

Women Shaping the Nation

Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Volume 1 2001



Centenary of Federation

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Introduction

Women Shaping the Nation is a major event in Victoria's Centenary of Federation Celebrations.

The Centenary of Federation is an opportunity for all Australians to reflect upon our achievements and challenges and reaffirm our commitment to the future. In particular, the Victorian Government and the Centenary of Federation Victoria Committee want to ensure the contribution of women is acknowledged and honoured in the celebrations.

On 7 May 2001, 9.30 to 11.30am, in Parliament House, Victoria, over 800 women from across Australia will meet to recognise women who won the right for women to vote and who are pioneers or major contributors to the shaping of our nation.

The Event will feature the presentation of the 2001 Women's Petition by the Hon. Mary Delahunty, Minister for Education and Minister for the Arts and Minister responsible for Centenary of Federation. The Petition has been developed and signed by thousands of women across Victoria.

The Petition highlighted the eight main issues on which women wanted community and government action and honoured the historic role of the women who developed and presented to the Victorian Parliament the 'Great Petition' of 1891, which demanded the right for women to vote. It was signed by 30,000 women.

The Hon. Sherryl Garbutt, Minister for Conservation and the Environment and Minister for Women's Affairs, will present to the 7 May assembly of women, this first

volume of the inaugural *Victorian Honour Roll of Women*. This presentation will be supported by *Honour Roll* nominees.

The *Honour Roll* features marvellous stories of 250 key Australian women who have achieved 'firsts' or have been founders of movements benefiting women and the community nationally or internationally, as well as Victorian women who have made a significant contribution to the progress of women and the community. The first level of nominees was obtained by research undertaken by the Museum of Victoria and the second level of nominees are nominations from peak Victorian community and women's organisations. This first volume is an important step towards a better record and greater understanding of women's roles in Australian history. The further development of the *Honour Roll* will be an ongoing initiative of the Victorian Government.

The participation of Victorian women from all walks of life and all areas of endeavour in the Women Shaping the Nation Program augurs well for the achievement of a more just, equitable and sustainable society.



*The Hon. Sherryl Garbutt
Minister for Conservation
and the Environment,
Minister for Women's Affairs*



*The Hon. Mary Delahunty
Minister for Education
and Minister for the Arts,
Minister responsible for
Centenary of Federation*

Acknowledgements

The *Victorian Honour Roll of Women* is a joint initiative of the Centenary of Federation Victoria Committee, the Office of Women's Policy and the *Women Shaping the Nation* Steering Committee.

This *Honour Roll* book has been compiled by the Hon. Joan Kirner, AM, Chair, *Women Shaping the Nation* Steering Committee, (Hatic) Hutch Hussein, *Women Shaping the Nation* Event Project Manager, with the generous assistance of David Pitchford, Chief Executive Officer, Centenary of Federation Victoria, CFV support staff, in particular Joe Bogdanov and the staff of the Office of Minister Delahunty and Minister Garbutt.

Special thanks for work on the book are due to Emma Willoughby and Jayne Josem of the Museum of Victoria, who researched the 'Firsts & Founders', Helen Burbery, Emma Smart, assisted by Darren Rath, Ann Rzesniowiecki, Luize Svikers and James Rule from B&B Design Australia who designed and produced the book, and Helen Duffy (author) and Bruce Postle, who supplied photographs from the book, *Women of Australia*, by Helen Duffy and Ingrid Ohlsson.

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We also wish to acknowledge the excellent work done on a difficult task by the Independent Advisory Panel, the Hon. Joan Kirner, Chair, Ms Joy Murphy, Dame Margaret Guilfoyle, Ms Vicki Mitsos, Ms Jacinta Allan, MP, Hon. Jeanette Powell, MP, Cr Julie Hansen, Ms Eve Mahlab, Ms Andrea Mc Call, MP, Ms Judy Maddigan, MP, Ms Sue Natrass, Ms Ella Ebery, Ms Sarah Miller, Ms Ellen Kleimaker and Prof. Shurlee Swain.

The brief accounts of *Honour Roll* nominees contained in the book are completed to the Project Team's best ability in a very short time frame.

As the *Honour Roll* is further developed, the biographies will be improved and the *Honour Roll* extended.

Contents

The *Victorian Honour Roll of Women* List is divided into two sections. The first section lists and documents the stories of women who have achieved firsts in the nation and women who have been or are leaders or founders of movements or organisations.

The second section lists and documents the stories of women who have been nominated by peak women's or community organisations for their significant contribution to Victoria or the nation.

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Firsts and Founders

Elizabeth Macarthur



1809: First Australian woman pastoralist

Elizabeth Macarthur was born in Devon, England on 14 August 1766, to a farmer and his wife who were educated and affluent. Elizabeth received an education before marrying John Macarthur in October 1788. He joined the New South Wales Corps in 1789 and sailed to Australia with his wife and young son, Edward. They arrived in June 1790 having lost a baby daughter en route.

Elizabeth was the first educated woman to reach the colony and held a privileged position. Over the next two decades she gave birth to four sons and three daughters, one of whom died. Letters to her family reveal a positive nature and strength of character which helped her overcome the hardships of early colonial life. By 1794, the Macarthurs had built Elizabeth Farm, a brick house at Parramatta. They had a beautiful garden and the children received an excellent education.

In 1809, her husband was forced to leave the colony and return to England. Business partners administered his mercantile affairs but Elizabeth was responsible for the care of their valuable merino flocks, the Camden Park estate and their convict labourers. She did so successfully for eight years,

visiting their estate regularly despite the danger of venturing into the bush. Elizabeth oversaw every aspect of the management of their flocks and communicated with her husband in England. As a result of their joint interest they were able to sell their wool competitively in the British market and effectively established the reputation of the colony as a centre for this industry. Elizabeth did not complain about her workload, nor did she boast of her achievements.

On John's return in 1817, Elizabeth retired from the business affairs and spent more time enjoying social life and her children in Sydney and Parramatta. She was distressed by her husband's fits of depression and jealousy and they soon lived in virtual separation. She strove to keep the family together. He died in 1834 and she lived another sixteen years during which Australian wool exporters became very successful. Elizabeth was a beautiful, sensitive woman who was widely praised. She died on 9 February 1850, and while her husband is remembered as the father of Australia's wool industry, her pivotal role in its success is often overlooked.

Mary Reibey



1811: First known successful Australian businesswoman

Mary was born in Bury, England on 12 May 1777. Christened as Molly Haydock her family were yeomen and she received a good education. Her parents passed away when she was young so she lived with her grandmother. After her grandmother died when she was in her early teens, Mary apparently spent much of her time disguised as a boy and called herself James Burrows. It was under this guise that she was arrested for stealing horses in 1790, a most serious offense punishable by hanging. She was thrown in gaol and in November 1791 her family and friends presented a petition calling for her release. Unfortunately, none of them would act as guardian for her, so at fifteen years of age she found herself the youngest of 47 women transported to New South Wales.

Mary arrived in October 1792 and by September 1794 she had married a young officer with the East India Company, Thomas Rabey (later changed to Reibey). He applied for a land grant and they soon moved to set up a farm by the Hawkesbury River. Thomas was more of a businessman and a sailor than a farmer so they moved back to Sydney with their baby son Thomas who was born in 1796. They set up a store in their house at the Rocks. Realising there were big profits to be made in shipping and trading, Thomas soon had a ship and later a partner and was travelling up and down the east coast trading in timber and coal. Meanwhile Mary helped run the business and by 1803 they were becoming affluent. Soon they moved into a two storey stone house in Macquarie Place and had servants to help with the children. Mary kept the accounts while her husband and his partner were away.

By 1810, Mary had given birth to their seventh child. Thomas died the following year, aged 42, and his business partner died a few weeks later. Mary was a 34-year-old wealthy widow with seven children, farms, ships and a warehouse. She continued to run the business and was an astute businesswoman, adept at handling the American, Chinese and Indian traders. Mary expanded the business and made extensive investment in city property, erecting many substantial buildings. She took an interest in the church, education and charity.

Mary rose to respectability, became a social figure in Sydney and was an occasional guest of Governor Macquarie at Government House. Her eldest son, Thomas, became a ship captain and spent a lot of time in Tasmania. He married into a good family and built a house in Launceston. Mary took her two older girls to England to show them the world and provide them with some schooling. On their return, one of the daughters became engaged to a Lieutenant.

Mary tried to conceal her convict origins by claiming she arrived as a free woman. Her past came to haunt her when a book was published in 1846 about Margaret Catchpole, a convict sent to Australia for stealing horses. Many believed it was a book about her so she enlisted the help of the Bishop of Tasmania to clear her name. Her grandson, Thomas, went on to become the Archdeacon of Launceston and, briefly, the Premier of Tasmania. Mary died on 30 May 1855 in Sydney.



Caroline Chisholm

1838: Australia's first prominent female social worker

Caroline Chisholm was born in Northampton, England to a well-off farmer and, at age 22, married Captain Archibald Chisholm of the East India Company. In 1832, he was posted to Madras where Caroline founded the Female School of Industry for the Daughters of European Soldiers. The Chisholms, with three sons, moved to Sydney in 1838. Caroline discovered that the government had no plans for the many immigrants who arrived without employment, so she met the ships and assisted the female immigrants. In January 1841, she petitioned Governor and Lady Gipps with a plan for a girls' home and was subsequently provided with part of an old immigration barracks to establish the Female Immigrants Home. Her next mission was to find employment for the women and she soon established a dozen employment agencies in rural areas. She went on to push for other reforms, undaunted by the constant battles with authority.

Caroline returned to England in 1846 to successfully fight for free passage for emigrants' wives and children. Her house became an Australian information centre.

In 1849, she established the Family Colonisation Loan Society which lent families money for passage to Australia and found them employment once they arrived. By 1854, when Caroline sailed back to Australia, the Society had sent more than 3000 emigrants. She toured the Victorian goldfields and pushed for the construction of shelter sheds en route.

The family moved to Kyneton where they ran a store but Caroline moved to Sydney for medical attention. Financial necessity forced her to open a girls' school in Newtown, which was later moved to Tempe. In 1866, the Chisholms returned to England, where they lived humbly until Caroline died in 1877, survived by three sons and two daughters. Buried in Northampton, her birthplace, her headstone was inscribed 'the emigrant's friend'.

Adelaide Ironside

1850s: First Australian artist to study abroad

Adelaide Ironside was born in Sydney on 17 November 1831. Her father, James Ironside, was a commission agent and she was educated, including artistically, by her mother, Martha Rebecca (nee Redman). Adelaide wrote patriotic prose and verse for the Sydney press and in 1855 designed a large banner for the First Volunteer Artillery Company of New South Wales. She also exhibited at the 1854 preparatory Australian Museum Exhibition for the Paris Universal Exhibition. The next year her 'Drawings of native wild flowers, &c.' received honourable mentions in Paris.

In 1855, Adelaide sailed with her mother to Europe to study art and met painter Joseph Severn and critic John Ruskin. In 1856, she set up in Rome and after many difficulties established a reputation with a large oil painting *'The Pilgrim of Art, Crowned by the Genius of Art'* (1859). The 'pilgrim' in the painting was Adelaide herself, while the 'genius of art' was a portrait of her mother. In 1861, a private audience with

Pope Pius IX enabled her to study in Perugia and to copy works in the papal collections.

In 1862, her oil painting *'The Marriage at Cana in Gallilee'* was exhibited in the London International Exhibition, in the New South Wales court, while *'The Pilgrim of Art'* was shown in the Rome court. In the same year, she became a member of the Accademia dei Quiriti in Rome and was awarded its diploma. Adelaide died in Rome, of tuberculosis in 1867. Although she gained recognition for her work in Italy and England, she was never popular in Australia. Her ambition to fresco the walls of the Great Hall of the University of Sydney was never fulfilled. Her surviving works are mainly portraits.

Throughout her life, Adelaide remained a committed republican and held anti-papal views – in her oil painting *'The Marriage of Cana'* she modelled the heads of both Christ and the bridegroom on Garibaldi.



Mother Mary Mackillop

Mother Mary Mackillop

1866: First woman in Australia to found a religious order

Mary MacKillop was born on 15 January 1842 in Fitzroy, Melbourne, the eldest of eight children. Mary was educated at private schools and by her father who had studied for the priesthood in Rome. When her family fell on hard times she took on a succession of jobs including a shop girl, governess and teacher at a Catholic school in Portland.

Mary was influenced by an early friend of the family, Father Geoghegan and became interested in a penitential form of religious life. Accordingly, she placed herself under the direction of Father J. E. Tenison-Woods who as parish priest of Penola in South Australia wanted to found a religious society. With Mary as its first member and Superior, the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart was founded in 1866. Members were to live in poverty and dedicate themselves to educating poor children. Membership increased rapidly and the order spread throughout South Australia but ran into

difficulties. Mary was excommunicated by Bishop Sheil in 1871 over alleged insubordination and the Sisterhood was almost disbanded. The excommunication was removed in 1872. The following year, Mary obtained papal approval of the Sisterhood and travelled throughout Europe visiting schools until her return in 1875. By then, her relationship with Tenison-Woods had soured.

In March 1875, she was elected Superior-General of the Sisterhood. She travelled throughout Australasia, establishing schools, convents and charitable institutions. On 11 May 1901, she suffered a stroke while travelling in New Zealand, and remained an invalid until her death in Sydney on 8 August 1909. In 1972, she was nominated for the honour of beatification and canonisation.

Lucy Osborn

1868: First trained nurse to work in Australia

Lucy Osborn was born on 10 May 1835 in Leeds, England. Her father was an Egyptologist and she was given a good education. She had a long-standing interest in nursing and she worked at hospitals in Germany, Austria and Holland. In 1866, she entered the Nightingale Training School in London to study nursing, much to the displeasure of her family. As part of her training she spent three months studying midwifery, completing her studies in 1867.

Around this time the New South Wales Government wrote to Florence Nightingale asking her to send a team of trained nurses to work at the Sydney Infirmary. Florence was impressed by her recent graduate so she sent Lucy Osborn as the lady superintendent with a staff of five sisters. They arrived in the colony on 5 March 1868 and found the hospital in a state of neglect – filthy, disease and bug-ridden and with no plumbing. Colonial medicine was still in its rough pioneering stage. The nursing staff there were completely untrained, so Lucy dismissed some and trained those with the most potential.

Within a week of arriving at the hospital, the visiting Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, was shot and wounded by an Irish patriot. The bullet was removed and Lucy took care of him. During this period she became close to the Governor's wife who in turn supported her when necessary. Late that year Lucy, herself, fell ill with dysentery. Once recovered she took up the daunting task of trying to improve conditions

in the hospital. The Board and the doctors became irritated by her demands, which implied that management was negligent. Eventually the government responded with a Royal Commission, which looked into its operations. The only bright spot the Commission found was its nursing.

Lucy reported back to Florence Nightingale that year that she had graduated eighteen nurses. Unfortunately, she made many enemies within the hospital system owing to her outspokenness and demands for improvements. Some bad reports about her filtered back to Miss Nightingale in England. Nevertheless, many women were trained in nursing by Lucy and her graduates worked throughout Australia. One of them, Florence Abbott, was very successful as the matron of Brompton Hospital in England.

Finally, in 1881, the *Sydney Hospital Act* was passed abolishing the Infirmary and its board. In 1884, after a series of administrative crises, Lucy resigned and returned to England. Her position was taken up by one of the trainees, Miss Mackay. Lucy continued nursing in Britain and in 1888 was a foundation member of the British Nursing Association. She wrote to her friend, Mary Windeyer, of her plans to return to Australia but never did. She died in December 1891 while staying at her sister Ann's boarding school at Harrogate.

Henrietta Dugdale

1869: First woman to speak out for female emancipation

Henrietta Dugdale was born in London around 1826 and married at fourteen. In 1852, she arrived in Melbourne with her husband and by 1859 he had died. She then married William Dugdale, son of an English clergyman, with whom she had a son and two daughters. Around this time she began to be outspoken about the rights of women. In 1869, *The Argus* published a letter she had written about extending the franchise to women, ideas which were considered revolutionary at the time. This letter was the first time a woman in Australia had spoken out in the public arena on emancipation.

In 1883, she published *'A Few Hours in a Far Off Age'*, a booklet which contained her ideas on the equality of the sexes. She wrote, *'My suffering has been borne; no alteration of the laws could now benefit me; but there are thousands enduring the pain I have experienced through man's injustice, and thousands to follow before there be just legislation'*.

She blamed the current social problems on male ignorance, liquor and the illiteracy of the working class. She condemned the monarchy for restricting human advancement and attacked Christianity as despotism formed by men to humiliate women.

She was a member of the Eclectics, a group devoted to the discussion of controversial subjects and the Australian Secular Association which attracted freethinkers on religious and moral questions.

Henrietta won a following among radicals and secularists but she clashed with conservatives. Nonetheless, she was first president of the Victorian Women's Suffrage Society, which she found in 1884, and fought side-by-side with the Christians to achieve emancipation. This group was actually the first women's suffrage association in Australia.

