

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE4787

Tory, Ethel Elizabeth

(1912 - 2003)

Born 27 July, 1912, Subiaco Western Australia

Died 10 July, 2003, Batemans Bay New South Wales

Occupation Academic, Teacher

Summary

Ethel Tory was a teacher of French and Latin and an advocate for drama and language studies, particularly French. She taught French and Latin in Western Australian schools and at the University of Western Australia before undertaking further study in French literature in Paris. She was appointed a lecturer in French at the Australian National University in 1961 and promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1965. In 1970, she published an edition of Giraudoux's play *Intermezzo* for use in schools and universities. She retired in 1977 but continued to teach French and to support drama studies at the Australian National University through donations and a bequest on her death in 2003.

Details

Ethel Tory was born on 27 July 1912 in Subiaco, Western Australia. Her parents were Frank Bertram Tory, a legal manager and estate agent, originally from Blandford, Dorset and Ethel Marion Victoria Johnson, born in Guildford, Western Australia. The daughter Ethel was known as 'Two-ee' to distinguish her from her mother.

Ethel attended the St Mary's Church of England Girls' School in West Perth and completed her Leaving Certificate in 1930. She enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts at University of Western Australia in 1933, after spending two years living with family in Dorset and in Grand Luce, Sarthe in France. She graduated with 1st class honours in French in 1936 and added Honours in Latin in 1938. She then enrolled in a Diploma of Education at the University of Western Australia which was awarded in 1940. During the war, she taught in Western Australian private schools and was also employed by the Censor's Office in the Department of Information to scan mail written in French or Latin. In 1941 she won the Hackett Research Scholarship from the University of Western Australia which allowed her to conduct research into French literature.

In 1946 she was appointed a tutor in French at the University of Western Australia and then in 1947 as a lecturer in Latin. In October 1947 she attended the University of Paris (La Sorbonne) on a French government scholarship and was awarded a Diplôme de littérature française contemporaine (mention honorable) in 1948. She remained in France teaching, translating and undertaking research which resulted in the award of Docteur de l'université (mention très honorable) in 1961 from the University of Paris. Her doctoral thesis was entitled 'Giraudoux et l'ideal'.

In 16 February 1961, Ethel took up an appointment as Lecturer in French, School of General Studies, Australian National University (ANU), joining the Department of Modern Languages under Professor Derek Scales. 1961 was the first year in which the ANU had undergraduate enrolments as undergraduate students had previously been enrolled in the Canberra University College. She was promoted in 1965 to Senior Lecturer in French and was acting head of the department in 1969 and again in 1974-1975 when it was the Department of Romance Languages.

Apart from her university teaching, she was passionate about the theatre and a long-term supporter of Alliance Française in Canberra. She published an edition of Giraudoux's play *Intermezzo* in 1970 for use by secondary and university students. She retired in 1977 and moved to Malua Bay on the South Coast where she continued to teach for the Eurobodalla branch of Alliance Française.

Ethel Tory was appointed a Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French government in 1992 for services to French culture. In 1995 the Ethel Tory Drama Endowment was established by the Australian National University from donations she made. She made a large bequest to the University on her death in 2003 to support academics and students in drama and languages. The Ethel Tory Languages Scholarship assists a number of students each year to study languages overseas.

In 2011, a state-of-the-art languages centre was opened in the Baldessin Building at the Australian National University and named the Ethel Tory Centre in her honour.

Published resources

Resource Section

Ethel Tory profile, 2011,
<http://cass.anu.edu.au/scholarships/ethel-tory-languages-scholarship/ethel-tory>

Site Exhibition

From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Australian National University Archives

[Ethel Tory papers](#)

[ANU calendar master set](#)

[Annual Report 1977](#)

Author Details

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Digital resources



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