

Honouring the Past – Securing the Future

The Braithwaite family made a donation to The Mackay Foundation to build a secure future for the community, in honour of the contribution of

SEPTIMUS AND MARGARET ELIZABETH BRAITHWAITE

The Braithwaites have an indelible history in this region. During their lifetime they endured the loss of brothers in the first World War, experienced the joy of marriage, acquired and worked cane farms in the region, faced the financial pressures of the Great Depression and the uncertainty of the second World War, as well as enjoyed an era of prosperity post-war. The Braithwaites were typical of hundreds of regional families on whose shoulders were built the prosperity of Mackay and its sugar industry.

Sept was born in Yeppoon on June 18, 1895, and served in the ninth battalion in World War One. He suffered the loss of his brother Sidney in Flanders. Sept was a stockman in the Gulf and excelled at football.

Margaret Elizabeth Brisbin was born at Mount Morgan on June 26, 1900 and excelled at the piano. She also lost a brother, Lowry, during the Gallipoli landing.



Sept and Margaret married on April 28, 1925, and began cane farming at Finch Hatton. Sept remained a cane farmer until his death in 1964. Margaret on the other hand resumed music and played and taught piano until the age of 90. Sept involved himself in the affairs of the RSL and was a first year member of the Finch Hatton sub-branch and remained a lifetime member. He joined the Masonic Order when it commenced in Finch Hatton and it became the cornerstone of his life. Because of his contribution to the war, it was natural that he joined the Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC) in 1942.

On their farm the couple raised six sons and two daughters including Peg, Colin, Brian, Don, Ray, Valerie, Glen and Ian. On a modest farm income, they educated all eight children at Scots College and PGC in Warwick where they held the record for educating the most children from the same generation.

Sept became a member of the Cattle Creek Mill Suppliers Committee and was elected a Mirani Shire Councillor. In 1946 they sold their Finch Hatton cane farm and moved to a larger farm at Mia Mia, supplying cane to North Eton sugar mill. Sept suffered a bad accident in 1950 but recovered and continued farming and adjusted to the transition from farm horse to machine. He died in February 1964. His son Glen continued managing the farm until its sale in 1975.

Margaret took up residence at Homefield Home for the Aged in Mackay where she died in 2001 at the age of 101 years.

Additional reading "Waiting for Maggie" and "Educating Eight".