

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** IMP0126

## Leeson, Ida Emily

(1885 - 1964)

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**Born** 1 January, 1885, Leichhardt New South Wales Australia

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**Died** 31 December, 1964

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**Occupation** Librarian

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### Summary

Ida Emily Leeson (1885-1964) was born at Leichhardt, Sydney, the daughter of Thomas Leeson, a carpenter from Canada, and his Australian born wife Mary Ann, née Emberson.

Leeson was educated at Leichhardt Public School and Sydney Girl's High School. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney in 1906. In August that year she was appointed library assistant at the Public Library of New South Wales, and in 1909 was transferred to the Mitchell Library. In 1932 she was appointed second Mitchell Librarian.

In April 1944 Lieutenant Colonel A.A. Conlan secured Ida Leeson's secondment as a research officer in the Directorate of Research, where she was ranked captain, and later major in the Australian Military Forces. She was a member of A.A. Conlan's 'think-tank' which included John Kerr. Leeson did not return to the Mitchell Library, officially resigning in 1946. Toward the end of the war she was appointed librarian-archivist for the School of Civil Affairs, later known as the Australian School of Pacific Administration. In 1949 she went to Noumea to establish the library for the South Pacific Commission, returning to Australia the following year, where she continued to work for the commission in Sydney until 1956.

### Published resources

#### Resource Section

Leeson, Ida Emily (1885-1964), Berzins, Baiba, 2006, <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A100055b.htm>

#### Book

Ida Leeson: a life: not a blue-stocking lady, Martin, Sylvia, 2006

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Archival resources

#### Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection

[Ros Bowden - interviews with people who knew Ida Leeson, former Mitchell Librarian, 1985](#)

### Author Details

Clare Land

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