Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0838

Somerville, Dorothy Catherine

(1897 - 1992)

Born	18970512, Unley South Australia Australia
Died	19921231
Occupation	Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

The daughter of Archibald and Seca (née Lewin) Somerville, Dorothy Somerville was educated at Brownhill Creek School in Mitcham, the Methodists Ladies College (now Annesley College) and the Adelaide Law School. She was the third woman admitted to practice law in South Australia in 1922. Mary Kitson, the first woman admitted to the Bar, joined with Somerville in 1925 to form Australia’s first women’s legal partnership: Kitson & Somerville. Kitson later went to Sydney to work in publishing, and in 1950 she moved to New York to take charge of the United Nations affairs on the Status of Women. Somerville, who continued with the legal practice, became an honorary solicitor to a number of women’s organisations.

Events

1986 - 1986
Appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for service to the Legal profession and to the community

1921 - 1921
Foundation Member of the Lyceum Club (Adelaide) Incorporated

1919 - 1919
Graduated Bachelor of Arts (BA) (Hons) from Adelaide University

1922 - 1922
Graduated Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from Adelaide University

1971 - 1971
Honorary Life member of the Lyceum Club (Adelaide) Incorporated

1945 - 1945
Honorary Life member of the South Australian Women's Hockey Association

1948 - 1975
Honorary solicitor to the Australian Croquet Council

1925 - 1971
Honorary solicitor to the Country Women's Association (SA)

1925 - 1925
Honorary solicitor to the South Australian Women's Croquet Association

1925 - 1974
Honorary solicitor to the South Australian Women's Hockey Association

1945 - 1945
Honorary solicitor to the Wanslea Inc (Emergency Homes for Children)

1955 - 1955
Honorary solicitor to the Women's Memorial Playing Fields

1925 - 1925
Solicitor in private practice

Published resources

Book
Greater than their knowing: a glimpse of South Australian women 1836-1986, National Council of Women of South Australia, 1986

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

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section
Law, Kerwin, Hollie and Rubenstein, Kim, 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0624b.htm

Site Exhibition
Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia
Interview with Dorothy Somerville [sound recording] Interviewer: Yvonne Abbott

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Dorothy Somerville, solicitor, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Author Details
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