



## Mary (Molly) Wark

**Elected Life Member of the Glebe District Hockey Club 1986**

**Born: 10th October 1925**

**Passed away: peacefully on Sunday 15 January 2017 aged 91.**

Molly was born on 10 October 1925 at the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital in Albion Street Annandale.

Her father was Roy Johnstone who worked in the transport industry. After leaving school he drove a horse and cart for a transport company, and then progressed to driving a lorry after the company replaced horses with trucks. His mother was Mary Johnstone (nee Cleary), whose parents had come to Australia from Ireland. All Molly's childhood was spent in Annandale, initially on Booth Street and then in Trafalgar Street.

For primary school Molly went to the North Annandale Public School. After finishing Primary School in 1938 Molly moved to the Riverside Girl's School in Gladesville. Molly travelled to

Gladesville on the tram and on the same tram were two boys who played hockey for the Drummoyne Boys High School team Harry Wark and David Robertson. Harry joined the tram in Rozelle and David got on at the same stop as Molly in Annandale. In 1938-1939 there was only a school boy/girl nodding acquaintance between Harry and Dave and Molly.



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Glebe District Hockey Club Life Member – Molly Wark



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In 1940 Molly moved from Riverside to the TAFE at Ultimo in order to add shorthand, typing and officer skills to her studies. After 18 months at the Ultimo TAFE Molly left and got a job using her shorthand and typing skills at a firm in the City called Parberry Henty, which was based in the Grace Building at the corner of York and King Streets. The rest of Molly's working life was spent in office employment performing shorthand, typing and secretarial tasks.

In the early to mid-teen years Molly was encouraged to play hockey by a Mrs Sutherland, who was a telephonist in Martin Place. Mrs. Sutherland was the driving force in a women's hockey club called the Telephones who trained at Allen's Reserve, Annandale on the southern bank of Johnston's Creek Canal, adjacent to the elevated Sewerage Viaduct which crosses Johnston's Creek. The Telephones played in the women's hockey competition at Rushcutters's Bay Oval.

Allen's reserve is no longer a park; houses were built on the land after World War Two.

The Balmain Police Boys Club Hockey Team also trained at Allen's Reserve and it was here that Molly became better acquainted with her future husband Harry a butcher, who after leaving school played for the Balmain Police Boys Club Hockey Team. Molly and Harry married at Saint Brendan's Church Annandale on 11 November 1945, when Molly was aged 20.



Above: Molly and Harry Wark Circa mid 1940's

After they were married Molly and Harry lived for close to 10 years above Harry's Butcher Shop at 107 Mansfield Street Rozelle. In March 1955 they moved to 12 Sisters' Crescent Drummoyne where she still lives.

Molly and Harry had two sons Harry Joseph Wark born in 1947 and Leslie Patrick Wark born in 1955, both of who are Life Members of the GDHC. Molly continued to play women's hockey on a Saturday afternoon for many years. When the Telephone team could not get enough players to field a team Molly moved to a team called Ever Jays and then to a team called the Glebe Jays. She always played at Rushcutters's Bay Oval, which is now called the Reg Bartley Oval.

In the early 1970s Molly retired from competitive women's hockey and on Saturday afternoons went out to watch her husband Harry play his games. During the 1977 season on the sideline of the men's hockey Molly, Jocelyn Jenkins, and Bev Birmingham and Glebe men's first grade player Robert Diviney talked about forming a Glebe women's team the following season. Jocelyn and Bev had played hockey on the north coast of NSW and were

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keen to play again. Molly started playing hockey when she was 14 years old and in her early 50s was instrumental in the formation of the Glebe Women's Hockey Club in 1978. Molly was a driving force in the early days of the Glebe Women's Hockey Club, which was then a separate organisation to the GDHC.

Molly went on to play 155 games for the Glebe Women's Hockey Club. From its inception in 1978 until the end of 1988 Molly was President of the Glebe Women's Hockey Club and from 1978 to 1985 Molly was also Secretary of the GWHC. At the 1986 Women's Annual Meeting, Molly together with Jan Hammond, both inaugural players in the women's teams were awarded Life Membership of the GWHC. Molly was the first Life Member of the GWHC at the age of 60.

Molly was a driving force in the merging of the GDHC and the GWHC Club in 1991 to form a single entity. The GDHC has now fielded men's and women's teams for over 20 years and the 1991 amalgamation has been by any measure a great success.

After retiring from playing the game Molly continued to take a keen interest in the Glebe Women's teams attending women's games when and where she could. Four of her granddaughters Mary, Gabrielle, Elizabeth and Amy have played hockey for Glebe both in the junior ranks and in the women's senior teams and they all take a keen interest in GDHC affairs. Her granddaughters have each played close to 200 junior games for Glebe and all played over 100 senior games for the Club.

In 2014 at the age of 88 Molly remains a keen GDHC supporter, frequently attending both Women's and Men's competition games. Attending these games brings her great pleasure and she enjoys chatting to people new to the Club and people she had known for well over 50 years.

