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The Redistribution Committee  
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NAME OF NEW ELECTORAL DIVISION IN W.A.

With the pending creation of a new electorate in Western Australia, I wish to submit for consideration a name for the new electoral Division.

With the current 14 Divisions in W.A., the names are derived from localities and prominent former members of parliament or outstanding citizens who contributed to the State of W.A. in various fields.

The locality names are the Divisions of Perth, Swan and Kalgoorlie. The remaining 11 Divisions are named after former citizens. This includes Fremantle which was named after the City of Fremantle which in turn was named after Captain Fremantle who established the port in 1831.

Of the 11 Divisions named after citizens, only two are named after prominent women who served the State with distinction.

The two Divisions are :

Tangney – named after Dame Dorothy Tangney – first woman Senator in Australia

Cowan – named after Edith Dirksley Cowan – first female member of an Australian Parliament.

The remaining nine Divisions are named after prominent men who served the State in a variety of capacities through political, public service and other areas.

It is suggested that with the creation of a new Division in this State, perhaps the name of another outstanding woman might be considered.

In this area there are many, many women who have given of their time and devoted their whole life to assist in the establishment of all types of projects to improve the living standards and the welfare of citizens and to enhance the prosperity of the State.

With the Federal Government presently considering the matter of Aboriginal Reconciliation to coincide with the Centenary of Federation in the year 2001, it may also be appropriate to include this factor into the naming of the new Federal Electorate to be established in W.A.

With the two factors of : (a) a woman who gave devoted service to the State

And : (b) recognition of Aboriginal culture in W.A. history

it is respectfully requested that consideration be given that the new electorate be dedicated to the memory of **Daisy May BATES (1859-1951)** Anthropologist and Welfare Worker with the Aborigines throughout W.A.

and that the electorate be named after the title bestowed upon her by the Aborigines of central west tribes in W.A -

### “KABBARLI”

There are some varied translations of this name which is pronounced “Kahber-lee” not Ker-berley and the most common one is that is “Grandmother”. The name **Kabbarli** implies wisdom and kindness, family love, understanding, authority in the tribe. Aboriginal relationships are clearly defined and vital, Fathers, Mothers, Uncles, Brothers-by-skin and Grandmother. Mrs Bates was known as **Kabbarli** through many tribes and languages in her pilgrimage from Broome and Port Hedland to Sandstone, Geraldton, Merredin, Kojonup, Yallingup caves through the Bibbulmun tribes throughout the south west of W.A.

Daisy May BATES, was born Daisy May O’Dwyer at Ballychine, Tipperary, Ireland. Her birthdate given on her marriage certificate was 16th October 1863. Her mother died when she was six years old and she was adopted by Sir Francis Outram when her father could not continue care for his children. She was made part of a family with considerable means and was well educated and travelled extensively throughout Europe. She was a very good student and was blessed with the ability to master other languages very quickly. This linguistic skill was to prove of inestimable value later in life. In her adolescent years she became an acknowledged beauty of London Society and all considered a brilliant social career lay ahead of her, however, this was not to be.

In 1884, at the age of 23 Daisy O’Dwyer contracted a lung complaint and was diagnosed as consumption (TB) and was advised to live in a warmer climate. Being from a well to do family contacts were made with the gentry in Australia and she chose to move to Queensland, Australia.

She soon moved to NSW and took up a position as Governess with the Bates family. She then met the elder son Jack Bates, an expert horseman and drover and a member of the famous "Geebung Polo Team" immortalised by Banjo Paterson. After a very short courtship they were married on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1885. The next day Jack Bates left on a droving trip which took six months. Upon his return she became pregnant and moved to Bathurst. A son was born in 1886. The marriage was not a success and they separated although they did keep in touch.

Daisy Bates was first introduced to the suffering and genocide of the Aboriginal population in 1893 when she was a guest of the Bishop of Hobart in what was described as "an island of whites that had been an island of blacks". The Bishop was a compassionate man with an interest in anthropology. At Dalenness, Daisy Bates saw a portrait of Truganini, the last survivor in Tasmania of the First Tasmanians who died in Hobart in 1876 at the age of 73. The Bishop told her the tale of the extermination of the population of 1200 which began in 1804 and by 1847, only 44 remained. These were taken to Oyster Cove, near Hobart where they fell ill of white man's diseases and died.

