

Janet Rankine Blair Halkerston MBE (1924-1989)

Janet Halkerston was a member of SI Kirkcaldy from 1962 until her death in 1989. She was Club President in 1965-1966 and President of Scotland South Divisional Union in 1969-1970. The club benefited from her guidance and wisdom on many occasions. Ahead of her time, one of her activities was the promotion of mental health and well-being. Honorary membership was conferred on her in 1987 in recognition of her active part in club life which epitomised the true spirit of Soroptimism.

Janet undertook nurse training in Croydon and then studied Tropical Diseases in

Liverpool, looking after servicemen who had returned from the Far East. She then moved to Fife to become Sister Tutor at the East Fife School of Nursing. Janet was instrumental in combining the four separate schools of nursing in Fife into the Fife College of Nursing, a single nurse education establishment, formed in 1973. In 1984, as Director of Nursing Education, she cut the first turf for a new purpose-built College, which brought nursing and midwifery education in Fife under one roof. This facility, opened in 1987, provided state of the art facilities, making Fife well placed to deliver the changes to nurse education that took place in the early 1990s.

Janet was a member of the General Nursing Council of Scotland. She was also a member of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Council at UK level, chairing the RCN Scottish Board at one point. She served as chair of the Educational Committee South-East Scotland Regional Health Board and the Educational Committee at Fife Health Board. She was awarded an MBE for services to Nursing Education.

In addition to her professional career, Janet used her nursing, managerial and people expertise to contribute to the community. An active church member, she was past President of the Women's Guild and involved with Girl Guides, Rangers and the Sunday School. She was a past President of the Glenrothes Branch of the British Red Cross Society and an officer in the Order of St John of Jerusalem, at one point being the representative officer of the Scottish Priory and a past chair of the Fife Association of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

On receiving honorary membership of SI Kirkcaldy Janet commented, 'I have enjoyed every minute of the service I was able to give. I count it as a privilege.'



Photograph shows Janet Halkerston cutting the first turf for the Fife College of Nursing and Midwifery

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