Entry type: Person
Entry ID: PR00420

Robinson, Nellie Elizabeth

(1915 - 1992)

Born	19150101, Toowoomba Queensland Australia
Died	19920919, Toowoomba Queensland Australia
Occupation	Mayor, Radio presenter, Teacher

Summary

Nellie Robinson was elected as Alderman to the Toowoomba Council in 1961. In 1967 she was elected mayor of Toowoomba, thus becoming Queensland's first female mayor. Nellie served the state for 14 years. The Queen's New Year Honours list in 1979 made her an officer of the Order of the British Empire for "distinguished service to local government".

Details

Nellie Robinson was educated at North State School, Glennie Memorial School and St. Hilda's at Southport. In the 1930s she commenced a 3 year course at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. Without completing the course Nellie returned to Toowoomba at the outbreak of World War II. She taught briefly at Fairholme, and then became a driver with the Women's Voluntary Auxiliary for the remainder of the war. Next she joined radio station 4GR for a short time, before moving to 2LM Lismore where she established her own women's session on air.

Nellie then joined her father's grocery business which she carried on after his death in 1949, only selling it in 1967 when she was elected mayor of Toowoomba. She was President of the committee which raised funds to build the Senior Citizens' clubrooms in Victoria Street & was dedicated to the development of East Creek Park. A Park on the southern side of Toowoomba is named in her honour. Miss Robinson had a particular interest in dramatic art and cultural activities and was a trustee of the Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery and was actively involved in the Toowoomba Repertory Company. Nell Robinson retired in 1981 because of ill-health.

She passed away on 19th September 1992 & is buried at the Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery. The Robinson Collection within the Toowoomba City Library is so named because of a generous twenty thousand dollar bequest from Miss Robinson.

Published resources

Resource
Nellie E. Robinson - Queensland's First Lady Mayor, Toowoomba Regional Council, 2003, http://www.toowoomba.qld.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=416&Itemid=691

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section
Nellie Robinson, Toowoomba Regional Council, 2009, http://www.women.qld.gov.au/q150/1960/index.html#item-nellie-robinson

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