
GRACE (GRETТА) MARGARET LEWIS
(Born 2 February 1892, died May 1968.)

PRG 254
Series List

As a child, Gretta Laidlaw (later to become Mrs. G. Lewis), was an excellent student with a keen interest in art. She was the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T.H. Laidlaw of Hamilton, Victoria. As a young woman, she had many sporting interests, many of which she continued till she died. These included riding, motoring, golf, tennis and shooting. On April 12, 1921, she married Major Lancelot Ashley Lewis at Scots Church, Collins Street, Melbourne. After the wedding she moved to Adelaide where her husband resided and moved into his family home of Benacre.

They had two sons and a daughter, the eldest child later becoming Premier of N.S.W. Major Lancelot Lewis was a very brave and adventurous man who was a friend to everyone and his death in June 13, 1938 at the age of 53 years, was sadly mourned by all. The family stayed at Benacre after Major Lewis' death, but during the war many of the out buildings were turned into self contained flats. In 1950 Mrs. Lewis sold the deer park to reduce the size of the property.

Mrs. Lewis was always an untiring worker for charity and the community, but she found time for her other interest, art. She studied art technique in Europe and in 1963 had two art exhibitions.

During her very busy life, Mrs. Gretta Lewis was the founder of Adelaide's Annual National Flower Day, first held in 1938 after she suggested it to the government. She was also a member of the centenary celebrations committee in 1936, in charge of building decorations.

She was awarded the O.B.E. in 1942 in recognition of her services in community work. She organized the Girl Guides' Thrift Campaign, which raised \$250,000 for patriotic funds. She also held the position of Chairman in the Women's Defence Services and the Women's National Voluntary Services.

As the vice-president of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, she visited Boston and London as a delegate to conferences.

She was also actively associated with the District and Bush Nursing Society. On the occasion of Gretta Lewis' death in 1968, she was sadly mourned and she is best summed up in these words-

"She was a vital person, a gracious hostess, a wonderful organizer and a friend of the needy" page 13, News-Review May 29, 1968.

Correspondence to Mrs. Lewis from various agencies 1913-1968 (and undated). 12 cm. (6 envelopes). See also Series 23	<u>1</u>
Letters introducing Mrs. Lewis as a representative to various people/organizations overseas. 1947-1962. 0.5 cm.	<u>2</u>
Royal correspondence to Mrs. Lewis, including notification of O.B.E. 1935-1942. 0.5 cm.	<u>3</u>
Cards, including invitation, Christmas and Post-cards. 1920-1964 (and undated). 1.5 cm.	<u>4</u>
Papers from the National Trust, including greeting cards, copies of works of art and poetry, correspondence and a medal awarded to Mrs. Lewis. 1963. 0.5 cm.	<u>5</u>
Papers re Tuberculosis in Australia and Mrs. Lewis' participation in relief works, including newspaper articles, interviews, correspondence and conference papers. 1943-1964. 0.5 cm. See also Series 25	<u>6</u>
Papers re Mrs. Lewis' invention of Bicycle Reflectors, including the patent, newspaper cutting and correspondence. 1955-1958. 1 cm.	<u>7</u>
Papers re painting Exhibitions by Mrs. Gretta Lewis, including cards and catalogue with prices. 1963. 0.5cm.	<u>8</u>
Papers re Schools including report cards of Mrs. Lewis (nee Laidlaw) 1905-1907, a school magazine, certificate and a pamphlet of theatrical production. 1905-1910. 0.5 cm.	<u>9</u>
Catalogue of trees at Benacre 1905. 0.25 cm	<u>10</u>
Correspondence, diary and booklet re tour of lectures on horticulture overseas. 1965-1966. 1cm. See also Series 26	<u>11</u>
Photographs of Mrs. Lewis, and friends, both identified and unidentified, including one of Mrs. Lewis (nee Laidlaw) as a child with her grandmother. Sizes (12.5 x 9cm. - 20.5 x 25.5cm.) n.d. and 1966. 1 cm. See also Series 32	<u>12</u>