Henrietta also believed in 'rational dress' and wore a long tunic over loose trousers, known as 'bloomers' after Amelia Bloomer who first promoted the outfit. Henrietta cut her hair short, played chess, did her own carpentry and was a vegetarian who grew most of her own food.

Henrietta married for the third time in 1903 at 77 years of age, having seen women win the vote. She was able to exercise this right several times before she died at Point Lonsdale on 17 June 1918, aged 91.



Nellie Stewart

1877: Australia's first female comic opera star

Eleanor Stewart Towzey was born on 22 November 1858 in Woolloomooloo, the daughter of actor Richard Stewart Towzey and his actress wife, Theodosia. The family all adopted the surname 'Stewart' and Nellie began acting as a child playing alongside her father. She went to boarding school, and at Christmas, played in pantomime under her father's management.

In 1877, the Stewarts staged a show called *Rainbow Revels* in which they all sang and danced. In 1879, they toured India, England and the United States with the show. The following year Nellie was invited to play the principal boy in the pantomime *Sinbad the Sailor* at Melbourne's Theatre Royal. Then George Musgrove invited her to play the lead in his production of *Offenbach's La Fille du Tambour Major*. Thus began her professional and romantic relationship with Musgrove. She played numerous lead roles for the Royal Comic Opera Company, run by Musgrove, J. C. Williamson and A. Garner. Between 1883 and 1887 Nellie played continuously, touring around the country. In 1884, she married Richard Goldsbrough Row, although it did not last and was dissolved in 1901. In 1887, Nellie went to England with Musgrove for a rest.

In 1888, she appeared in grand opera as Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust*. She was eventually forced to relinquish opera and concentrate solely on comedy and drama. In 1891, Nellie and George returned to London where their daughter Nancye was born in 1893.

Nellie returned to Australia and played in comic opera again for two years before returning to England and taking a break from the stage. When she appeared on stage in England in 1899 she was well received, one critic describing her as 'a lovely and gracious woman, a born actress, an experienced artist, with an attractive style and pure as well as beautiful voice'. In May 1901, she sang the memorial ode 'Australia' at the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament at the Royal Exhibition buildings in Melbourne.

In 1902, she appeared in the role which she made her own – Nell Gwynne in *Sweet Nell of the Old Drury*, which proved a resounding success. She continued to tour Australia, New Zealand and even the United States over the next decade.

In 1911, she acted in Raymond Longford's film of *Sweet Nell of the Old Drury* which premiered in Sydney and screened for six years. In 1910, she made one of her many appearances for charity to raise money to buy radium for Sydney Hospital which named its children's wards after her. During World War 1 Nellie was forced to live on her savings and her hardship became worse when Musgrove died in 1916.

Nellie was a versatile actress, who was also beautiful and had expressive eyes. She had a certain magnetism and her perennial youth enabled her to play young roles late in her life. She even played an astonishing revival of 'Sweet Nell' when she was 70. In her later years she opened the Nellie Stewart School of Acting where she continued to teach until close to her death in Sydney on 21 June 1931.



Bella Guerin

1883: First woman to graduate from an Australian University

Bella Guerin was born on 23 April 1858, at Williamstown, Victoria. She studied at home to matriculate in 1878, and then gained her Bachelor of Arts in 1883, followed by a Master of Arts in 1885. She taught at Loreto Convent, Ballarat, urging the establishment of higher education scholarships to produce 'a band of noble thoughtful women as a powerful influence for good'. She married an elderly poet, Henry Halloran, who died shortly afterwards leaving her with a young son, Henry. She returned to teaching and from the mid-1890s frequented suffragist circles. A second marriage in 1909 to George D'Arcie Lavender was also short lived.

Bella Guerin was vice-president of the Women's Political Association from 1912-14 and co-authored Vida Goldstein's 1913 Senate election pamphlet. However, dual membership of the non-party feminist camp and Labor Party organisations

proved untenable, so from 1914 she campaigned for Victorian Socialist parties and the Women's League of Socialists, speaking out on a range of controversial social issues. She led the Labor Women's Anti-Conscription Fellowship campaign during the 1916 referendum. In 1918, as vice-president of the Labor Party's Women's Central Organising Committee she caused controversy by describing Labor women as 'performing poodles and packhorses' who were used for fundraising but under-represented in policy decisions. But she was right. She would be delighted to see the 123 Labor women now in parliament throughout Australia.

Bella died in Adelaide on 26 July 1923, of cirrhosis of the liver and is remembered for her idealism, her oratory skill and her commitment to equity for women.



Dr Dagmar Berne *Dagmar Berne*

1886: First woman to study medicine in Australia

Dagmar Berne was born in New South Wales in 1865, the eldest of eight children. Her father had emigrated from Denmark to New South Wales but drowned in the Bega River while trying to save a man. Her mother remarried but her stepfather died while Dagmar was in her teens. The family moved to Sydney and both the boys and the girls were sent to private schools. Dagmar attended the exclusive Springfield Ladies' College in Potts Point where she was taught deportment, needlework and other subjects aimed to make her a good wife and mother. However, Dagmar wanted to study science and go to University so she begged her mother to organise private tuition rather than the expensive school.

It paid off, for in 1885 Dagmar began studying at Sydney University. After a year of studying Arts, she gained admission to the Department of Medicine, despite the protestations of the Dean, Professor Stuart who was determined that no woman would qualify while he was in charge. In her first year she achieved Honours in many subjects but, in her second year, she encountered Professor Stuart and he had decided to never give her a pass. So, despite four years of intensive study, Dagmar realised she would never qualify in medicine. In 1888, she met Dr Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, a pioneering British doctor who had a similar experience to Dagmar in England. Garrett advised her to go abroad to gain a degree.

Thanks to the support of their mother, Dagmar and her sister Florence travelled to London, where women were now accepted as medical students at London University's Medical School. They took cheap lodgings and studied hard but the combination of poor diet and damp accommodation had a bad effect on Dagmar, who suffered recurring bouts of pneumonia and pleurisy. In the 1890s, the family was hit by financial disaster when the Australian economy took a downturn and there was no more money to support the sisters. Florence had been a teacher, so she returned to work and supported Dagmar while she completed her degree. Dagmar qualified in 1883 and worked in a hospital in Tottenham for two years before returning to Sydney.

In 1895, Dagmar registered to practice as a doctor with the Medical Board of New South Wales, only the second woman to do so. She set up a practice in Macquarie Street and worked hard to support her mother. It was soon discovered that her persistent cough was a symptom of tuberculosis. She moved to the country to stay with some family friends in the hope that the dry climate would help her condition. She did not stop working, right up until her death on 22 August 1900.

Her mother established a prize to honour her daughter whose life was cut short as a result of the male prejudice that existed at that time. The Dagmar Berne prize is presented each year to the medical graduate obtaining the highest marks in their final year.

Maria Kirk

1887: Founder of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Australia

Maria Kirk was born on 9 December 1855 in London to a salesman's assistant and his wife. She married an ironmonger's assistant, Frank Kirk, on 14 September 1878. Maria was brought up as a Quaker and worked as a missionary in London's slums. In her late twenties, she became active in the British Women's Temperance Association. She represented it in 1886 at a meeting held in Toronto to organise the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WWCTU). Later that year the Kirks migrated to Victoria and settled first at Warragul before moving to Camberwell late in 1888.

In November 1887, Maria played a large part in establishing an offshoot of the Union in Victoria. Its aim was to fight the liquor traffic and promote social and moral reforms. She became colonial (later general) secretary of the WCTU of Victoria and edited its journal, *White Ribbon Signal*, from its inception in 1892. In May 1891, she became secretary of the newly formed WCTU of Australasia and in 1897 represented the Victorian body at temperance conventions in Britain and the United States. As a delegate of the WCTU, she helped to establish the National Council of Women of Victoria in 1902 and served on its executive committee until 1913.

Due to ill health, she resigned from her official position that year but retained her involvement.

Maria's passionate, earnest and winning manner as well as excellent organisational skills made her 'the heart of the movement'. She combined ardent Christian piety with lively feminist views and a keen interest in social reform. In 1891, Maria organised and presented to parliament the 'Great Petition' of 1891 for enfranchisement and in 1894 was a founding committee member of the Victorian Women's Franchise League. In the 1890s, she also fought to increase the age of consent for girls. She advocated the appointment of female gaol attendants and police matrons. Through the WCTU and the NCW she fought for the *Children's Court Act* (1906), and was a keen supporter of free kindergartens for the inner suburbs.

She died on 14 January 1928 at Malvern, Victoria. As a memorial, the kindergarten she helped found in Richmond in 1909 bears her name. Her epitaph reads: 'Her works do follow her'.



Louisa Lawson

Louisa Lawson

1888: First Australian woman to publish a radical magazine for women

Louisa Lawson was born on 17 February 1848, on an outback station near Mudgee, New South Wales. She was the second of twelve children born to Henry Albury, a station hand and his wife Harriet, a needlewoman. She was educated at Mudgee National School but had to stay home and look after her siblings, instead of learning to teach. In 1866, she married a Norwegian-born handyman and gold digger. Between 1867 and 1877, Lawson gave birth to five children, but her husband, Peter, was often away at the goldfields or contract building.

Louisa Lawson moved to Sydney with her children in 1883 and Peter sent money irregularly. Her father had a gift for story-telling which she had inherited, and some of her poems had been published in the *Mudgee Independent*. In 1887, she bought the *Republican*, an ailing newspaper, for which she and her son, Henry, wrote and edited most of the copy. In 1888, she started the magazine *Dawn*, to publicise women's wrongs, fight their battles and sue for suffrage. It combined reporting on women's issues with household advice, fashion, poetry and short stories. Louisa included her own political editorial and created an instant commercial success. She employed ten women including printers and they were taking on other jobs to subsidise the magazine. She ran into trouble with the New South Wales Typographical Association which refused membership for women and tried to force her to dismiss her printers. But Louisa succeeded and therefore

her venture was unique in being almost completely staffed by women.

Through her magazine, Louisa championed many causes for women and particularly working women. In 1889, she launched a campaign for female suffrage and established the Dawn Club where women could meet to discuss reforms and gain experience in public speaking. She argued for professions to open their doors to women, particularly for women to be working as lawyers, doctors, prison wardens, factory inspectors and magistrates. She urged parents to educate their daughters so that they could be more independent. She was instrumental in the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales.

Louisa was thrown from a tram and badly injured in 1900. She lost some of her vitality and in 1905 *Dawn* closed. She was also devastated by her son Henry's alcoholism. Unfortunately, the last fifteen years of her life were increasingly lonely and impoverished. She lived alone and suffered bouts of depression and the onset of senile dementia. In 1920, her other son, Peter, admitted her to a hospital for the insane. She lived out her final six months in this decrepit state and was given a pauper's funeral upon her death in August 1920. The only memorial is a block of housing commission flats in North Bondi.

Mary Lee



1890: Founder of the Working Women's Trade Union

Mary Lee was born on 14 February 1821 in Ireland. She married George Lee and together they had seven children. By 1879, she was a widow and sailed with her daughter, Evelyn, to Adelaide to nurse her sick son John Benjamin. He died the following year but they stayed in Adelaide. She spent the rest of her life working tirelessly for political and social reform.

Mary became secretary of Reverend Kirby's Social Purity Society, which worked for legal changes in women's social and sexual status. One of their achievements was raising the age of consent to sixteen in 1885. She realised that women's suffrage was necessary for women to improve their lot, so she helped establish the Australian Women's Suffrage League in July 1888. She steered their campaign and understood the value of publicity to arouse public interest in this issue. Mary travelled energetically around the city and country speaking publicly about franchise. She collected shilling subscriptions and organised petitions and deputations.

Mary was concerned with working women's conditions so she proposed the formation of women's trade unions at a public meeting on sweating in December 1889. The Working Women's Trades Union was founded the following year and Mary was secretary for the first two years. She visited factories and workshops, trying to persuade employers to adopt the Union's recommended wages. In 1893, as vice-president, she was delegate to the Trades and Labor Council where she examined sweating in the clothing trades. She also worked on the Distressed Women's and Children's Committee which

distributed clothes and food to poor women. Mary was also a member of the ladies' committee of the Female Refuge.

From 1889, she worked tirelessly on parliamentary petitions calling for female suffrage. In 1891, the United Labor Party decided to back the cause. Mary organised a colony-wide petition, which contained 11 600 signatures and was 400 feet long. It was presented to the House of Assembly in August 1894. Women 'deluged' members with telegrams and thronged the galleries. *The Constitution Amendment Act* was passed on 18 December 1894, making South Australian women the first in Australia to gain the parliamentary vote. It also gave them the right to stand for parliament. Mary was exhausted but jubilant.

In 1895, two trade unions wanted her to stand for parliament however she did not want to be hampered by obligation to a particular party. In 1896, she celebrated her 75th birthday at Adelaide Town Hall. Premier Kingston handed her a purse of 50 sovereigns, which was publicly donated through the Mary Lee Testimonial Fund. Her role in the achievement of women's suffrage was officially acknowledged. In 1896, she was appointed first female official visitor to the lunatic asylums and performed this task with immense courage for twelve years. Her financial resources dwindled and in 1902 an appeal was launched with little result. Her last years were blighted by poverty. She died in her North Adelaide home on 18 September 1909. Her work remained unrecorded until 1980.



Dr Constance Stone

Constance Stone

1890: First woman to be registered as a medical practitioner in Australia

Emma Constance Stone was born on 4 December 1856, in Hobart. She and her sister were educated at home by their mother, a former governess. Their father was a builder and the family moved to Melbourne in 1872. The family had a Protestant work ethic and believed strongly in the value of education. Constance was interested in anatomy from a young age but, like many middle class young women, she started her career as a primary school teacher.

When she was 28 she went overseas to study medicine as the University of Melbourne did not admit women to its medical course. She studied at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania for three years and in 1888 graduated MD, ChM, with first class honours from the University of Trinity College, Toronto. She then went to London where she worked with the famous Dr Elizabeth Garrett Anderson at the New Hospital for Medicine, a hospital staffed entirely by women for women patients only. This gave her the idea for a similar medical institution in Melbourne. On her return in 1890 she became the first woman to register with the Medical Board of Victoria.

Meanwhile, in 1887, following petitions, Constance's sister Clara had been among the first women to enter the

University of Melbourne's medical school and by 1891 was one of the first two women to graduate. The two sisters set up private practice and worked at the free dispensary attached to Dr Singleton's missionary in Collingwood.

A few years later their cousin Emily Stone graduated from medical school. The three of them were among a group of female doctors who met at Constance's home in 1895 to establish the Victorian Medical Women's Society to network and further their common goals. In 1896, eleven women doctors decided to set up a hospital of their own, under the leadership of Constance. It began as an outpatients' dispensary in La Trobe Street but eventually became the Queen Victoria Hospital for Women and Children, funded by a jubilee shilling appeal. It opened in 1899. The doctors worked there on a voluntary basis and the patients were treated for free. Family planning work was encouraged at the hospital and sexually transmitted diseases were treated.

Unfortunately, Constance was worn out from the effort to establish the hospital and caught tuberculosis from one of her patients and died on 29 December 1902. She was survived by a husband, Rev. David Jones, whom she had married in 1893, and a daughter who went on to become a doctor.



Tilly Aston

1894: Founder of Australia's first Braille library

Tilly Aston was born on 11 December, 1873, at Carisbrook, Victoria, the youngest of eight children born to bootmaker Edward Aston and his wife Anne. Her parents had migrated from Gloucestershire in 1855. Tilly had defective eyesight from birth. Her parents ensured that she was exposed to the beauty of nature and this inspired her later verse and prose. She attended a private school where she learned to read from large-type books and to read and memorise poetry. Just before she turned seven she became completely blind.

In 1881, her father died and her mother had to work as a district nurse to support the family. Shortly afterwards an itinerant blind missionary introduced her to the Braille method of reading. In June 1882, Tilly enrolled at the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind in St Kilda. She matriculated at sixteen and began an Arts course at the University of Melbourne. However, the lack of Braille books, combined with her nervous condition, forced her to abandon studies in her second year. She then tried to earn a living as a music teacher.

During this period she worked with the many friends she had made to establish the Victorian Association of Braille Writers in 1894, which later became the Victorian Braille Library. This group sought and trained volunteers to become proficient at transcribing books into Braille. The committee wanted the library service to be free to the blind. As books were mailed to borrowers, in 1897 Aston pushed for the

railways to carry Braille books at half the normal rate, and by 1899 the cartage was free. Following this, she founded and became the first secretary of the Association for the Advancement of the Blind. In 1947, she became president.

In 1913, Tilly applied for the Education Department post of Head of the School for the Blind. After training, she took up the post, but was never fully accepted by some of the staff of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. They did not approve of a blind teacher. She was also required to sever her connections with the blind societies she had helped to found. Although she enjoyed teaching, these years were not happy ones. In 1925, she was forced to retire due to ill health. She was appointed a life-governor and paid a weekly allowance in lieu of superannuation.

