

Waverley's Own Queen



Photograph: Susan and Leka. Photographer: Unknown

Susan Cullen Ward was born in Waverley on 28 January 1941 and went on to become Her Majesty Queen Susan I Zog of Albania.

Susan met Leka Zogu, the son of exiled King Zog of Albania, at a Sydney dinner party in 1975 and married him soon after. Members of other exiled royal families attended their wedding and Queen Elizabeth II sent a congratulatory telegram.

Susan and Leka both had claims of royal lineage; she was descended from King Edward 1 and he was a ninth cousin once removed from Queen Elizabeth II. They had one child, a son, Leka Anwar.

Leka was 6ft 9in tall and known as the 'gun-toting giant' reflecting allegations throughout his life that he was an arms dealer.

During her marriage Susan and Leka moved constantly, while he tried in vain to capture the crown once worn by his father, who fled when the Italian fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, occupied Albania during World War II.

When King Zog died in 1961, Albanian monarchist émigrés in Paris declared Leka their rightful king and Susan their Queen. However their dream that they would one day rule Albania was dashed in 1997, when a referendum on the future of the Albanian monarchy saw a defeat of the pro-monarchist position.

Queen Susan died in Albania in July 2004, aged 63.

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