Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0411

Maxwell, Barbara Edwina Audrey

(1932 - 1991)

Born	19321006, Rangoon Burma
Died	19910517
Occupation	Servicewoman

Summary

Born in Burma in 1932, Barbara Maxwell came to Australia with her family in 1946 and attended Girdlestone School, Perth, Western Australia. She joined the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps (RAANC) in 1952, serving in Japan, and was in every Australian Command with the exception of Eastern Command.

While posted to the 11th RAANC, Western Command, Warrant Officer 2 (WO2) Barbara Maxwell gained selection for the Officers' Cadet School. This was after the Military Board gave approval for other ranks of the RAANC to attend the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) Officer Cadet School. Except for the last few days of the course Barbara Maxwell wore her RAANC grey uniform and she won the 'Scarf of Honour' (dux) for the course.

Barbara Maxwell was fourth Director of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps from 5th July 1977 to 14th March 1979. She was the first Director who had not previously served in Australia's wartime army. Following her retirement from the Army Barbara Maxwell pursued a business career with her husband, Bruce Starrett. [1]

[1] *Soldiers of the Queen* by Janette Bomford p. 117

Events

1960 - 1960
Attended officer cadet course at Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) School, Georges Heights

1978 - 1978
Awarded National Medal and Bar

1954 - 1954
Awarded the British Commonwealth Occupation Force medal

1960 - 1960
Awarded top academic cadet prize

1968 - 1968
Captain Staff Officer and Officer Commanding 6 WRAAC Headquaters Tasmania Command

1964 - 1965
Captain Staff Officer at the Royal Military College, Duntroon (Australian Capital Territory)

1966 - 1967
Captain Staff Officer with the Department of Defence (Army Office)

1969 - 1969
Captain, senior instructor at the WRAAC School

1979 - 1991
Colonel in Reserve of Officers Headquarters, 2nd Military District

1977 - 1979
Colonel, director of the WRAAC

1973 - 1974
First servicewoman crew member of service-owned yacht in the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race

1977 - 1978
Involved in establishment of WRAAC Association

1969 - 1972
Involved in organization and conduct of collections for Red Cross, Austcare, etc., with Mosman City Council

1974 - 1975
Involved in organization and conduct of collections for Red Cross, Austcare, etc., with Mosman City Council

1963 - 1964
Lieutenant Adjutant and Quartermaster at the WRAAC Barracks, Melbourne

1972 - 1974
Lieutenant Colonel, assistant director WRAAC Headquarters Eastern Command at Victoria Barracks, Paddington

1974 - 1975
Lieutenant Colonel, commanding officer and chief instructor at the WRAAC School

1975 - 1977
Lieutenant Colonel, staff officer grade 1 at the Directorate of Service Conditions with the Department of Defence (Army), Canberra

1961 - 1962
Lieutenant instructor and platoon commander of the WRAAC School Recruit Training Wing

1969 - 1972
Major, chief instructor at the WRAAC School

1972 - 1972
Married (Lieutenant Colonel) Bruce Starrett

1954 - 1954
Member of the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan

1972 - 1979
Member of the Royal Australian Naval Sailing Association

1951 - 1959
Served with the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps (RAANC)

Published resources

Book
Soldiers of the Queen : women in the Australian Army, Bomford, Janette, 2001

Colonel Best and her soldiers: The Story of the 33 years of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps, Ollif, Lorna, 1985

A Stroll down memory lane, WRAAC Association, 2001

Edited Book
Who's Who of Australian Women, Lofthouse, Andrea, 1982

Journal Article
Vale - Barbara Edwina Audrey Starrett (nee Maxwell) Colonel and Last Director of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps, 1991

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Barbara Maxwell, former head of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Australian War Memorial, Research Centre
Army Minister visits WRAAC School DPR/TV/1513

Author Details
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