Over the years, she had written a number of books including *Maiden Verses* (1901), *Singable Songs* (1924), *Songs of Light* (1935) and *The Inner Garden* (1940). In 1946, she published the *Memoirs of Tilly Aston*. She twice received the King's Medal for distinguished citizen service. She was an exponent of Esperanto and corresponded with fellow linguists around the world. When she left the school, she lived with her mother and brother until about 1913 when her brother married and her mother died. She then lived in her own house in Windsor where a devoted housekeeper cared for her. She died there of cancer on 1 November 1947.

Margaret Cuthbertson



1894: First female inspector of factories in Australia

Margaret Cuthbertson was born on 6 September 1864, in Bacchus Marsh, Victoria. Her father was a contractor from England while her mother had come from Edinburgh.

Margaret entered the Victorian Public Service in July 1888 as a telephone switchboard attendant in the Postmaster General's Department. She arrived there with experience in factory work, so in March 1894, she was appointed to the newly created position of female inspector of factories, the first woman in Australia to hold such a position. There were 11,104 women working in registered factories and Cuthbertson supervised their general accommodation, ventilation and sanitary conditions and investigated pay rates, hours of work and conditions of apprenticeship. A year later she had two assistants.

In 1897, Margaret was providing valuable assistance as secretary of the Clothing Board, a wage board designed to regulate wages in sweated trades. By 1907, she was secretary of six such boards. In 1898, she contributed to the investigation of Victoria's pioneering factory laws and in 1900 she became a Senior Inspector. The government sent her to the UK in 1912 to find suitable women who wanted to migrate to Victoria to work. She co-authored a book, *Woman's Work* (1913), which detailed the nature, terms and conditions of employment available to women.

Margaret Cuthbertson became first president of the Victorian Women's Public Service Association in 1901 and the following year represented it at the newly formed National Council of Women of Victoria. They worked to improve prison conditions for women and to establish the Talbot Epileptic Colony. Margaret lent support to the Free Kindergarten Union, founded in 1908, which aimed to provide facilities for 'slum children'. She also worked with Vida Goldstein to assist unemployed women during World War I.

In 1920, Margaret resigned as Inspector of Factories in order to work elsewhere but she continued her welfare work for women and children. She served on the board of the Queen Victoria Hospital and was treasurer of the Yooralla Hospital for Crippled Children.

On 17 November 1944, Margaret died after a long illness. An obituary in *The Age* paid tribute to her 'valuable work in safeguarding the rights and well-being of woman and girl workers in the days when Victoria was becoming known as the leading industrial State in Australia'.



Maybanke Anderson

Maybanke Anderson

1895: Established Australia's first free kindergarten

Maybanke Anderson was born on 16 February 1845 in Kingston-on-Thames in England and arrived in Sydney in 1855 with her family. She studied to be a teacher and in 1867 married Edmund Wolstenholme, a timber merchant. By 1882, they had seven children, but only three boys reached adulthood as four infants died of tuberculosis-related diseases. They built a large home, Maybanke, in spacious grounds near Marrickville. Around 1884, Edmund became a drunkard and deserted the family, so she took in boarders then turned the house into Maybanke College which gained a good reputation as a girls' school.

In the 1890s, Maybanke was involved in the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales as President and Vice-President, the Women's Literary Society (the first group of Sydney women to meet in the evenings) and the Australian Home Reading Union. In 1894, she published and edited her own fortnightly paper, *The Woman's Voice*, a venture that lasted for eighteen months. Through this vehicle she hoped to spread the message of reform according to her ideals. Its motto was 'Democratic but not revolutionary, womanly but not weak, fearless without effrontery, liberal without licence'. The following year her son Arthur drowned and soon afterwards she stopped producing the paper.

In 1895, she helped found the Kindergarten Union of New South Wales and the following year assisted in the establishment of the first free kindergarten at Woolloomooloo. This initiative was soon followed by others and included

inner-city slum areas. From her own experience she knew that childcare was an issue for working mothers. Maybanke stayed involved in the Kindergarten Union until the 1920s. In 1908, she started the Playgrounds Association which aimed to build safe parks for children in slum areas. From 1895 to 1927 Maybanke tried to assist children of the poor, travelling widely and giving advice on setting up new kindergartens and play areas, in order to keep them from getting into trouble or danger on the streets.

In 1899, she married Sir Francis Anderson, the Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney and became involved in campus activities such as the Women Evening Students' Association. Together they strove for educational reform and were involved with the Workers' Educational Association. Maybanke also worked as a journalist, penning articles under the name 'Lois' for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In 1919, she published *Motherlore*, a handbook on educating babies and young children.

She died in Paris on 15 April 1927 while travelling with her husband. Her work for the welfare of women and young children was honoured at the time of her passing, but her contribution appears to have been forgotten. At the time of her death there were fifteen free kindergartens in Sydney, including one called the Maybanke Free Kindergarten in Pymont. One of her colleagues wrote: 'Indeed it was impossible not to feel that inspiration came from her heart and soul'.



Catherine Helen Spence

Catherine Helen Spence

1897: Australia's first female candidate for public office

Catherine Helen Spence was born on 31 October 1825 near Melrose, Scotland and migrated with her family to South Australia in 1839. Catherine worked as a governess hoping to fulfil her childhood ambition to be a teacher and a great writer. She wrote the first novel about Australia by a woman, *Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia During the Gold Fever* which was published anonymously in London in 1854. Other books followed which bore her name as the author until she stopped writing fiction in 1889. She was more interested in writing as a literary critic and social commentator with articles published regularly in South Australian newspapers and magazines.

In 1872, Catherine was involved in the formation of the Boarding-Out Society to find homes for orphaned, destitute and reformed delinquent children. She worked as a visitor who checked on their progress. She supported the foundation of kindergartens and a government secondary school for girls. She wrote a book *The Laws We Live Under* (1880) which became the first social studies textbook used in Australian schools.

Under the influence of J. S. Mill's review of Thomas Hare's system of proportional representation Catherine became an enthusiast for electoral reform in 1859 and wrote and

published a pamphlet entitled '*A Plea for Pure Democracy*' (1861). In 1892, she proposed the modified Hare-Spence system as the way to achieve true proportionate representation of political parties. Her campaign was given financial support by R. Barr Smith and was launched through public meetings in 1892-93. She was gaining confidence as a public speaker and in 1893 went to the Chicago World Fair to speak and then lectured around the world. In 1895, she formed the Effective Voting League of South Australia. When she ran for the Federal Convention in 1897 she became Australia's first female political candidate, coming twenty-second out of thirty-three candidates. In the following two years she campaigned unsuccessfully for the introduction of 'effective voting' in Federal elections, and from 1902-10 her supporters introduced proportional representation bills into the South Australian Parliament.

Catherine was active in the fight for female suffrage throughout the 1890s. After South Australian women were given the vote in 1894 she went on to support campaigns in other states. She died on 3 April 1910, having raised three families of orphaned children in succession. She is remembered as 'The Grand Old Woman of South Australia'.



1900: First woman superintendent of the first nurses to serve in a war

Nellie Gould was born in Wales on 29 March 1860, the daughter of a mining agent, Henrym and his wife, Sarah, who died in childbirth eighteen months later. She was educated in England and Portugal. She taught in England and Germany before travelling to New South Wales in 1884. She trained as a nurse then worked at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney and the St Kilda Private Hospital in Woolloomooloo before becoming Matron of the Hospital for the Insane at Rydalmere, 1898-1900.

When the Boer War began in October 1899, hundreds of women offered to nurse there. Colonial authorities were reluctant to send women to a war zone. Nonetheless, early in 1899, Colonel Williams, the Principal Medical Officer for the Army in New South Wales, had asked Nellie to help him found a NSW Army Nursing Service Reserve. She would be the Lady Superintendent of Nurses and there would be 25 nurses underneath her. In 1899, she also helped found the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association.

On 17 January 1900, Nellie and thirteen other nurses left the colony with a contingent of the NSW Army Medical Corps. This was the first group of military nurses to be sent to any war by any of the Australian colonies. On arrival they were sent to hospitals in Cape Town, East London and Sterkstroom. Nellie was in charge of nursing in the Orange River District which included Bloemfontein, considered the most undesirable posting in that war. It was a pestilential city where dead horses and human sewage had infected the water. The sick tents were

crowded and conditions in the makeshift hospital were hopeless. Nellie and her nurses were commended for their devotion to duty and kindness to their patients.

On her return in 1902, Nellie and her friend, Sister Julia Bligh Johnston, opened Ermelo Private Hospital at Newtown, Sydney. Nellie also organised the Army Nursing Service Reserve in New South Wales. Ermelo was sold in 1912 and Nellie and Julia joined the Public Health Department. In 1914, Nellie enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and was appointed matron. She left with six other nurses bound for Alexandria, Egypt. Soon they had two hospitals with a total of 1500 beds established in order to treat the casualties from Gallipoli. In 1916, they were transferred to France. After a long period of arduous duty she was posted to England in 1917, where she worked in an Australian convalescent hospital. She was very weary when she returned to Australia in January 1919 and was discharged from the AIF. Nellie was unfit to take up nursing duties again and received a war service pension. Her service was recognised by the Royal Red Cross (1st class) award she received in 1916.

Nellie was a highly professional nurse with excellent administrative skills. She had impeccable manners and good humour and lead the other nurses by example. After her retirement she lived with Julia Johnston at Miranda, Sydney. She died on 19 July 1941, in Neutral Bay, Sydney.



Vida Goldstein

1903: First Australian woman to nominate for election to a national parliament

Vida Goldstein was born on 13 April 1869, at Portland, Victoria. In 1877, after living in Portland and Warrnambool, her family moved to Melbourne where her father worked as a contract draughtsman. The Goldstein's involvement in churches, particularly Charles Strong's Australia church, encouraged Vida's interest in social work. Her father worked for numerous charity organisations and was a member of the Women's Hospital Committee. Vida was well educated by a private governess before attending the Presbyterian Ladies College from 1884-86. Her mother was a suffragist and an ardent worker for social reform.

In 1890, Vida helped her mother collect signatures for the 'Great Petition' for women's suffrage. She subsequently became involved in the National Anti-Sweating League, the Queen Victoria Hospital appeal and other social welfare activities. She read widely and attended parliamentary sessions in order to learn about politics. She became friends with Annette Bear-Crawford, who founded the United Council for Women's Suffrage in order to unite the disparate women's groups. Goldstein learnt a lot from her, so much so that when Bear-Crawford suddenly passed away with pneumonia in 1899, Goldstein took over her leading role. She began spreading the word to other women via her monthly magazine the *Woman's Sphere*, which she owned and edited. In 1902, she travelled to the United States to give evidence in favour of female suffrage to a committee of the Congress. On her return she nominated for election in the national parliament, thereby achieving a notable first. She ran as an independent

candidate for the Senate in 1903, campaigning tirelessly for women's suffrage. Although unsuccessful she made four more attempts: in 1910 and 1917 for the Senate and in 1913 and 1914 for the House of Representatives, always as an independent woman candidate.

Throughout this period Vida continued to be outspoken on many social issues such as equal pay, her opposition to capitalism and public control of public utilities, as well as women's rights. She successfully lobbied politicians in order to achieve some of her social reforms. Vida refused to join a party but sympathised deeply with the cause of working people. She helped to either found or support many women's organisations including the National Council of Women, the Victorian Women's Public Servants' Association and the Women Writers' Club. In 1909, she launched a second paper, the *Woman Voter*, which she owned and edited. During World War I she turned her attention to pacifism, forming the Women's Peace Army in 1915. Her radical pacifism and opposition to the war lost her the support of the women's movement, so she fared poorly in the 1917 elections.

After the war, she spent three years abroad. In her later years, disillusioned, she turned to Christian Science and died of cancer at her home in South Yarra on 15 August 1949. Despite her years of dedication her death passed unnoticed. Her memory has been revived with the second wave of feminism and in 1984 a federal electorate in Victoria was named Goldstein.



Flos Greig

1905: First woman to enter the legal profession in Australia

Flos Greig was born on 7 November, 1880, at Broughty Ferry, Scotland, and migrated with her family to Australia in 1889. She attended Presbyterian Ladies College between 1894 and 1896 and enrolled at the University of Melbourne to study arts and law in 1897, becoming the first woman to enter the law faculty and became the first woman to graduate LLB in 1903. Through her efforts the Victorian Parliament passed the 'Flos Greig Enabling Bill' to allow women to be admitted to legal practice. After completing her articles Flos

became the first woman to enter the legal profession in Australia on 1 August 1905.

Knowing it would take too long to be accepted as a barrister, Flos decided to practice as a solicitor. She drafted amendments to a bill for the Women's Christian Temperance Union which passed into law as the *Children's Court Act*, 1906. She worked as a solicitor until her retirement in 1942. Flos lived in Rosebud until her death at Moorabbin on 31 December 1958.



Annette Kellerman

1905: First woman long distance swimmer for Australia

Annette Kellerman, born in Marrickville, Sydney, on 6 July 1886, was never a strong child. She was diagnosed with rickets, but it may have been polio, forcing her to wear leg braces from an early age. Her mother wisely took her to swimming lessons at Cavill's baths from the time she was six years old, which enabled her to discard the leg irons by the time she turned fifteen. It also gave her a love of swimming. In 1902 she won the inaugural New South Wales women's championship in the 100 yard and one mile races. Unfortunately, there was no higher level of competitive swimming open to her so she turned to long distance and exhibition swimming. The Olympics were not yet open to women as Baron Pierre De Coubertin, who had revived the ancient Olympics, wanted to keep the tradition of the games as a masculine endeavour. By 1912, he was out voted and swimming was introduced for women. This was too late for Annette Kellerman.

Her father was often out of work so she was determined to make money for the family. As a schoolgirl she gave exhibitions of swimming and diving at the Melbourne Baths, performed a mermaid act at Princes Court entertainment centre and swam with the fishes at the Exhibition Building Aquarium. In 1905, after swimming along the Yarra, Annette headed for Europe and swam along the Thames, down the river Seine and along the Danube, smashing records on the way.

In America in 1907, Annette attempted a long-distance swim wearing a tight-fitting boy's costume made of black wool,

which covered her entire body but had short legs. She was arrested for 'indecent exposure'. With no money for a lawyer she was forced to defend herself and pointed out to the judge that swimming with sleeves and heavy bloomers was 'like swimming in a ball gown'. The judge was sympathetic and dismissed the case, helping to relax laws for women's swimwear.

Annette became notorious following this case which generated much publicity world-wide, and she soon found herself making silent movies in Hollywood and touring the world with her vaudeville acts. Her movie career flourished until the advent of 'talkies', and she was alternately known as the 'Australian Mermaid' or 'Diving Venus'. With her magnificent physique Annette became an authority on physical fitness, beauty and health, publishing books on the subject and lecturing around the world. She lived in California with her American husband, James Sullivan, whom she had married in 1912, and ran a health store. She even wrote a book of children's stories *Fairy Tales of the South Seas* (London, 1926). In 1952, Esther Williams starred in a film of her life, *Million Dollar Mermaid*.

In 1970, Annette returned to Australia with her husband and she died on the Gold Coast on 6 November 1975. Her ashes were scattered close to the Great Barrier Reef. She did much for the promotion of swimming as an acceptable pursuit for women and furthermore emancipated women from the neck-to-knee costume.

Dr Helen Mayo, OBE

1909: Founder of the Mothers and Babies' Health Association

Helen Mayo was born on 1 October 1878, in Adelaide, the eldest of seven children. She and her siblings were educated by their parents in a happy family setting, then by a governess once she turned ten. Her formal schooling was brief but she was able to enrol at university in the Arts Department, transferring to medicine two years later. She was dux in her final year and won two scholarships. After a year at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, in 1904-05 she gained experience in midwifery and children's diseases at a range of hospitals in Great Britain and India.

Helen returned to Adelaide in 1906 and worked in private practice, specialising in the management of medical problems of women and children. From 1911, she worked as a clinical bacteriologist at the Adelaide Hospital, working towards her MD in 1926. Throughout her career, her major interest was infant health. Accordingly, in 1909, she established a School for Mothers with her social worker friend, Harriet Stirling. They also set up the Mareeba Babies' Hospital in 1913 which the government took over once they encountered financial problems. Helen believed women needed assistance to rear healthy children in an urban environment and should not just rely on their natural mothering qualities. Helen opposed hospitalisation of sick babies. With government assistance and

much voluntary work, her school evolved into the Mothers and Babies' Health Association in 1927, which advised and reassured generations of young mothers.

Helen held positions of responsibility at the Children's Hospital and at the Adelaide Hospital while running a busy private practice. From 1926-34, she lectured in children's medical diseases at the University of Adelaide. In 1933, she became a foundation member of the Australian College of Physicians. In 1935, she was awarded an OBE for her 'zeal for efficiency'.

Helen had been a founding member of the Lyceum Club which aimed to advance the status of women in professional life and in arts and letters. She served on the Council of the University of Adelaide from 1914-60, the first woman in Australia to be elected to the governing body of a university. She was also a founder of the Women's Non-Party Political Association in 1909. Helen has been described as a progressive woman of forceful views. She lived in a North Adelaide house with her partner Dr Constance Finlayson. During her lifetime, infant morbidity declined by around 60 percent and women achieved much in the medical profession. Helen played a vital role in influencing these trends.



