
Thelma Lorraine Medland

I was born in Victoria 1925 and moved to Perth in 1948.

I joined the W.R.A.N.S when I was 18 years old. I was then Thelma Lorraine Williams, Service Number W.R.2008. I joined because I had no brothers to join and my father had been in World War 1.

I was at first at H.M.A.S. "Lonsdale", I worked in the pay office, then Sick Bay, I had no idea how to spell the medical terms. From there I went to the Directorate of War Graves, I was the only Navy there; a Colonel and Squadron Leader were in charge.

I saw the Navy once a fortnight for my pay and rations. It was very depressing working there, as you would read some terrible things that happened to our people.

I was there when the 300 Japanese took their lives on the rail line at Cowra. I had all the names to type and we had all the ashes there. We made the best of it and had a bar made out of a coffin.

From there I went to H.M.A.S. "Cerebes". I worked in the transport office. You could have a Sailor visit you at the Recreation Centre, he had to put his name down and so forth. After the dance I was walking back with him, I was stopped, not allowed to do that, go jankers, had to cut the lawn in front of our hut with a pair of scissors. How different it is today as allowed to be married and have children.

It was so cold at Cerebes we used to fill lemonade bottles with hot water for our beds. Had to be in the end of the day for hut inspection, sometimes we would get in our night attire early and hide, sometimes in the lockers. One night the Officer opened the Lockers and found us all, we didn't get into trouble, she laughed.

My late husband was in the Air Force and we met at Myers Dug out. I wouldn't be living in Perth if it hadn't of been for the war as we would never have met.

I met some wonderful people and have lovely memories. I still belong to the W.R.A.N.S and the R.S.L.