

Val Russell Archive

Valerie Alice Mabel Russell (nee Williams) was born in Ayr in 1925. She moved to Atherton on the Atherton Tableland, North Queensland with her husband Eric in 1946 where she lived until her death on 9 September, 2009. She was a well-known local artist who sketched and painted throughout North Queensland. Her voluminous body of work included 39 sketchbooks with 639 sketches for 743 paintings. During 1975 to 1980 she produced a large number of landscapes - 37 in 1975 alone - predominantly in oils which was her favoured painting medium. Val's careful recordkeeping and the annotations she recorded in her sketchbooks make this archive an important history of the Atherton Tableland and surrounds.

Val Russell's daughter, Ellen Danaher, wrote a biography of her mother's life, "Sketchbooks: an artist's life on the Tableland", published in 2013.

Archive Location: 420

Detailed Listing

VR/1. "Meanderings in Rhyme and Rhythm" by Val Russell, 1998. With margin notes by the author.

VR/2. "Autumnal" by Val Russell, with margin notes by the author.

VR/3. "Me Talking/Random Jottings" by Val Russell. Repurposed 1998 diary with contents/index page. Contains some loose material and pasted newspaper clippings.

VR/4. "Everything Came Up Roses: Autobiography of a Childhood 1925 to 1941." Autobiography by Val Russell. 51 pages. A4 Spirex bound. Contains illustrations and photos.

VR/5. "Trekking Back: Memories of a Courtship and Marriage During the Latter Years of World War 2, 1943 to 1945" by Val Russell. 41 pages.

VR/6. Letters to Thelma. A4 Spirex Bound. Letters sent at Christmas from Val to Thelma since 1945. Returned to Val. In Pink A4 Spirex bound folder.

VR/7. Account Book. Record of Artwork from June 1985.

VR/8. Account Book. Record of Artwork from 1966 to 1985.

VR/9. Diploma Commercial Art awarded to Val Russell, 15 September 1967. Art Training Institute Pty Ltd, Melbourne, Australia.

VR/10/1-5 Commercial Art Sketchbooks.

VR/10/1. Commercial Art Sketchbook, A3. Lesson 1-19.

VR/10/2. Commercial Art Sketchbook, A3. Lesson 20-28.

VR/10/3. Commercial Art Sketchbook, A3. Lesson 29-31.

VR/10/4. Commercial Art Sketchbook, A3. Lesson 31 cont'd -39 plus 9, 10, 12 and 44.

VR/10/5. Commercial Art Sketchbook, A3. Lesson 42 – prep course.

VR/11. “Cottages: A History of Cottage Life in Toowoomba, 1860 to 1910” by Beris Broderick and Val Russell, 1997. 60 pages.

VR/12. “Sketchbooks: An Artist’s Life on the Tableland” by Ellen Danaher (daughter), 2012. 189 pages.

VR/SKB/1-39. Sketchbooks of Val Russell.

For detailed records of Sketchbooks’ contents, see attached spreadsheets which list sketches, dates, locations, derived paintings and sales.