

Timed Summary

Interview with Pam Savage
about her father Douglas Darian Smith

OH 687

Interviewer: June Edwards

Date: 17th February 2004

Note: Key words shown in bold.

START TIME	SUMMARY
Side A	
00.00	Introduction
00.13	Pam explains that her father, Douglas Darian Smith, was born in Adelaide in 1900. His parents came from Northern Ireland and his father died when he was five. When his mother returned to the UK, he and his brother were left in care for two years.
1.13	The brothers were sent to the Goodwood Orphanage . Darian was very fond of the Mother Superior, Mother Colomba . He left at age 13 and tried to join army but was refused and finally enlisted in 1916. He was in Army Medical section attached to hospitals. After the war he stayed in England and studied at Polytechnic School of Art in London.
4.14	Pam explains that when her father returned to Australia, he got a job with G&R Wills . He enjoyed photography and made extra money from developing and printing. He married in 1927 and set up his own business.
6.05	He worked as a freelance photographer from home and did commercial work. He did a lot of aerial work from Parafield Airport.
7.36	Pam explains that she was born during the Depression in 1931. In 1938 they bought a block of land at North Adelaide and built a two-storey Georgian house. He wanted to go to war but was turned down.
9.05	She recalls that her father took on a variety of photography work. He did a lot of propaganda work for the war photographing Army girls and the Land Army girls. Weddings were an important part of his business. He also did commercial work for companies like Holden's and for the wineries in the Barossa.
13.47	He did aerial photography under commission and won a prize in Paris for his work. He also took photos of shop windows for department stores.
18.03	He took photos at the Adelaide Show every year, especially of the displays in primary produce and the Grand Parade.
19.02	Darian Smith took photos at the end of the Gas Company cooking classes and these were published in Women's Weekly and Homes and Gardens . He also photographed houses and gardens for <i>Homes and Garden</i> . He had great attention to detail and a very artistic eye.
20.54	Pam explains he was a wonderful father, understanding and caring. He was very kind and helped a lot of people. He had fond memories of the Goodwood Orphanage and took his family to Christmas parties there every year, taking presents for the orphans.

START TIME	SUMMARY
24.15	Darian never met with his mother again and she died in Paris after an unhappy life. He never got on well with his brother as they had very different personalities.
26.42	Pam describes her father's positive outlook on life. He continued flying into his late seventies even when he was nearly blind. He worked until he was 80. He died at 84.
28.07	Darian took a lot of photos during the war, some of which have been donated to Mortlock Library . The collection is well annotated. He was very artistic and found that he was good at photography. He loved the art of Geoff Smart and Lionel Lindsay. He developed and printed photos on the boat to England. He had an interest in photography at that stage and just fell into it as a career.
31.38	He had a good eye for proportion. His "bread and butter" work was taking school photography and medical photography.
35.01	Pam explains that when (Douglas) Mawson came back from the South Pole with (Frank) Hurley he developed all the film. Mawson expected Darian to do this work for honour but he had expected to be paid for it.
36.41	The family always had a holiday for several weeks at Christmas, often going to Murray Bridge on a boat called <i>The Wanderer</i> , or to Kangaroo Island.
39.54	Pam says that her father did not win many prizes in Australia but he was very active in the Professional Photographers Association in Adelaide and he was given an AO for his work in the area of photography. He was one of the first commercial photographers in Adelaide.
42.14	He did some work for <i>The Advertiser</i> including the Great Eastern Steeplechase at Oakbank. He took photos of the big fire at Charles Moore and a fire on a P&O cruise ship at Outer Harbour.
44.31	Early in his career he took some films and was especially interested in medical photography and was a pioneer in that field, focusing on eye surgery at the Calvary Hospital .
45.39	As a result of diabetes he went blind in his mid 70s. He loved to go shopping and went to the Market every Saturday, and he particularly like good cheeses.
49.11	Pam recalls that her father was interested in theatre, particularly ballet, and did a lot of work with Joanne Priest in her early days at the Tivoli . He did film work for Colonel de Basil in 1939. The films have been donated to the Australian Ballet Archives .
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