

The Wilkins Chronicle

A selection of Wilkins-related Trobe articles, incorporating advertisements and cartoons from the day

Please note * indicates that the photo used is taken from the Sir George Hubert Wilkins Papers, SPEC.PA.56.0006, Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center Archival Program, Ohio State University

1922

21 February 1922

SUZANNE BENNETT

Obtains a Decree Nisi Against Her Husband

MELBOURNE, Monday.

Suzanne Bennett, a theatrical artist, was today granted a decree nisi against Oscar Bennett. The petitioner said that prior to her marriage she had been a typist and that she had known her husband only three weeks before the marriage. The respondent (she said) drank heavily and was guilty of cruelty, and had said that he loved another woman.

Sunraysia Daily (Mildura, Vic), Tuesday 21 February 1922, page 3.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/258532344>

21 February 1922

TYPISTE'S UNHAPPY MARRIAGE

MELBOURNE. Feb. 19.

Suzanne Bennett, a theatrical artist, aged 25, was granted a decree nisi from Oscar Bennett, a returned soldier, by the Chief Justice, Sir Wm. Irvine this morning. Prior to her marriage, Mrs. Bennett swore in her affidavit she was a typist. She knew her husband for only three weeks before they were married. During his absence at the war they wrote to each other in most affectionate terms. She bought furniture and furnished a room with the money from his separation allowance, but later be sold the furniture. She had to find work in an opera, as respondent could not get a position. He used to drink heavily, and was guilty of repeated acts of cruelty. He took up with a married woman named Elsie Patterson, who was separated from her husband, and of whom he said, "I am in love with her. She is the girl for me." When questioned as to whether he had ever stayed with her he answered "Many a time." There was no appearance for the respondent.

Geelong Advertiser (Vic.), Tuesday 21 February 1922, page 3.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/165982432>

1924

25 April 1924

WELL DONE, SUZANNE.

Once upon a time there was a little girl who attended the Melbourne Conservatorium, and in between the singing lessons she dreamed of the days when idle would see her name in big letters on a theatrical bill. The dream has come true, and Suzanne Bennett has become a star in the land where stars shoot up in a night.

Suzanne starred in "The Gingham Girl, in Chicago last season, and she is now cue of the beauties of "The New Revue," which is playing to capacity houses in New York. The Australian has been such a success that shortly she goes to Paris with Mistinguet.

The New York "Herald" has hailed Suzanne as an Australian beauty, and a recent visitor who saw her in America, says that she really is lovely. Her hair is mahogany brown, and in her oval face her green eyes shine eerily. Her milk-white complexion is the envy of all women who know her.

Prahran Telegraph (Vic), Friday 25 April 1924, page 6.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/165101385>

1925

13 January 1925

The Woman's World.

OH, SUZANNE! How Did it Happen? The Prince'

's Chosen Dancing Partner.

It takes a good deal to stir New York from its general level of dollar-chasing and gum-chewing, but an Australian girl — young and certainly beautiful — has had the whole city by the ears. If one can believe the magazines, America has a small monopoly of beauty, so it came somewhat as a surprise to find that the chosen of Edward P. — As Americans persist in railing the Prince of Wales — was an Australian. New Yorkers are still asking themselves how it happened that Suzanne Bennett received a mysterious telegram signed "Trotter," urging her to sail for England with the Prince's party on board the, *Olympic*. Broadway is still rubbing its eyes, and Suzanne's friends in the Vanities are still talking of that telegram. The manager admits nothing, except the arrival of the telegram, and Suzanne told only a few intimates about the contents. There has been disagreement about the message, but one of the Vanity girls declared that the telegram read like something in the nature of a Royal command about taking tie Olympic for London. And it is said that a nice little bit was tucked away at the end, saying that "E.P. will be delighted." The newspapers excelled themselves over the news. "How could he help it?" asked one sheet, printing a large photograph of the nineteen-year-old graduate from Rego's Opera Company, in Melbourne, to the Vanities in New York. Another paper features all the most exciting rumours, and says: — "Prince of Wales Falls Again" — and another Vanities Girl has left the show. The New York "Evening Bulletin" splashed its story with an eight-column streamer, "Chorine Invited to Join Wales," in letters 1¼ in. deep. And then there is the story of how Suzanne was the only theatrical girl in New York to be picked from a boat of beautiful girls as a dancing partner for the Prince in six dances. It was at a dinner given in honour of Edward P., at the Lido Venice, and the memorable dance reads like

