

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE0486

Cameron, Elizabeth Katherine (Betty)

(1918 - 2011)

Born 20 November, 1918

Died 1 April, 2011

Occupation Community worker, Servicewoman

Summary

Betty Twynam-Perkins and Leith Cameron married in July 1940. They both joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in April 1941. After the war Betty Cameron joined the WAAAF Branch of the RAAF Association. She held various positions including president, secretary and treasurer. She also has been the convenor of two national reunions for the WAAAF, as well as a committee member. Her other community work included being a member of MU (Mothers' Union) Australia and a voluntary driver at Concord Hospital.

Details

Betty Cameron's father, who was English, was a doctor in the Indian Army. Both his parents were with the British Government in India.

Her mother, also English, trained at Trinity College in Dublin because at the time it was the only University to take women. Capable of speaking seven languages she travelled to America and was a matron in Philadelphia and later in Argentina. She came to Australia in 1907, married in 1908 and they had five children. Her husband served in World War I in France in the Australian Army Medical Corps. He was gassed in a Field Hospital in Ypres and became a TPI (totally and permanently incapacitated).

Betty Cameron was educated at Fort Street Girls' High School and obtained her Leaving Certificate. From 1938 to 1940 she was a lady cubmaster. In July 1940 she married scoutmaster Leith McLaurin Cameron. He enlisted in the RAAF in 1940 and his wife joined the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) in April 1941.

In the WAAAF, Mrs Florence McKenzie trained Cameron as a wireless telegraphist operator. She then served in the Shipping Movement Branch of the RAAF before being transferred to Melbourne. Early in 1942 she was stationed at Parkes to complete a navigation course (theory only) and was then posted to Fighter Section in Sydney. Here she worked underground in the tunnels made for the Eastern Suburbs Railway.

Promoted to corporal in May 1942, Cameron went to Melbourne on an officers course and then on the operations course. After completion she was posted to Eastern Area, Point Piper in the Operations Room and Intelligence.

In July 1944 Leith Cameron returned to Australia. He was in Sydney for a brief period before being posted to Darwin and the South East Asia area. That same year Betty became pregnant with her first child and was discharged from the WAAAF on 20 November 1944. She and her husband were to have three children.

After the war Cameron joined the WAAAF Wing which later became the WAAAF Branch of the RAAF Association. She has held various positions with the Branch including president, secretary and treasurer, and was the convenor of two national WAAAF reunions.

For several years Cameron served on the RAAF Association State Committee and was Matron of Honour four times to the debutantes at the annual RAAF Ball as well as helping to train the debutantes and their partners. In 1978 she was made a life member of the RAAF Association.

Cameron was a volunteer typist at the three schools her children attended as well as being in the P&C (Parents' and Citizens') and Mothers' Clubs. She also is a member of MU in the Anglican Church being a Diocesan president. At various times she has been president, secretary and treasurer for the MU at the local church as well as a voluntary worker visiting the local hospitals. For a number of years Cameron has been a driver for church members who have been unable to attend the Carers Club, meetings or complete their shopping etc.

For many years she was one of the voluntary drivers at Concord Hospital where in 1953 she was introduced to Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Windsor.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

Anne Heywood

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Digital resources

Title: Servicewoman Betty Twynam-Perkins (later Cameron)
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