

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0051

Latham, Eleanor Mary (Ella)

(1878 - 1964)

Born 10 October, 1878, Northcote Victoria Australia

Died 26 March, 1964, Melbourne Victoria Australia

Occupation Community worker

Summary

Lady Latham was president of the Royal Children's Hospital management committee from 1933 until 1954, and founding president of the Victorian Society for Crippled Children in 1936. On 1 January 1954, Lady Latham was appointed to the Order of the British Empire – Commander (Civil) for services to children.

Details

Named Eleanor Mary but always called Ella was the only child of teachers (Richard and Fanny (née Matthews) Tobin who taught at Northcote State School, in Victoria as well as being involved in Northcote community affairs. She was educated at University High and the University of Melbourne, from which she graduated in 1902 with an Arts degree.

Latham worked as a teacher and in 1905 co-authored with Jessie Webb a poetry text *Phases of Literature from Pope to Browning: prose and verse selections*. On 19 December 1907 she married John Greig Latham (later Rt. Hon. Sir) and they had three children. Their eldest son died during the World War II and their daughter Freda died from complications of diabetes.

In 1912 Latham was a foundation member of the Lyceum club, a new club for women graduates and other women who had distinguished themselves in art, music, literature, philanthropy or public service. She became it's tenth president in 1925. She was also foundation president of the Hawthorn branch of the Children's Hospital auxiliary, in 1923, and was invited to join the committee of management, a position she resigned from in 1926. Latham rejoined the committee in 1932 and became president in 1933 (retiring 1954). During her term as president she guided the Children's Hospital through the transmission from a charity hospital to a teaching hospital.

Events

2001 - 2001

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Edited Book

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

Who's Who in Australia 1962, Alexander, Joseph A, 1962

Book

The Royal Children's Hospital: A History of Faith, Science and Love, Yule, Peter

From charity to teaching hospital : Ella Latham's presidency 1933-1954, the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Williams, Howard E, 1989

Phases of literature from Pope to Browning: prose and verse selections, Webb, Jessie S and Latham, Ella M

Jessie Webb, a memoir, Ridley, Ronald T, 1994

Resource

Guide to the Papers of Howard E. Williams, National Library of Australia,
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-291931366/findingaid>

Victorian Women's Roll of Honour: Women Shaping the Nation, 2001,
<https://herplacemuseum.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2001-Honour-Roll-Booklet.pdf>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section

Latham, Eleanor Mary (1878-1964), Williams, Howard, 2006,
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A150076b.htm>

Site Exhibition

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Howard E. Williams, 1878-1969. \(bulk 1907-1969\) \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Sir John Latham, 1856-1964 \(bulk 1890-1964\) \[manuscript\]](#)

[Family papers, 1879-\[1971?\] \[manuscript\]](#)

Author Details

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