

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6232

Dicks, Robin Elizabeth

(1940 - 1975)

Born	8 December, 1940, Subiaco Western Australia Australia
Died	7 December, 1975, South PerthSouth Perth Western Australia Australia
Occupation	Nurse, Pilot

Details

Robin Elizabeth Miller was born on 7 December 1940, to parents Dame Mary Durack and Captain Horace (Horatio) Clive Miller. After completing her education at Loreto Convent, Nedlands, Robin trained as a nurse at the Royal Perth Hospital. She graduated in 1962, winning the State nurses' medical prize and by 1964 she was a triple-certificated nurse at St Anne's Hospital, Mount Lawley. With encouragement from her future husband, Harold Dicks (honorary president of the Western Australia branch of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia), Robin upgraded her private pilot's licence – which she had obtained in 1962 – to a commercial one in 1966.

In 1967, after purchasing a plane and obtaining permission from the Department of Health, Robin set off to north and north-western Australia to administer the Sabin polio vaccine. The local Aboriginal children often referred to Robin as 'the tchooger bird lady' ('Sugar bird lady') because of the sugar cubes the oral vaccine was administered on. By the time she had completed the immunisation programme in October 1969, Robin had administered over 37,000 doses of vaccine and had flown 69,200 km.

Robin was awarded a diploma of merit by the Associazione Nazionale Infermieri, Mantova, Italy in 1969 and received the Nancy Bird (Walton) award in 1970.

Despite the initial hostility of male doctors, Robin regularly flew aircraft for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. In 1971 she produced a book about her career, titled *Flying Nurse*.

On April 4, 1973, Robin married Harold Dicks in Canberra. In the same year she competed in the Powder Puff 'Derby', a trans-America race for female pilots.

Sadly Robin passed away in December 1975 after being diagnosed with Cancer. She was 35 years of age.

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Robin Miller Dicks, 1943-1978 \[manuscript\]](#)

National Library of Australia

[\[Biographical cuttings on Robin Miller Dicks, nurse with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

Author Details

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