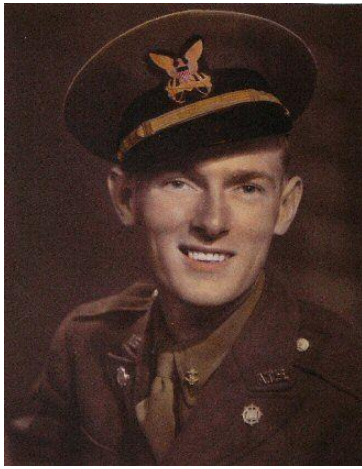


Desmond McKellar



Desmond (Des) McKellar was born at Grenfell on 3 June 1925; he was the first child of Albert and May McKellar of Avondale, Grenfell. He commenced his schooling at Bumbaldry School and later attended Grenfell Intermediate High School.

Shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939, Des attempted to enlist in the A.I.F. but was rejected because of his age. Early in 1943 he went to Sydney where he joined the U.S. Army Small Ships Service (a section of the Australian Merchant Navy), which was formed to provide escort duty and ensure communications and supplies between the mainland and fighting forces on the Pacific war zone. He trained at the Apprentice Seamen School of the U.S. Army Small Ships Branch at 10 Walsh Bay, Sydney. Following graduation he was assigned to several ships and served at Milne Bay, Buna, Port Moresby and Dutch New Guinea, and later during the invasion of the Philippines.

As a tribute to the men who served in the U.S. Army Small Ships, a U.S. Army Small Ships Apprentice Memorial was unveiled at the Public Jetty, Walsh Bay, on 8 March 2008.

After his discharge from the service at the end of the war, Des returned to the family property. In 1950 he married Ella Loader and they have three children, John, Helen and Donna, 15 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Des and Ella still reside at Avondale.

ANZAC Day 2009