Newspaper cuttings relating to Mrs. Lewis, including some of her wedding to Major Lancelot Ashley Lewis. 1921-1966.	<u>13</u>
Diaries of Mrs. G. Lewis 1954-1964. 5 vols. 7 cm. See also Series 28	<u>14</u>
Note Books of Mrs. G. Lewis. 1940-1959 (and not dated) 14 volumes. 10 cm. See also Series 28	<u>15</u>
Papers re Flower Day, including correspondence to Mrs G. Lewis, speech and broadcast by Mrs Lewis, booklet and 4 vols. of newspaper cuttings. 1938-1948. 12 cm.	<u>16</u>
Minutes of the Women's Defence Services. 1939-1940. 2 volumes. 3 cm.	<u>17</u>
Newspaper cuttings re the S.A. Centenary Celebrations in 1936. 1936. 1 volume. 1.5 cm.	<u>18</u>
Miscellaneous items including, British Passport, booklet of Turkish Proverbs, list of names and addresses, catalogue, programme of the Royal Visit, Mission to Seamen annual report and Financial Statement, monthly notes of St. Andrews' Church, Woodville Floricultural Society leaflet, music sheet, Australian Drama Group leaflets, leaflet re Ball on centenary day, note book, articles. 1920-1959. 1.5 cm.	<u>19</u>
Diary and newspaper cutting re Mr Lancelot Lewis when he rode overland 1,200 miles at the age of 12 years. 1898. 0.5cm.	<u>20</u>
Letters of condolence received on the death of her husband, Lance Lewis. 1938. 1 cm.	<u>21</u>
Catalogue for an exhibition of Gretta Lewis' paintings at the City of Hamilton Art Gallery August, 1963.	<u>22</u>
General correspondence to Mrs. Lewis 1936-1968. 0.5 cm See also Series 1	<u>23</u>
Papers relating to the Girl Guides Association 1934-1945. 1 cm Pages from 'The Adelaide Chronicle' April 19, 1934 regarding the	<u>24</u>

- Festival of Flowers farewell held for Lady Hore-Ruthven, wife of the Governor of SA, by the Girl Guides; a description of the pageant of Flowers; brochure for the Girl Guides Thrift Campaign 1940; songs written for the end of the Thrift Campaign; and correspondence regarding the Girl Guides.
- Papers relating to The National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in Australia 25
1942-1967. 1.5 cm
The Asian-Pacific Tuberculosis Conference programme (1955); official dinner menu for the annual conference (1958); correspondence concerning Tuberculosis in Australia (1942-1967), and associated papers concerning Tuberculosis including a speech given by Greta Lewis and documents on Bedford Industries. See also Series 6
- Papers relating to horticultural work 26
1936, 1965-1966. 1 cm
Correspondence regarding Greta Lewis' overseas trips to the US and Great Britain to give lectures on the flowers and gardens of Australia; newspaper cuttings; document on types of flower arrangements for competition; annotated 'Floral Pageant: South Australia's Centenary 1936'; two black and white photographs of floral arrangements (16 cm x 21 cm). See also Series 11 and 16
- Financial correspondence 27
1938-1967. 1.5 cm
Correspondence received by Mrs. Lewis regarding financial matters, primarily from Bagot's Executor and Trustee Company Ltd, regarding the estate of L.A. Lewis and her home at Benacre.
- Diaries and notebooks of Greta Lewis 28
1940, 1954, 1962 (and undated). 7 volumes. 6.5 cm
Two diaries (1954, 1962), two notebooks (1940, undated), address book, small black notebook with handwritten recipes, and lists of letters sent. See also Series 14 and 15
- Miscellaneous documents 29
1934-1968. 1 cm
Items include: circular for the S.A. Council Women's Voluntary National Register, Women's Defence Services (1939); postcard sent from Greta Lewis to her son Sandy (Alexander Ashley Lewis) (1934); programme for 'The Pied Piper' performed by the Australian Drama Group at the Adelphi Theatre London, in the presence of H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester, and three black and white photographs (16.5 cm x 21.5 cm) of the performance and H.R.H. backstage with cast members, 28 November 1953; Chairman's report 1968 for the Charles Sturt Memorial Museum

-
- Trust Inc.; and miscellaneous newspaper cuttings.
- Gretta Lewis obituaries and condolence letters 30
1968. 0.5 cm
Newspaper cuttings of tributes and obituaries for Mrs. Gretta Lewis and condolence letters written to her children.
- Illuminated poem and photograph of Lady Gowrie 31
1944. 1.5 cm
A bound, illuminated poem written by Stanley Addison with a black and white photograph of Lady Gowrie, (Lady Zara Hore-Ruthven, Countess of Gowrie, wife of Alexander Hore-Ruthven, Governor of SA and Governor General of Australia) given as a token of regard from the VADs of Australia to their Commandant-in-Chief, 25 May 1944.
- Photographs of Gretta Lewis and others 32
ca1920-1968. 1 cm
Black and white photographs of Gretta Lewis and friends and family, most unidentified and not dated. Includes black and white and hand-tinted photographs of Gretta with her horse (ca1920), and of Gretta at social and charity events. Also includes a photograph of A.A. Cardlaw at the Adelaide Royal Show, September 10, 1958, and a strip of four photographs of Gretta's children Ann, Sandy and Tom ca1955. (Sizes 11.7 cm x 3 cm to 22.8 cm x 16.5 cm).
See also Series 12
- 8mm film strip of Gretta Lewis 33
ca1960. 0.5 cm
Short strip of colour 8mm film of Gretta Lewis (approximately 52 frames).