

Eileen Fisher

1909-1999

Dr Eileen Fisher was a member of Graduate Women Victoria for over 60 years and left a generous legacy to AFUW Victoria (former name for Graduate Women Victoria). She requested in her will that the legacy be used for a postgraduate scholarship named after her parents, William and Elizabeth Fisher. The scholarship has been awarded each year since 2002. Her nephew, W.S. Roper kindly supplied GWV with details of his aunt's life and work.

Eileen Elizabeth Fisher was born at Canterbury, Melbourne daughter of William and Elizabeth Fisher of 1 Balwyn Rd Canterbury, where she lived until her death on 10th October 1999. She was educated at Canterbury State School and Methodist Ladies College, where she was Dux of School in 1927. She studied at the University of Melbourne, graduating B.Sc. in 1930 and M.Sc. in 1932. She won AFUW Victoria's first travel scholarship which enabled her to study at Newnham College, Cambridge where she was awarded a doctorate in 1938.

She was called home from Cambridge in time to attend her father's death in 1937 and stayed on to accompany her mother in the family home in Canterbury until she felt free to resume independent living after the war, and took up an appointment at the University of Queensland until 1949. She then returned to Melbourne, living with her mother in the family home. She joined the Victorian Department of Agriculture as Plant Pathologist where she worked till retirement. She was the author of many research papers on mycology and plant pathology and known internationally for her research work on facial eczema in sheep, a mycotoxicosis, a disease which reached epizootic proportions in New Zealand and Australia. As a result of this work, the fungus that caused such damage to the sheep industry was largely eradicated.

She was a strong proponent of equal pay for equal work for women at a time when there were few professional women to join with her. She is remembered by her family and friends as a caring and considerate woman.

GRADUATE WOMEN VICTORIA