

VALE MARGARET FULTON

TRUSTWORTHY ADVOCATE WHO CHANGED AUSTRALIAN COOKERY FOREVER

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When much-loved Australian cookbook and recipe writer and magazine editor Margaret Fulton died in November 2019 at the age of 94, her life and work was widely celebrated in the national media.¹ Most of these tributes noted her influence on cookery and eating habits in Australia and further afield, always mentioning her landmark bestselling cookbook, *The Margaret Fulton Cookbook*², published by visionary publisher Paul Hamlyn in 1968. This discussion focuses on one aspect of Fulton's entire career: her use, and promotion, of fresh vegetables and fruit and other garden-grown produce.

1 See, for examples, Donna Lee Brien, "Vale Margaret Fulton: A Role Model for Generations of Australian Food Writers," *The Conversation* (2019): Jul. 24, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/vale-margaret-fulton-a-role-model-for-generations-of-australian-food-writers-120897>; Lynne Cairncross, "Margaret Fulton was Australia's 'First Domestic Goddess,'" *The Sydney Morning Herald* (2019) Jul. 24, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/margaret-fulton-was-australia-s-first-domestic-goddess-20190724-p52adw.html>; Jennifer King, "Margaret Fulton, Who Inspired Australians to Undertake Culinary Adventures, is Dead At 94," *ABC News* (2019): Jul. 25, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-24/margaret-fulton-celebrated-australian-cook-dies-aged-94/9618732>; Sian Supski, "A Margaret Fulton Recipe Always Works," *Inside Story* (2019): Jul. 25, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://insidestory.org.au/a-margaret-fulton-recipe-always-works>; "Cookbook Legend Margaret Fulton Dead," *Financial Review* (2019): Jul. 24, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://www.afr.com/life-and-luxury/food-and-wine/cookbook-legend-margaret-fulton-dead-20190724-p52ad4>.

2 Margaret Fulton, *The Margaret Fulton Cookbook* (Sydney: Paul Hamlyn, 1968).

Margaret Fulton was born on 10 October 1924 in Nairn, near Inverness, Scotland, the youngest in a family of six children.³ Her father, Alexander Fulton, was a master tailor, and although financially successful in Scotland, the family immigrated to Australia from Glasgow when Margaret was aged three years old, settling in Glen Innes in New South Wales, some 600 kilometres north of Sydney.⁴ Glen Innes is in the Northern Tablelands region, an area which had boomed under the late 19th century tin mining and was already then well renowned for its fine wool and sheep meat production.⁵ Glen Innes also hosted a number of Scottish immigrants, a heritage which is commemorated—and reinforced—today in a number of street signs in Scottish Gaelic, a stone crofter's cottage (operating as a café)⁶, the so-called Australian Standing Stones (based on the Ring of Brodgar in Orkney)⁷ and a Celtic-themed festival that features "gourmet Celtic food."⁸ Fulton has described her parents as creative and loving storytelling, music, dancing and the theatre.⁹ Fulton has also recalled how she initially learned to cook at a young age from her mother, Isabella, who taught her to not overcook vegetables¹⁰ and keep a sharp eye out when purchasing fresh items in order to secure the best quality ingredients.¹¹

3 Margaret Fulton, *I Sang for My Supper: Memories of a Food Writer* (Sydney: Lansdowne Publishing, 1999), 6.

4 *Ibid.*, 6

5 Robert L. Reid (ed.), *The Manual of Australian Agriculture* (Sydney: Butterworths, 2013), 598; Robin Berwick Walker, *Old New England: A History of the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales, 1818-1900* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1966), 103.

6 NSW Government, "The Stone Cottage," *Destination NSW* (2020), accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/country-nsw/glen-innes-and-inverell-area/glen-innes/attractions/the-stone-cottage>.

7 Glen Innes Highlands, "The Australian Standing Stones," *Glen Innes Highlands* (2020), accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://gleninneshighlands.com/australian-standing-stones.html>; David Donnelly, "Glen Innes Heritage Recognised: The Recipe and the Ingredients," *Australian Folklore* vol. 26 (2011): 194-202.

8 Australian Celtic Festival, accessed Mar. 9, 2020, <https://www.australiancelticfestival.com>.

9 Fulton, *I Sang for my Supper*, 6.

10 *Ibid.*, 16

11 *Ibid.*, 22.