Sister Elizabeth Kenny

1911: First person to implement an effective method of treatment for infantile paralysis (poliomyelitis)

Elizabeth Kenny was born in 1880, at Warialda, New South Wales. She received limited schooling. Her interest in medicine was aroused when, as a thirteen year old, she broke her wrist and stayed with Dr Aeneas McDonnell in Toowoomba. She became fascinated with muscle structure and learnt much from the doctor in his spare time.

Elizabeth found her calling in voluntary work at a small maternity home in Guyra. A local doctor wrote her a reference, so she bought herself a nurse's uniform and began working as Nurse Kenny. Though untrained she was competent and caring and rode on horseback in the Darling Downs area, treating people for whatever fee or barter they could afford.

In June 1911, she tried to treat a young girl who could not move. Dr McDonnell diagnosed the child with infantile paralysis for which there was no known cure. Elizabeth found that hot cloth fomentations relieved the pain and then she encouraged the child to move her paralysed limbs so that the muscles wouldn't waste away. She began treating other children who contracted the disease and all of them recovered. Her method went against the orthodox medical treatment, which sought to immobilise the limbs by placing them in splints.

During World War I, Elizabeth enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service and worked on troopships bringing wounded servicemen home to Australia. She invented and patented the 'Sylvia' ambulance stretcher, which was designed

to reduce jolting of accident victims. Its success provided her with a healthy income.

In 1931, she established a makeshift clinic in Townsville to treat poliomyelitis victims and cerebral palsy patients in the manner she had devised previously. She charged no fee but relied on public donation. She was constantly met with opposition from the medical profession. Meanwhile her popularity grew and new clinics opened using her methods in Brisbane, Toowoomba and Sydney. In 1937, her fare was paid to England where she worked at the Queen Mary's Hospital for Children at Carshalton. In 1938, she returned to Australia to be damned by a Royal Commission into her treatment, despite the fact that patients were improving under her rehabilitation. Some doctors and governments did support her, but in 1940, she and her daughter left for the United States. It was there that she achieved her greatest success and went on to become a household name as Kenny clinics were established around the country. She conducted courses for doctors and physiotherapists from around the world.

When she returned to Australia in 1947 she found that her methods were still opposed. She died of cerebro-vascular disease on 30 November 1952. The method of treatment she devised was successful and the conviction with which she spread her knowledge, in the face of overwhelming opposition, is her remarkable achievement.



Lottie Lyell

Lottie Lyell

1911: Australia's first movie star and movie producer

Lottie Lyell was born in Balmain on 23 February 1890. Around 1906, she was taught elocution by the Shakespearian actor, Harry Leston. Her parents placed her in the care of Raymond Longford, an actor with Edwin Geach's Popular Dramatic Organisation, which she joined. For several years she toured Australia and New Zealand performing in romantic melodramas.

In 1911, Lottie Lyell joined Spencer's Pictures when Longford was appointed to direct its films. She played in his first film, *The Fatal Wedding* (1911), which achieved great commercial success and followed this up with leading roles in *The Romantic Story of Margaret Catchpole* (1911), *The Midnight Wedding* (1912) and *Australia Calls* (1913). Lottie could also swim and ride horses, skills that were captured on screen. When Spencer's Pictures became Australasian Films Ltd, Lottie continued to act only in films directed by Longford, who was her partner although they never married. The films included *Neath Austral*

Skies (1913), *The Mutiny of the Bounty* (1916) and *The Woman Suffers* (1918). Her reputation as a screen actress reached a highpoint with her sensitive portrayal of Doreen in Longford's masterpiece *The Sentimental Bloke* (1919).

As she became more involved in production and her health deteriorated Lottie made fewer on screen appearances. She scripted and co-directed *The Blue Mountains Mystery* (1921) with Longford. They formed the Longford-Lyell Australian Productions which produced the successful film *The Dinkum Bloke* (1923), Lottie Lyell's last screen performance. Lack of financial backing caused the company to fail. They formed a new company and produced two more films in 1924 and 1925.

Lottie succumbed to tuberculosis and died on 21 December 1925. Her contribution to early Australian cinema was not just as an actress but also as a writer, editor, producer and director.



Dame Nellie Melba, DBE

Nellie Melba

1911: First Australian opera superstar

Born Helen Porter Mitchell on 19 May, 1861, in Richmond, Victoria, Dame Nellie Melba was educated in Melbourne where she studied singing and piano. After her mother's death in 1880, the family moved to Mackay, Queensland, where she met and soon married Charles Armstrong. In 1884, following the birth of a son, George, they moved to Melbourne where Nellie intended to pursue a singing career. Nellie made her debut on 17 May, 1884, at the Melbourne Town Hall. 'She sings like one out of ten thousand', was the opinion of one critic. In March, 1886, she accompanied her father to London. An introduction to the esteemed Paris-based singing coach, Mathilde Marchesi, who recognised the potential in her voice, helped establish her career as she worked on both her voice and her social education. Mme Marchesi also insisted she take on a suitable name, hence 'Melba' an abbreviation of her home town.

Nellie made her debut as an opera singer at the Theatre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels on 13 October, 1887, playing Gilda in *Rigoletto*. By 1889, she had performed at Covent Garden and in Paris and was receiving public and critical acclaim. She toured the world for the next few decades and

mixed with the rich and famous. She caused a scandal in 1890 when she consorted with Phillipe, Duke of Orleans, and her husband divorced her in 1900.

Nellie finally returned to newly federated Australia in 1902 for a highly successful tour of all states. The first of over 100 recordings of her singing was produced in 1904. After further success she returned again in 1909 for a 'sentimental tour' which took her far and wide into the continent. She bought a property at Coldstream near Lilydale, Victoria, where she built Coombe Cottage and thereafter spent more time in her homeland. In 1911, she returned to head the Melba Williamson Opera Company. During the war, she helped raise around 100,000 pounds for war charities and in 1922 she staged the successful *Concerts for the People* in Melbourne and Sydney. Throughout the late 1920s, she gave a series of farewell concerts around the world. She returned to Australia in ill health and died on 23 February, 1931, of septicemia. Her death was received in Australia as though she was royalty, with parliamentarians in Canberra standing with bowed heads to honour her passing.

Fanny Durack



1912: First Australian woman to receive an Olympic gold medal

Fanny Durack was born on 27 October 1889, in Sydney, to parents who were both publicans. After nearly drowning in the surf at Newcastle, she decided to learn to swim in the Coogee Baths. She initially swam breast-stroke as this was the only style in which there was a championship for women. She won her first State title in 1906, later adopting the trudgen stroke and by 1911, the Australian crawl. The New South Wales Ladies' Amateur Swimming Association had banned women from appearing in competitions where men were present. However, Fanny was so successful that, following much debate and much opposition from male Olympic officials, she was allowed to compete in the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm.

At the Olympic Games she broke the world record for the 100 metre freestyle in 1 minute 19.8 seconds in a heat. On 15 July 1912, she won the gold medal for this event, the only individual event for women, beating fellow Australian Wilhelmina Wylie. Buoyed by this success, at their own expense, the two swimmers toured Europe and the United

States over the coming years. Fanny constantly fell foul of officialdom, because as a woman, she insisted on her right to swim internationally and competitively. Determined, she pressed on and with very little official support between 1912 and 1918, she broke twelve world records and her success aided the promotion of women's swimming. Unfortunately, Fanny had an appendectomy a week before the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, forcing her to withdraw. In 1921, she retired from competitive swimming and married a horse trainer, Bernard Martin Gately. She turned to coaching young children and was made a life member of the New South Wales Women's Amateur Swimming Association in 1945.

Fanny died of cancer at her home in Stanmore on 20 March 1956. Following this, her gold medal was presented to the Commonwealth Government. She received little attention until 1990 when public subscription raised funds to erect a commemorative plaque on her untended grave at Waverley Cemetery in Sydney.

Lillian Armfield

1915: First policewoman in Australia

There are a number of women who lay claim to this title. Fanny Cocks is often credited as Australia's first policewoman, when in fact she began her service in South Australia some five months later than Lillian Armfield. The justification given is that Cocks was employed on the same wages and terms as policemen, whereas Lillian was on less pay and different conditions than her male counterparts. It is an interesting distinction, but one in fact which should not exclude Lillian from her rightful place. The reason Lillian was not on equal pay was on account of the prejudice of the time and certainly not as a result of her lesser role. Another woman who should be given credit is Maude Rhodes who was employed at the same time as Lillian. However she did not last as a policewoman, for very long and hence has faded into obscurity.

Lillian was born on 3 December 1884, at Mittagong in New South Wales. She was educated locally before working as a nurse at Callan Park Hospital for the Insane in Sydney from 1907. She answered an advertisement and was employed as the first female policewoman in Australia in July 1915 along with Maude Rhodes. They were employed on less pay and with different conditions and entitlements to the policemen. For instance, they were not allowed a pension upon retirement, were not eligible for compensation for injuries suffered in the performance of duties, were not to receive overtime payments and were not given a uniform. After a year's probation she was enrolled as a special constable. Police around the world kept a watch on

developments for Lillian and Maude were among the first plain-clothes female detectives in the world.

Women's groups had called for women to serve on the police force for many years in an attempt to lower the number of women arrested for prostitution and vagrancy. The belief was that these women were often destitute or victims of abuse and needed to be helped, rather than treated as criminals. Part of the role of the female officers was to help with these women and young girls, but it was also to assist male officers with raids and arrests. Often Lillian would be used as a decoy for the police to gain access to criminals. Initially, the work of these women was greeted with a mixed response, for it was felt by some that they were still arresting women who needed other assistance. Nonetheless, Lillian felt the social aspects of her job to be the most important.

There was resistance within the force to female officers yet Lillian was a dedicated worker. She carried out the first arrest at gunpoint by a female officer in the 1920s. By 1923, she became a special sergeant, 3rd class, then was promoted to the rank of 2nd class with direct responsibility for all plainclothes women police. By 1943, she had risen to 1st class. She was awarded the King's Police and Fire Service Medal in 1947 for outstanding service, another first for a woman, and retired from the force in 1949 without superannuation but with an Imperial Service Medal. Lillian died in Leichhardt, Sydney on 26 August 1971.

Ivy Brookes

1915: Founder of the first Housewives' Association in Australia

Ivy Brookes was born in South Yarra, Victoria, in 1883, the eldest daughter of Pattie and Alfred Deakin, the second Prime Minister of Australia. She was educated privately and at Merton Hall. Mixing in a circle of political and intellectual figures, she married Herbert Brookes, a friend of her father's, in 1905. They shared a strong interest in politics, and were both involved in many community and political organisations. In 1933, Ivy founded the International Club of Victoria and was its president until 1958, when it disbanded. She was a foundation member of both the Boards of Studies in Physical Education and Social Studies at the University of Melbourne.

In June 1915, Ivy convened a meeting of women from a variety of political groups, and began the Housewives' Co-operative Association of Victoria, the first association of its kind in Australia. The Association was primarily a consumer association specifically for women. In its early manifestation, the Housewives' Association presented a challenge to capitalism, buying wholesale foodstuffs and distributing them, and providing discounts for members. It drew on the ideals of the co-operative movement in Britain and also lobbied on the civil status of women. Later in the

century, the Association was active in politics, supporting women candidates, and education policy, advocating domestic science in schools and the education of 'young housewives' in women's citizenship. The movement grew to have associations in each state, and at its peak in the early 1960s had about 200,000 members nationally.

Ivy also held executive positions in the National Council of Women, the International Council of Women, League of Nations Union, the Empire Trade Defence League, the Playgrounds and Recreation Association, and the United Nations Association. For 50 years she was on the Board of the Women's Hospital.

Ivy's other passion was music. Her talent led her in 1904 to win the Ormond Scholarship for singing and she played in Marshall Hall's orchestra from 1903-13. She was also a foundation vice-president of the ladies' committee of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as well as a member of the University of Melbourne faculty of music from 1926-69.

She died on 27 December 1970.



Florence Taylor, OBE, CBE

Florence Taylor

1920: First Australian woman architect

Florence was born near Bristol in England in 1879. In 1888, the family emigrated to Sydney, Australia where she was enrolled at Presbyterian Ladies College. Tragedy struck when she was nineteen as her father died suddenly leaving the family with no income. Florence had to work to support the family.

Florence soon found employment as a clerk at an architectural and engineering firm in Parramatta. This gave her the impetus to study to become an architectural draftsman. She enrolled in evening classes at Sydney Technical College, the only woman among 200 males studying building construction, quantity surveying and drafting. However Florence had taken on too much and failed all her first year examinations in architecture. Undeterred, she aimed to top the class the following year, and she did. When she began an apprenticeship she was given all the tedious technical specification work rather than creative design which went to her male colleagues. She sought work elsewhere and was employed as chief draftsman in the prestigious office of John Burcham Clamp where her talent was encouraged.

In 1907, after eight years of study, Florence completed her architectural course. She was already qualified as a structural and civil engineer. Clamp nominated her for associate membership of the New South Wales Institute of Architects and gave her an excellent reference. When the committee rejected her application, Clamp demanded to know on what grounds, for

he claimed, 'She can design an entire home while an ordinary draftsman is still sharpening his pencil'. It took another thirteen years before the Institute of Architects admitted her as the first qualified female architect in Australia in 1920.

Florence married George Taylor in 1907. George was passionate about aviation and learned to fly gliders. In 1909, Florence made the first glider flight ever attempted by a woman. Together they formed the Building Publishing Company and published numerous technical and professional journals on urban planning and design, improved material construction methods, modernism in architecture and town planning. In 1913, they founded the Town Planning Association of New South Wales.

In 1928, George died suddenly. Florence was grief-ridden, and threw herself into her work in order to combat the loss. She cut back the number of journals published but continued to produce many town planning schemes. Although she worked in a male-dominated profession, Florence was extremely feminine in her manners and dress. She travelled extensively to learn new and progressive designs and was honoured with an OBE (1939) and later a CBE (1961). She died in Sydney on 13 February 1969. Her achievements are commemorated in the annual Florence Taylor Award for outstanding services to engineering.



Edith Cowan, OBE

1921: First woman elected to an Australian parliament

Edith Cowan was born on 2 August 1861, at Glengarry near Geraldton, Western Australia. Her mother died in childbirth in 1868 and she was sent to a Perth boarding school. Tragedy struck again in 1876 when her father was tried and hung for the murder of his second wife. In 1879, she married James Cowan, registrar and master of the Supreme Court. They had four daughters and a son by 1891, when James had become the Perth police magistrate.

Edith became involved in voluntary organisations through the 1890s, most notably the Karrakatta Women's Club where Perth's leading women discussed women's rights and health issues among other topics. She served several terms on the Fremantle Board of Education, one of the few public offices open to women and worked with the Ministering Children's League and the House of Mercy for unmarried mothers. Through the Children's Protection Society, she pioneered its 1909 day nursery for the children of working mothers. She was involved in the establishment of the Children's Court (1907), the Women's Service Guild (1909), the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women (1916) and the Western Australian National Council of Women (1911). During World War I her efforts for the war earned her an OBE.

Edith believed in the need for women justices of the peace, lawyers and jurors and campaigned strongly for these changes. In 1920, legislation was passed which enabled women to enter

parliament. In 1921, Edith was one of five female candidates in the Western Australian elections. Standing as a Nationalist for the Legislative Assembly seat of West Perth, she campaigned on her community service record and on the need for women in parliament 'to nag a little' on social issues. Her narrow defeat of the Attorney General, T. P. Draper, made her the first Australian woman to become a Member of Parliament. *The Age* newspaper voiced concern, 'Were political office to become the ambition of the fair sex, and were standing for parliament to become the latest craze of fashion, there would be many dreary and neglected homes throughout the country sacrificed on the altar of political ambition' (15 March 1921). When in parliament, Edith succeeded in establishing some metropolitan baby health centres and playgrounds, as well as changes to legislation that paved the way for women to enter law and other professions. She lost the 1924 and 1927 elections. Unfortunately, Edith was also the victim of infighting within the women's movement.

Edith was a founder of the Western Historical Society in 1926 and active in the State's 1929 centenary celebrations. She died on 9 June 1931. A memorial clock tower was erected at the King's Park gates to commemorate 'one of Australia's greatest women'. In 1984, a new federal electorate was created in her name and in 1990 the West Australian College of Advanced Education became the Edith Cowan University.

Bessie Rischbieth, OBE



1921: Founder of the Australian Federation of Women's Societies (later Voters)

Bessie was born in Adelaide on 16 October, 1874. In her home, the discussions about Federation and social issues strengthened Bessie's political convictions. She married a wool merchant in 1898 and moved to Western Australia. She was a founding member of the Children's Protection Society in 1906 and joined the Women's Service Guilds of Western Australia, becoming its president from 1911-22. Through the Guilds important institutions for women were established, such as the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, free kindergartens and a training college. Many other causes such as basic wages, equal pay for women, women police and female prisoner rights were promoted by the guilds.

