

Ms Helen Ann Mitchell OAM

The title of Honorary Fellow of the University was conferred upon Helen Ann Mitchell OAM at the Faculty of Education and Social Work graduation ceremony held at 11.30am on 16 April 2010.



Deputy Chancellor Mr Alan Cameron AM conferring the title upon Ms Mitchell, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Deputy Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting Helen Ann Mitchell for the conferral of the title of Honorary Fellow of the University.

Helen Ann Mitchell, or Ann, as she is universally known, has made an extraordinary contribution to the University, to cricket and to Australian women's sport for nearly five decades.

Ann Mitchell studied at the University of Sydney in the 'Sixties, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts and Teaching Certificate. She represented the University in the sports of Cricket, Hockey and Softball and was awarded a University Blue for Cricket in 1963. She had taken up each of those three sports while at University.

Ann worked as a high school teacher for 20 years from 1968 before returning to the University in the role of Executive Director of the Women's Sports Association.

Ann proved to be an agent of transformation for the Association. One of her major early achievements was the rebuilding of the Women's Sports Centre, which provided a valuable income source particularly through the establishment of a sports medicine clinic.

Her successes also included the development of the sporting scholarship program which led to the University winning four consecutive Australian University Games by 2002; the leasing of the Glebe Rowing Shed and securing a fine dining restaurant as its first floor tenant; and the strategic education of Club administrators. Arguably her main contribution was the time she devoted to mentoring and providing wise counsel to large numbers of young women developing their sporting and academic potential and preparing for careers beyond University.

In a singularly selfless move she worked for two years fostering the amalgamation of the women's and men's sporting bodies at the University. She played a leading role in the elaborate series of papers, proposals and meetings which ensured that the coming together of the two bodies was seamless and very successful. She then served as Deputy Director of Sydney University Sport until her retirement in 2004.

Since retiring she has continued her involvement with her University as a very active and innovative President of the Sydney University Blues Association.

Ann's administrative positions in Women's Cricket have included: President of the New South Wales Women's Cricket Association from 1974 to 1988; Manager of the Australian Women's Cricket Team from 1977 to 1988; President of Women's Cricket Australia from 1988 to 1998; and President of the International Women's Cricket Council from 1982 to 1988.

She was the inaugural President of the Australian University Sports Federation from 1992 to 1994, and is currently on the Board of Australian University Sport. She contributes regularly to cricket journals and has provided commentary for Sydney radio and ABC television.

In 1991 Ann was awarded an OAM for services to cricket. This was followed in 2005 by her winning the Margaret Pewtress Memorial category of the 2005 Ausport Awards for developing and promoting opportunities for women in sport.

Ann is, in fact, a quintessential Sydney University sportswoman. She tried her hand at a number of sports whilst at University; excelling particularly in one and achieving international representation. She took on leadership roles as a player and coach, and brought her energy and organisational skills to succeed as a sports administrator while practising a profession born of her University qualifications. It is fitting that she returned to her University two decades after graduating, and by doing so, ensured that generations more of University sportswomen would have similar experiences and even greater opportunity.

Deputy Chancellor, I present Helen Ann Mitchell and I invite you to confer the title of Honorary Fellow of the University upon her.