the story of a fairy-tale prince and his pretty partner. The story is not yet complete, for news of the voyage of the Olympic, and the arrival in London w not yet to hand. But Suzanne is a discreet young person, and her wide dark eyes give away so secrets, so perhaps the real story will be locked tight in the treasure house of memory. The Prince seems to have a predilection for Australian girls, for a Sydney girl has sent a letter home telling how she played the favourite fox trots for Royalty. At a private dinner and dance given at the Royal Kara! College at Dartmouth, the Corelli Dance Quartet was engaged to play the music, and Mrs. Corelli has written and told her mother all about it. "After we had seen over the college," she wrote, "we were taken to the drawing-room in which we were to play, and word was sent at intervals to tell us how far off the Prince was. "As we were told he was coming I looked up, to see him standing with Captain Meade's wife ready to begin the dance. I got such a thrill, he was so close. It was not like a public dance, and he nodded to us as he passed. He is such a darling. The dance was a great affair. Lord and Lady Churston, Admiral Sir Joint Roebeck. Admiral Sir Lionel Halsey, and all the best of the Prince's crowd were there. "I sang, and was complimented on my singing." After supper the Prince came over to us and asked if we minded him playing on the drum. Therefore the dear little Prince sat down amongst us all and played three or four fox trots. I was so close to the Prince I was almost touching him; it was like a dream. "After the ball was over Lady Churston thanked us, and Mrs. Meade said the Prince had specially commented on the music. The dear said it was beautiful." So all the honours are not with the girls who danced with the Prince during his Australian visit.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA), Tuesday 13 January 1925, page 7.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/73430434>

1928

9 August 1928

Attaboy George!



Sir George Wilkins receives a genuine Ausrtalian kiss from Miss Suzanne Bennett (an Australian), upon his arrival in New York.

Newcastle Sun (NSW), Thursday 9 August 1928, page 4.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/163971145>

The Wilkins Chronicle

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23 August 1928

RICH, AUBURN HAIR

Girl Who May Marry Sir George Wilkins

MELBOURNE, Wednesday. — The former Australian actress, Miss Suzanne Bennett, now in America, where persistent rumour has it that she is engaged to Sir George Wilkins, the Australian explorer, is a Melbourne girl. Billie Lockwood, the well-known actress, says that Miss Bennett played in the Tivoli reviews as a member of the chorus until 1921. She then left for America. Miss Bennett is very tall and attractive, with rich auburn hair.

Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Thursday 23 August 1928, page 7.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/246809489>

24 September 1928

SHE WILL WAIT

Explorer's Engagement



Sir George Wilkins

("Sun" Special)

NEW YORK, Sunday.

Though the engagement of Sir George Wilkins, the Australian explorer, and Suzanne Bennett, the Australian actress, has been kept secret for some months, the Sun's special representative learns that it was existing at least as long ago as Wilkins's return from the North Pole flight, when Miss Bennett accompanied the official reception committee down the bay to meet the explorer. Everyone present observed how enthusiastically they embraced on that occasion. Miss Bennett is planning to continue her stage career, and the marriage will not take place until Sir George Wilkins returns from the Antarctic. His pilot, Eielson, is accompanying Sir George on the Munson liner *Southern Cross* to Monte Video, whence the party will go by whaler to Deception Island, which will be the base for the explorations of Graham's Land. Eielson is in charge of two Stinson-Vega planes, which are lashed to the deck of the steamer. After repairs to the pumps, Commander Byrd's steamer, *City of New York*, sailed again from Panama for Dunedin. The journey, will probably occupy several weeks.

Newcastle Sun (NSW), Monday 24 September 1928, page 1.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/163976775>

24 September 1928

CAPT. WILKINS

Engaged to Suzanne Bennett — MET IN NEW YORK —

NEW YORK, Saturday.—

Suzanne Bennett, the actress, who is a native of Australia, announced on Saturday her engagement to Captain Wilkins, who has sailed, for Monte Video, where he will join the whaler, and proceed to Deception Island base for exploration flights.

