

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE2190

## Dennis, Clare

(1916 - 1971)

---

<b>Born</b>	7 March, 1916, Burwood New South Wales Australia
<b>Died</b>	4 June, 1971, Sydney New South Wales Australia
<b>Occupation</b>	Commonwealth or Empire Games Gold Medalist, Olympian, Swimmer

---

### Summary

Clare Dennis dominated breast-stroke swimming from 1931 to 1935, becoming the first Australian woman to win a gold medal in the British Empire Games in 1934. An outstanding junior swimmer, she broke the world record at 15 years of age in the 220 yards breast-stroke, ensuring her selection in the team to represent Australia at the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. She was the youngest member of the team, but still came home with the gold medal in her event – the first female Olympic Champion since Fanny Durack in 1912 and the last Australian swimmer, male or female to win Olympic Gold until 1956. She was the youngest Australian to win Olympic Gold until Shane Gould in 1972. She was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1985.

### Events

#### 1932 - 1932

Swimming – 200m Backstroke

#### 1934 - 1934

Swimming – 200y Breaststroke

### Published resources

#### Edited Book

The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport, Vamplew, Vray; Moore, Katharine; O'Hara, John; Cashman, Richard; Jobling, Ian, 1997

#### Site Exhibition

She's Game: Women Making Australian Sporting History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2007, <http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/sg/sport-home.html>

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

#### Resource Section

Dennis, Clara (Clare) (1916-1971), Raszeja, V. M., 2006, <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A130687b.htm>

### Author Details

Nikki Henningham

**Created** 14 November 2006  
**Last modified** 16 April 2019