



BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL
ALDERMEN'S ROOMS

AL/1735
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BRISBANE

THE CITY HALL
BRISBANE

28th May, 1949

Rec^d 1 June "
Ans^d 25 " "

Dear Miss How-Martyn,

Thank you for your letter of congratulation, of the 23rd instant, and in reply I may say that I am the first woman to be elected to the Brisbane City Council, and I am given to understand that I am the only one in Municipal Government in a Capital City, throughout the Commonwealth. However, I am not quite certain of that, always having been under the impression that there were quite a number of women holding public office in this sphere, down South. I personally knew a Mrs. Ibbott, who attained the rank of Mayor of Hiedelberg, Victoria. I have also read of a Mayor of Newtown, Sydney, and a Deputy Mayoress of Bondi, and many other Councillors in Shires. However, my endorsement was the first ever given a Women in Brisbane, by a Party - the two other women who stood previously, were Independents, and did not get elected.

As time goes on, I am realising the almost frightening responsibility which is mine as "the first woman", and also how all the women's organizations feel that now I am in, I will be able to achieve miracles. All rather disturbing, as I am afraid my reason for entering into Municipal Government was because I felt that women could play a part in conjunction with men, in the community life of a city, - and now I find everyone considers I should be "better" than the men, should show them "how" to do things, and generally be some sort of paragon as well as a pioneer - and believe me it is not a role which I seek at all.

It interests me to learn that you were the only woman on the Middlesex County Council, and if you have the time and the inclination, I would sincerely appreciate it if you would give me an outline of some of your activities.

I am enclosing some leaflets for you to send to the Women's Service Library, Oxford, England. I am also the President of a Women's Political Club, and I am sending you a copy of our Constitution, also copy of a talk I gave over the air, in a session sponsored by the National Council of Women, on a Conference which our Club recently held in Brisbane; also our Annual Report. I will hand to the Club the very interesting pamphlet which you enclosed in your letter, and possibly the Committee will consider the advisability of joining the Women's Service Library.

With again my sincere thanks for your letter, and interest.

Sincerely Yours,

Petronel White