

Tribute to Helen Grace Doyle . . .

Miss Helen Doyle whose death occurred at RGH, Hollywood, on January 22, 1975, was a nurse of outstanding ability who served her profession well both in war and in peace.

Born in Victoria in the late 1880s, she came to WA with her parents in the exciting "gold rush" period and lived in Subiaco where she was an early pupil of the Subiaco School, and where her father was elected Mayor of the newly formed Subiaco Municipality.

Later, when the family moved to the country, Helen Doyle went to Kalgoorlie and in 1910 commenced her nursing training at the Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie Hospitals, gaining the general certificate in 1913 and acceptance for membership of the ATNA.

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Miss Doyle, who was a staff nurse at the Bunbury hospital, hastened to join the Army Nursing Service.

On being told that there was a long waiting list, she decided to go to England at her own expense, embarking on the "Indarra" for Adelaide on December 19, 1914, and transshipping to the "Commonwealth" on December 26 for overseas.

She was accompanied by her friend, Miss Irene Dunne.

In England, Miss Doyle joined the QAIMNS and was posted to France, where she nursed in field hospitals in many theatres of war, including Ypres.

INVALIDED HOME

Invalided home to Australia in 1919, she again joined the staff of the Government hospitals and was a Sister at the Wooroloo Sanatorium and Kalgoorlie Hospital.

Anxious to gain further experience, she went to New Zealand in 1925.

There she gained her **Obstetric Certificate at St Helen's Hospital, Auckland, and a further certificate in Child Health and Mothercraft at Dunedin under the Plunkett system directed by Dr Truby King.**

Her return to Australia marked the beginning of a long service in Board and Departmental hospitals in many areas of WA, ranging from Northcliffe, Margaret River, Narrogin, Albany, Busselton and Tambellup in the south of Big

Bell, Wiluna, Sandstone and Geraldton in the north.

Working conditions were not easy, for the early years were those of the depression and the latter those of the Second World War.

MIGRATION SCHEME

The immediate post-war migration scheme meant the opening up of a maternity hospital at the migrant holding centre in Northam.

Miss Doyle took charge of this centre and could be said to have ushered many of the first "truly new" Australians into this world.

With the closure of the centre came retirement, but not for long, as the Government Maternity Hospital in Geraldton needed a matron and Miss Doyle was happy to act in this capacity till she finally retired from nursing.

She then found life busier than ever with her many nursing interests and activities, which included the Eleanor Harvey Home Committee; the Government Nurses ex-Trainees Association, of which she was secretary till her death; the Returned Sisters' Sub-branch of the RSL where she acted as Warden and the RSL Corps of Hospital Visitors.

A keen bridge player, she was for many years secretary of the Perth Bridge Club.

In her latter years, she resided in Subiaco in a home unit very near her old home, and was greatly interested in the Subiaco Historical Society to which she contributed many early memories.

A woman of great purpose, Miss Doyle was able to hold on to what she valued most, an independence of mind and body, and her indomitable spirit will be long remembered by those who knew her. — V.H., 1975.

Father and Son at Upper Swan

The Upper Swan Sub-branch, which was issued with its charter in July 1920, is one of the oldest-established in the State.

The Sub-branch meets in the Baskerville Hall, the entrance to which is through Memorial Gates, presented by the Sub-branch in 1956.

As can be imagined, the price of grapes is one of the main topics in the centre of the State's wine-growing district, and a "chocolate wheel" at the Grape Show is an annual source of funds.

The present office-bearers are Fred Symes (president), his father Keith (secretary) and G. Thomas (treasurer).

Fred Symes, a volunteer for National Service, served with the 17th Construction Unit, and was for six months on active service in Vietnam till the Australian involvement was terminated.

The League is grateful to young men like Fred, who, inspired by all that the League stands for, have come forward and accepted responsibility for their Sub-branches.



KEITH SYMES



FRED SYMES

Best Wishes to all RSL Members from . . .

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