Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0061

Hallenstein, Phillipa May

(1918 - 1994)

Born	19180519, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Died	19940801
Occupation	Community worker, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

In 1972, Phillipa Hallenstein was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to the community and to women’s organisations.

Details

The following is an extract of the Appreciation Dinner Speech made by Dame Phyllis Frost AC, DBE, DSocSc (Hon) for the National Council of Women of Victoria Inc. on Thursday, 18 March 1993.

Philippa Hallenstein was the daughter of Mr and Mrs J Plottel who were a professional couple – her father an architect and her mother a doctor of medicine. After matriculating from Melbourne Girl's Grammar School in 1935 she was in residence at Janet Clarke Hall, University of Melbourne where she successfully completed a Law degree and later obtained a Master of Laws. Whilst at the university she was an active member of the University Ski Club. She completed her Articles with Hedderwick, Fookes and Alston and in 1943 was admitted to the Bar. During the Second World War, Australian women were Australian citizens and British subjects but our Nationality Act said that when an Australian woman married, she lost her Australian nationality and took the nationality of her husband. This created enormous difficulties for Philippa as she had met her future husband, Rolf Hallenstein and wished to marry. Her intelligence made her probe and research the situation and she discovered that Germany had withdrawn citizenship for Jews and this made Rolf a stateless person, so she was able to marry in 1943 and Rolf became an Australian citizen. Philippa took an active interest in organisations and was an elected member of the National Council of Women of Victoria (NCWV) for 21 years – 1958-1979. A remarkable and outstanding woman, devoted to the cause of mankind, she was a dedicated member of NCWV for more than 35 years, being a delegate for the Victorian Women Lawyers Society. Mrs Hallenstein was President of NCWV 1968-1971 whilst at the same time being Vice President of NCW Australia from 1968-1971. She gave generously of her talents to NCW worldwide as she was Convenor of the Laws Standing Committee NCWV, as well as Vice Convenor and then Convenor of that Committee Australia-wide. From 1979-86 she convened that Committee worldwide for the International Council of Women. She always supported NCWV and its work in rural Victoria and was instrumental in founding in founding the branch in Mildura (Sunraysia). Philippa always encouraged the branch members as well as the members of the Council in Melbourne to express their views and thoughts and so benefit all of the community and society. Her contribution was outstanding and she was elected an Honorary Life Vice President of NCWA in 1991 and up until her death she was a very supportive and loyal Honorary member of NCWV. Mrs Hallenstein also took an active interest and working role in being a member of the Council of the Melbourne State College, Victorian Post Secondary Education Committee, Board Member of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital and a Member of the Fourth University Committee. She was a member of the UN Status of Women Committee, as well as being Foundation President of the Australian Local Government Women's Association Victoria in 1963 and with her long time friend Dame Phyllis Frost she was on the Victorian Women's Prison Council for 24 years. She also lectured in Forensic Pharmacy at the Pharmacy College for 6 years. Mrs Hallenstein was a keen and vocal supporter of women being able to serve on juries, married women having a share of property and women in local government. In between all these volunteer activities she was a ruthless bridge player and devoted to her game of golf, although she had earlier played tennis and hockey. Philippa was devoted not only to her delightful husband Rolf, but also her wonderful family, Hal (State Coroner Victoria), Colin who has worked around the world mining and daughter Josephine in Family Law. Philippa was a women who gave much encouragement to younger women to explore and express their talents and was always supportive of all women whether in the workforce or working voluntarily in the community. She will be remember as a truly remarkable, outstanding and supportive women who was ahead of her time.

Events

1979 - 1986
Convenor of the Laws and Status of Women Standing Committee for the International Council of Women

1958 - 1973
Convenor of the Laws and Suffrage Standing Committee for the National Council of Women of Victoria

1964 - 1979
Convenor of the Laws and Suffrage Standing Committee of the National Council of Women of Australia

1968 - 1971
President of the National Council of Women of Victoria

1979 - 1986
Vice-convenor of the Laws and Status of Women Standing Committee for the International Council of Women

1968 - 1971
Vice-President of the National Council of Women of Australia

Published resources

Edited Book
Who's Who of Australian Women, Lofthouse, Andrea, 1982

Valuing the Volunteers : An Anthology for the International Year of Volunteers 2001, National Council of Women of Victoria Inc., 2001

Site Exhibition
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

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Journal Article
'Sit down girlie' [Obituary: Phillipa Hallenstein], Lateral, Una, 1994,
http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AltLawJl/1994/104.pdf

Archival resources

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Philippa Hallenstein, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Author Details
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