Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2894

Moore, Winifred

(- 1952)

Died	19521111, Brisbane Queensland Australia
Occupation	Journalist, Print journalist

Summary

Winifred Moore was a prominent Brisbane journalist in the early twentieth century. She edited the women's section of The *Brisbane Courier* (later *Courier-Mail*), from the early 1920s through to the 1940s, and remained with the newspaper as a columnist until the early 1950s. In addition to her literary and arts interests, Moore was a founding member of the National Parks Association of Queensland. Although generally politically conservative, she had a keen interest in women's affairs and a range of social welfare issues of the day.

Details

Winifred Moore was born in England but moved to Queensland (probably after both her parents died) to be raised by her elder sister in Ingham, North Queensland. She was a teacher of music, and travelled to her students by sulky. During the First World War, Moore joined the staff of the *Daily Mail*. In 1921, she was appointed Social Editress of the *Brisbane Courier* (later the *Brisbane Courier-Mail*). For two decades, Moore edited the women's section for the paper, contributing her own anecdotes and observations in her column, 'Between Ourselves', under the pseudonym 'Verity'. She remained a columnist for the paper until the early 1950s, and was responsible for the expansion of the *Courier-Mail* Christmas Toy Fund.

Under Moore in the 1920s, the weekly women's section of the *Brisbane Courier* – 'Home Circle' – combined London gossip, Paris fashion, recipes, poems and riddles, serialised novels, cartoons, domestic tips, news of Australians abroad, a children's section, and a 'how-to' column with instructions for making everything from knitted slippers to 'a pretty cretonne work-box which can be used also as a seat'. The section also included a political column of sorts, profiling prominent public personalities – from statesmen to sportsmen – in Australia and overseas. In November 1922, Sir Walter Edward Davidson, governor of New South Wales, was listed alongside the 'picturesque and romantic figure' of the Maharajah of Jaipur.

Moore used her own column to discuss topical questions around women in parliament, women and marriage, and women's organisations, or to offer personal anecdotes and tips in domestic economy. An early column discussed the proposed introduction of a League of Skilled Housecraft in England which, if successful, might be emulated in Queensland. Women could sit for an examination to demonstrate elementary knowledge of general housework skills (cooking, needlework etc), and go on to sit an advanced exam to receive a diploma, and full membership of the League: 'It is believed that such a hallmark of efficiency will go far towards giving such women the status of their sisters who are certificated teachers or district nurses', wrote Moore.

By the 1950s, the *Courier-Mail*'s 'Women's Interests' section was a far more splashy affair, dominated by photographs of women engaged, married or going abroad. Its editor complained that 'the ranks of Brisbane's society girls are thinning out so quickly with the steady stream making for England, that soon it will be necessary to go overseas just to find out what Brisbane people are doing'. Pages were dedicated, magazine-style, to society gossip and fashion. A caption in February 1950 described the 'unusual fashion accessory' of one Mrs. John Down, who arrived at a supper party wearing a 'fascinating cloche hat, complete with a full-size bird draped under her chin'. By this time Moore was no longer heading the section, but she continued to submit a weekly column on Wednesdays entitled 'Speaking for Women'. Again, her discussion was wide-ranging. One week Moore was writing about the shortage of trained nurses, or the need for women to assert themselves in the workplace, and the next, she was illuminating her readers on the subject of vice-regal etiquette and how to present oneself.

According to historian Patience Thoms, Winifred Moore 'wrote as a woman, not a feminist, but as one conscious of the contribution women could make if they had the will'.

Events

1920 - 1950
Career in journalism active

Published resources

Book Section
They Wrote as Women, Thoms, Patience, 1994

Site Exhibition
The Women's Pages: Australian Women and Journalism since 1850, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cal/cal-home.html

Resource
AustLit: The Australian Literature Resource, 2002, http://www.austlit.edu.au/

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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