



This photo was taken at the Inauguration of Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (1954).

FRONT ROW: Walter Lockhart Gibson, John Pockley, Dame Ida Mann, Archie Anderson, Arthur Joyce, AL Tostevin.

BACK ROW: Hugh Ryan, Kelvin Ledgett, Ron Lowe, Bruce Hamilton, W Deane-Butcher, Sir Norman Gregg.



Dame Ida Mann

DAME IDA MANN - 1893-1983

Graduating in medicine, Ida Mann subsequently published a DSc thesis on the development of the human eye. This was soon followed by congenital defects of the eye in 1937. Both of these publications were trail blazing and definitive texts of embryology.

Ida's wide interests included comparative anatomy. She established the first contact lens clinic in London prior to the First World War and researched mustard gas keratitis and thyroid eye disease.

Appointed as Assistant Surgeon to the Central London Hospital, Ida became the first female consultant to the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital, later known as Moorfields. She was subsequently appointed as Senior Surgeon.

Oxford University appointed her Margaret Ogilvie's reader in ophthalmology and she subsequently gained a personal chair, which was the first in Britain for a woman to hold the title of professor at Oxford.

She was honoured with the Doyné lecture in 1928 and the Harrison Gale lecture in 1929. Other notable lectures were the Nettleship medal and the Montgomery lecture in 1935.

In 1949 her husband Bill Gye, a cancer researcher, became ill and they both travelled to Australia to escape

the bleak climate of post war Britain. They settled in Perth, with her husband continuing his research into viruses and cancer. Ida set up an ophthalmic practice with her original Gullstrand slit lamp, which was eventually passed on to Andrew Stewart, Past President of RANZCO. Ida met up with Father Frank Flynn, a Catholic priest and ophthalmologist who had been Ida's House Surgeon at Moorfields some 20 years earlier. He introduced her to trachoma, something she had not encountered in the United Kingdom. This led to an investigation, lasting four years, documenting the cause of the high rate of blindness among the Aboriginal population of the Kimberley and Western Desert. This highlighted the prevalence of a disease ignored by governments in Australia.

Ida travelled incessantly over the next 20 years in outback Western Australia, between times maintaining her small city practice in Dalkeith and the coastal town of Busselton until her retirement in 1976.

Ida was honoured for her many contributions to ophthalmology, becoming a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1950 and Dame (DBE) in 1980.