

~ VALE – BERYL NASHAR ~

(9 July 1923 to 12 May 2012)

Past BPW International President and Past Australian President

BPW has lost a true icon with the passing of Beryl Nashar on 12 May 2012 and she served the women in the world with passion and commitment. Beryl will always be remembered and honoured by BPW Australia as there is a perpetual trophy “Beryl Nashar Women of Achievement Award” The recipient of the Award is a member who has demonstrated the same qualities as Beryl who believed that:

We should work hard and be prepared to accept responsibility.

As Australian President I am honoured to share the story of Beryl Nashar as I admired her greatly as an activist, as a mother, an academic and BPW member.

Beryl was a gifted student and attended Cardiff Primary School and then Newcastle Girls High School gained first place in New South Wales in Geology upon graduation from high school. She graduated from the University of Sydney first in her class as the only girl in her year. Beryl told me that the boys objected to her being in an all-male class as she would be a distraction.

Beryl continued her studies as a doctoral candidate at the University of Tasmania and in 1952 she was the first Australian awarded a PhD in Australia, as Australians had had to travel overseas prior to that. She was awarded a fellowship by Cambridge University (UK) under a Rotary Fellowship. She became known as Professor Nashar when she began her twenty-eight year university teaching career in 1952. Appointed Dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of Newcastle in 1969, she was the first woman ever to hold a Dean's position in an Australian University.

From 1965 to 1980, Beryl held the position of Professor of Geology and Head of Department, University of Newcastle and in 1980 become Emeritus Professor, University of Newcastle. During this period she made many speeches on the value of education and especially the education of girls.

It was most appropriate that she, who had achieved ground breaking honour in her profession through tenacity and hard work, would be a BPW member.

Beryl was a member of BPW Newcastle and was President of the Club from 1959 to 1961. In 1964, Beryl was elected as the President of BPW Australia and then in 1974, she was elected as President of the International Federation of BPW. It was an appropriate time for Beryl to be International President, as in 1975



Graduate 1947

there was the ground breaking *International Year of Women* and the commencement in 1976 of the *International Women's Decade*.

Beryl was on the International Federation Executive for 9 years and was responsible for initiating the upgrading of the Federation's Non-Government status in the United National ECOSOC from Category 2 to Category 1.

One of Beryl's international achievements was that she was an initiator of Project 5-0, which joined five of the world's leading women's organisations together to fund projects for women in under-developed countries.

It was a wonder that Beryl ever had time for other interests as from 1981 to 1987 she was a member of many boards of businesses and non-government organisations, which included the Red Cross, John Hunter/Rankin Park Advisory Council and was Chairman of the NSW Police Service North Region Country Customer Council. Beryl received many honours and awards, including an OBE for Services to Education and International Relations and AO for Service to the Community and particularly through raising awareness of issues affecting women and education. I am sure that Beryl would consider her greatest honour was her family and her son, Tarek.

Yvette Swan, past BPW International President, said:

*Know that Beryl has served the women of the world well.
May she now rest in peace.*



Patience Thoms (Australia), IFBPW Past President 1968-1971 (left); Lady Thomson, Past President BPW Australia 1953-1955; Beryl Nashar (Australia), IFBPW Past President 1974-1977. February 12, 1995.