Wilkins refused to discuss Miss Bennett, but admitted that the announcement was true, but no date has been fixed for the wedding.

Miss Bennett confirmed the engagement, she said she became engaged three days ago, "I met Captain Wilkins the first time that the explorer arrived in New York from Spitsbergen."

Warwick Daily News (Qld), Monday 24

September 1928, page 1.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/165101385>



An advertisement from the *Warwick Daily News* (Qld), Monday 24 September 1928, page 1.

25 September 1928

AIRMAN AND ACTRESS , ENGAGEMENT REPORTED

NEW YORK, Sept. 21.

The engagement of Sir George Wilkins to Miss Suzanne Bennett, an Australian actress, is announced. Miss Bennett confirmed the engagement, and said they became engaged three days ago. She met Sir George Wilkins for the first time when the explorer arrived in New York from Spitsbergen. No date for the marriage has been fixed. Sir George Wilkins, when interviewed, declined to confirm or deny the engagement. He added, "We are very good friends, but I cannot say anything at this time."

Kalgoorlie Miner (WA), Tuesday 25 September 1928, page 5.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/94011294>

24 September 1928

Sir Hubert Wilkins's Engagement Australian Press Association,

NEW YORK, September 22.

Miss Suzanne Bennett, the actress, who is a native of Australia, today announced his engagement to Sir Hubert Wilkins, the Australian explorer, who sailed for Montevideo where he will join a whaler and will proceed to Deception Island, the base of his exploration flights in the Antarctic. Sir Hubert Wilkins refused to discuss his

engagement to Miss Bennett. He admitted that it was true but said that no date had been set for the wedding. Miss Bennett said that they became engaged three days ago. She met Sir Hubert Wilkins for the first time when the explorer arrived in New York from Spitsbergen. It is said that Miss Bennett is a niece of Lieutenant-General Sir John Monash.

Telegraph (Brisbane, Qld), Monday 24 September 1928, page 15.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/182776137>

28 September 1928

FLYER'S ROMANCE.

Though the engagement of Sir George Wilkins, the Australian explorer, and Suzanne Bennett, the Australian actress, has been kept secret for some months, it was existing at least as long ago as Wilkin's return from his North Pole flight, when Miss Bennett accompanied the official reception committee down the bay to meet the explorer. Miss Bennett is planning to continue, her stage career, and the marriage; will not take place before Sir George Wilkins returns from the Antarctic. His pilot, Eielson, is accompanying Sir George on the Munson liner *Southern Cross* to Monte Video, whence the party will go by whaler to Deception Island, which will be the base for the exploration of Graham's Land. Eielson is in charge of two Stimson Vega planes, which are lashed to the deck of the steamer. After repairs to the pumps, Commander Byrd's steamer, *City of New York*, sailed again from Panama for Dunedin. The journey will probably occupy several weeks.

Nambucca and Bellinger News (NSW), Friday 28 September 1928, page 3.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/214524737>

1929

14 March 1929

SIR H. WILKINS

FIANCE WAS WAITING KISSED AND EMBRACED EXPLORER.

NEW YORK, Tuesday.

Sir Hubert Wilkins arrived aboard the liner *Ebro*. He was greeted by his fiancée, Suzanne Bennett, who kissed and embraced him. Wilkins is filled with enthusiasm over his recent trip. He declared the air voyage over the Antarctic was merely a preliminary, the most important results of which were the mapping of a new coastline for that part of the Antarctic continent and also the discovery that Graham Land is not part of the continent, but an island, also the location of the spot for the Antarctic meteorological base. He was later escorted to the City Hall by a squad of motor cycle police, where he was officially welcomed to the city by Mayor Walker.

Daily Examiner (Grafton, NSW), Thursday 14 March 1929, page 5.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/195043848>

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2 September 1929

SIR G. WILKINS MARRIED TO MISS SUZANNE BENNETT

(Register World Cables), CLEVELAND, (Ohio), Saturday.— Sir George Wilkins, the famous Australian explorer, has been quietly married here to Miss Suzanne Bennett, an Australian actress.

The bride gave her age as 28. Sir George Wilkins announced his engagement to Miss Bennett in September last year, just before he sailed for Monte Video on his Antarctic expedition.

