

Honouring the Past – Securing the Future

The Hamilton Masonic Lodge No. 186 made a donation to The Mackay Foundation to build a secure future for the community in honour of the contribution of

RONALD DAVID McCLURE

Ron McClure was born on July 5, 1921 to Jim and Agnes McClure at Teemburra on the upper Pioneer River. His parents later moved to a property at Benholme, near Mirani.

At age 20, Ron enlisted in the RAAF as a navigator and served in Europe flying Lancaster bombers with 100 Squadron. On his 21st raid over Germany, his aircraft collided with another and he spent the remainder of the war a German prisoner.

Upon his return home he worked at Mirani Shire Council and in 1952 drew a soldier settler block and began cane farming. He later acquired an additional larger farm and went on to run cattle as well as farm cane. In 1960 Ron married Greta Orchard, of Mirani, and they resided on this property until his death. They had two children, Peter and Fiona.



In 1960 Ron was elected to the Board of Directors of Marian Central Mill and held that position until the merger of all co-operative mills to form the Mackay Sugar Co-operative in 1988. Ron was part of the board which oversaw the huge expansion of the sugar industry and Marian Mill.

In 1976 Ron was appointed Chairman of Marian Mill Co-operative. This led to the initial discussions with Cattle Creek Mill and North Eton Mill to merge all three mills. From this time onwards, Ron worked tirelessly to bring about the merger of all six of the Mackay Co-operative Mills as was the condition of the government of the day in order to access finance for the complete merger.

The first vote by farmers to merge all six mills was not successful, but the second was. Ron devoted time, effort and ultimately his health to the proposition and the eventual merger saw his dream become a reality.

Ron was committed to agro-politics and the community. He was a life member of the Mirani RSL sub-branch and was its driving force. As President of the RSL, Ron secured funds for the retirement home at Mirani and was instrumental in the construction of the Mirani War Memorial. He was also a committed Freemason who held all major offices and donated the land at Mirani for the lodge building. He was awarded a 60-year jewel for his service to Freemasonry.

For his services to his country, the sugar industry and the community, Ron McClure was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 1990. The warrior he was, it was appropriate Ron died on Anzac Day 2011.