Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0464

Provan, Frances Betty

(1911 - 1963)

Born	19111117, Spring Hill Queensland Australia
Died	19630621, Queensland Australia
Occupation	Servicewoman

Summary

Frances Provan was one of the first 14 females posted to HMAS *Harman*, the communications station in Canberra, on 28 April 1941, making her one of the first members of the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS).

Details

After completing her education, Frances Provan worked as a trainee-teacher, nurse and governess. She moved from Queensland to Sydney and trained as a wireless telegraphist with the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps, which had been established by Florence McKenzie. Provan was one of the first 14 females posted to HMAS *Harman*, the communications station in Canberra, on 28 April 1941. Her official number was WR/1.

In September 1941 Provan was promoted to leading telegraphist and then petty officer telegraphist in December 1942. She attended the first WRANS officers' training course at Flinders Naval Depot, Victoria and was appointed third officer on 15 February 1943.

In June 1945 Provan was posted as officer-in-charge of the only draft of WRANS to serve in an operational zone, in Darwin. During her time in the navy she also served at bases in New South Wales and Queensland. Provan was stationed at HMAS *Lonsdale,* Melbourne, when she was discharged on 17 October 1946.

After the war she travelled to England and became manager of the London office of the Melbourne firm, Jackson's United Meat Co. Pty Ltd. In 1963 after Provan had made a business trip to Melbourne, she died (21 June) while on her way to visit her mother.

Published resources

Resource Section
PROVAN, FRANCES BETTY, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002,
http://www.ww2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=N&VeteranID=1157284

PROVAN, FRANCES BETTY, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002,
http://www.ww2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=N&VeteranID=1194954

Provan, Frances Betty (1911-1963), Jennings, Rosemary, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A160043b.htm

Book
W.R.A.N.S. : the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service, Curtis-Otter, M, 1975

Ships belles : the story of the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service in war and peace 1941-1985, Fenton Huie, Shirley, 2000

Resource
Belconnen Wireless Station, Duntroon, Harman & RAAF stations 1943,
http://www.canberra.starway.net.au/~jwilliams4/x43_04.htm

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Australian War Memorial, Research Centre
Members of the first WRANS Officer Training Corps.

Senior WRANS from HMAS Harman Naval Wireless Station at the fourth birthday of the service

Author Details
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Digital resources



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