Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0363

Wake, Nancy Grace Augusta

(1912 - 2011)

Born	19120830, Wellington New Zealand
Died	20110807, London England
Occupation	Servicewoman

Summary

Nancy Wake, whom the Gestapo code-named ‘the White Mouse’ was the Allies’ most decorated servicewoman of World War II. The youngest of six children, Nancy Wake came to Australia with her parents when she was 20 months old. In the early 1930s she went first to England and then Paris as a freelance journalist and there met and married Henri Fiocca, a wealthy French industrialist. When the French government surrendered, after the German Army invaded in May 1940, Nancy Wake joined the French Resistance working as a courier and saboteur. For these ‘special operations in France’ Wake was awarded the George Medal (17 July 1945). Wake worked for the Intelligence Department at the British Air Ministry, after the war. She married John Forward, in 1957, before returning to Australia to live. In December 2001, Nancy Wake left Port Macquarie, New South Wales to live in Europe.

On 22 February 2004 Nancy Wake was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia. The award recognises the significant contribution and commitment of Nancy Wake, stemming from her outstanding actions in wartime, in encouraging community appreciation and understanding of the past sacrifices made by Australian men and women in times of conflict, and to a lasting legacy of peace.

Nancy Wake moved to London to live in 2001. She died there, in Kingston Hospital on 7 August 2011.

Events

2004 -
Appointed Companion in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

1985 - 1985
Author of *The White Mouse*

1912 - 1912
Born: daughter of C A Wake

1943 - 1945
Captain FANY

1946 - 1948
Executive Officer British Foreign Office attached to Embassies Paris and Prague

1936 - 1939
Freelance journalist Europe

2001 - 2001
Left Australia to live in London

1939 - 1939
married Henri Fiocca (dec. 1943)

1957 - 1957
married John Forward (dec. 1997)

1940 - 1943
Member Allied Escape Route Organisation Occupied France

1988 - 1988
Officer Legion d'Honneur (Chevalier 1970)

1952 - 1958
WRAF officer Air Ministry London (Intelligence)

Published resources

Edited Book
Who's Who in Australia 2002, Herd, Margaret, 2002

Book
The Autobiography of the Woman the Gestapo Called the White Mouse, Wake, Nancy, 1985

Nancy Wake: The Story of a Very Brave Woman, Braddon, Russell, 1956

Nancy Wake, Braddon, Russell, 1958

Woman in Arms: The Story of Nancy Wake, Braddon, Russell, 1963

Nancy Wake: A Biography of Our Greatest War Heroine, FitzSimons, Peter, 2001

Twentieth-Century Women of Courage, Escott, Beryl E, 1999

Newspaper Article
Wartime spy honour, 2004

White Mouse finally gets her gong, Nicholson, Brendan, 2004

Wartime comrades watch as White Mouse is honoured, Mulvey, Paul, 2004

Timely Wake-up call, Riley, Robyn, 2004

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition
Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html

Archival resources

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Nancy Wake-Forward, resistance fighter during World War II, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

[Biographical cuttings on Nancy Wake, French Resistance worker, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

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Digital resources



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