

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: PR00305

Mottram, Elina Emily

(1903 - 1996)

Born 1 January, 1903, Sheffield England

Died 31 December, 1996, Queensland Australia

Occupation Architect

Summary

Elina Emily Mottram was Queensland's first and longest practicing female architect, establishing her own business in Brisbane in 1924.

Details

In April 1924 a woman architect, Elina Mottram, opened her own practice in Brisbane, when she established her office in the T&G Building on the corner of Queen and Albert Streets. The *Architectural Building Journal of Queensland* announced that "Brisbane has at last a lady architect...we trust that she will get her fair share of public support". She is considered the most successful of Queensland's early women architects.

Elina Emily Mottram (1903-1996) was born in Sheffield, England, the only child of Arthur Mottram, a building contractor and stonemason. She came to Brisbane in 1906 with her parents and attended Nundah State School. Mottram later undertook studies in Architecture at the Brisbane Central Technical College while employed by architect F R Hall of Brisbane during the city's 1920s construction boom. She received a Diploma in Architecture in 1925. Mottram taught building construction at the Brisbane Central Technical College between 1926 and 1928. During this time she also worked as an architect in Longreach (1926-1928) and in Rockhampton (1928-1929). In Longreach she designed public and commercial buildings, including the Masonic Temple, Longreach Motors and the office of Winchcombe Carson Ltd. She also remodelled the Australian Worker's Union building and the School of Arts.

Mottram registered as an architect with the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1930. During the 1930s depression, when work was scarce, she was a postmistress at Raglan via Rockhampton from 1930-1936. In partnership with her father as A and E Mottram, she worked in Rockhampton in 1937 and later in Longreach 1938-1941, where she was foreman of works for her father for the first stage of construction of the Longreach Hospital (1940). She was employed as a draftsman with the American Army Engineering Office in North Rockhampton in the Second World War. She later worked with the Queensland Railways and designed Eagle Junction Station.

Other residential commissions by Mottram, included a two-storeyed block of flats in Scott Street at Kangaroo Point c1925, a Tudor revival residence for Zina Cumbrae-Stewart overlooking the river, and a residence for Mrs Thurlby on the corner of Winchester and Hants Roads Ascot (now demolished). Of all the buildings designed by Mottram before World War II, only two survive in Brisbane – the Scott Street Flats and Monkton. Monkton was built in 1925 on Ardoyne Road to the west of Oxley Road at Corinda for William and Margaret Dunlop, who were then only recently married. It was named to commemorate Monkton Farm, William Dunlop's parents' farm which was to the east of Oxley Road. Elina, one of only a handful of women practicing at the time, had been recommended to the Dunlop's, though apparently they did not choose her particularly because she was a woman. William and Margaret Dunlop lived at Monkton their whole lives and raised four boys there. When they died the house was left to their son Robert and the dwelling remains in the family's possession.

Published resources

Resource

Women's Employment and Professionalism in Australia: Histories, Themes and Places, Nugent, Dr Maria, 2002,
<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/womens-employment-and-professionalism.pdf>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Journal Article

Early Queensland women architects, McKay, Judith, 1988

Book

A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940, Watson, Donald and McKay, Judith, 1984,
<http://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:151975>

Author Details

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