Bessie was the 'prime mover' and founding president of the Australian Federation of Women's Societies in 1921, a role she held until 1942. She attended conferences, both interstate and overseas and edited the monthly journal, *'The Dawn'*.

She was active in many international organisations, including roles as co-founder and vice-president of the British Commonwealth League of Women in 1925 and leader of the Australian delegation to the Pan-Pacific Women's Conference in Honolulu in 1928. In 1935, she was granted an OBE and had joined the board of the International Alliance of Woman for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship in 1926.

A strong-minded woman who lived in style in Peppermint Grove, Bessie strove for social reform through legislation, not revolution, and this pitted her against the more left-wing feminists. She published a history of the early women's movement, *March of Australian Women: A Record of Fifty Years' Struggle for Equal Citizenship* (1964). This was the first known history of feminism in Australia. Bessie died in Bethesda Hospital, Claremont on 13 March 1967.

Grace Munro

1922: Founder of the Country Women's Association of Australia

Grace Munro was born on 25 March 1879 at Gragin, Warialda, New South Wales. Her father was a grazier and she was educated by governesses and at Kambala School. She was an accomplished horsewoman, a good shot, an expert needlewoman and a good gardener. In 1898, she married Hugh Robert Munro of Keera and they had four children, although the youngest died in 1891. This experience made her determined to pursue better conditions and availability of medical help in the country. While recovering from this loss she travelled extensively, through Papua, the Trobriand Islands, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji and in 1914 she went to Egypt, Europe and Britain.

During World War I, Grace lived in Bellevue Hill, a suburb of Sydney. She worked for the Australian Red Cross Society and helped raise money for the Army. Grace was qualified in first aid, home nursing and hygiene with the Order of St John Ambulance Association. After the war she gave first aid classes and in recognition of her work was appointed a serving sister of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

In 1922, Grace helped to organise and publicise a conference in Sydney which formally established the Country Women's Association of New South Wales. Grace was elected president and she insisted that the association be non-political. She travelled throughout Queensland and New South Wales speaking to country women and helping them to form branches. By 1923, there were 68 branches, seventeen rest-rooms for mothers and children, two seaside homes and maternity centres in many towns. She lobbied government for improvement in the area of children and women's health.

Ill health forced Grace to retire in 1926, by which time 100 branches had been formed and 4500 members enlisted. She continued to raise large sums of money for causes such as rest-centres and holiday homes. Over the years she visited Kashmir, India, Burma, China, Japan, North America, Europe and South Africa. From 1952, she annually visited the Great Barrier Reef. Grace died in Sydney on 23 July 1964.

Florence McKenzie, OBE



1923: First female electrical engineer

Florence McKenzie was born in 1891 in Hawthorn, Victoria. She won a scholarship from Thirroul Public School which enabled her to attend Sydney Girls' High School. In 1915, she passed chemistry and geology at the University of Sydney. She then went on to Sydney Technical College where, in 1923, she became the first woman to graduate as an electrical engineer.

As part of the course she needed practical experience, so in 1921 she took over a wireless shop in the Royal Arcade, Sydney and apprenticed herself. She was fascinated by broadcasting and became the first woman to be granted an amateur radio operator's license (station VK sFV). She also became Australia's first certified female radio telegraphist and in 1924 was the only woman member of the Wireless Institute of Australia. She used morse code to broadcast on her own transmitter to operators all around the world. That year she married Cecil Roland McKenzie who became a partner in her business.

Florence shared the popular belief that electricity could free women from much of their housework. In 1934, she founded the Electrical Association for Women, a non-profit organisation to provide for women's electrical needs. She gave advice, lectures and tested appliances for safety. The showroom displayed appliances from different manufacturers so women could compare. She also published a cookery book and electrical guide.

In 1939, she founded the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps which trained women, and later men, in electrical signalling for World War II. She offered evening classes for women volunteers at the rooms of the Electrical Association for women. Once war was declared her school expanded into the adjacent warehouse. The centre was subsequently used as a training school for soldiers and commercial aircraft pilots. She apparently trained 12,000 servicemen in communications during World War II. Ever the pioneer, she persuaded the government to establish the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service in 1941. In 1950, she was awarded an OBE for her wartime services. She was also an honorary flight officer in the RAAF.

Florence corresponded with Albert Einstein until his death in 1955, and became a fellow of the Australian Institute of Navigation and member of the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society. Florence retired in 1956 but continued to help occasional pupils with special needs in her own home. Apparently, a day before she died, age 90, in 1982 she said, *'It is finished, and I have proved to them all that women can be as good or better than men'*.

Isabella, Phyllis and Paulette McDonagh

1926: First Australian women to direct, produce and write feature films

Isabel, Phyllis and Paulette were the eldest of seven children born in Macquarie Place, Sydney. Their father, John, had migrated to Australia from Ireland and married an Australian woman. He had a prestigious medical practice. The girls were educated at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Elizabeth Bay.

In 1925, Isabel made her acting debut as 'Marie Lorraine' in two films, *Joe* and *Painted Daughters*. That year, Paulette also worked as an extra on a movie and then attended a film-acting school run by P. J. Ramster. This was their first experience in an industry which they had been exposed to since their childhood. Owing to their father's interest in show business they had watched many Hollywood movies, studying every aspect of their production. Paulette also learned to use the camera and editing techniques from cameraman Jack Fletcher.

In 1926, they produced their first feature film, *Those Who Love*, written by Paulette. It was a social drama produced on a budget of 1000 pounds and filmed in ten days. Initially, Ramster was brought in to direct the film but none of the sisters were happy with his work so Paulette gradually assumed control. Isabel was the principal actress and Phyllis was the business manager, publicist and art director. It was filmed at the family's palatial home, Drummoyne House. As their father was honorary surgeon to the J. C. Williamson Company, J. C. Williamson distributed this film and it premiered in Sydney in 1926 to much acclaim.

The profits from their first success were put towards the second film, *The Far Paradise*. This was released in July 1928 and enjoyed a long run. Their third film, *The Cheaters* was initially produced as a silent film in 1929, however as talkies were becoming popular they went back in 1930 and added some talking scenes to try to improve its commercial potential. The film is a fine crime melodrama, which revealed the sisters' growing interest in the European expressionist techniques.

Their last feature film, *Two Minutes Silence* starred Isabel alongside professional stage actors who had to modify their methods for film. Adapted from a stage play it was an anti-war statement set in London on Armistice Day. Paulette considered it to be their best film although it received only a mediocre response from Australian audiences. It premiered in Sydney in 1934, however as it was the first Australian sound feature to deal with social issues it was generally not acceptable. They also made some sporting documentaries, *Australia in the Swim* featuring 'Boy' Charlton, *How I Play Cricket* with Sir Donald Bradman and *The Mighty Conqueror* about Phar Lap.

The sisters then dissolved their film-making partnership. In 1932, Isabel married a Scottish born rubber broker and they left for England until 1935. She acted on stage for a while in 1959 and in 1965 returned to England where she died in 1982. Phyllis went to New Zealand where she became a journalist and eventually editor of New Zealand

Isabella, Phyllis and Paulette McDonagh

Isabella, Phyllis, Paulette

Truth. She married a salesman in 1941 and returned to Sydney. In 1978, she attended the Australian Film Institute's awards where she accepted the Raymond Longford Award for the sisters' contribution to Australian film. She died a few months later. Paulette remained in Australia working in the film industry for a few years, however she did not have the finances to continue as an independent film maker. She lived with her younger sisters until 1940 and then moved to Kings Cross where she stayed until her death in 1978.

The McDonagh sisters were able to express themselves in film because of their financial and artistic independence. They were not forced to produce mainstream movies and were influenced by the best aspects of both American and European cinema. They avoided the typical Australian bush stories and concentrated on good acting and interesting urban storylines. They were forgotten for many years until two of their works were screened in the 1970s.

Reverend Winifred Kiek

1927: First woman to be ordained to the ministry of any church in Australia

Winifred Kiek was born in Manchester to a tea salesman and his wife who were frugal Quakers. At sixteen, she won a scholarship to Manchester Pupil Teacher Training Centre. In 1907, she graduated from the Victoria University of Manchester with a Bachelor of Arts, having won the university prize in logic. She became a schoolteacher and soon met and married Edward Kiek in 1911.

Edward had just been ordained and from 1913 preached at a Congregational Church in Yorkshire. Winifred embraced her husband's beliefs. He preached liberal evangelical Christianity and socialism as 'the gospel in action' and he denounced militarism. She had a daughter and two sons during this period. In 1920, they travelled to Adelaide where Edward had been appointed principal of Parkin College, a small Congregational theological institution. Winifred studied theology and in 1923 became the first woman to graduate with a Bachelor of Divinity from the Melbourne College of Divinity. She then went on to study for a MA in philosophy at the University of Adelaide. Winifred also published a book on child rearing, *Child Nature and Child Nurture* (1927).

Winifred had some experience at public speaking from Quaker meetings and Congregational churches. In 1926,

she started preaching in the new Colonel Light Gardens Congregational Union Church and the following year became its pastor, thus making her the first woman in Australia to be so ordained. She preached there until 1933. She served as pastor to the Knoxville Congregational Church from 1938-46.

From the time she arrived in Adelaide, Winifred was active in the women's movement, first joining the National Council of Women. She also held office in the Women's Non-Party Association and in the Australian Federation of Woman Voters as well as other groups. After World War II, she became the World Council of Churches' liaison officer in Australia to work among women. She wrote a book, *We of One House* (1954) about the co-operation of men and women in the Church. Her other main cause was that of peace and she was a key figure in the Peace Week organised by the International Peace Campaign in 1938. In 1965, she established the Winifred Kiek scholarship to provide Christian training in Australia for Asian and Pacific women.

After her husband died in 1959, she retired. Winifred died on 23 May 1975 at Victor Harbour.

Dame Mary Gilmore, DBE

1928: Founder of the Fellowship of Australian Writers

Mary Gilmore was born on 16 August 1865 near Goulburn in New South Wales to a Scottish farmer-cum-building contractor and his Australian-born wife. They lived an itinerant life, so Mary was educated at numerous country state schools. She became a pupil-teacher and then a teacher in the country. In the 1890s, she spent time in Sydney and befriended Henry Lawson. She claims they were unofficially engaged. Her experiences of poverty in both the country and the city made her embrace the radicalism of the day. She was the first woman member of the Australian Workers Union, apparently joining under her brother's name, and became a member of its executive.

In 1895, Mary resigned from teaching to join William Lane's New Australia Movement and live in his utopian settlement in Paraguay. She married Will Gilmore, a Victorian shearer and they had a child in August 1898 but left the settlement a year later. They returned home via London in 1902 and moved into Will's family property in Western Victoria. Mary made her life bearable by writing and her work was featured in the *Bulletin's* 'Red Page' on 3 October 1903. She began editing the woman's page of the *Australian Worker* in 1908, a job she maintained until 1931. In 1910, her first book of poetry, *Marri'd*, and other verses was published. She used simple colloquial lyrics to express the joys and disappointments of everyday life.

In 1912, she moved back to Sydney with young Billy but without her husband. In 1918, she published a second book of poetry,

The Passionate Heart, which dealt with the futility of war. She wrote a further eight collections of poetry and two books of memoirs: *Old Days, Old Ways* (1934) and *More Recollections* (1935). She captures the spirit of pioneering in these prose works. Mary wrote with empathy about motherhood, history, Aborigines and nationalism. One of her inspirational wartime poems was 'No Foe Shall Gather Our Harvest' (1939).

She used her page in the *Australian Worker* as well as other forums to campaign for social and economic reform, especially for children, the elderly, the poor and indigenous Australians. She was a champion of the little people and much admired. She encouraged young writers and was a founder of the Lyceum Club in Sydney and the Fellowship of Australian Writers. In 1937 she was appointed a DBE for her literary and social achievements.

In 1945, both her husband and her son died. She had hardly seen her husband for 30 years, but they never divorced. From 1952, she was associated with the communist newspaper *The Tribune* because of her pacifism. In 1954, as she neared 90, she published her final book of poetry, *Fourteen Men*. In 1957, the Australasian Book Society commissioned William Dobell to paint her portrait. She died in Sydney on 3 December 1962 and was given a state funeral. It is said that she wrote too often and too hastily but nonetheless, her best works are memorable pieces of Australian poetry. Mary was not just a poet, but also a crusader, patriot and feminist and accordingly won much fame and admiration.

Julia Flynn



1928: First woman Chief Inspector of Schools

Julia Flynn was born on 24 January 1878, at West Melbourne, the youngest of six children of Daniel Flynn, a grain and corn merchant. Her parents were Irish born Catholics. Julia was educated in Carlton then at South Melbourne College and later at Presbyterian Ladies College, matriculating in 1893.

In 1897, she was appointed as a monitor teacher to Brunswick South State School. In 1900, she entered the Training College to obtain her 'Trained Teachers' Certificate and went on to study at university for a Bachelor in Arts, finally completing it in 1912. She taught at Christmas Hills and then at Bright. In 1907, she taught at the Continuation School (later Melbourne High School) and was recognised as an outstanding teacher of mathematics.

In 1914, she was one of three people appointed to the newly created position of Inspector of Secondary Schools. At this time all senior positions in education were held by men. Through long hours, hard work and dedication she rose to Senior Inspector in 1924, then Assistant Chief Inspector early in 1928. When the Chief Inspector M. P. Hansen became Director of Education in June of that year Julia became Acting

Chief Inspector of Secondary Schools. No woman had ever reached such a high position in the Victorian Public Service and no woman in Australia had achieved this position.

In July 1928, the position was advertised with the caption, 'Male Required'. Powerful women's groups rallied, appeals were made to the 1926 Women's Qualification Act, questions were asked in parliament and *The Age* took up the cause. She finally won the position on appeal but held it only for a six-month probationary period as Hansen refused to recommend confirmation of the appointment. He claimed Julia lacked vision and imagination. It was not until 1936 when Hansen was no longer the Director, that she was appointed Chief Inspector. She held this position until her retirement in 1943.

Julia was a formidable but just inspector and required a high standard of others. She was committed to the welfare and cause of education. After her retirement she worked tirelessly as secondary schools adviser to the Catholic Education Office.

On 14 October 1947 she died following a heart attack at Mount St Evin's Hospital in East Melbourne.



Lucy Bryce, CBE

Lucy Bryce

1929: Established Australia's first blood transfusion service

Lucy Bryce was born on 12 June 1897 at Lindfield, New South Wales, but later moved to Melbourne. She was educated at the Melbourne Church of England Girls' Grammar School and received her Bachelor of Science (1918) and Bachelor of Medicine (1922) from the University of Melbourne. She went on to hold research posts at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research from 1922-28 and spent some of this time in London at the Lister Institute. She then went on to become clinical pathologist and bacteriologist at the Royal Melbourne Hospital until 1934 when she entered private practice, while continuing part-time research. Lucy was also made honorary Director of Pathology at the Queen Victoria Hospital.

Lucy is best remembered for her work in establishing Australia's first Blood Transfusion Service in 1929. Working with Dr Eric Cooper, the Victorian division of the Australian Red Cross Society agreed to set up a panel of blood donors, while Lucy, as honorary Director, took charge of the laboratory testing and medical care of the donors. She adopted new blood storage techniques and oversaw ongoing research into blood services. In 1954, she retired as Director but continued as chair of the transfusion committee until 1966, despite failing health. She wrote numerous scientific articles as well as a history of the blood transfusion service, *An Abiding Gladness* (1965). In 1951, Lucy was appointed a CBE. She died on 30 July 1968.

Jean MacNamara

Dame Jean MacNamara, DBE

1930s: First person to strongly advocate the use of myxomatosis to kill rabbits in Australia

Jean MacNamara was born on 1 April 1899 at Beechworth, Victoria. She was educated on scholarships at Presbyterian Ladies' College and the University of Melbourne. She graduated in medicine in 1922 along with Kate Campbell, Lucy Bryce and Macfarlane Burnet, all of whom went on to greatness in their chosen fields. From 1923-25, she was a resident at the Melbourne Children's Hospital, obtaining her MD.

In 1925, there was a polio outbreak prompting her to study infantile paralysis with Macfarlane Burnet. Together they identified more than one strain of polio virus and their research received international recognition. She became a leading proponent of the use of human immune serum in treatment of patients at the pre-paralytic stage. She worked on treatment and therapy for children with polio in her clinic, seeing up to thirty children per day.

From 1927-51, she was Honorary Medical Officer to the physiotherapy department of the Melbourne Children's Hospital and Adviser to the Yooralla School for Crippled Children. As a Travelling Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation for two years she went overseas to study the latest developments in this field. She was made a Dame of the British Empire for her work in 1935.

While in America in 1931 she noticed some work being done in the field of pest eradication by bacterial means. She saw enormous possibilities for Australia with its rabbit plague. Accordingly, she sent samples of the myxomatosis organism to her husband, Dr Ivan Connor at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute. Customs Officials dumped the specimens into Port Phillip Bay. After fourteen years of persistence, she persuaded the CSIRO to give myxomatosis a trial. Initially it did not take off, but after mosquitoes spread the disease the results were spectacular and in three years most of the rabbits were eradicated.