Lady Wilkins was among the crowd wishing the explorer good luck. She herself was cheered and congratulated when the steamer sailed. The engagement had been secret for some months. It existed at the time Wilkins returned to New York from the Arctic, when Lady Wilkins accompanied the official reception committee down the bay. Everyone observed how enthusiastically they embraced on that occasion.

Sir George who is 40 years of age, was born at Mount Bryan, South Australia.



SIR GEORGE WILKINS



LADY WILKINS

Register News-Pictorial (Adelaide, SA), Monday 2 September 1929, page 4.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/53449854>

3 September 1929

CABLEGRAMS.

SIR. G. H. WILKINS. MARRIAGE IN AMERICA

CLEVELAND (Ohio), August 31.

Sir D. H. Wilkins, the Australian explorer, married Miss Suzanne Bennett here late today. It was a simple ceremony by a justice of the peace. Sir George and Miss Bennett met at New York yesterday, and came here today. Miss Bennett is also an Australian. CLEVELAND (Ohio), August 31

Sir George Wilkins announced on Saturday the construction would start shortly on a specially designed submarine to be used for geographical and meteorological explorations in the South Polar regions. Sir George Wilkins expects to start about December 14, and is not connected with the explorations of Lieutenant Commander Byrd.

Northern Miner (Charters Towers, Qld), Tuesday 3 September 1929, page 2.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/80577811>

3 September 1929

The VOICE of the CITY Prince's Partner

The Australian, Suzanne Bennett, who has just been married "quietly" to the 40-year-old Wilkins, is a great friend of the Prince of Wales. When Edward P. last visited "the land of the free," he frequently tripped the light fantastic with Suzanne, and one New York paper had a full-page illustrated interview with "Royalty's dancing partner." Other American sheets said the lady was a niece of Sir John Monash, though the general opinion there seemed to be that she had years ago married — and divorced — a relative of Sir John, in the Australian Air Force. Anyway, some Suzanne newspaper pictures in colour were clear enough, and they showed a tall, auburn-haired sylph, with sombre eyes.

Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Tuesday 3 September 1929, page 6.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/246288770>

1931

26 February 1931

Woman's Page

Going Under Arctic With Husband.

Lady Wilkins (formerly Suzanne Bennett, of Melbourne, a pretty actress, who was married about two years ago) announced recently that she intends to accompany her husband (Sir Hubert Wilkins) on his submarine trip across the North Pole, preferring to share the hazards of a possible slow and boring voyage through the Polar seas and under the ice-packs to the suspense of waiting for word of him.

Lady Wilkins accompanied her husband in the Graf Zeppelin on its trip to Germany.



Lady Wilkins.

Daily Standard (Brisbane, Qld), Thursday 26 February 1931, page 4.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/180978839>

18 February 1931

LADY WILKINS

SUBMARINE TRIP TO POLE TO GO WITH HUSBAND

("Sun" Special)

NEW YORK, Tuesday.

Lady Wilkins, formerly Suzanne Bennett, of Melbourne, a pretty actress who was married about two years ago, announced today that she intends to accompany her husband, Sir Hubert Wilkins, on his submarine trip across the North Pole, preferring to share the hazards of a possible slow and boring voyage through the polar seas to the suspense of waiting here for word.

No special, cabin has been fitted aboard the *Nautilus* for her. She will be the first woman to undertake an extensive submarine voyage. "My husband convinced me that it will be perfectly safe," she said. "I will be able to live much as I would aboard a liner. Of course the voyage may take months. It may prove tedious, but at any rate I will be comfortable." Lady Wilkins accompanied her husband in the Graf Zeppelin on its trip to Germany.



Sir H. Wilkins

Her participation in the adventure it's expected to increase tremendously the public interest in the voyage. Those knowing Sir Hubert Wilkins are certain that it is not a publicity stunt, but rather is her decision arisen from a genuine courageous desire to share her husband's adventures. *Newcastle Sun* (NSW), Wednesday 18 February 1931, page 8.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/164321489>

23 February 1931

THE WILKINS PAIR : DIVING TO THE POLE.

