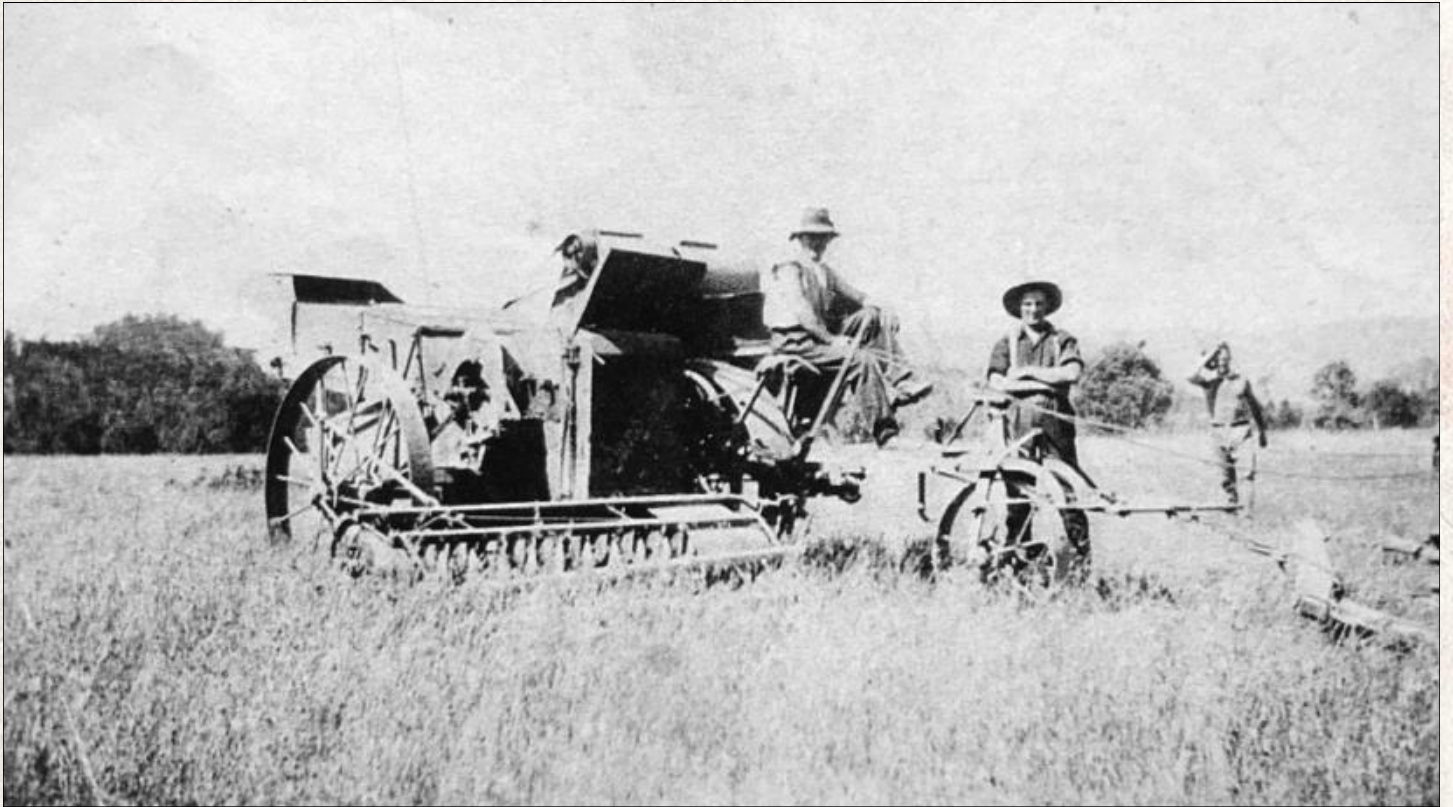


Charles Collier Snr with his son Ormond and Charlie Jnr, circa 1935

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charles Collier Snr with his son Ormond and Charlie Jnr, circa 1935

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



**Wedding of Charlie and Lorna Marion
Burness on 20 February 1937 at Eildon
St Pauls Church**

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2018

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Lorna Collier with her working dogs in 1937

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie (sitting), Bill Austin (casting), with visitors Vic Yann and Keith Mudie, at Charlie and Lorna's first home circa 1937. This property was formerly the *Uneeda Store*. This building was later relocated to Shaw Avenue in the new township of Eildon where it continues to exist today.

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY




Charlie Coller serving in the 20th Lighthouse at Puckapunyal circa 1945

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY

A.A.F.A.ZIO


Certificate

Nº 39460

Australian Military Forces
Volunteer Defence Corps
Certificate of Discharge

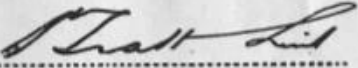
This is to Certify that

V.380422 PTE. COLLIER C.R. - 16 BN V.D.C. VIC.

Served in the Volunteer Defence
Corps on Part Time War Service

from the date of his enlistment on 28/3/42
and until 1/10/45 on which date
he was discharged from that Corps ..