Dame Jean had married Ivan in 1934 and they had two daughters. Jean found it difficult to combine her profession with motherhood due to the attitudes of society at that time. She was a very dedicated doctor who was generous with her time and money. Much of her private practice work was unpaid and she was often paid in kind rather than cash. While in America she had taken up smoking 'roll your owns' which was probably a significant factor in her deteriorating health in later life. She suffered her first heart attack in 1949. In 1966, the University of Melbourne conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws on Jean. She died on 13 October 1968.



Ethel Richardson

1932: First Australian woman to be nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature

Ethel was born on 3 January 1870 in Fitzroy, Melbourne to a doctor and his wife who had migrated from Ireland to the goldfields in the early 1850s. Her father became a respected obstetrician in Ballarat and made a small fortune. He took the family abroad in 1873-74, lost money on the share market, set up practice again in Melbourne and then Chiltern and finally became a quarantine officer in Queenscliff before succumbing to mental illness. He died in 1879, possibly from the degenerative effects of syphilis, but not before he had passed on his love of literature to his young daughter.

Ethel's mother was fortunate to find employment as the postmistress in Koroit in the Western districts of Victoria. Ettie, as she preferred to be called, withdrew into herself to deal with the social stigma of her father's illness, making up and writing stories. In 1883, Ethel was sent to the Presbyterian Ladies College in Melbourne where she excelled in all fields. Years later she would write about her adolescent experiences in *The Getting of Wisdom* (1910). She taught music until her mother took her daughters to Europe, where Ethel graduated with honours and met John Robertson and married. She moved around Europe until John was made professor in 1902. His career as a famous scholar took off.

Ethel wrote articles for English magazines and was encouraged by her husband. She became disciplined about her writing and in 1908 her first novel *Maurice Guest* was published under the pen name Henry Handel Richardson. She wrote under this pseudonym because she wanted to be taken seriously and also because her dark subject matter was not the stuff of ladies.

It was a very modern novel which dealt with homosexuality, but was not well received. Derided as immoral, many bookshops refused to stock it. Ettie was deeply hurt by the criticism.

'Henry' was homesick for Australia. They returned in 1912 so she could research a fictionalised account of her father's life during the gold rush. It turned into a trilogy of books called *Australia Felix*. The first novel, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (1917), provided a fascinating glimpse into life on the diggings. As the period covered was a turning point in Australia's history the books are as much about Australia as they are about her father. The other two novels were *The Way Home* (1925) and *Ultima Thule* (1929). The first two were unsuccessful so Professor Robertson had to intervene to ensure that the third was published. One influential critic gave it a rave review, and Henry Handel Richardson finally achieved success. Along with this fame came a desire for the novelist to reveal his face, and it was soon discovered that 'he' was a 'she'. Nonetheless Ettie preferred not to be in the limelight. She received the Australian Literature Society's gold medal for *Ultima Thule* in 1929.

During the war she wrote her memoirs *Myself When Young* before she died of cancer on 20 March 1946. Although she spent much of her life away from Australia it definitely did have a formative influence on her and her major works were set there. The high point of her career was her nomination for the Nobel Prize for Literature, ensuring her place as one of Australia's great female novelists.

Mary Bennett



1933: First missionary teacher to agitate against the removal of Aboriginal children

Mary Bennett was a teacher and advocate of Aboriginal rights. She was born on 8 July 1881, at Pimlico, London. Because their mother detested life on Lammermoor station when they came to North Queensland, the children were educated mainly by governesses, in Sydney, Brisbane, and in Tasmania, Australian country towns and England. Bennett learned nevertheless to share her father's strong affection for the Aboriginal people on his run.

After her husband died in November, Mary distributed family papers and mementoes to various institutions and, in October 1930, arrived in Perth to devote the rest of her life to the welfare of Aboriginals.

After short periods with the United Aborigines Mission at Gnowangerup in the south-west and at the Forrest River Mission, she settled late in 1932 at the Mount Margaret Mission near Laverton, managed by Pastor R.S. Schenk who shared her distrust of anthropologists and pastoralists. There she devoted herself principally to unorthodox but highly successful primary teaching of Aboriginal children and the promotion of handicrafts among Aboriginal women. Her teaching was supplemented by tireless agitation for Aboriginal rights,

which made her an anathema to State officials and politicians. She corresponded widely, persuaded the Women's Service Guild and the Country Women's Association to take up her cause, and was able to use London friends to spread her views outside Australia. After wide British press coverage in June 1933 of her charges of maltreatment, made to the British Commonwealth League, the Western Australian government appointed H. D. Mosely as royal commissioner to inquire into Aboriginal problems. His 1943 report rejected most of her allegations but conceded the need for reforms.

Undeterred by this failure and by frequent illness, Mary continued agitation, particularly on behalf of Aboriginal women. She co-operated gladly with small activist groups and in 1938 participated in the Aboriginal day of mourning at the Sydney sesquicentennial celebrations. About 1940 she returned to England in order to remedy her educational deficiencies. She matriculated at the University of London in 1944 but did not take a degree and returned to Australia about 1950. Soon after, she retired to Kalgoorlie and died there on 6 October 1961; she was buried in the Kalgoorlie cemetery with the rites of the Churches of Christ.



Nancy Bird Walton, AO, OBE

Nancy Bird Walton

1934: Australia's first female commercial pilot

Nancy Bird was born on 16 October, 1915 at Kew, New South Wales and educated at Brighton College, Manly. She took flying lessons with Charles Kingford-Smith, obtaining her 'A' and advanced pilot licenses in 1933 and her 'B' commercial license a year later at age nineteen. She was the youngest licensed woman commercial pilot in the British Commonwealth.

In 1935, she began an air charter service and organised Australia's first 'ladies flying tour'. She also became the first woman to engage in commercial aviation in Australia when she was employed by the Far West Children's Health

Scheme in Bourke, New South Wales to operate their air ambulance and baby clinic service. She won various trophies in women's air races, affectionately known as the 'powder puff derbies'. During World War II she served as Commandant of the Women's Air Training Corps and in 1950 became founding president of the Australian Women Pilots' Association.

She married Charles Walton in December 1939 and they had two children. She wrote two autobiographical books, *Born to Fly* (1961) and *My God, It's a Woman* (1990).

Pearl Gibbs

1937: Co-founder of the Aborigines' Progressive Association

Also known as Gambayani, Pearl Gibbs was born in Botany Bay in 1901. She grew up in Brewarrina and Yass in rural New South Wales, attending segregated schools before going into domestic service in Sydney in 1917. It was there that she witnessed the exploitation and injustice which led her to a lifetime campaign for justice. In the 1920s, she married an English sailor named Gibbs. They later separated, leaving Pearl to raise their daughter and two sons. She was always a leader and in the early 1930s organised strikes by farmhands for fair conditions as well as other campaigns. She was frustrated by her attempts to work through the Aborigines' Protection Board, so she spoke directly to politicians and reached the community through talks on radio.

In 1937, she joined William Ferguson in forming the Aborigines' Progressive Association which organised the Day of Mourning in 1938 on the 150th anniversary of the British 'invasion'. She was part of the deputation to Prime Minister Lyons. One of their aims was to abolish the Aborigines' Protection Board, which they believed had pursued a policy of prejudice and persecution. She drew large crowds when she spoke in public because she spoke with such fluency and passion. In 1954, she became the first female representative on the renamed New South Wales Aborigines Welfare Board and was more convinced of the need to dismantle it.

Pearl was convinced that the so-called 'Aboriginal problem' was actually a white person's problem and that a coalition of

white and black people was needed in order to overcome the situation. Accordingly, she called on her friend Faith Bandler, and they founded the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, a political body campaigning for citizenship rights for Aborigines. Included in the group were feminists, left-wing activists, Jewish refugees from Nazism and poets including Mary Gilmore. In 1957, activist and communist, Jessie Street, initiated a petition which the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship endorsed calling for a referendum to delete the 'discriminatory clauses' from the Constitution. Following a ten-year campaign they achieved success with an overwhelming 'yes' vote in the 1967 federal referendum.

Pearl established the first hostel for Aboriginal hospital patients and their families in Dubbo in 1960. She attended most major Aboriginal conferences in New South Wales until her health began to fail. She was an active contributor to meetings in the 1970s which pressured the government to act on land rights legislation.

Pearl's great skill was establishing networks or coalitions for change through which action could be organised. She was a pioneer of many Aboriginal organisations. Activist Len Fox commended her effort, 'She persisted in every way she knew. She wrote to the papers...she spoke out, she interviewed people, she worried people, she annoyed people, she became a damned nuisance. She persisted and still persisted.' She died on 28 April 1983 at Dubbo, New South Wales.

Muriel Heagney



1937: Founder of the Council of Action for Equal Pay

Muriel Heagney was born on 31 December 1885, in Brisbane into a Labor family. Her father, Patrick, was an early member of the Australian Workers' Union and wrote for the *Australian Worker* and the *Bulletin*. He moved his family to Melbourne in the late 1890s. In 1902, he founded the Richmond branch of the Political Labor Council and ran for the Legislative Assembly in the 1907 elections and also in a by-election for Mornington the following year. He was a councillor in Richmond from 1908-11. Muriel received her education in a convent in Richmond before training as a primary school teacher.

From 1906, she was a member of the Richmond branch of the Political Labour Council and was its delegate to the Women's Central Organising Committee in 1909. She attended the first Labor Women's Conference. During World War I, she worked as a clerk in the Defence Department. As the only woman working there she received equal pay, for they had no provision for female employees. Her eldest brother had gone to war in 1914 and was killed at Gallipoli the following year. Muriel and her mother were active in anti-conscription campaigns despite objections from her employers. She asserted her right to engage in political activities.

Muriel's main endeavour was the struggle for equal pay. In 1919, she began work as an investigator for a Royal

Commission established by Prime Minister Hughes to inquire into whether the basic wage was enough for a family to live on. She became the first woman to use official channels to fight for equal pay. Muriel travelled around Australia gathering evidence and included the costs of fuel, haircuts, newspapers, fares and schooling alongside the basic needs of food, rent and clothing. The Commission recommended increases in the basic wage and child endowment. The findings were rejected by the Federal Arbitration Court and the government. Muriel wrote a response, 'The Basic Wage Betrayal' which was circulated throughout Australia.

In 1921, Muriel helped the unions prepare a case, which resulted in quarterly cost of living adjustments. Beginning in 1923, she travelled around Europe for two years, speaking at women and Labor meetings. On her return in 1926, she helped the Clothing Trades Union prepare evidence for their application for equal wages for both sexes. She decided to do something for the growing number of unemployed people, especially women. With F.J. Riley from the Women's Trade Union Unemployment Committee, she wrote the Heagney-Riley report of June 1930, hoping to jolt the government into action. The result was that with government finance she formed the Unemployed Girls' Relief Movement, a unique organisation based on self-help, co-operation and equality.

Muriel Heagney

Over the next two years it helped to assist and restore dignity to more than 10,000 women. Work centres were established where women were paid relief wages to make clothes which were then distributed to the unemployed. While she worked there as organising secretary, Muriel received the same wages as the women who attended. A change of government in 1932 meant the project was abandoned and relief fell back on the charities.

With few jobs to go around there was growing resentment of employment of women. As they were 'cheap labour' some men felt they were taking their jobs, which prompted Muriel to respond with a book, *Are Women Taking Men's Jobs?* (1935). She argued that all people should have job opportunities and that women should have equal pay. In 1937, she co-founded the Council of Action for Equal Pay in Sydney. She served as its chair, president, secretary and treasurer at various times during its ten year existence. In 1938, it successfully lobbied the ACTU Congress which finally recognised that women should receive equal pay. In 1937 and again in 1949, she served as a witness in basic wage hearings before the Arbitration Court. In 1941, Muriel attended the International Labor Organisation conference in New York. Throughout this period Muriel actually held a job as a travel organiser with the Queensland Tourist Bureau.

During World War II women were needed to work, particularly in 'male' jobs and the issue of pay became heated. Ultimately, a tiny percentage of women received the full rate, while others were awarded 75-90 percent of the male rate. Muriel was bitterly disappointed that women, whose efforts were crucial to the war effort, were once again being treated like second class citizens. From 1943-47 she worked as an organiser for the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Muriel's last job within the labour movement.

In 1949, Muriel argued for an equal basic wage for men and women in the Basic Wage Case however, as women's wages were now at 75 percent the unions had lost interest in the cause. It would be twenty years before the unions would again put a case forward for equal pay. In 1950, Muriel retired to Melbourne due to ill health. She published *Arbitration at the Crossroads* (1954), which expressed her belief that the arbitration system was expensive and undemocratic and that it had failed to improve labour conditions.

On 14 May 1974, Muriel died in poverty at St Kilda, a week after the National Wage Case decision granted women an adult minimum wage. Unfortunately, the wider population remained ignorant of her achievements.



Ivy Weber

1937: First woman to be elected to the Victorian Parliament in a general election

Born in 1892, Ivy Weber was Victoria's second woman parliamentarian but the first to win a seat at a general election. She won and held the seat of Nunawading as an independent in 1937, 1940 and 1943. A widow from World War I, with a small child, she married Clarence Weber, principal of the 'Weber and Rice Health and Strength College' and an all-round athlete. He was a widower with seven young children and together they had another three. Clarence died of a heart attack in 1930 leaving Ivy with eleven children.

Ivy became involved in public life through the activities of the College. She was active in the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the National Council of Women. Like many women entering parliament, most of her children had left home when she embarked on a political career.

The WCTU encouraged women to stand as independent candidates to specifically represent women. In June 1937, the League of Women Electors of Victoria was formed and endorsed three women candidates including Ivy Weber.

Ivy's electoral platform was:

- a true democracy to provide economic security, and thus alleviate distress and unemployment;
- provision of free education from kindergarten to University;
- establishing a systematic National Health Scheme, thereby raising the General Health Standard;

- abolishing slum dwellings and erecting suitable homes for families; and
- securing a comprehensive scheme of National Insurance, and covering hospital treatment.

As a Member of Parliament she successfully lobbied for female representation on government boards and espoused equal pay for teachers. She believed that women should be on local councils and juries. She advocated a homemaker's allowance for women with families. She was one of the instigators of the Physical Education course at the University of Melbourne, the first of its kind in Australia. In 1938, Ivy was one of two women members of the first National Co-ordinating Council for Physical Fitness.

In 1943, following three successive electoral successes, she resigned her seat six weeks after the Victorian State election. She unsuccessfully stood as an independent for the Federal seat of Henty as part of the League of Women Voters' Women for Canberra Movement. Her choice of seat was ill-advised and she lost her seat.

Although denying that she was a feminist, Ivy's commitment to women and women's issues belies this. She was a woman of vision. Ivy spent her old age in obscurity and died in 1976.



Councillor Lilian Fowler

Lilian Fowler

1938: Australia's first woman mayor

Lilian Fowler was born in Cooma, New South Wales on 7 June 1886, and educated at the local public school. As a young woman she assisted her father who was a Labor League organiser and alderman for Cooma. She married Albert Fowler, a bootmaker, when working as a waitress in Sydney and they had a daughter. From 1915 she lived near Newtown Bridge and became secretary of the Newtown Erskineville Labor League.

In 1917, the anti-conscriptionist Labor candidate, F. M. Burke, won Newtown and Lilian managed his electorate for the next twenty years. She was involved in the central executive of the ALP and in 1926-27 was president of the Labor Women's Central Organising Committee. In 1921, Fowler was among the first women appointed Justices of the Peace and presided over the Cooma Court in 1921. In 1925, she led a deputation to the Governor requesting the appointment of women to the Legislative Council.

In 1928, she separated from her husband just prior to her election to Newtown Municipal Council, thereby becoming the first woman alderman in the state. She was re-elected in 1935-37, 1938-40, 1941-44, 1948 and, from 1938-39 she was the first woman mayor in Australia. As Newtown was a congested working class suburb, Lilian strove for the

establishment of playgrounds for children and assistance for the unemployed, while opposing the replacement of slum housing with blocks of flats.

She ran against Burke unsuccessfully in 1941 when he split from the Lang Labor Party. However she succeeded in being elected as the Member for Newtown in the New South Wales Parliament in 1944 and again in 1947. Both times, Lilian and Lang were the only successful Lang Labor candidates. She opposed the centralist tendencies of the Labor Party and ceased to be an alderman after Newtown was absorbed into the City of Sydney. She believed that smaller units of government were more effective and democratic, being closer to the people. In 1950, she was defeated at the State elections and in 1953 she was unsuccessful in running for the Sydney Municipal Council.

Her major parliamentary achievement was the 1945 amendment to the Lunacy Act which secured the release of Boyd Sinclair who had been committed to a criminal asylum in 1936 without trial.

In 1984, a new Federal seat in West Sydney was named in her honour. It is now held by another Labor woman, Julia Irwin, MHR.