In 1894, Australia was in deep depression and Daisy Bates put her son in his Grandmothers' care and departed back to England and demanded of her husband that when he had a home to offer her, she would return.

The time in England was to be 6 months, however, due to lack of finance, Daisy Bates was compelled to seek employment and commenced a career of journalism. After 5 years the Australian economy had recovered and a letter from husband Jack Bates advised that he was purchasing a cattle property in the north west of Western Australia. At this time, stories were appearing in the London Times of massacres, murders, brutalities and slavery with whips and chains of the natives in the north west of Australia. Daisy Bates called upon the editor of The Times and informed him she was now leaving for that distant scene. She offered to investigate impartially and truthfully and to report such outrages in detail and to study the condition of the natives with sincere regard for their wellbeing as subjects of the Queen.

She returned to Fremantle on the Stuttgart in September 1899 and was introduced to the wives of the northern pioneers and southern leaders of Government and was offered immediate membership to the most exclusive of women's clubs the Karrakatta Club. Through contacts made in this organisation, she was introduced to Sir John Forrest, the Premier of W.A. who had an intense interest in the welfare and the decline in the Aboriginal population. As a boy he had played with children from the Bibbulmun tribe and had been accepted as a member of the tribe. He was at that time planning his new Aboriginal Protection Act which came into being 5 years later. He encouraged her to take up his vision of recording their language and customs before it was too late and gave her some initial instruction in such matters as social and marriage laws.

A feature, which was prominent throughout the life and travels of Daisy Bates was her mode of dress. It was of Victorian style with long skirts, high collars, veiled hats and her most predominant feature, white gloves. Her prized possession was her umbrella, which she dropped when being presented to the Duke of York. The Duke picked it up and handed it to her. That umbrella remained with her for the rest of her life.

Daisy Bates left Perth for the coastal settlement of Cossack on board the s.s. Sultan on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1900 and met her husband and travelled overland to Roebourne which was a very desolate place. She immediately commenced to observe the customs and traditions of the Aborigines in the area and make notes on their way of life, their diet and their treatment of their illnesses. She did not attempt to change their way of life nor did she ever attempt to bring white religious beliefs into their world. She always encouraged them to continue their lives in the same manner as they had for thousands of years. After establishing their cattle station "Glen Carrick", she left husband Jack to go south to Perth where she met with Bishop Gibney, defender of Aborigines and presented to him her newly acquired facts on Aboriginal culture.

She returned to the northwest to Broome and then on to the Trappist Monk Mission at Beagle Bay. Here she continued to gain knowledge of the customs and rituals of the local natives and recorded everything. She had established herself as a successful journalist and her long articles were published in the Journal of the Department of Agriculture.

From this point Daisy Bates then roamed the outback of Western Australia seeking out different tribes and made a serious study of their different lifestyles and customs. She was never afraid of approaching any tribe whilst at this time many natives were being shot and hunted and arrested for taking cattle roaming on their land. In parliamentary circles she was acknowledged as an authority of Aboriginal matters. During these times she ventured through Roebuck Plains, Peak Hill, Meekatharra, La Grange, and Nullagine. She returned to Perth and between writing articles for the Western Mail she spent time at the Maamba Aboriginal reserve in Cannington where she would pitch her tent and record the dialects of the last of the different groups who settle there. Her linguist ability came to be of great value and she would eventually be credited with being able to converse and record in 188 Aboriginal dialects.

She then went to Katanning and it was here that an outbreak of measles occurred affecting the whole tribe. She dealt with it without assistance and with only rudimentary medical supplies she was able to save the group. An article she wrote relating to this was published in the West Australian in 1907. Daisy Bates was now a full time employee of the State Government on Aboriginal matters. She was given a free pass to travel the length of the train routes throughout the State and during most of 1908 she journeyed to where ever she could seek out the natives. This included Coolgardie and Norseman. In seven months she covered 5,400 miles visited seventy towns and obtained 34 new dialects.

