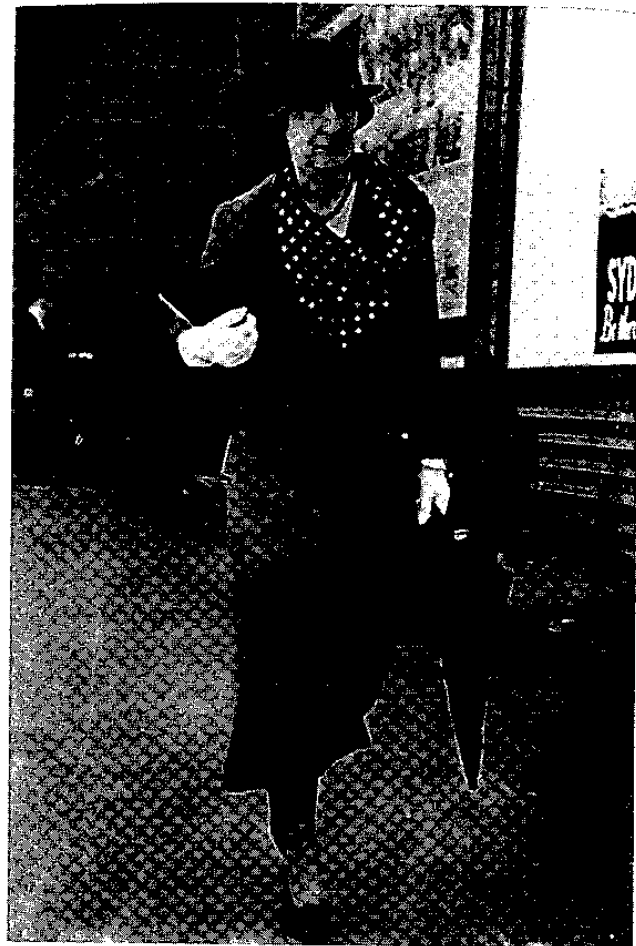


A TRIBUTE TO EMMIE RUSSELL

There are now few working members of the Orthoptic Association of Australia who had the privilege of knowing and working with Emmie Russell, who was one of Australia's first orthoptists. Born in 1892, she was educated at PLC Strathfield, and during the First World War was a voluntary worker for the Red Cross. She was a close family friend of Dr J Ringland Anderson, an ophthalmologist with a strong interest in strabismus, who was also a pioneer in the development of orthoptics in Australia. When, in 1932, he started a training program for orthoptists at the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, based on the British syllabus, Emmie Russell (NSW), along with Ethel Southey and Margaret Fox (Victoria) Lucy Willoughby (South Australia) and Lena Gilchrist (Tasmania) were his first students. She registered with the Orthoptic Council of NSW when it was initiated in 1938, and, in 1944 when the Orthoptic Board of Australia was formed, she was its first registrant.

On completion of her training, Emmie Russell (always known as Miss Russell to her colleagues) started a professional career marked by the highest ethical standards that was to continue up to, and beyond her retirement in 1956. She established her own private practice at the BMA building in Macquarie St in January 1933, and started the Orthoptic Clinic at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children a few months later. During the second world war she, and other orthoptists gave voluntary service to the RAAF in training stereoscopic vision for their pilots. Throughout her career, she had a long working relationship with Sir Norman Gregg, the ophthalmologist who recognised and reported on the relationship between maternal rubella and congenital abnormalities.

At the same time she was a crucial figure in developing orthoptics as a profession in Australia. She founded the NSW Orthoptic Association and, soon after, with Diana Mann (Craig), also an early student of Dr Ringland Anderson, she founded the Orthoptic Association of Australia in 1944. As an active member of the Association she was its first President from



1945-47, as well as from 1950-51, and was a member of Council from 1945 to 1953. After her retirement she was made an Honorary member in 1959, and, in 1961 became the first orthoptist to be appointed Patron of the Association. Her strong interest in developing the profession took a tangible form in 1957, when she donated a sum of money to the Association to encourage younger members to undertake their own research in orthoptics. The Emmie Russell Prize, for the best paper presented at an Annual Scientific Meeting by a member who has graduated in the previous five years still remains the most prestigious award for our newer members.

These facts, although outlining a dedication to her profession, only begin to reveal her special personal qualities. All who knew her speak fondly of her intelligence, charm, love of the arts, gentle sense of humour and dedication to her family. In adversity, such as the time when, in 1965, her mother, Sir Norman Gregg and Thea Proctor (a close relative) all died within a short space of time, she maintained her quiet dignity

and concern for others. It is obvious that she was loved by those who had the privilege of knowing her. Children in particular loved her, and in her latter years she was frequently visited by the (now adult) children of her friends in whose lives she still maintained an active interest.

Right up until her death in 1987, at the age of 95, she remained alert and interested in others. Even those who knew her only in the last years of her life recognised in her a very special person. Orthoptics lost not only a pioneer of our profes-

sion, but also a truly exceptional woman. A legacy from her estate to the orthoptic clinic at The Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children (shortly to be renamed The Emmie Russell Department of Orthoptics) will be invested to promote the development of orthoptics and young orthoptists. It is appropriate that her name will live on for future members through awards which represent excellence and a commitment to orthoptics.

EMMIE RUSSELL PRIZE WINNERS

1957 Margaret Kirkland	Aspects of vertical deviation
1959 Marion Carroll	Monocular stimulation in the treatment of amblyopia ex anopsia
1960 Ann Macfarlane	A study of patients at The Children's Hospital
1961 Ann Macfarlane	Case history: "V" Syndrome
equal Margaret Kirkland	Post operative diplopia in an adult
1962 Adrienne Rona	A Survey of patients at the Far West Children's Health Scheme, Manly
1963 Madeleine McNess	Case history: right convergent strabismus
1965 Margaret Doyle	Diagnostic pleoptic methods and problems encountered
1966 Gwen Wood	Miotics in practice
1967 Sandra Hudson Shaw	Orthoptics in Genoa
1968 Leslie Stock	Divergent squints with abnormal retinal correspondence
1969 Sandra Kelly	The prognosis in the treatment of eccentric fixation
1970 Barbara Dennison	A summary of pleoptic treatment and results
1971 Elaine Cornell	Paradoxical innervation
1972 Neryla Jolly	Reading difficulties
1973 Shayne Brown	Uses of Fresnel prisms
1974 Francis Merrick	The use of concave lenses in the management of intermittent divergent squint
1975 Vicki Elliot	Orthoptics and cerebral palsy
1976 Shayne Brown	The challenge of the present
1977 Melinda Binovec	Orthoptic management of the cerebral palsied child
1978 Anne Pettigrew	
1979 Susan Cort	Nystagmus blocking syndrome
1980 Sandra Tait	Foveal abnormalities in ametropic amblyopia
1981 Anne Fitzgerald	Assessment of visual field anomalies using the visually evoked response
1982 Anne Fitzgerald	Evidence of abnormal optic nerve fibre projection in patients with Dissociated Vertical Deviation — a preliminary report
1983 Cathie Searle Susan Horne	Acquired Brown's syndrome: A case report
1984 Helen Goodacre	Minus overcorrection: Conservative treatment of intermittent exotropia in the young child
1985 Cathie Searle	The newborn follow up clinic: A preliminary report of ocular anomalies
1986	
1988 Katrina Bourne	Current concepts in restrictive eye movements. Duane's retraction syndrome and Brown's syndrome
1989 Lee Adams	An update in genetics for the orthoptist, a brief review of gene mapping