

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE4063

MacGillivray, Melva Emily (Tommy)

(1900 - 1993)

Born	6 June, 1900, Broken Hill New South Wales Australia
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Died	1 September, 1993, Leabrook South Australia
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Occupation	Musician, Sportswoman, Volunteer
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Summary

Melva MacGillivray was the first woman to drive a T-Model Ford to Broken Hill, New South Wales.

Details

Melva Crossing – or Tommy, as she was known – was the fourth of nine children, and grew up to be fiercely independent. The Crossing family left Broken Hill to begin farming near Adelaide, and Melva completed her education at the Methodist Ladies' College in Wayville. At seventeen, Melva drove a T-Model Ford from Adelaide to Broken Hill, a long and arduous trip given that the road was little more than a track with plenty of creek beds and sandy stretches to be negotiated.

In 1927 Melva married medical practitioner Ian Hamilton MacGillivray. They spent eighteen months in Edinburgh, Scotland, where Ian studied surgery, and returned to Broken Hill so as he could resume his medical practice. The marriage ended in 1933 and Melva moved to Adelaide.

Melva MacGillivray was an active member of the Red Cross during the Second World War, and gave up much of her time for the Spastic Centre. She performed in musical concerts around Adelaide and, after her move to the Leabrook Resthaven in later life, she ran handcraft workshops and exercise classes. She became known affectionately as Granny Mac.

Published resources

Book

Some Outstanding Women of Broken Hill and District, Camilleri, Jenny, 2002

Site Exhibition

Unbroken Spirit: Women in Broken Hill, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2009,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/bh/bh-home.html>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

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