Entry type: Person
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Sherrard, Kathleen Margaret Maria

(1898 - 1975)

Born	18980215, North Carlton Victoria Australia
Died	19750821, Centennial Park New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Geologist, Palaeontologist

Summary

Kathleen Margaret Maria Sherrard, MSc, was a demonstrator and lecturer in geology at the University of Melbourne for over a decade in the years after World War I. She also published articles on palaeontology.

After her marriage and relocation to Sydney she served on a Commonwealth Committee on Nutrition, 1944-1945, and took an active role in many women’s organisations, particularly the Australian Federation of University Women and United Associations of Women, as well as scientific workers organisations.

Details

Kathleen Margaret Maria Sherrard nee McInerny [1] made her mark in Australian geological studies before her marriage, becoming the first woman graduate in geology from the University of Melbourne. She took her BSc in 1918 and was appointed as an assistant lecturer in 1920, taking her MSc the following year. She spent part of 1927 in England working on crystallography at the mineralogical laboratory at Cambridge University under Arthur Hutchinson (1866-1937). Like many in this book she was a member of the Lyceum Club.

In 1928 Kathleen McInerny married Howard Macoun Sherrard (1897-1984) and moved to Sydney. Having been Honorary Secretary of the Victorian Women Graduates' Association from 1920 to 1928 she occupied the same position in the Australian Federation of University Women from 1928 to 1938.[2]

Turner notes that she had been granted leave in 1929 to undertake doctoral research in Cambridge, but instead 'had involved herself in social causes, education and motherhood'.[3] She continued her scholarly investigations, changing direction to studying graptolites which are a group of extinct marine colonial animals common in the Palaeozoic era. From the early 1950s she was considered as a member of the Sydney University Geology Department staff. Howard Sherrard rose to become Chief Engineer of the Department of Main Roads of New South Wales and Turner notes that this helped his wife to get permission and special signs for geology excursion buses to stop on busy roads.

Her papers included many published in the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* as well as one in those of the Linnaean Society of New South Wales.[4] In 1950 she worked in the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences with Dr Gertrude Elles (1872-1960) the first woman to be appointed as a Reader in the University of Cambridge. In 1967 she studied fossil collections in Beijing.

Kathleen Sherrard also supported the *Australian Women's Digest* which was published from 1944 to 1948 and to which she contributed. In 1970 she wrote an unpublished memoir entitled *A Doctor's Daughter Remembers Her Childhood: life in Melbourne in the early nineteen hundreds* of which copies are held in the State libraries of New South Wales and Victoria. A monograptus from the Forbes district of New South Wales was named *Sherrardae sp. nov.* in her honour.[5]

[1] Kathleen Sherrard was born Kathleen McInerny, but her Victorian birth registration notes the spelling of her surname as McInerney. Her marriage registration notes the spelling as McInerny, and Trove newspaper references indicate that McInerny is the correct spelling.

[2] Rachel Grahame. 'Sherrard, Kathleen Margaret Maria (1898-1975)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002; 'As Women To Women: impressive gathering to meet in Adelaide: distinguished delegates from all states'. *Recorder*. 3 January 1934: 1.

[3] S. Turner. 'Invincible but mostly Invisible: Australian Women's Contribution to Geology and Palaeontology'. *Geological Society Special Publication*. v. 281(2007): 165-202.

[4] Ida A. Brown and Kathleen M. Sherrard. 'Graptolite Zones in the Silurian of the Yass-Bowning District of New South Wales'. *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*. v. 85 (1952): 127-134; Kathleen M. Sherrard. 'The Assemblages of Graptolites in New South Wales'. *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*. v. 87 no. 3(1954): 73-101; K.M. Sherrard. 'Some Dendroid Graptolites from New South Wales'. *Journal and Proceedings of the Linnaean Society of New South Wales*. v. 81 (1956): 82-90.

[5] F. M. Quodling . 'Kathleen Sherrard'. *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*. v. 109 (1976): 168.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book
40 Years 40 Women: Biographies of University of Melbourne Women, Published to Commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the International Year of Women, Flesch, Juliet, 2015,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/4040/

Journal Article
The political history of women in Australia, Sherrard, Kathleen, 1943

Archival resources

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection
Kathleen M. M. Sherrard papers, ca. 1918-1975

Kathleen M. M. Sherrard further papers, 1909-1975, together with papers of the McInerney and Sherrard families, ca. 1888, 1916-1976

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