Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0929

Ozolins, Irina

(1920 - 2016)

Born	19200101, Russia
Died	20160215
Occupation	Teacher

Summary

Irina Ozolins was born in Russia where her parents lived as refugees. Following the death of her father her mother returned to Viesite, Latvia when she was still an infant. Her mother worked as an accountant and they lived with her parents. Later Ozolins went to live with her aunt, in Riga, to go to a private college and then to University where she studied mathematics. The Russians came to the Baltic States and took 2,000,000 people to Siberia including her mother and six relations. Many died including all her male relatives. The Germans came in 1941. She completed her master of science. The Russians returned and she and her friends left by ship for Germany. They were sent to various workplaces. She went to Dresden to work as a scientist in the university. Dresden was bombed and the city was flattened. She and her friend Emily made their way to Emily's aunt in Austria, travelling by train and escaping to the fields when bombers came. A month later all foreigners were ordered out of Austria so she was sent to a Latvian couple. There she met her husband, a lawyer who was retraining as an electrician. They went to the Latvian displaced persons camp and because of her languages she was employed as an interpreter for UNRRA. Her husband's landlady had a son in Port Pirie and he organised a landing permit for them to come to South Australia. They moved to Adelaide and she taught mathematics at Norwood and Unley High Schools. She also enjoyed painting and joined the Royal Society of Arts, was made a fellow and had seven solo exhibitions. She was invited to give a talk at the Lyceum Club and then joined the Art Appreciation and Literature Circles. She also joined the German Circle.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia
Interview with Irina Ozolins [sound recording] Interviewer: Helen Jones

Storytelling by Irina Ozolins [sound recording] Recordist: Eva Noske

Interview with Irina Ozolins [sound recording] Interviewer: Daniela Kautsky

Author Details
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