LADY WILKINS, who will make the Arctic voyage to the Pole in a submarine with her famous husband, Sir Hubert Wilkins, was the young Australian actress, Suzanne Bennett, the couple being married 18 months ago in Ohio.

She is tall, slim, with auburn hair and sombre eyes, and was previously, married to an Australian Air Force officer.

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Sir Hubert claims a seventeenth century ancestor in the famous Bishop Wilkins, of Chester, who in that ancient day urged Polar probing and mechanical flight—two things for which the last of the Wilkins line is now famous.

The submarine in which the Wilkins pair will creep under the Arctic ice has bumpers, feelers, cutting claws, and other gadgets for tackling obstacles on its frigid itinerary.



Lady Wilkins (Suzanne Bennett)

Advocate (Burnie, Tas.), Monday 23 February 1931, page 5.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/67703683>

11 June 1931

LADY WILKINS PRAYS FOR HUSBAND'S SAFETY

Hopes To Salute Him In Mid-Ocean

(Herald Special Representative)
NEW YORK, June 10.—

Lady Wilkins who is well known in Melbourne as Suzanne Bennett, sailed today for London to meet her husband, Sir Hubert Wilkins, who is crossing the Atlantic in the submarine *Nautilus*, in which he will later attempt to cross the North Pole under the ice. On board the *Mauretania* tonight Lady Wilkins said she hoped to sight the *Nautilus* within two days. "I have faith in the *Nautilus* and Sir Hubert," she said. "The crossing of the Atlantic in such a craft is dangerous, but I hope and pray they will make it safely. "It is painful to feel that I shall travel in a palatial steamer with every comfort while my husband rolls, pitches and tosses on the waves, confined in a tiny craft. "We exchange daily radiograms, and will salute each other in passing." (Other references in Page 7)

Herald (Melbourne, Vic.), Thursday 11 June 1931, page 5.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/42954338>

Tweed Daily (Murwillumbah, NSW), Monday 15 June 1931, page 6.

WILKINS EXPEDITION

Explorer's Wife Confident

NEW YORK, Friday.—

Before sailing by the *Mauretania* on Wednesday to meet her husband, Lady Wilkins' said that she was confident that the *Mauretania* and the *Nautilus* would

meet somewhere in the North Atlantic. She would communicate with Sir Hubert by wireless and would see him through glasses. She was confident that the expedition to the North Pole would be successful. Lady Wilkins was formerly Miss Suzanne Bennett. She married Sir Hubert Wilkins in 1929.

Tweed Daily (Murwillumbah, NSW), Monday 15 June 1931, page 6.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/194128563>



An advertisement from the *Tweed Daily* (Murwillumbah, NSW), Monday 15 June 1931, page 6.

10 August 1931

LADY WILKINS PREFERS TO STAY HOME

Has No Desire For Trip in Nautilus

(By "The News" Woman Writer Abroad)
LONDON, July 2.

A month from now, if all goes well, Sir Hubert Wilkins, the South Australian explorer, aboard the submarine *Nautilus*, will be ploughing his way under the ice, on his way to the North Pole. Awaiting his return to Spitsbergen, Norway, will be an anxious wife, who, ever since the *Nautilus* set forth on her adventurous voyage from New York across the Atlantic, has had to maintain a calm demeanour throughout all kinds of trying circumstances.

ALTHOUGH Lady Wilkins has accompanied her husband on one or two of his minor expeditions (she flew with him as a passenger in the *Graf Zeppelin* across the Atlantic last summer), she admits that she personally takes no pleasure in participating in risky ventures, and that she has no desire to repeat her experience in the *Zeppelin*, when it flies to meet Sir Hubert at the Pole. "In any case, a woman is only in the way in exploring," she told me today in London. "I am quite content to leave all that to my husband." Since she arrived from New York last week, Lady Wilkins has been staying at the flat of a fellow-Australian, Miss Nellie Leitch with whom she formed a close friendship when they played together in the Rigo Grand Opera Company some years ago in Australia. As Suzanne Bennett the wife of the explorer played many roles in all the capital cities of the Commonwealth.