Nora Heysen, AM
Nora Heysen

1938: First woman to win the Archibald Prize for Portraiture

Nora Heysen was born in Hahndorf, a village in the Adelaide Hills, South Australia in 1911. She was the daughter of the famous Australian painter Hans Heysen, from whom she gained her early art training, as well as from her mother, also a talented artist. When she was fifteen she attended the School of Fine Arts in North Adelaide. Throughout the five years she studied there, she continued to draw with her father, particularly around Hahndorf.

In 1930, Nora exhibited with the Society of Artists in Sydney and she had works purchased by the art galleries of New South Wales and South Australia. She set up her own studio at The Cedars and began to pay a regular model for her paintings. The family then went to England in 1943 and Nora remained there to study at the Central School of Art. In 1936, she enrolled at the Byam Shaw School under Ernest Jackson. Before returning to Australia she travelled to Italy.

She moved to Sydney and in 1938 became the first woman to win the Archibald Prize for her portrait of Madame Elink Schuurman.

In 1943, she was the first woman to be appointed an official war artist, commissioned to record and represent the women's war effort. In this capacity she went to New Guinea, where she met her future husband, Dr Robert Black. After they married, in 1953, they bought a house in Sydney, the Chalet, but they also travelled to various tropical regions, including New Guinea, where Nora painted a series of works of the local people.

Nora continued to travel widely, to the United States, Mexico, England, Switzerland and New Zealand. In 1993, she received the Australia Council's Award for Achievement in the Arts and in 1998 was awarded an Order of Australia (AM).



Enid Lyons Honourable Dame Enid Lyons, DBE

1943: Australia's first female member of the House of Representatives

Enid Lyons was introduced to politics at an early age by her mother, Eliza, who was influenced by the ideas of Fabian Socialism and was a member of the ALP. Enid studied at the Teacher Training College in Hobart. Her mother introduced her to various Labor politicians including Joe Lyons. Enid began a correspondence with Joe, then the Tasmanian Treasurer and Minister for Education.

Despite the eighteen-year age difference they were soon engaged and Enid was eighteen when they married. Converting to Catholicism, she gave birth to the first of many children when she was nineteen, in spite of a divided pelvis. Soon she had five children under five years of age.

In 1925, Enid ran for the State seat of Denison as he felt the Labor Party should run a female candidate. She was a firm believer in women's rights and had argued for equal pay. Despite being busy with seven young children, Enid fought a hard campaign and just missed out. Shortly afterwards, her ten-month-old baby died of pneumonia and then her next pregnancy resulted in a stillbirth. She had five more children.

Joe Lyons was elected Prime Minister in December 1931 as leader of the newly formed United Australia Party. In 1937, Enid was made Dame Grand Cross of the British Empire. Enid was in fact her husband's closest political ally and adviser. His first act as Prime Minister was to write to his wife that 'whatever honours or distinctions come are ours, not mine'. Joe died in 1939.

When the Federal seat of Darwin (in Tasmania) became vacant in 1943, Enid's daughter persuaded her to nominate. She became the only new member elected for the UAP in a landslide victory to Labor. She was the first woman member of the House of Representatives in Australia. She campaigned on issues relating to the importance of family life. Describing Enid in parliament, former Prime Minister Billy Hughes said, 'Ah, there you sat, like a bird of paradise among carrion crows'. In her maiden speech, she argued the need to examine all policies in relation to their effect on home and family life. Her greatest success was when she committed the Party and subsequently the Coalition to the extension of child endowment to first children.

After the 1949 election victory of the UAP she achieved another first as the first woman to become Vice President of the Executive Council. With deteriorating health she resigned from parliament in 1951. Although infirm, she continued to have a voice on social issues via syndicated newspaper columns. She also accepted the position of Commissioner of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) which she held for eleven years. Her husband had set up the ABC and stipulated that at least one of the commissioners should be a woman.

Enid went on to publish two books of memoirs in which she was outspoken on the nature of Australian politics, observing that '*the tradition of male supremacy still holds in a manner not matched in any country of comparable development*'.



Dorothy Tangney

1943: First Australian woman Senator (WA)

Dorothy was the daughter of an engine driver and one of a family of nine. She was born on 13 March 1911 in Perth. Her father was badly injured when she was young so the family grew up in poverty. Dorothy won a State scholarship which enabled her to go through secondary school. After matriculating at fifteen, she managed to attend university on the monitor system whereby school teaching is combined with part-time study.

Her first job was in industrial Fremantle where she saw children living in poverty and suffering malnutrition. She soon founded the first Young Labor League in Fremantle which also served as an employment agency. Dorothy also founded the University Labor Club and was president of the Debating Society at the University. Among all this she found time to graduate with a BA and a DipEd and continued school teaching.

In the State elections of 1936 and 1939 she contested the university seat of Nedlands and won a place on the Senate ticket in 1940 and 1943. She was placed fourth on the 1943 Senate ticket. None of the ALP candidates had been elected in the 1940 election, but one of the landslides characteristic of the Senate system before the introduction of proportional representation brought her unexpectedly into parliament in 1943. She became the first Australian woman senator.

Her popularity meant that she was placed number one on the ALP WA Senate ticket in 1946, 1951, 1955 and 1961. She was the first woman to lead a Senate team for one of the major parties.

In parliament Dorothy argued for the extension of federal powers to provide social security, housing, education at all levels and a national health scheme. Accordingly, she felt that the Labor party should not be a party of low taxation. She opposed preference for returned service personnel, stressing the rights of all people to work. She became a member of the Joint Committee on Social Security set up by the Labor government in 1943. This committee achieved increased child endowment, hospital and medical benefits and TB and blind pensions. Dorothy saw this as her greatest achievement in parliament. Despite the fact that she never married she always endorsed the primacy of the maternal role for women.

In 1967, the preselection system for the Senate team was changed and Dorothy was relegated on the ticket. She had been critically ill with kidney problems and political damage had occurred. She was unsuccessful in the elections and, despite a recount, she found herself unceremoniously bundled out of politics. She died on 1 June 1985. An electorate in Western Australia is named in her honour.



Jessie Street *Jessie Street*

1945: First Australian woman delegate to the United Nations

Jessie Street was born on 18 April 1889, the eldest of three children born in India to a father who worked in the Indian Civil Service. Her mother, Mabel, inherited 'Yulgilbar' station in New South Wales in 1896 so the family moved there. Jessie was educated by governesses and in England before studying for a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, graduating in 1910. She was interested in the women's movement and sport and was a founding member of the Sydney University Women's Sport Association. She also attended the International Alliance of Women Conference in Rome in 1911 and Geneva in 1914. In 1916, she married Kenneth Whistler Street whom she had met at university when he was studying law. Over the next decade they had three children and Kenneth went on to become a Justice of the Supreme Court, then Chief Justice of New South Wales.

In 1918, she joined the League of Nations Union and was also Secretary to the National Council of Women and a member of the Feminist Club. By 1929, she felt there was a need for a stronger organisation to campaign for women's needs, so she established the United Associations of Women (UAW) hoping it would be an umbrella organisation for others with similar aims. She was founding president for the next twenty years. The UAW assisted campaigns for female teachers to overturn legislation forbidding them to work once married and campaigned for wages for housewives and equal pay for women. Jessie was also involved in drafting the Australian Women's Charter in 1943 which articulated women's needs. The following year she led a delegation of thirteen women who presented the Charter to parliament.

As a result of her long-standing interest in the League of Nations, Jessie was invited as the only Australian woman delegate to the conference which helped establish the United Nations Organisation. She helped found its Status of Women Commission and was Australia's representative on it in 1947-48. A member of the Labor Party since 1939, by 1949 she had been tainted with accusations of being a 'communist', so she was replaced on the Commission. She was prominent in the Women for Canberra movement and herself stood unsuccessfully for parliament on two occasions, 1943 and 1949. She one of the Labor women of outstanding talent who was constantly passed over for a winnable seat.

Jessie spent much of the 1950s outside of Australia, liaising with women's movements around the world.

On her return she attended the foundation meeting of the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship in 1957 which became part of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement. Over the next decade she campaigned vigorously for constitutional rights for Aborigines. She travelled the world attending conferences on peace and women's issues. In 1966, she published her autobiography, *Truth or Repose*. Her son Laurence followed in his father's footsteps in becoming a judge, then a Chief Justice of New South Wales.

Jessie died on 2 July 1970.



Shirley Strickland (de la Hunty), MBE

1948: First Australian woman to win an Olympic medal in athletics

Shirley was born in Guildford, Western Australia on 18 July 1925. She grew up in poverty with four brothers on a farm in East Pithara. She boarded at Northam Senior High School from the age of twelve, and wanted to study engineering at the University of Western Australia but was rejected as there were no women's toilets in that department. Accepted into the Science faculty, she gained an honours degree in Nuclear Physics.

Shirley rose to prominence in the 1947 West Australian and 1948 Australian athletic championships as a sprinter and a hurdler. After just one year of competition she was Australia's number one athlete and was automatically selected for the 1948 London Olympics. She won three medals – silver for the 4 x 100 metre relay and bronze in the 100 metre sprint and 80 metre hurdles – prompting one sportswriter to comment, 'She is one of the finest athletes in the world'.

By the time the 1950 Empire Games came around a new champion had emerged, Marjorie Jackson. Shirley had to be content with silver in the sprint events while retaining gold in the 80 metre hurdles. At the 1952 Helsinki Olympics she won a bronze medal in the 100 metre sprint and a gold in the 80 metre hurdles which she won in record time. Unfortunately, Winsome Cripps dropped the baton in the 4 x 100 metre relay, denying Australia a certain gold medal. By this time Shirley had married and was known as Shirley

de la Hunty. She gave birth to her first child in 1953 but was back in peak condition in 1954. Regrettably, she missed out on the 1954 Empire Games team when she misheard the starting gun in the hurdles.

Shirley was determined to defend her Olympic title on home turf in the 1956 Olympics despite accusations that she was too old. Described as a housewife (ignoring her thesis on cosmic particle detection) the 31-year-old mother won a gold medal in her event, the 80 metre hurdles, taking her Olympic tally up to seven medals. This achievement was especially noteworthy for it challenged the notion that once women had children their sporting careers were over. In 1957, she was awarded an MBE.

After retiring she moved into coaching and attended the 1968 Olympics as an official. She coached Raelene Boyle among other successful athletes. Despite her success at coaching she was never selected as accompanying coach to an Australian team, a fact which she attributed to the male-dominated sports administration.

By the 1970s she began to pursue a new passion: the environment. She was a founding member of the Tree Society and conceived and initiated the Conservation Council of Western Australia (Inc.) as a forum for nature conservation groups. She was also a foundation member of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Dame Ida Mann, DBE

1949: First person to diagnose trachoma epidemic in Indigenous population in the Kimberleys

Ida Mann was born on 6 February, 1893, in London, England. Her father was a civil servant and she had a happy childhood although troubled with illness. Her first experience with medicine was when she underwent a tonsillectomy performed at home under local anaesthetic. She was educated at Wycombe House School, then took the Civil Service Girl Clerks' examination and entered the Post Office Savings Bank.

Ida matriculated in 1914 and entered the London School of Medicine. She researched the embryology of the eye at St Mary's Hospital in London. The papers she wrote, '*The Development of the Human Eye*' (1928) and '*Congenital Abnormalities of the Eye*' (1937) became standard texts on ophthalmology. She worked at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for Women, the Central London Eye Hospital and then the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital, Moorfields from 1927. Her interest in comparative anatomy led to her becoming an oculist at the London Zoo.

She won numerous scientific awards and addressed international scientific meetings around the world. During World War II, Ida was senior surgeon at Moorfields where she researched chemical warfare. She accepted a fellowship at Oxford University and eventually became Professor of Ophthalmology there.

She married Professor William Gye in 1944 and they migrated to Perth in 1949. She was asked by the Western Australian Government to investigate eye problems among the Indigenous population in the Kimberley region. She diagnosed a trachoma epidemic at a stage when the symptoms were not visible and spent four years researching the disease. She then became a World Health Organisation consultant, studying eye diseases in the Pacific and Asia.

She described her work in two autobiographical books, *The Cockney and the Crocodile* (1962) and *Culture, Race Climate and Eye Disease* (1966). She was awarded an DBE in 1980 in recognition of her work. Ida died in Perth in November, 1983.



Dr Kate Campbell, OBE

1951: First person to demonstrate a link between retrolental fibroplasia (a blindness in premature babies) and oxygen levels in humidicribs

Kate Campbell was born on 22 April, 1899, in Hawthorn, Melbourne. Her father, a Scotsman, was a shipping clerk while her mother, whose parents were Scots, had been a school teacher. Campbell won a scholarship to attend Methodist Ladies College and then another which enabled her to study Medicine at the University of Melbourne. Other notable women in her class were Lucy Bryce and Jean McNamara, also scholarship recipients.

As one of the top twelve students, she went to the Melbourne Hospital where she immediately encountered discrimination as women were not allowed to do casualty duty. Campbell wanted to become competent in midwifery and so applied for a position at the Royal Children's Hospital. However that hospital did not take female residents as it did not have facilities for them. Nevertheless one senior doctor, Sir William Upjohn, felt that Kate and Jean McNamara were two of the most outstanding residents at the Melbourne Hospital, so he spoke to the Board. After Kate had worked there for a while, she was overlooked for a promotion so she resigned and went to the Royal Women's Hospital. She also set herself up as a General Practitioner in 1927, while still working at the hospital. Until her resignation in 1934 she

was the hospital's expert on the care of premature babies. She designed incubators which used hot water bottles to keep the babies warm. From 1937 she was a consultant pediatrician while also lecturing at the University of Melbourne (1929-65) in neonatal paediatrics. Kate was also involved in Baby Health Centres through her good friend, Dr Vera Scantlebury. In the late 1940s the Queen Victoria Hospital became Melbourne's first major hospital to liberalise visiting hours when Kate and others introduced free visiting in the children's wards.

In 1951, Kate observed that since methods of oxygen administration had improved in the neonatal nurseries, more babies were suffering from blindness known as retrolental fibroplasia. After looking into it she published her findings in the *Medical Journal of Australia*. Later more research was conducted which proved her theory correct and she received worldwide acclaim. She was awarded an OBE for her work and was joint winner of the inaugural *Encyclopaedia Britannica* award for medicine in 1964.

Kate died in Melbourne on 12 July 1986.

Marjorie Jackson, AO

Marjorie Jackson

1952: First Australian woman to win an Olympic gold medal in athletics

Marjorie Jackson was born on 13 September 1931, in Coffs Harbour but grew up in Lithgow, New South Wales. She went to Coffs Harbour Primary School, Coerwull Primary School in Lithgow and Lithgow High School.

Marjorie first showed promise in 1949 when as a seventeen-year-old 'typist' she beat the Dutch woman and Olympic champion Fanny Blankers-Koen in the 100 yard sprint. In the 1950 Empire Games in Auckland, she won four gold medals, one in every race she entered – the 100 yard, 220 yard, 440 yard relay and 660 yard relay. Nicknamed the 'Lithgow Flash', she made history at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952 by becoming the first woman to win gold in athletics when she took out the 100 and 200 metre sprint. She had worn her hand-made kangaroo leather running spikes, which cost her a month's wages. She returned home to a heroine's welcome and was named 1952 ABC Sportsman (sic) of the Year.

Between 1952 and 1954 Marjorie held four world records: 100 yard, 220 yard, 100 metre and 200 metre. She decided to end her career with the 1954 Empire Games in Vancouver at only 22 years of age.

She finished with a perfect result: three gold medals in three races – the 100 yard, 220 yard and 4 x 100 yard relay. She remained unbeaten in international competition.

She had married former Olympic cyclist, Peter Nelson in 1953 and planned to settle into normal life with him. They opened a sporting goods store in Adelaide and managed several retail stores over the next two decades. They had two daughters and a son together. Following his death in 1977 she established the Peter Nelson Leukemia Research Foundation and pledged to raise \$1 million for research.

Research began in 1979 with \$400,000 raised by 1980.

In 1978, she moved out of retail to manage an almond orchard. Marjorie received numerous accolades in her life including a MBE in 1953 and being named Australian Sportstar of the Year in 1952. She has said, *'I'd rather attempt something great and fail, than succeed at less. When faced with a mountain, I will not quit. I firmly believe that our lives are a gift from God, and what we do with Life is our gift in return'*.



Ngarla Kunoth-Monks

1955: First Indigenous Australian female film star

Ngarla Kunoth-Monks, also known as Rosie, was born at the small settlement of Utopia, 250 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs and raised in the traditional Aboriginal ways of the Arunta people. Her life changed dramatically in 1953 when movie director Charles Chauvel discovered her after an extensive search and hired her to play the female lead in his film *Jedda*.

The film, which only featured three professional actors, was shot on location in Central Australia. It was the first Australian feature film to have Indigenous Australians play lead roles. Most scenes were filmed on the Coolibah station in the Northern Territory, but some were shot at geographical locations such as the Ormiston Gorge. The film centres around the adoption of a young Aboriginal baby into a white family on a cattle station and the dilemmas this creates. The child, Jedda, is forbidden to have any contact with the Aborigines where she lives. One day a full-blooded Aboriginal man starts working at the station and he ends up kidnapping the adolescent Jedda. She is frightened as she enters the unfamiliar physical and psychological world of her ancestors. The landscape is used to great effect in this part of the film, particularly as it is the first Australian feature film produced in colour. Ngarla's beauty and strong performance are a vital factor in the appeal of the film.

