

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0570

Jeffrey, Agnes (Betty)

(1908 - 2000)

Born	14 May, 1908, Hobart Tasmania Australia
Died	13 September, 2000, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Occupation	Author, Nurse, Nursing administrator

Summary

Betty Jeffrey was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia on 8 June 1987 for service to the welfare of nurses in Victoria and ex-service men and women. Jeffrey was one of the members of the Australian Army Nursing Service who was captured by the Japanese after the fall of Singapore in 1942. Incarcerated in Japanese prisoner of war camps for three and a half years, after the war she wrote about the experiences in *White Coolies* (1954) which was later the basis for the film script *Paradise Road* (1999). After her return to Melbourne, and spending some time in hospital, Jeffrey and fellow survivor Vivian Bullwinkel travelled throughout Victoria raising funds towards a memorial for military nurses. The Nurses Memorial Centre was opened on 19 February 1950 and Jeffrey was appointed its first administrator. In 1986 she became the Centre's patron.

Events

2050 - 2050

Appointed administrator of the Nurses Memorial Centre

1935 - 1938

Completed nursing training at the Alfred Hospital, Melbourne

2041 - 2041

Joined the Australian Army Nursing Service

2046 - 2046

Discharged from the Australian Army Nursing Service

2041 - 2041

Arrived in Singapore with the 2/10 Australian General Hospital

2042 - 2042

Evacuated from Singapore with approximately 300 people on the *Vyner Brooke*

2042 - 2045

Incarcerated in Japanese prisoner of war camps in Sumatra

2045 - 2045

Arrived back in Australia

1986 - 2000

Patron of the Nurses Memorial Centre

Published resources

Book

[Diary of Sister Betty Jeffrey, Australian nursing sister captured by the Japanese in World War II]., Jeffrey, Betty, 1954

White Coolies, Jeffrey, Betty, 1954

Matron A.M. Sage 'Sammie': A Tribute by Betty Jeffrey, Jeffrey, Agnes Betty, 1970?

A Woman's war : the exceptional life of Wilma Oram Young, AM, Angell, Barbara, 2003

Resource

Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,
<http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section

Betty Jeffrey OAM RN, Davis John,
<http://www.stpeters.org.au/views/sermons/davis/JD00jeffrey.shtml>

Author Details

Anne Heywood

Created 29 September 2003

Last modified 4 May 2009