Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0035

Herring, Mary Ranken

(1895 - 1981)

Born	18950331, Victoria Australia
Died	19811026
Occupation	Community worker, Hockey player, Sports administrator, Tennis player

Summary

In her biography on Dame Mary Herring, Della Hilton lists Dame Mary as being Patroness of the following organisations:
• Aftercare Hospital
• Victorian Women's Hockey
• Australian Association O Group
• Ministering Children's League
• Spastic Children's Society
• Victorian Association of Day Nurseries
• Victorian Family Council
• Save the Children Fund
• Travellers Aid Society
• Bush Nursing Association (Life Governor)
• Royal Eye & Ear Hospital Auxiliaries
• Royal Melbourne Hospital Auxiliaries
• Tweddle Baby Hospital
• Gentlewomen's Aid Society
• Victorian Amateur Sports Council
• RSL Women's Association Veterans Care Homes.

Mary Herring was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire on 11 June 1960 for service to nursing in Victoria.

Details

Dame Mary Herring, the daughter of Sir Thomas Ranken and Frances Clare (née Millear) Lyle, attended Toorak College between 1906 and 1912. Here she excelled both scholastically and at sport. In 1913 she entered Melbourne University as a medical student and continued to participate in sports obtaining Hockey and Tennis Blue. Graduating in 1921, she achieved first-class honours in all subjects, with a first in medicine and fourth in surgery. She won the Keith Levi Memorial Scholarship in medicine and the Sameson prize in clinical medicine (Hilton).

On 6 April 1922, she married Edmund Herring (later Lieutenant General, Honorary Sir and future Lieutenant Governor of Victoria) at Toorak Presbyterian Church. They had three daughters. From 1926 until 1945 Herring was medical officer for the Pre-Natal Clinic at the Prahran Health Centre. She also was chairman of Toorak College Council (1947-1971), as well as helping in coaching the college tennis teams. In 1943 (until 1953) Herring was vice-president of the Melbourne District Nursing and After Care Hospital, a society she joined in 1931.

Herring became chairman of the Welfare Branch of the AIF Women's Association in 1940 and president from 1943 till 1946. Between 1946 and 1950 she was a foundation member and president of the Victorian Council Social Service. For 23 years (1946-1979) Herring was chairman of the Vera Scantlebury Brown Trust. Herring and Scantlebury Brown had attended Toorak College and were medical students at Melbourne University together.

Herring also was an honorary member of the Soroptimist Club of Victoria, president (1962-1967) of the Australia Council of the Save the Children Fund, deputy president of the Victoria League 1945-1972, as well as vice-chairman of the British Commonwealth Youth Sunday Council. She was a member of both the Alexandra and Lyceum clubs as well as the Royal Melbourne Golf, Barwon Heads Golf and the Lawn Tennis Association of Victoria.

Before passing away Dame Mary Herring planned her funeral service requesting that no announcements be made until after she was buried. A small private service was held on 28 October 1981. The Mary Herring Hall at Toorak College is named in her honour.

Published resources

Edited Book
Who's Who in Australia 1980, Draper, W. J., 1980

Book
Dr Mary: the story of Dame Mary Herring, DBE, CBE, Hilton, Della, 1989

The Ties that Bind: A History of Sport at the University of Melbourne, Senyard, June, 2004

Site Exhibition
She's Game: Women Making Australian Sporting History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2007, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/sg/sport-home.html

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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