The name "**Kabbarli**" was bestowed upon Daisy Bates by the diseased and dying Aborigines who were transported to the two barren islands north of Dirk Hartog island off the coast from Carnarvon. The islands were Bernier Island where the men were sent and Dorre Island where the women were sent. They were camps for the crippled and blind, the leprous and the syphilitic insane. It was a place where husbands and wives were separated for the first time and the supposed hospital treatment was a daily torture of needles, dressings, doses, forcible feeding and all were chained to keep them from running away. There were far more graves than people and death was a release. In her book "The Passing of the Aborigines" Daisy Bates wrote "The horrors of Dorre and Bernier unnerve me yet..." There was no ray of brightness, no gleam of hope.

As Government Representative she had the duty to write objective reports on the activities on these islands for the benefit of the Chief Protector. She was granted permission to relay message sticks to the families and tribes of the occupants and gave every comfort she could to the dying. Very few ever returned to the mainland. She returned to Perth in 1911.

In 1912, she was invited by Robert Fairbairn, magistrate of the Aboriginal prison on Rottnest Island for an extended visit to continue her research among the groups on the island. At this time, Rottnest Island gained the reputation as one of the darkest episodes in W.A. history. It was set up as a native prison where up to eight hundred prisoners could be held at any one time. Tiny cells with five to six in each cell and forced to work around the island in chains. Not half of them lived to return to their country and hundreds died and are buried on the island. Daisy Bates was a Prisoner's Aid Society of one. She was their friend and, the only visitor in months, speaking their language, bringing news of their countries and small comforts in tobacco and sweets.

She spent hours in cells to bring cheer to dying men. **Kabbarli** was a source of comfort to all aboriginal prisoners.

In 1913, Daisy Bates as Honorary Protector of Aboriginies, drove two camels and her buggy to Eucla on the WA, SA border and commenced her studies and recording of the languages and customs of the natives who roamed the Nullabor plain. She would continue her anthropological studies and welfare work among the tribes in S.A. for many years. In 1915 she moved to be among her aboriginal friends at Yalata and was on a very small Government subsidy and looked after blind and diseased tribal people. In 1919 Daisy Bates moved to a place north of Port Augusta called Ooldea.

In the 1934 New Years Honours List, Daisy Bates was awarded the Order of Commander of the British Empire (C.B.E). At the time, she was congratulated on being "the only woman in the world who can claim distinction of the C.B.E and blood brotherhood of an Aboriginal tribe". It was noted that she valued the C.B.E. as highly as her title of **Kabbarli** to the end of her long life.

Daisy Bates remained in SA stayed with the declining Aboriginal tribes in other areas and eventually came to rest in a private hospital in the suburb of Prospect. She was, by most historical reports, aged 92. She died alone on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1951 at the nursing home. She was buried in Adelaide's North Road Cemetery in a virtual State funeral which was attended by leading Parliamentarians, university professors, officers of geographical, historical, ethnological societies, education authorities, missionary people and a small crowd of Aboriginal Australians.

Daisy Bates was truly a remarkable woman who loved the Aboriginal population and their customs and spent most of her life recording her findings. She has 94 folios of her work with Aborigines on the shelves of the National Library in Canberra.

The State of W.A. recognised Daisy Bates by naming a State Ship "**Kabbarli**" which was the first ocean-going vessel built in Australia which operated out of Fremantle and serviced the north west regions.

She is also remembered by having the highest peak in the Porongorups near Albany named Daisy Summit.

Her place in Australian folk-lore has been formalised by the opera, "**The Young Kabbarli**", written by Lady Casey to music by Margaret Sutherland.

There are 37 publications in the Battye Library of W.A. on the life and work of Daisy Bates.

