Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6243

Waddell, Thea Mary

(1925 - 2008)

Born	19250101
Died	20080713, Elizabeth BayElizabeth Bay New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Author, Patron

Details

Thea Mary Hogg was born in 1925 to dentist Owen and his wife Kathleen (McDonald). After contracting bovine tuberculosis as a girl, resulting in damage to one eye and some facial paralysis, Thea finished primary school at Blue Mountains Church of England School in Springwood, New South Wales.

Thea won a scholarship to attend Kambala girls school in Rose Bay and there she received her Intermediate Certificate in 1940. Despite her studies, Thea's father decided she should train for employment rather than go on to university study.

Thea passed the matriculation exam at a business college however she suffered a relapse of tuberculosis and was bedridden for months. Through fear of becoming blind, Thea began to learn braille. After her recovery she volunteered at the American Officer's Club.

Soon after, Thea obtained employment as fashion editor for Tops in Fashion, and in 1944 applied for a scholarship to Wellesley College in Massachusetts, United States. Unfortunately her application she was unsuccessful due to her eye condition.

After gaining an advertising diploma in 1948, Thea sailed to England on the same ship as her soon-to-be husband Thomas William Waddell. The pair married in London in 1950 and honeymooned in France, Switzerland and Italy. Afterwards, Thea worked with the Festival of Britain.

Back in Sydney in 1951, Thea worked with Voice, an independent monthly review of current affairs. She also went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree at Sydney University, majoring in English literature and language. Thea sat on the Kambala school council and became a life member of the National Trust. She also wrote the text for *Hidden Gardens of Sydney*, which was published in 1977.

In 1972 Thea became a volunteer at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. She also supported the Museum of Contemporary Art and the National Institute of Dramatic Art, and was the director of the Sydney Theatre Company.

Thea was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia on Australia Day, 1994, 'for service to the Art Gallery of New South Wales'.

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Thea Waddell, 1963-2000 [manuscript]

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection
Thea Waddell interviewed by Helen Topliss [sound recording]

National Library of Australia
Correspondence from Thea Waddell, 1984

Author Details
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Created 23 March 2018
Last modified 27 March 2018