

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE4894

Hughes, Helen

(1928 - 2013)

Born 1 October, 1928, Prague Czechoslovakia

Died 15 June, 2013

Occupation Economist

Details

Helen was born on 1 October 1928 to Charles and Elsie Gintz in Prague, Czechoslovakia and migrated with her parents to Australia in 1939. She attended MacRobertson's Girls' High School, Melbourne, matriculating in 1946 and studied at the University of Melbourne, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History and Economics in 1949. She completed a thesis on the history of the Australian iron and steel industry for a Master of Arts Honours degree awarded in 1951. She then studied at the London School of Economics and was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of London in 1954 for her thesis on the effects of technological change on labour in the pre-war iron and steel industries of Great Britain, the United States and Germany. She became a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society for statistical work she undertook as part of her thesis.

From 1959 to 1960 she was a lecturer in Economics at the University of New South Wales and then from 1961 at the University of Queensland, being promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1962. She came to the Australian National University in 1963, initially as a visiting fellow in the Department of Economic History in the Research School of Social Sciences and then as a Senior Fellow in the Department of Economics in the Research School of Pacific Studies.

She was appointed a Senior Economist at the World Bank in Washington, DC in 1969 while on sabbatical leave from Canberra, and was promoted to Deputy Director in 1973 and was Director of the Economic Analysis and Projections Department from 1976 to 1982. She had returned to Canberra briefly in 1976 as a visiting fellow in the Development Studies Centre in the Research School of Pacific Studies and in 1982 was appointed Professor of Economics and Director of the National Centre for Development Studies.

She gave the ABC Boyer Lectures in 1985 on the topic 'Australia in a Developing World' and was made a member of the Order of Australia and a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia the same year.

She was a member of a broad range of committees including the United Nations Committee for Development Planning 1987-1993, the Advisory Council of the Asian Development Bank Institute, the Jackson Committee to review Australia's overseas aid program 1983-88, the FitzGerald Committee to review Australia's immigration policy 1988, the Hughes Committee to review export market development assistance 1989, the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition 1989-1992 and the Board of AUSSAT 1983-1992.

She had two sons by her first marriage and remarried in 1975 to Graeme Dorrance, an economist at the International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.

She retired in 1994 and became an Emeritus Professor of the Australian National University where she was a visiting fellow in the Crawford School of Economics and Government. In 1994-5 she was a Professorial Fellow at Melbourne University and directed a full employment project at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research. She was also a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies, an Australian independent public policy 'think tank', focusing on issues of development in the Pacific and in Australia's remote Indigenous communities.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

The Centre for Independent Studies,
<http://www.cis.org.au>

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>

Archival resources

Australian National University Archives

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Author Details

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