In conclusion, it would appear fitting that with the new electorate to be created at the time when the Aboriginal reconciliation debates are now being conducted prior to the centenary of Australian Federation, that the outstanding lifetime devotion of Daisy May Bates to the Aboriginal population be recognised and name the new Division :

**"KABBARLI"**

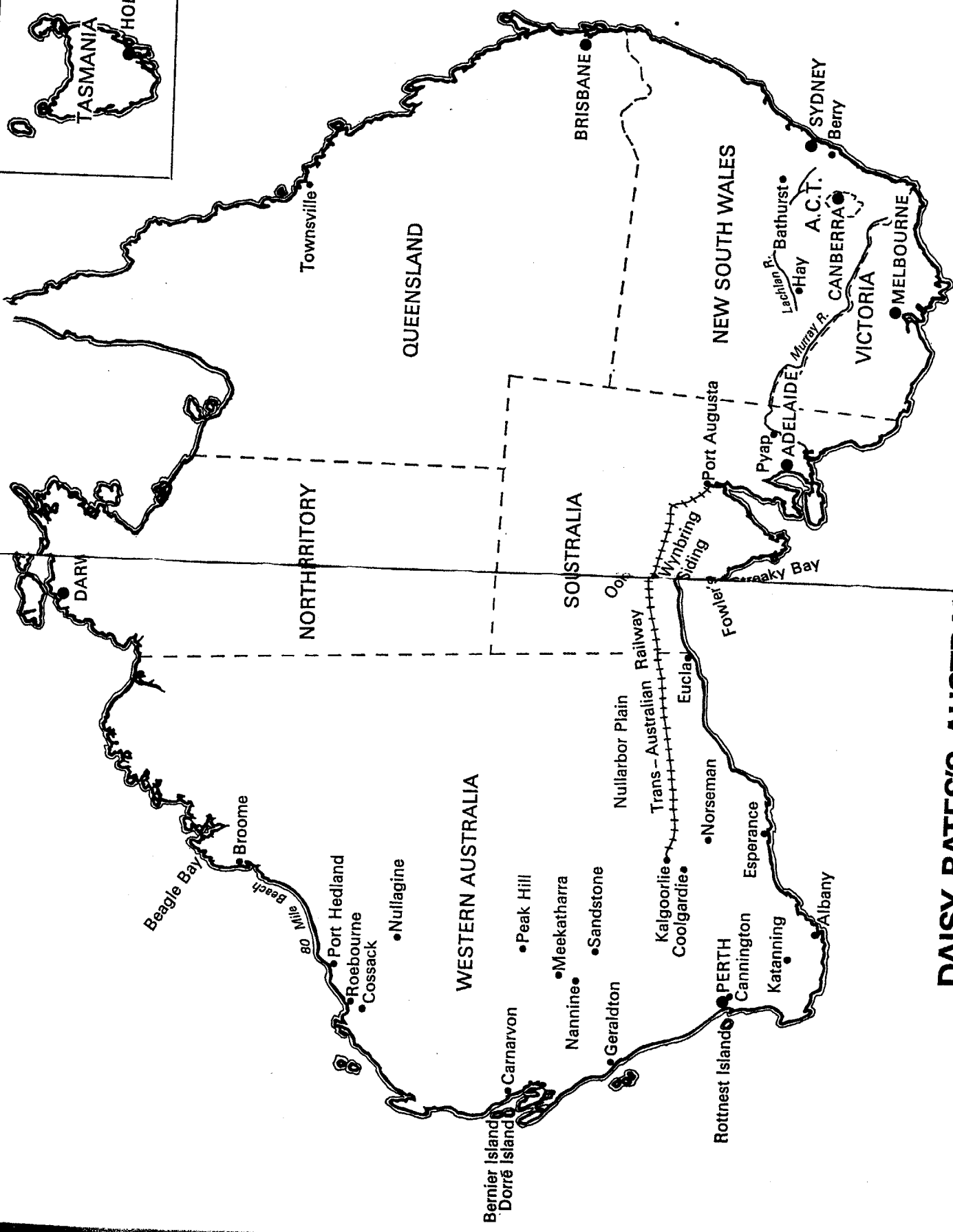
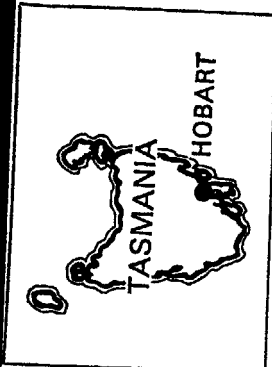
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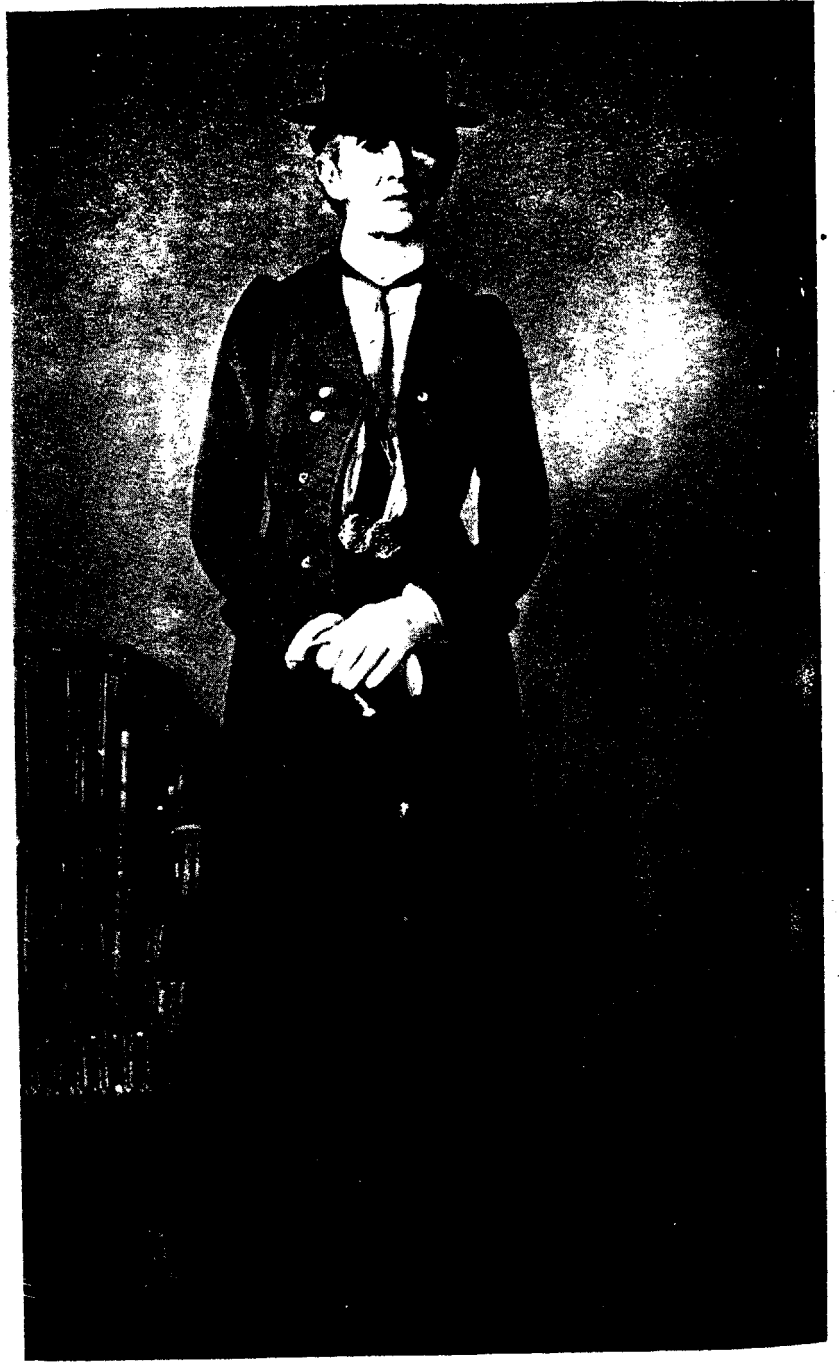
(K.T.Hebbard)  
Divisional Returning Officer.  
Division of Perth.