CONTINUING ON STAGE

Since her marriage she has kept up her stage connections in New York, and recently played for a season in one of the leading parts in "Shanghai Gesture." She is due back there on October 1, in accordance with a contract she has signed for broadcasting with the principal radio

station. Later in the year, she and her husband will be in Australia, for they, have planned a flying trip through Japan, China, India, and the Commonwealth. Looking trim and smart in a chestnut brown tailored suit, which blended admirably with her beautiful reddish hair, and unusual brown eyes, Lady Wilkins chatted to me for more than an hour of her life in America. She talked of the "slimming" craze which has struck Hollywood and of how it is ruining the health of stars. She told me of how Joan Crawford (who is a personal friend) is now a shadow of her former self, having been ordered to take pounds off her weight at a time, and of how "slimming" has wrecked the health of Greta Garbo, whose temporary retirement from the screen is announced. Lady Wilkins is herself exceptionally slim in appearance, and yet Hollywood producers, when they offered her a contract recently, told her that she must take off six pounds at once in order to comply with their requirements. "I decided that Hollywood could do without me," she declared. "Life in America (especially for people who are much in the limelight of publicity) is quite hectic enough without that!" On the screen Lady Wilkins has a remarkable resemblance to Greta Garbo. In a series of news reel films in which she "starred" with the *Nautilus*, just before it left New York, the likeness was most pronounced. Mr. Henri Bernstein, the successful French playwright (who is regarded as the Noel Coward of Paris), is at present in the American capital writing scenarios for talking pictures. He is much interested in her type, and later intends writing a play in which this clever Australian will probably star on Broadway. A few months ago her portrait was painted by the famous American artist: Mr. Roland Hinton Perry. It had a place in his recent New York exhibition, and is now on its way to South America for exhibition there.

FOND OF POLO

While she is waiting in London for the submarine to set out on its journey (during repairs to its engines, Sir Hubert has had to make frequent flying trips between Plymouth and Spitsbergen), Lady Wilkins hopes to be able to get in some polo practice. She is keen on riding, and regards polo as the finest sport in the world. Women in America play it a great deal, and this year Englishwomen have followed suit, and are to be seen daily practising in Richmond Park. "Later I may go down to the Riviera for some sunbathing, before going to take up my vigil at Spitsbergen," she said. "I may call in at Paris on my way but not to buy clothes. I buy all of mine in New York, and in any case, I am not crazy about clothes. I find that I have enough interests in being the wife of an explorer, and carrying on with my own stage work at the same time. Sir Hubert's submarine was damaged while crossing the Atlantic, and he lost several weeks while it was being repaired in London. He is now at Tromsø on the north coast of Norway. Other explorers said recently that it would be too late for him to make the dash to the Pole

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this summer. Latest details concerning the venture appear on Page 7.]
News (Adelaide, SA), Monday 10 August 1931, page 4.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/128931456>

1934

31 August 1934

AN AUSTRALIAN CINDERELLA

If the life of Lady Wilkins were published it would rival the story of Cinderella. She was a beautiful Australian, Suzanne Bennett, occupying humble domestic positions in Sydney. A number of people knew her, as she was friendly with Mrs. McNab (Anita Roma, of the operatic stage, and niece of Mr. Stewart Dawson), and used to stay with her at Wentworth Falls. Someone "shouted" Suzanne a trip round the world, but when she got to New York she went on the stage for a time. On board ship she met Prince Charming in the person of Sir Hubert Wilkins. And now she is to be the first woman to go to the Pole in a submarine. *Illawarra Mercury* (Wollongong, NSW), Friday 31 August 1934, page 8.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/132438875>

1937

4 February 1937

Lady Wilkins As Actress

LADY Wilkins, who, according to a cable message, has announced that she will appear in a floor show at a New York night club, has had considerable stage experience.

Some years ago as Suzanne Bennett, she played in Rigo's Grand Opera Company in Australia and took many roles in all the capital cities of the Commonwealth.

Since her marriage she has played a leading part in New York in "Shanghai Gesture," and has also starred in a series of films.

News (Adelaide, SA), Thursday 4 February 1937, page 15.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/131402903>

4 February 1937

LADY WILKINS, CABARET SINGER INDEPENDENT CABLE SERVICE NEW YORK, Wednesday.

