Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2754

Chase, Muriel Jean Eliot

(1880 - 1936)

Born	2 July, 1880, Geraldton Western Australia Australia
Died	13 February, 1936, Perth Western Australia Australia
Occupation	Community worker, Journalist, Print journalist, Professional photographer

Summary

Muriel Chase (nee Cooper) was well known for her community work, philanthropy, journalism and photography. A foundation member of the Karrakatta Club and the Women Writer's Club, she was social editress of the *West Australian* from 1903.

Details

Muriel Jean Eliot Cooper, later Chase, was born on 2 July 1880 in Geraldton, Western Australia. She was the eldest of four children born to John Henry Cooper and Priscilla Richenda (née Eliot). Cooper was educated at Amy Best's school.

On 5 July 1900, at the age of 20, she married Ernest Edward Chase, who was 15 years her senior. The couple moved to England where Ernest was to work as secretary to Sir Charles Rose, a conservative Member of Parliament. The couple did not stay long, returning to Australia only a year later due to Ernest's ill health. They had two daughters.

It is unclear when Cooper developed an interest in photography, or where she trained, but she is known to have worked at a photography studio called the Hay Street Studio in Perth during 1900s. She photographed notable community leaders, and some of these photographs were published in newspapers. *Western Mail* published six of her photographs of West Australian Members of the Federal Senate.

Cooper was a foundation member of Karrakatta Club and the Women Writers Club, and through her work at the *Western Mail* newspaper Cooper helped raise funds to establish the Silver Chain District Nursing Association in 1904.

Cooper was the social editor of *The West Australian* newspaper from 1903, and also wrote for the *Western Mail* using the pseudonym Adrienne. She also wrote a column entitled *Children's Corner* under the name of 'Aunt Mary'.

Muriel Jean Cooper died of heart failure on 13 February in 1936, aged 56.

Collections
State Library of Western Australia

Content added for the *In Her Gift* and *The Women's Pages* research projects, last modified 5 September 2012

In addition to writing for the *West Australian*, Chase wrote for the *Western Mail* under the pseudonym of Adrienne, and campaigned for more social welfare services throughout the Western Australian community. She wrote for the paper's Children's Corner as 'Aunt Mary', and recruited her younger readers as 'silver links in a chain of service'. In this way she helped to establish the Silver Chain District Nursing Association, raising enough money by 1904 to fund a district nurse who visited her patients by bicycle. The work of the district nurse raised awareness in the community of the need for hospitals and homes, both for infants and the elderly. Occasionally, Chase herself would relieve the district nurse on night duty.

Events

1900 - 1910

1900 -

Published resources

Book
The Mechanical Eye in Australia: Photography 1841-1900., Davies, Alan and Stanbury, Peter, 1986

Newspaper Article
The Six West Australian Members of the Federal Senate,
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article33202719

Weddings, 1901,
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article33206871

Miss Cooper's Studio, Egeria,
http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/67065944

Photograph
Elinor Elizabeth Clifton, Cooper, Muriel, 1901

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition
The Women's Pages: Australian Women and Journalism since 1850, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cal/cal-home.html

In Her Gift: Women Philanthropists in Australian History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2009,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/wiph/home.html

Resource Section
Chase, Muriel Jean Eliot (1880 - 1936), Stewart, Noel, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A070630b.htm

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Created   4 October 2007
Last modified 15 December 2016