



Florence McKenzie



STEM field(s): Engineering (Electrical)

Born: 1891, Hawthorn, Victoria (Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation)

Died: 1982



‘To see every woman emancipated from the “heavy” work of the household by the aid of electricity is in itself a worthy object.’

- Won a scholarship to attend Sydney Girls’ High School.
- Began a Bachelor of Science, passing chemistry and geology, but financial difficulty forced her to drop out.
- Achieved a Diploma of Electrical Engineering, setting up her own electrical contracting business to gain the practical experience needed.
- First woman to be granted an amateur radio operator’s license and become a certified Australian radio-telegraphist.
- Founded the Electrical Association for Women, and taught classes on the use of electrical appliances.
- Formed the Women’s Emergency Signalling Corps (WESC), which trained over 3,000 women in Morse code and visual signalling ahead of the Second World War.
- Campaigned successfully to have females accepted into the Australian Navy (WRANS).
- Awarded an OBE for her work with the WESC.

