Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6069

Howqua, June Louise

(1921 - 2008)

Born	19210101
Died	20081231
Occupation	Doctor, Physician

Summary

June Howqua was awarded her MD in 1947 from the University of Melbourne. Her most significant appointment as a physician was as at the Queen Victoria Hospital, where she devoted three decades of her life. She took the position of the Vice-President of the Board of Management from 1979 to 1983 and membership of the Standing Committee of Ethics in Human Experimentation and IVF. She was twice President of the Honorary Medical Staff.

Details

The great-grandfather of June Louise Howqua immigrated to Australia in 1854, being appointed Government interpreter in 1855. Ah Kin How Qua was naturalised in 1861 and gave his name to the Victorian valley in which he settled.[1] The family moved to Melbourne and June Howqua took her MBBS in 1944 with Honours in all subjects. She was awarded her MD in 1947.

She worked at the Royal Melbourne and the Royal Children's Hospitals before paying her passage to England as a ship's doctor and spending time at the Central Middlesex Hospital and the Brompton Hospital in London. Her most significant appointment as physician, however, was at the Queen Victoria Hospital to which she devoted three decades, taking the position of Vice-President of the Board of Management from 1979 to 1983 and membership of the Standing Committee of Ethics in Human Experimentation and IVF. She was twice President of the Honorary Medical Staff.

June Howqua specialised in cardiology and pulmonary medicine, publishing several papers on the subject.[2] She also had a special interest assisting women doctors in resuming their careers after marriage and ran several courses for them.[3] In an interview in 2006 she recalled being refused a position at a well-known hospital because it already had one female doctor on the staff.[4] When the Queen Victoria Hospital amalgamated with Monash Medical Centre at Clayton, she became an Associate in the Monash University Faculty of Medicine and oversaw the expansion of the obstetric unit.

When the Queen Victoria Hospital moved to Clayton in 1989, June Howqua, living in the East Melbourne house she had refurbished, continued in private practice until 1996 when she retired and was able to spend more time on her grazing property in Flowerdale. She also volunteered with the Brotherhood of St Laurence and studied a number of subjects in Classics at the University. She was a member of the Lyceum Club and listed her recreations as literature, theatre and gardening as well as farming and classical studies. In her will she endowed prizes at both Monash and her alma mater; both are available to a final year student.

[1] National Archives of Australia, NAA: A712, 1861/U7248 Howqua, Ah Kin – Naturalisation
https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1815331

[2] John Hayward, June Howqua. 'Pulmonary Embolism a Case Successfully Treated by Embolectomy'.

Lancet. v. 284 no. 7363 (10 October 1964): 771-776; June Howqua, John Leeton. 'A Case of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura Requiring Splenectomy and Trial of Labour'. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology. v. 9 no. 2 (May1969): 122-124.

[3] June L. Howqua. 'Refresher Course at Queen Victoria Hospital, Melbourne, for Married Women Wishing to Return to Medical Practice. 'British Medical Journal'. v. 1 no. 5542(25 March 1967): 752-753.

[4] Helen Razer. 'A Tower of Strength'. *Age*. 19 June 2006:

Published resources

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/

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