Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0144

Galleghan, Persia Elspeth

(1902 - 1997)

Born	19020922, Khoribah New South Wales Australia
Died	19970113
Occupation	Red Cross leader, Social worker

Summary

Persia Galleghan, née Blaiklock, established a reputation as ‘a born organiser’ and ‘tireless worker’ for many philanthropic causes, which included the Red Cross Society and in particular the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) in New South Wales. Educated in Brisbane, she married Sidney Porter in 1925, and they moved to Sydney, but he died after a short illness in 1933. On the outbreak of war in September 1939, she joined the newly formed Scottish Voluntary Aid Detachment situated at Millers Point, Sydney and later became its commandant. She devoted much of the next fifty years to the VAD movement in New South Wales and to the Red Cross Society. In addition to her voluntary work she qualified as a social worker in 1955 and was employed at the Concord Repatriation Hospital for nine years. She embarked upon a second marriage to Sir Frederick Galleghan in 1969, but was to be widowed again in 1971. She also contributed to the Arts by serving on the executive of the Opera Foundation of Australia and donating funds for an opera scholarship. Her desire to complete a history of the VAD movement, was thwarted by her death in 1997. Melanie Oppenheimer subsequently wrote a history entitled *Red Cross VAs: a history of the VAD movement in New South Wales*, using some of the records Persia Galleghan had collected. Persia Galleghan was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1978 and posthumously appointed to the Order of Australia in 1997. The Red Cross admitted her to honorary life membership, the highest honour bestowed by the Red Cross.

Published resources

Book
Look what you started Henry! A history of the Australian Red Cross 1914-1991., Stubbings, Leon, 1992

Red Cross VAs: A history of the VAD movement in New South Wales, Oppenheimer, Melanie, 1999

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

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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