

Australian Church Women National Life Member



1989 - HELEN RUTH BURMESTER OAM – ACT

Born at Strathfield N.S.W. in 1917 Ruth completed her Secondary education at Sydney Girls High School. She then undertook secretarial and accountancy studies.

In 1948 Ruth travelled to London to marry Cliff Burmester who was there on a three year transfer with the National Library.

The Burmesters returned to Australia in 1951 and made their home in Turner A.C.T. Their three sons and six grandchildren all live in the A.C.T.

As a representative from St. Columba's Presbyterian Church [Braddon] Ruth was an active member of the A.C.T. World Day of Prayer Committee.

It was largely due to Ruth's enthusiastic ecumenical spirit that Canberra Church Women was formed in 1964. In following years she served three years as President, Vice-President for three years, Honorary Secretary for eight years, Treasurer for eight years and a four year term as F.L.C. Convener. During this period Ruth was instrumental in the change of name from Canberra Church Women to A.C.T. Unit of Australian Church Women. She has attended, as delegate, many National Conferences of Australian Church Women and appreciated the friendship and fellowship of these occasions.

In recognition of her outstanding service Ruth was made a Life Member of the A.C.T. Unit of Australian Church Women in 1988 and in 1989 was granted National Life Membership of Australian Church Women.

The impressive list of offices held in her local church reflects Ruth's commitment.

At various times she served as President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Day and Evening Groups. She is an Elder of St. Columba's Uniting Church and has served on the Parish Council.

Ruth is greatly admired and respected for her ability to accurately recall vital information whether it be a National Conference decision or relevant sections of the A.C.W. Constitution and Guidelines. Over the years she has been lovingly described as the "Fount of All Knowledge" and the "Dispenser of Wise Advice" by members of the A.C.T. Unit.

Despite her busy schedules Ruth has been a devoted wife and a loving mother always ready to fulfill parental obligations in School and Scouting functions. It is worthy to mention that she still plays a mean game of tennis!

In 1982 Ruth was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia. The citation emphasised community service, with a special mention of Ruth's work with the Girrahween Lodge Association [Aged Care Units].

Date of Death: 31 July 2015

