

The Australian Women's Register

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A group of Australian nurses rescued after being almost three and a half years with the Japanese.

Repository Australian War Memorial, Research Centre

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Formats Photograph

Details

Probably at Atsugi airfield, Japan, probably on 1 September 1945. A group of Australian nurses rescued after being three years and nine months as prisoners of war (POW) of the Japanese. Seventeen were captured at Rabaul and one, Dorothy May (or Maye), at Kavieng early in 1942. They were then taken to Yokohama and kept there until 1943 when they were transferred to a camp at Totsuka about twelve miles away. The group included: Mavis Green of Raymond Terrace, NSW; Dorothy May (or Maye) of Sydney, NSW; Lorna Whyte of Hay, NSW; Jean Christopher of Kadina, SA; Jean McLellan of Weranga, Qld; Grace Kreuger (or Kruger) of Townsville, Qld; Kathleen D Bignell civilian plantation owner of Rabaul; Eileen Callaghan of Woodville North, SA; Alice Bowman of Lawrence, NSW; Joyce Oldroyd-Harris of Bowenfels, NSW; Jean Anderson of Grafton, NSW; Mavis Cullen of Yass, NSW; Kay Parker of Croydon; Dorothy Beal of Gladstone, Qld; Mary Goss of Binalong, NSW; Dora Wilson of Newcastle, NSW; Daisy Keast of Junee, NSW; Joyce McGahan of Warwick, Qld. The women travelled by bus from the camp to Atsugi airfield. From Atsugi they flew to Okinawa, then the Philippines, before returning to Australia. One of the women is wearing a checked cloth suit. The nurses were taken from the tropics of Rabaul to the cold winter of Japan and had no winter clothing. The Japanese gave them a roll material and Dora Wilson made suits for each of them.

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