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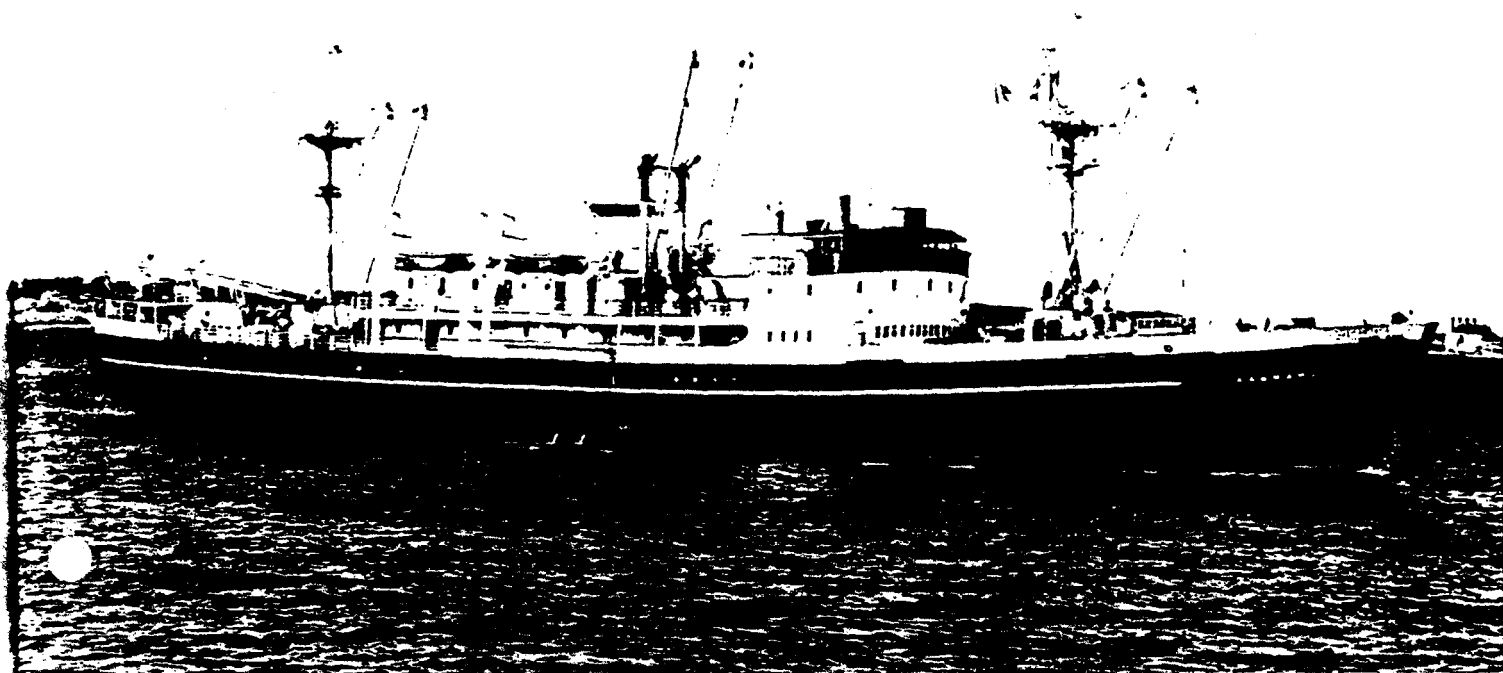
- . Map of Daisy Bates's Australia
- . Photo of Daisy Bates
- . MV **Kabbarli** - profile



DAISY BATES'S AUSTRALIA



Daisy Bates



*MV KABBARLI* (native word for grandmother of the dreamtime as the natives regarded the legendary Mrs. Daisy Bates) 1951-1971. 2,983 tons; cargo/passenger vessel, with accommodation for 37 passengers.

Bought in 1950 while still under construction, *Kabbarli* was the first ocean-going motor vessel built in Australia, constructed by the N.S.W. State Dockyard in Newcastle.

She was sold to Asiatic Intermodel Seabridge S.A., of Panama, in October, 1971, and in June, 1972, was beached near the mouth of the Mekong Delta, south of Saigon in Vietnam, after a mine had been detonated beneath her hull.

Late in 1974, then Philippine-owned, *Kabbarli* burnt and sank at the dockside of the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, after having been struck by insurgent rocket fire.

*MV Kabbarli was the first ocean-going motor vessel constructed by the NSW State Dockyards at Newcastle. Three years after leaving Stateships she became a casualty of the Vietnam War in 1974.*