

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5693

McGarry, Kathleen Patricia

(- 1958)

Died 23 July, 1958, Bondi New South Wales Australia

Occupation Barrister, Lawyer, Playwright, Writer

Summary

Kathleen McGarry was the fourth woman to be admitted to the New South Wales Bar. The third and youngest child of Patrick McGarry, a former member of the Legislative Assembly of Murrumbidgee in south-western New South Wales, and Mary McGarry (nee Myres), McGarry lived at Ardenclutha in Hunter's Hill on Sydney's North Shore and was educated by the Sisters of Charity at St Vincent's College, Potts Point. She continued to be associated with the College after she had left, particularly through the Ex-Students' Dramatic Society. At the University of Sydney she spent time at Sancta Sophia College and was a member of the University's Catholic Women's Society. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1928 and a Bachelor of Laws in 1935. On 6 March 1936 McGarry became the first Catholic woman to be admitted to the New South Wales Bar. She did not practise, however, and after an early stint at the Parliamentary Draftsman's Office, appears to have abandoned the law and turned her attentions to the arts, producing plays and skits for the theatre and radio. McGarry had been an early student of the Independent Theatre School of Dramatic Art and impressed audiences with her prowess on the stage. She earned a number of prizes for her artistic abilities, including second prize in the Catholic broadcasting station 2SM's 'Search for Talent' competition in 1935. As a member of the Catholic Women's Association, with which she was deeply involved, she learned Braille and applied her knowledge to translate the Roman Missal. She was said to be fluent in French and German.

Published resources

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Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers>

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