Away from hockey Molly has been an active parishioner at Saint Mark's Drummoyne for 58 years. She has been a Member of the Catholic Women's League for decades, its President for many years, and has organised countless raffles to raise money for a diverse range of charitable causes. Molly knows how to handle a book of raffle tickets, she is a pro.



**Above:** Molly Wark pictured her with Glebe 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Player Dominic Tintner at the conclusion of the Wark-Trevenar Cup Day held at Cintra Hockey Field.



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She has been a Member of the Drummoyne Probus Club, the Drummoyne View Club and the National Seniors for many years.

Molly's husband Harry had a small motor boat which he moored at Half-Mon Bay Drummoyne 500 metres from the Wark family home in Drummoyne. During the hockey off-season, they spent many a day out on the boat enjoying activities on beautiful Sydney Harbour. For over 60 years Molly has played tennis on a Tuesday afternoon and at age 87 she is still playing a set of tennis at a court in Balmain with a social tennis group, many of whom she has known for over 30 years. In later years Molly has enjoyed going out on Canada Bay Council organised bus trips on a Friday, with a group of seniors from the area.

Molly has been actively involved in the hockey scene for over 70 years and has made a substantial contribution to Club affairs both on and off the field of play.

Molly's husband Harry died on 17 May 2002, four days short of his seventy-eighth birthday.

Molly passed away peacefully on Sunday 15th January 2017 aged 91.

Mary Wark (nee Johnstone), known to all as Molly, was born in Annandale on 10 October 1925 where she lived until her marriage to Harry Austin Wark on 11 November 1945.

Encouraged by Mrs Susie Sutherland, Molly began to play hockey at 14 years old with the Telephones and later with a variety of teams in the Rushcutter's Bay competition. In 1978 when she was in her early 50s, Molly came out of retirement and was instrumental in the formation of the Glebe Women's Hockey Club, which was then a separate organisation to the GDHC. Molly went on to play 155 games for the Glebe Women's Hockey Club and served as President and Secretary for 7 years, President for 10.

In 1986 she was awarded Life Membership. Molly was a fierce competitor, a very competent player often underestimated by younger opponents who frequently found themselves surprised and minus the ball after her strong defensive tackles. She also knew how to hit a ball - hard. Even at 62 when she finally retired she was still a force to be reckoned with on the field. After retiring Molly continued to be a keen GDHC supporter, until her death in January this year, frequently attending both women's and men's competition games where she enjoyed the company of her many hockey friends, her sister-in-law and great mate, Joyce Wark, her sons Harry and Les, their wives Anne and Carole and the families of her nephews, Robert, Gary and Ken. Watching her family play in the maroon and white, especially her grandchildren, Mary, Anthony, Patrick, Gabrielle, Michael, Elizabeth, Amy and Simon Wark was one of her great joys in life, as was the arrival of her 'fourth generation' of great grandchildren, Henry, Vivienne and Rose Wotton, Emily, Maeve and Violet Shipp, Frank and Grace Paterson.

Molly will be remembered for her high expectations for all of our players and her strong opinions about their performances. Many women who have passed through the Club also remember her many kindnesses. She knew each player personally, knew about their

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illnesses, injuries, pregnancies and their families, jobs, partner's jobs, each player's highs and lows. She also knew where she had to pick up players to transport them to the game each week, or someone else in the Club who could, she knew how many raffle tickets each person had or hadn't sold and how much was still owed on fees. She was a formidable woman, a tireless worker, a huge personality, a great supporter of the Club and the game of hockey and we are grateful for her enormous contribution to the Club and the lives of its members.

## Appendix

### The Wark Family

Harry A	Wark	1947-1987	757, Life Member
Molly Doreen	Wark	1947-2016	Life Member
Harry J	Wark	1961-2003	643, Life Member
Les	Wark	1968-2009, 2019	813, Life Member, President, Secretary
Total Games Played: 2,213			

## Sentiments on the death of Molly Wark

### James-Dean McDonald

Wow that's tremendously sad news. Some people you just think will love forever. What an amazing woman and true legend in a legendary club. RIP molly. Condolences to the Wark family and to all who were fortunate enough to know her.

### Elly Williams

Everyone's Grandma. Lots of love to all the Warks from Elly and Moira Williams

### Ben Everist

Sending our love from the Everist's to the wider Wark family. Molly was a wonderful women who added so much to Womens hockey and the wider GDHC. She will forever hold a place in my memory as we had many conversations when she was at any Glebe hockey game. RIP Molly xx

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### **Kate Brownrigg**

Molly was a wonderful companion for many nights at the club when our children were young. Have lots fond memories of our times together.

### **Norm Foord**

An amazing lady, the matriarch of of a glebe family dynasty, to all of the Wark family and all at our most respected and revered club, our thoughts are with you at this time  
Norm and everyone at MLDHC.

### **Jorge Campano**

Vale, Molly! You were a wonderfully strong person, an example to all women and you had a life rich in experiences. Our condolences to all the Wark family. Love, Lisa and Jorge Campano.

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