Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6076

Maxwell, Lilias Charlotte

(1887 - 1972)

Born	18870618, Armadale Victoria Australia
Died	19720506, Caulfield Victoria Australia
Occupation	Academic, Scientist

Details

Lilias Charlotte Maxwell nee Jackson was intimately connected to the University of Melbourne both before and after her marriage, although, as was typical of her time, in rather different ways. A graduate of the University of Melbourne, she married a University of Melbourne academic and their children are all Melbourne graduates.

Lilias Jackson graduated BSc in 1911 and MSc the following year when she also won a Government Research Scholarship for work on fish from a nutritional perspective. In 1914, winning the University Scholarship in Physiology she was appointed a demonstrator, acting in Arthur Rothera's position as Lecturer from August 1915 until 1919. Her scientific career was a promising one. She was elected to the Physiological Society, London in 1915, the first year in which women were admitted and published several papers.[1] In 1919 Lilias Jackson married another promising biochemist, L.A.I. Maxwell, known as Ivan and it is as Mrs Ivan Maxwell that her subsequent career was recorded.

Although she left academia, Lilias Maxwell continued her involvement with the University through the Women of the University Fund and many benevolent societies concerned with the wellbeing of the troops in World War II. She was at various times President of the University Women's Patriotic Fund, the Lyceum Club and the Catalysts.

From 1935 to 1937 the family travelled in Europe. On her return, Lilias Maxwell gave lectures to organisations like Rotary and the Victorian Women Graduates' Association on her impressions of Russia and Spain. In Russia she was especially struck by the contrasts in poverty and affluence among the people, noting that 'in a railway waiting-room she saw a magnificent Persian rug but in shop windows she saw little attractive food or clothing'.[2] In Spain the most notable aspect was the January festivities continuing in Seville despite the Civil War:

celebrating the feast of the three kings with a procession watched by a laughing crowd, which followed it into the great cathedral. Sweets were distributed to the children, and the night before the shops had been open late to sell toys for them.[3]

In addition to serving on the committees of the Melbourne Hospital Auxiliary, St Andrew's Presbyterian Hospital, the Scottish Mothers' Union and the Parents' National Education Union, Lilias Jackson managed two houses: 'Narveno' in Toorak, and 'Rosmarin' in McCrae.

[1] Lilias C. Jackson, Leslie McNab and A. C. H. Rothera. 'The Electrical Conductivity of Milk during its Concentration, with Suggestions for a Practical Method of Determining the End Point in the Manufacture of Sweetened Condensed Milk'. *Journal of the Society of Chemical Industry*. v. 33 no. 2 (31 January 1914): 59–60; William Alexander Osborne and Lilias Charlotte Jackson. 'Counter Diffusion in Aqueous Solution'. *Biochemical Journal*. v. 8 no.3(June 1914): 246-249, etc.

[2] 'Suit Costs £48 in Russia: Luxury and Poverty'. *Argus*. 24 June 1937: 11.

[3] 'A Contrast: Spain in January, European Tour'. *Sydney Morning Herald*. 26 August 1936: 7.

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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