Lady Wilkins, wife of the explorer, Sir Hubert Wilkins, will make her debut as a night-club singer at the Mon Paris Cafe, in New York. "I am weary of the role of a celebrity's wife. I want a career of my own," she said. "My husband is busy preparing for a submarine exploration trip to the North Pole, and I'm going to show him that I can take care of myself." Lady Wilkins, formerly Suzanne Bennett, the actress, is, like her husband, an Australian. Last reports were that she was going to cook for the crew of the submarine on its voyage to the Pole.

Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Thursday 4 February 1937, page 1.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/247380406>

1938

5 September 1938

GLAMOROUS LADY WILKINS

"SIR HUBERT and I are the happiest married couple in New York," said Lady Wilkins, wife of the famous explorer, when she arrived in Sydney today in the Monterey.

"But, as we are hardly ever together, it is, I suppose, no wonder. We have been married for eight years, and have spent four months of it together. That is why I smile when people say, 'How exciting to be the wife of an explorer!' 'It is because Sir Hubert is away so much,'" she continued, "that I have kept up my stage career. I have to have something to keep me occupied." Lady Wilkins, who is very glamorous, is fair, with her hair in long page-boy style, and when she arrived she was wearing a black romaine frock with a silver fox cape.

With her husband she is on her way to Johannesburg, South Africa, where she will give three singing concerts and then return to New York, while Sir Hubert is in the Antarctic. Next year she will accompany him on a further expedition. "No," she said in answer to a question, "I have never been in a submarine, but I am very excited about it all the same. My official job will be to cook, and that means I will have to cook out of tins. "Of course," she said, "I might manage to do a bit of singing, and I am going to take a small piano with me. I will probably do broadcasts from the submarine.

Before leaving New York on this trip, she has been singing in a fashionable New York cabaret called Mont Parks. The type of song she sings is what she calls "story songs," and one of her special numbers is one she wrote herself, "Love is my Racket." Since leaving Australia, she has had an interesting life.

Two years ago she was on the maiden voyage of the *Hindenberg* and did broadcasts from the airships and she also wrote the story of the Graf Zeppelin voyage, which she also made for the Hearst syndicate of newspapers. Lady Wilkins, who was formerly, Miss Suzanne Bennett, is a Melbourne girl, and is paying her first visit to Australia for some time. Lady Wilkins also writes short stories and is now writing a play. She intends writing a story about the Australian girls, and she said she was terribly excited to hear Australian voices and see Australian girls once again. Another of her hobbies is interior decorating. She will be in Australia for three weeks before [?] Africa.

Sun (Sydney, NSW), Monday 5 September 1938, page 11.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/230809842>

An advertisement from the *Sun* (Sydney, NSW), Monday 5 September 1938, page 11.



3 November 1938

Lady Wilkins To Become American Independent Cable Service LOS ANGELES, Wednesday.

LADY WILKINS, wife of Sir Hubert Wilkins, the Australian explorer, wishes to become an American citizen.

"I feel sure that Sir Hubert will become an American, too," she told interviewers when she arrived from Australia today, "I want to be a citizen of the United States because I love this country. "I had a hectic time in Australia," Lady Wilkins added. "I hope to fatten up here, in preparation for the submarine cruise to the Arctic with my husband next year."

New Polar Flight

Sir Hubert and Lady Wilkins arrived in Sydney from the United States on September 8. Sir Hubert was on his way to Capetown, where he joined Lincoln Ellsworth for another voyage of discovery to the Antarctic. They plan to fly from Enderby Land to the Bay of Whales, 2000 miles distant, across icefields and mountain ranges never yet seen by man. Sir Hubert plans to visit the North Pole in a submarine next year.

Both South Australians

He believes that the establishment of a series of meteorological stations in the Arctic and Antarctic will make long-range weather forecasts probable. Sir Hubert Wilkins was born in South Australia in 1888. He has been in nine expeditions to the Arctic and eight to the Antarctic. Lady Wilkins, formerly Suzanne Bennett, actress, was born in Adelaide.

She married Sir Hubert before a Justice of the Peace at Cleveland (Ohio), on August 30, 1929. Their honeymoon trip was a flight across the Atlantic in the Graf Zeppelin. *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW), Thursday 3. November 1938, page 1.

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SIR HUBERT and LADY WILKINS