

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** IMP0078

## Bush, Muriel Evelyn (Merle E)

(1897 - 1981)

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**Born** 9 March, 1897, Bairnsdale Victoria Australia

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**Died** 1 January, 1981

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**Occupation** Community worker

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### Summary

Merle Bush devoted over 50 years of her life to the Victoria Guide Movement. During that time she developed training programs for leaders in Victoria and interstate. In the New Year's Honours List for 1956, Bush was appointed an Officer of the British Empire (Civil) for her services to the Girl Guide Movement.

### Details

Always known as Merle E Bush, she was named on her birth certificate as Muriel Evelyn Bush.

Merle grew up with very good memories of life in the early days of Victoria, as both her grandfathers had 'Produce Stores' which supplied vast areas in the state of Victoria. Her paternal grandfather's store was in Bendigo and from there he supplied goods from Northern Victoria and Southern Riverina, using Paddle Steamers along the Murray from Echuca. On the other hand her maternal grandfather's store was situated in Bairnsdale and with the aid of a steam ship, which he built himself, called the J. C. D. he traded through the Gippsland Lakes and coastal ports to Melbourne.

Bush was educated at Girton, a Church of England Grammar School, where in 1915 she became the school's Head Prefect.

Her involvement with the Girl Guide movement lasted nearly 60 years. She helped establish and was the first Guide Leader of the 1st Bendigo Guide Company. Later Bush organized Guide rallies to see Lord and Lady Baden Powell during their visits to the State of Victoria, as well as developing Camping and Training programmes.

Acting State Secretary for eight years, Bush was awarded the Chief Guide's Diploma for Training (the only one to be awarded in Australia) as well as becoming a life member of the State Council of the Victorian Girl Guide Association during the 1940s.

Following her death in 1981 a new Trefoil Guild was formed in Bendigo and called the Merle Bush T.G. It was registered on June 18, 1981.

(Source: information supplied by Guides Victoria archives)

## Events

### **1923 - 1923**

Gained the Campers Licence

### **1923 - 1923**

Honorary Secretary for Bendigo Local Association

### **1925 - 1925**

Attended the first All Australian Camp for Leaders

### **1925 - 1925**

Appointed the Head of Brownies in Victoria

### **1926 - 1926**

Appointed the first Camping Advisor for Victoria

### **1926 - 1926**

Appointed the first Training Advisor for Victoria

### **1926 - 1926**

Instituted training by correspondence for country Leaders

### **1927 - 1927**

First Ranger Captain of 1st Bendigo Ranger Company

### **1927 - 1927**

Visited Queensland as an experienced Trainer and gained further training qualification (Red Cord) for service beyond her own State

### **1930 - 1930**

Organized a Rally for guides to get together and meet the Chief's – Lord and Lady Baden Powell during this visit to Australia

### **1930 - 1930**

Awarded the Medal of Merit – presented by the world Chief Guide, Lady Baden Powell

### **1935 - 1935**

Organized a rally for the Guides of the time to see Lord and Lady Baden Powell during their visit to the State of Victoria

### **1939 - 1946**

Accepted position of Acting State Secretary for 3 months (lasted for 8 years)

### **1940 - 1940**

Worked with the other States particularly South Australia and Queensland to develop Camping and Training programmes

### **1940 - 1940**

Life Member of the State Council of the Victorian Girl Guide Association

### **1956 - 1956**

Honoured by Her Majesty the Queen with the Order of the British Empire. Presented with her award at Buckingham Palace.

### **1915 - 1915**

Head Prefect, Church of England Grammar School, Girton

### **1970 - 1970**

Born: daughter of Samuel Albert and Nina Marie (nee Dahlsen) Bush

### **1981 - 1981**

Died

### **1945 - 1945**

Visited South Australia to help reorganise that State's Training Department

### **1945 - 1945**

An organiser and assessor of the first Guide International Service (Australian) Test prior to the women being selected to work with the displaced people in Europe and Malaysia

**1947 - 1947**

Awarded Chief Guide's Diploma for Training (the first to ever be awarded in Australia)

**1948 - 1948**

Honorary Secretary at the first Federal Trainers Conference

**1922 - 1922**

Founded Guiding in Bendigo

**1922 - 1922**

First Guide Leader of 1st Bendigo Guide Company

**1923 - 1923**

Nominated for special leadership training at the First Victorian Training Week

**1924 - 1924**

First Brownie Leader of 1st Bendigo Brownie Pack

**1924 - 1924**

Gained first Training Diploma (Blue Cord)

**2001 - 2001**

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

**1923 - 1923**

District Secretary

**Published resources****Resource**

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

**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>

**Author Details**

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## Digital resources



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