

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2258

Mills, May

(1890 - 1984)

Born 1 January, 1890, Millbrae South Australia Australia

Died 31 December, 1984, South Australia Australia

Occupation Cricketer, Educator, Sports administrator

Summary

May Mills played a prominent role in the development of women's sport in South Australia. She was President of the South Australian Women's Cricket Association and the Australian Women's Cricket Council in the 1960s. Prior to that she was President of the South Australian Women's Amateur Sports Council, the body that successfully lobbied the then Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, to secure access to playing fields for the dedicated use of women. Trained as a teacher, she taught at Unley High School for thirty years. She became the first female President of the South Australian Institute of Teachers in 1943.

Apart from her interest in women's sport and teaching, Mills was active in a number of other spheres of public life. She was the first President of the South Australian Film and Television Council, a founding member of the Australian College of Education, a Life Vice-President of the National Council of Women and a Life Member of the Royal Commonwealth Society. She was the first woman in South Australia to secure a license to drive a motor car.

May Mills' contribution to women's cricket was recognised in 1984/85 by the creation of the May Mills Trophy for the Under 18 national Championship. This competition ran until 1995/96.

Details

The extent of Mills' involvement in public life gives proof to the old aphorism which tells us that if you want something done, ask a busy person. May Mills wasn't just busy, however, she was canny. She saved thousands of dollars of development costs by enticing major corporations to test their heavy machinery on the ovals, therefore getting them cleared and levelled at no cost to the sporting clubs. She organised parties of youngsters to plant almond trees around the oval and then, when the trees began to bear fruit, organised other children to harvest the crop, thus creating another source of funds through their sale.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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>

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia

South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields Trust : SUMMARY RECORD

May Mills : SUMMARY RECORD

Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording] Interviewer: Lynne Arnold

Author Details

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