Date 27 Feb 46


for Officer in Charge

VIC Echelon & Records

Lt. Gen. J.L. Whitham
Comd. V.D.C. VICTORIA

Signature of Member

Volunteer Defence Corps Certificate showing service from 28 March 1942 to 1 October 1945

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie Royland Collier, son of Charles Collier and father of Merle, Ross, Barry and Ken Collier, riding his horse Pearl on his property in the late 1940s—now the site of Eildon township.

Photographer Derek Falconer, courtesy Rod Falconer

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charlie with one of the farm work horses circa 1947

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Barry, Merle and Ross Collier at Eildon in March 1947

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Lorna and Merle Collier feeding lambs at Eildon circa 1948

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Merle Coller on Brownie the horse with Gwen Petersen in the background in 1948

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Ken Coller at the Acheron property in 1957

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Barry Coller in 1959 when aged 18

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Ross Coller at the Acheron property *Richdale* in 1956

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



A photograph from the Miss Australia Quest of Merle Collier taken in 1957

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Charles and Lorna at Charles' 80th Birthday on 17 February 1989

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



The family of Ross and Nancy Coller in 2018. Ross is the eldest son of Charles Coller. James and Beck have been inset.

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Coller 2016

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Four generations in one photograph. Ross, Glen, Glen's son James, and Charlie in November 1997.

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2019

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Barry, Ken and Ross Collier in 2018

Courtesy Ross & Nancy Collier 2019

COLLER HISTORY

GALLERY



Alexandra Cemetery plot of Charlie and Lorna

NEWSPAPERS

RELATED NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



COLLER HISTORY

NEWSPAPER

Herd Testing.

The top eight herds for the month of October were:—L. C. Creighton, 16 cows, 33.5 lbs. milk, 4.8 per cent. test, 1.60 lbs. butter fat; A. R. Thomson, 24 cows, 32.6 lbs. milk, 4.7 test, 1.52 lbs. butter fat; A. W. Gorman, 29 cows, 36.5 lbs. milk, 4.1 test, 1.49 lbs. butter fat; H. A. P. Beatty, 28 cows, 28.3 lbs. milk, 4.98 test, 1.42 lbs. butter fat; W. Lakin, 31 cows, 27.5 lbs. milk, 4.9 test, 1.39 lbs. butter fat; C. R. Collier, 20 cows, 31.1 lbs. milk, 4.5 test, 1.38 lbs. butter fat; Neve and Trollope, 21 cows, 27.5 lbs. milk, 4.9 test, 1.34 lbs. butter fat; F. J. Yeates, 11 cows, 28.9 lbs. milk, 4.5 test, 1.30 lbs. butter fat. The three leading cows for the same period were:—Neve and Trollope's Flighty, 52 lbs. milk, 6.0 test, 3.12 butter fat; W. Perry's Thora, 49 lbs. milk, 5.7 test, 2.84 lbs. butter fat; A. W. Gorman's Muriel's Maid, 56 lbs. milk, 4.3 test, 2.41 lbs. butter fat.

Alexandra Standard
Friday 11 November 1949
Courtesy National Library Australia

Alexandra Herd Testing Association

Alexandra Standard
Friday 11 November 1949
National Library Australia

COLLER HISTORY

NEWSPAPER

Alexandra Herd Testing Association

The leading eight herds for the year
were:—

	No. of Cows	Milk lbs.	Test	B.F. cow
H. A. P. Beatty, Thornton.. ..	22	5349	5.68	304
L. C. Creighton, Thornton.. ..	38	6165	4.82	297
A. W. Gorman, Alexandra	31	6911	4.51	292
Dobson and Shaw, Acheron	44	5382	5.13	276
E. C. Bottrell, Marysville	18	4616	5.5	254
C. R. Collier, Eildon Weir ..	25	5426	4.66	253
N. and B. Williamson, Taggerty	44	4830	5.05	244
W. C. Laken, Acheron	32	4632	5.24	243

Alexandra Standard
Friday 17 March 1950
Courtesy National Library Australia

Alexandra Herd Testing Association

Alexandra Standard
Friday 17 March 1950
National Library Australia



COLLER HISTORY

ALEXANDRA CEMETERY LIST

Coller family members currently buried at Alexandra

John Coller
Annie (Smith) Coller
Charles John Coller
Mabel (Butler) Coller
Eloura Coller
Brent Coller
Phillipa (Johns) Coller
Shirley (Coller) Henderson
Norma (Coller) Newman
Elizabeth Coller
Annie Elizabeth Coller
Herbert Coller
Elizabeth (Tottie Forsyth) Coller
Bertha (Coller) Sawers
Alf Coller
Elsie (Fry) Coller
Arthur Coller
Eleanor (Popple) Coller
Frank Coller
Stan Coller
Winifred (Coller) Findlay
Lesley Coller
Jean (Findlay) Coller
Andrew Coller
Charles Royland Coller
Lorna (Burness) Coller
Merle (Coller) Evans



COLLER HISTORY

EILDON CEMETERY LIST

Coller family members currently buried at Eildon

Edith (Coller) Corrie
Mavis (Coller) Austin
Yutha (Coller) Broderick



Coller Family