

Family History Alfred Leclair

Eugène Alfred Leclair (called Alfred; born at 6 am on June 19, 1892 in Ville d'Elbeuf, Rouen, France; died July 10, 1960 in Catania, Sicily, Italy).

His father: Desiré Georges Leclair (aged 27 in 1892) was called Georges.

His mother was Eloina Alépée (24 years old in 1892).

Alfred was married on August 11, 1923 to Denise Poupel (born in Paris, France, April 13, 1901; died in Catania 1977)

He had one daughter: Marie Georgette Arlette (called Arlette; born in Lima Pulu, Sumatra, Indonesia, November 30, 1924; died in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, October 29, 2013)

Adopted son: Emanuel (son of Arlette born in Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia, November 5, 1944; died in Aci Reale, Sicily, Italy, May 8, 1968 in a car accident)

At the age of 16 (in 1908) Alfred leaves home and becomes a sailor.

This, according to Denise, because his father beat him regularly.

At a certain point he settles in Sumatra in Indonesia.

In 1923 he goes back to France to meet Denise and her sister Agnes.

Alfred had put a personal ad in a French newspaper and Denise's mother replied positively: she did have two marriageable daughters.

Alfred Leclair (31 years) and Denise Poupel (22 years) married on 11 August 1923 in London (at "The Notre Dame de France", District St. Martin, County London).

Why did they marry in London?

Probably because Alfred did not want to enter military service in France. If I remember correctly, it was a three-year military service.

Fleeing conscription happened more often. If you were caught, you faced time in jail.

Jacques, the son of Roland and Evelyne Bourdieu, also fled to England at the time.

Roland Bourdieu was related to Denise. When we (Hugo, Arlette, Ruth and I) were once in Normandy between 1960 and 1965, Jacques came over to see us from England.

After returning to Sumatra (Alfred lived in Tanah Datar, Labuhan Ruku district) with Denise, Arlette was born in Limah Pulu on November 30, 1924.

Alfred first was a planter and later owner of a rubber factory.

Arlette gave birth to Emanuel (called Manu) in Medan, Sumatra on November 5, 1944. The father of Manu is until today unknown to me. In 1947 Arlette married my father Victor Hugo Steevensz (called Hugo).

After Alfred sold his possessions, they moved to Catania.

Alfred and his family had to leave Indonesia because at the time Sukarno, the president of Indonesia, had ordered all Europeans to leave the country.

He, Denise and their foster son Manu arrived there on April 3, 1956.

On July 27, 1957, he and his family were formally allowed to reside in Italy.

Why the move to Catania in Sicily?

Denise's sister, Agnes Poupel, was married to a violinist from Palermo, Amleto Capponi.

After their marriage they moved to Catania, where Amleto played in the orchestra of the concert hall of Catania.

Agnes and Amleto had a daughter and a son.

Daughter: Christiane, called Toutoune.

Son: Eddie.

Toutoune is married to Giuseppe Grimaldi (psychiatrist), known as Pino.

They were married on April 25, 1954.

Toutoune and Pino lived with their two sons in Enna, Sicily at the time.

In the time between Alfred's arrival in Catania and our arrival there (January 1960), Alfred bought three flats and unfortunately also lent money to a dishonest person who never returned the loan. It had been a recommendation by Amleto, I understand.

Alfred, Denise and Manu first lived in Catania at Via Ronchi 21 and on June 22, 1964 they moved to Via Palmanova 3.

Alfred had become an alcoholic. I never saw him in Catania other than ill. He was not a pleasant man. He died of cirrhosis of the liver on July 10, 1960. So I only knew him in Catania for 6 months.

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