

MERLE HONOR MARSHALL MARTEN OAM ACM



Commercial Artist, Sportswomen, Mayoress of Pt Adelaide

Born: Cheltenham SA 3 November 1915

Died: Adelaide SA, 29 September 2004

Attended ATHS: 1929-31

Career

Merle began her working life as a commercial artist in advertising and copywriting and was private secretary to three Mayors and two Town Clerks of the City of Adelaide.

During WW2 she joined General Motors at Woodville and worked in the engineering drawing room, on Beaufort bombers and anti-aircraft guns.

Towards the end of the War, Merle was transferred to the Art and Colour Section and worked on the original Holden motor vehicle from its inception to the final prototype stage. This work included making 1/8th scale models of the various designs in plasticine right on to the final design. When that final design was approved Merle assisted in producing the full scale model, again in plasticine with all the finest details.

In February 1946 Merle married Squadron Leader H.C. Roy Marten, who later became a long serving Mayor of Port Adelaide. For many, Merle was best known as Mayoress of Port Adelaide for 18 years from 1969 to 1987. Her dedication to the City of Port Adelaide and its Citizens included 30 years in the Port Adelaide Nursing division of St. John and 15 years in the Port Adelaide Women's Service Organisation.

Merle had serious sporting interests, representing South Australia in cricket from 1935 to 1937. She played netball, tennis, badminton, golf, and raced speedboats.

The breadth of Merle's involvement over many years is overwhelming, but her most impressive attribute was her balance between public and private good and her belief that you cannot have one without the other.

Awards:

Merle was awarded the Order of St. John Australia in 1992 and the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 1997. She also received the Australian Centenary Medal in 2001.