

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE0448

## Burchill, Dora (Elizabeth)

(1904 - 2003)

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**Born** 4 January, 1904, Hawthorn Victoria Australia

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**Died** 3 December, 2003

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**Occupation** Author, Historian, Nurse

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### Summary

The daughter of Alholstane Chase and Rosina (née Sherrin), Elizabeth Burchill completed her education at the Camberwell State School and the Ladies Business College, Melbourne, as well as at Melbourne and Monash Universities.

Before World War II Burchill worked at the Australian Inland Mission, Innamincka, Labrador, Grenfell Mission, and was a member of the British Ambulance Unit, caring for refugee children during the Spanish Civil War. She enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service on 21 December 1939 and was one of the first nurses from Victoria to go to the Middle East with the 2nd Australian Imperial Force in 1940. After the war she combined nursing with writing – particularly about the area in which she had nursed. Her publications include *Australian Nurses since Nightingale: 1860-1990*, a largely biographical history published in 1992.

On 8 June 1998, Sister Elizabeth Burchill was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to nursing, particularly as an historian, author and philanthropist. Also she has won the Jessie Lichfield Annual Award and the Veterans' Affairs Writers Award.

### Events

#### 1930 - 1930

Certificate in Midwifery from the Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne

#### 1933 - 1933

Certificate in Infant Welfare from the Tweddle Baby Hospital, Melbourne

#### 1981 - 1981

Bachelor Arts from Monash University

#### 1938 - 1938

Postgraduate study, diseases of the chest, from the Brompton Hospital, London

#### 1946 - 1946

Publication *Labrador memories*

#### 1960 - 1960

Publication *Innamincka*

#### 1970 - 1970

Publication *New Guinea Nurse*

#### 1958 - 1960

Nursing at Thursday Island

#### 1952 - 1956

Charge sister and nursing sister for the Department of Health, Darwin, Northern Territory

**1946 - 1947**

Chief woman announcer at 3SR Radio, Shepparton, Victoria

**1940 - 1946**

Captain for the Australian Army Nursing Service, 2nd AIF

**1938 - 1938**

Nursing at Labrador

**1937 - 1937**

Member of the British Ambulance Unit, caring for refugee children during the Spanish Civil War

**1930 - 1932**

Nursing at the Australian Inland Mission, Innamincka

**1969 - 1971**

Nursing in United States of America and Canada

**1929 - 1929**

Certificates in General Nursing from the Prince Henry Hospital, Melbourne

**1965 - 1967**

Nursing in Europe

**1961 - 1963**

Nursing in New Guinea

**1974 - 1974**

Publication *Thursday Island Nurse*

**1981 - 1981**

Publication *The Paths I've trod*

**1992 - 1992**

Publication *Australian nurses since Nightingale: 1860-1990*

**1972 - 1976**

Member, Fellowship of Australian Writers

**1972 - 1977**

Foundation member of the Maroondah Singers

**1975 - 1975**

Winner Short Story Award from the Army Repatriation Project

## Published resources

### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,  
<http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html>

### Resource Section

Burchill, Dora Elizabeth, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002,  
<http://www.wv2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=A&VeteranID=416942>

### Edited Book

Who's Who in Australia 2003, De Micheli, Catherine and Herd, Margaret, 2003

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

### Book

Innamincka, Burchill, Elizabeth, 1960

The paths I've trod, Burchill, Elizabeth, 1981

Australian nurses since Nightingale 1860-1990, Burchill, Elizabeth, 1992

Thursday Island Nurse, Burchill, Elizabeth, 1972

### Newspaper Article

A dedicated nurse who practised around the world, Hudson, Susan, 2004

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia

[\[Biographical cuttings on Sister Elizabeth Burchill, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

### Author Details

Anne Heywood

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