Jedda premiered in Darwin on 3 January 1955, attended by the Aboriginal stars and Australian press. On 5 May it premiered in Sydney at the Lyceum Theatre with a strong publicity

campaign. It was praised for its visual grandeur and for the sincerity of its script. *Jedda* was actually the first Australian film to be shown at the Cannes Film Festival. In Great Britain and the United States, the film was distributed as *Jedda the Uncivilised*.

Ngarla became very well known outside her community but still managed to complete her education in Alice Springs and Adelaide. She then became the first Aboriginal Anglican nun when she entered the Community of the Holy Name. When she left after a decade she became a liaison officer with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and married confectioner William Monks.

In 1977, Ngarla returned to Alice Springs and became an activist. She stood unsuccessfully for the Northern Territory parliament as a candidate for the Country Liberal Party before working for the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service. She became a member of ATSIC and a member of the governing body of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association.

In 1993, the family moved back to her birthplace, Utopia, looking for a better quality of life. Recently, with the 'stolen generation' becoming a prominent issue, Ngarla reflected, 'While Aboriginal people continue to be undermined and their land and language degraded, it's difficult to say that there has been any progress over the past 40 years'.



Betty Cuthbert, AM, MBE

1956: First Australian Olympic triple gold medallist

Betty Cuthbert was born in Ermington, New South Wales, on 20 April, 1938. At primary school sport meetings Betty discovered she could win every event she tried. By coincidence, when she was thirteen, her schoolmistress at the Home Science School in Parramatta was June Ferguson who, in 1948, had represented Australia in the Olympic Games as a sprinter. Ferguson noticed the potential in young Betty and began coaching her.

In 1953, Betty unofficially broke the Australian junior 100 yard record with a run of 11.3 seconds. She joined the Western Suburbs Athletics Club in Sydney when she left school and in September 1956 broke the world record time for 200 metres with 23.2 seconds. She was chosen to run in the 100 metre and 200 metre events at the Melbourne Olympic Games.

Betty set a world record for 100 metres of 11.4 seconds in her first heat. She went on to win the event with a run of 11.5 seconds, winning Australia's first Olympic gold medal on Australian soil. The next event was her favourite, the 200 metre and she won her heats easily. In the final, however, Germany's Christa Stubnick edged ahead of her. Betty lengthened and quickened her stride, caught up to her and overtook her to win by two metres, equalling Marjorie Jackson's world Olympic record time of 23.4 seconds.

When the baton was passed to Betty in the final leg of the 4 x 100 metre relay the Australian's held a narrow lead, but Betty was exhausted from having run eight races already that week. She held on gallantly to win in the record time of 44.5 seconds. It was the first time Australia had won this event. With her flaxen hair and swag of gold medals, she was dubbed the 'golden girl'. She won the 1956 ABC Sportsman (sic) of the Year.

Betty had injury problems at the 1960 Rome Olympics and was unable to win a medal. She announced her retirement shortly afterwards, but was lured back to the track for the 1962 Empire Games in Perth. Though unsuccessful in the individual events she helped her team win the relay.

Following these Games, she switched to middle distance running and qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in the 400 metre event. Her stunning performance to win gold in an Olympic record time of 52 seconds capped off her brilliant career.

In 1978, she became the first female trustee of the Sydney Cricket Ground. Her courage has been called on again, for in 1981 she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. She lives with her family in Western Australia while contributing to public awareness of the disease.



Professor Dorothy Hill, AC, CBE

*1959: First woman appointed full professor at an Australian University
and first woman President of Australian Academy of Science*

Dorothy Hill was born 10 September 1907 in Brisbane and was educated at Brisbane Girls' Grammar School. She received a scholarship, which enabled her to attend the University of Queensland where she was awarded a Bachelor of Science in 1930. She went on to receive a PhD from Cambridge University and returned to the University of Queensland as a research fellow in 1937. During World War II, she served in the WRANS (1942-45). She returned to the University of Queensland after the war where she lectured, rising to Research Professor of Geology in 1959. This made her the first woman in Australia to receive a full professorship.

Dorothy was Secretary of the Great Barrier Reef Committee for nine years, conducting extensive studies of the reef.

Her geological research led to significant oil discoveries. She became president of the Professorial Board at the University of Queensland in 1971, the first woman to hold such a position in any university in Australia. She was also the first woman President of the Australian Academy of Science in 1970. In 1973 she was appointed Emeritus Professor of Geology at the University of Queensland.

Dorothy is also an A grade pilot and a member of many scientific societies. She has won numerous prizes and accolades including being appointed CBE in 1971 and winning the 1983 ANZAAS medal.



Ruby Hutchinson

Ruby Hutchinson

1959: Founder of the Australian Consumer Association

Ruby Hutchinson was born in Melbourne, Victoria, in February 1892, daughter of a goldminer and bookmaker. The family moved to Western Australia in 1896 and she attended school on the Murchison goldfields. She married a miner, Daniel Buckley, at Meekatharra while still a teenager. After the marriage broke up she was left to rear seven children in the metropolitan area. She took in boarders and did dressmaking to make ends meet. In 1938, she married Alex Hutchinson. Later she began to further her education at a commercial business college and summer schools.

Ruby was always interested in politics and joined the Australian Labor Party at sixteen. She contested her first election in 1950. In 1954, she won the marginal Suburban Province seat by a little over 500 votes from Hubert Parker who had sat in the Legislative Council for twenty years. In her inaugural speech she dealt with the major theme of her political career, the need for reform or abolition of the Legislative Council. She also urged the decriminalisation of abortion. Ruby was re-elected comfortably in 1960 and in 1962 her impatience with her opponents led her to become only the second woman to be suspended from a Western Australian Parliament. She said she *'I am ashamed to belong to the Legislative Council because of the 'undemocratic nature of the House'*.

Through the 1950s Ruby was involved in campaigns to buy Western Australian goods. She had received numerous

complaints from her constituents about the shoddy quality and poor value for money of goods. She knew of overseas consumer associations so she found out how they worked with a view to creating something similar in Australia. In 1959, Ruby travelled to Sydney to discuss her idea with a group of like-minded people, including Roland Thorp, Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Sydney. At a public meeting on 17 September 1959 at the Sydney Town Hall the Australasian Consumers' Association (ACA) was born.

Their primary aim was to produce a magazine that would inform consumers about their rights and about the safety and value of products. They were also concerned about the misleading nature of advertisements. In their first year, they launched the magazine and had 3200 members. The group was committed, highly focussed and staunchly independent.

The ACA targeted women, addressing the National Council of Women, the Feminist Club and the Housewives' Association. By the end of 1961 they had 20,000 members. The ACA continued to grow and the success of its endeavours resulted in the Federal government passing the Trade Practices Act in 1974. By 1984 *Choice* had a circulation of over 200,000. ACA continues to publish *Choice* magazine and now has an internet site, *Choice Online*.

In 1965 Ruby moved into the safe seat of North-East Metropolitan Province and retired from politics at the 1971 election, aged 79. She died in December 1974.



Dame Margaret Scott, DBE

Margaret Scott

1963: Founder of The Australian Ballet School

Dame Margaret Scott was born in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1922. From the age of three, Margaret (Maggie) wanted to be a dancer. Outstanding talent led her at sixteen to leave for London, to join Ninette de Valois, the Sadler's Wells School, and the Sadler's Wells Ballet. In 1947, she travelled to Australia as soloist with Ballet Rambert. She became a foundation member of the National Theatre Ballet before returning to London in 1951.

Maggie later chose to return to Australia with her husband, Professor Derek Denton, rather than take the post of Assistant Director of the Ballet Rambert. She then opened a ballet school for children and for professional dancers to maintain their skills between seasons. This led to the formation of a group which identified the need for a permanent, full-time company and school in Australia. The group took this idea to Dr H.C. 'Nugget' Coombes, the then Chairman of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. He, through the combination of the Trust, J.C. Williamsons Ltd and the Federal Government, facilitated the establishment of first The Australian Ballet Company in 1962, followed by The Australian Ballet School in 1964 with Maggie as its Director. Nugget Coombes wrote 'the success reflects the drive and energy as well as the persuasion of Margaret Scott'.

She ran The Australian Ballet School for 27 years producing graduates who have been the stars of The Australian Ballet Company and many other companies throughout the world.

She introduced Brenesh choreology or dance notation into the School which was used in an experimental programme to record and notate Aboriginal dances and corroborees. This work was eventually taken over by the Department of Anthropological Studies at Monash University.

Maggie also introduced the first health programme and orthopedic clinic in Australia specifically for dance injuries.

Maggie's contribution to dance was recognised when she was created a Dame of the British Empire in 1981 and given a Doctorate of Law Honoris Causa by the University of Melbourne in 1989. She has also received an Ausdance Lifetime Achievement Award and a Green Room Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

Her expertise has been recognised internationally through work in China for the then Australian Ministry for External Affairs and through her memberships of the jury for the International Ballet Competitions held at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre. In 1987, she was an Invited Guest at Premier Gorbachev's International Forum 'Survival of Humanity' Science and Arts Panel.

After retiring from The Australian Ballet School, Maggie was invited by Graeme Murphy, in 1992, to return to the stage to create the role of the elderly Clara in his production *Nutcracker* for The Australian Ballet Company. She was nominated for both Green Room and Mo Awards for this role.



Dawn Fraser, AO

Dawn Fraser

1964: First woman in the world to win an Olympic gold medal in the same event at three consecutive Olympics

Dawn Fraser was born in Balmain on 4 September, 1937, as the youngest of ten children. She began swimming as a youngster at the Balmain pool but came to notoriety in 1951, when, as a thirteen year old, she defeated the Sydney schoolgirl wonder Lorraine Crapp who started on a handicap. The same year her father became an invalid with asthma and her mother suffered a heart attack. Dawn did all the housework and worked part-time at a milk bar to earn money. She also suffered asthma and found that swimming helped to relieve it.

In 1952, she met Henry Gallagher who undertook to coach her for nothing. She worked hard and first found success when Crapp withdrew from the 220 yard event at the Australian Championships. Dawn won the title in Australian record time. When she turned eighteen, she moved to Adelaide where Gallagher had taken over management of the Adelaide City Baths and she began swimming eight miles every week day and chopping down trees in the Adelaide Hills on weekends. The gruelling schedule paid off, for in the summer of 1955-56 Dawn won every South Australian freestyle title from 110 to 880 yards. At the 1956 Australian Championships Dawn set her first world record time defeating Crapp in the 110 yard freestyle, and her second world record in the 220 yard freestyle. Gallagher told reporters that Fraser had 'a heart as big as Phar Lap's'.

As the Olympics approached, Dawn Fraser and Lorraine Crapp continued to break world records and the rivalry between them grew. Dawn began training exclusively with men, chasing them up and down the lanes. In the Olympic 100 metre sprint Lorraine and Dawn battled stroke for stroke, but Dawn just pipped her at the post, winning her first gold Olympic medal. She won another gold in the 4 x 100 metre freestyle relay and silver in the 400 metres at those Olympics. Over the next four years a host of new young challengers arose including Ilsa Konrads and Chris von Salza, but Dawn continued to break records.

On her way to the 1960 Rome Olympics Dawn contracted dysentery but her will to win was so strong that she overcame adversity to take the gold medal in Olympic record time. Unfortunately, this victory was overshadowed by the scandal that broke out when she refused to swim in the medley. Her reasoning was that she was only requested to do so one hour before the event and she was simply in no condition to race. Nonetheless, Australian swimming officials refused to accept her written apology. Dawn realised she could only respond by performing well in the pool so she continued to apply herself and won four gold medals at the 1962 Commonwealth games.

Dawn Fraser

Dawn continued to improve but tragedy struck in 1964 when the car she was driving collided with a truck. Her mother was injured in the crash and died soon afterwards in hospital, while Dawn injured her neck and back so severely that she was forced to spend nine weeks in a steel brace. A month before the Tokyo Olympics, Dawn still could not make a racing dive but she continued to fight to represent Australia in the 100 metre freestyle event. Her gold medal swim in that event was the most courageous swim of her life earning her an Olympic first of victory in the same event over three successive Olympics.

This prompted the team manager to invite Dawn to carry the Australian banner during the closing ceremony, a first for an Australian woman. Unfortunately, her success was once again overshadowed by the furore when she tried to souvenir an Olympic flag by scaling a fence into Emperor Hirohito's palace gardens. The Australian Swimming Union suspended her from competitive swimming for ten years, however this was overturned four years later by public demand.

In 1964, she was honoured as the Australian of the Year.

Since 1965, Dawn has worked as a swimming coach, a publican and MLA for Balmain (1988-91). In 1988, she was voted Australia's greatest female athlete.

In 2000, she played a major role as an ambassador in the Sydney Olympics. She is truly a living legend.



Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

1964: First published poetry book by an Indigenous Australian woman and leading advocate for land rights and reconciliation

Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska was born on 3 November 1920 on North Stradbroke Island, Queensland, one of the Noonuccal tribe. She wanted to become a nurse, however further study was not an option for an Aboriginal student at the time, so she went into domestic service for a white family in Brisbane.

The work was hard so when the war broke out she joined the Army and worked as a switchboard operator. She married a wharfie, had two sons and studied to be a stenographer. The marriage was not happy and it did not last. She joined the Communist Party as she found they were the only party sympathetic to the problems of Indigenous people. She was active in the movement to advance Aboriginal rights and became secretary for the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders from 1960. She wrote a poem entitled 'Aboriginal Charter of Rights' which became the 'battle hymn' of the reform movement. In 1964, her first book of poetry *We Are Going* was published and it was widely read and discussed. Her poignant collection became a best-seller, and Kath became the second best-selling Australian poet behind C.J. Dennis. It was published in the United States where she won further acclaim. Fellow poets Mary Gilmore and Judith Wright were very supportive of Kath's work.

Another book followed, *The Dawn is at Hand*, which was published in 1966 to further acclaim. Kath was now advocating land rights as well. She co-founded the Aboriginal publications

Identity and *Aboriginal Quarterly* and contributed to other magazines. Following the success of the 1967 referendum, Kath stood for parliament in Queensland, becoming the first Aboriginal to contest a seat in the State government. She was not successful but kept up the fight for Aboriginal housing, employment, health and education. She was also involved in the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Australian Union of Women and was an Australian delegate to the World Council of Churches Consultation on Racism in London in 1969. She publicised the Aboriginal cause all around the world. She published a book of prose and poetry, *My People*, in 1970 but retired from many official duties the following year on doctor's orders.

In 1972 she established 'Moongalba' an educational and cultural centre for children of all races on Stradbroke Island. It was a camp where children could experience and learn about the Aboriginal lifestyle. She acted in *Shadow Sister* (1977) a film based on her life and the *Fringe Dwellers* (1985). She also published two children's books *Stradbroke Dreamtime* (1972) and *Father Sky and Mother Earth* (1981). In 1988, she returned the MBE medal she had been awarded in 1970 and changed her name by deed poll to Oodgeroo Noonuccal. She received honorary doctorates from four Australian universities and has been described as 'the mother of Australian Aboriginal writing'.



Professor Priscilla Kincaid-Smith, AC

Priscilla Kincaid-Smith

1968: First person to establish a link between analgesics and kidney damage

Priscilla Kincaid-Smith was born on 30 October 1926 in Johannesburg, South Africa and educated there before attending Witwatersrand University. She then did a two-year residency at a busy hospital in Soweto. This experience of working in an impoverished black township left a deep impression on her, and later in her career she would campaign strongly for birth control in developing countries. She completed post-graduate studies in London where she met Kenneth Fairley, an Australian who was to become her husband.

In 1959, Priscilla arrived in Melbourne to take up the position of Senior Research Fellow at the Baker Institute. In London she had a more senior position, however, Australia at that time was more conservative and did not consider women as equals. From 1960-67 she became an associate with that institute. She established her reputation when she discovered a link between readily-available analgesics (pain relievers) and kidney damage. She campaigned strongly for the restriction of certain analgesics. From 1968-69 she served on the World Health Organisation Committee on Analgesic Abuse.

Priscilla was a reader at the University of Melbourne (1969-75) but was overlooked for the position of Professor of Medicine in 1972. It wasn't until 1975 that she was appointed to a full professorship. In 1990, she became chair of the Australian Medical Association following which she became the first Australian president of the World Medical Association (1994-95) and the first woman to hold this position. She has been an outspoken supporter of birth control as a basic right for women. She also served as a commissioner of the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (1987-90).

Priscilla has published numerous journal articles as well as books including *Renal Infection and Renal Scarring* (1971) and *The Kidney* (1974). She was honoured with a CBE in 1975 and is an Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Melbourne.

Dr Ruth Bishop, AO



1970s: First person to discover the virus that causes gastroenteritis

Ruth Bishop graduated from the University of Melbourne with her first Science degree in 1954. Following that, she worked constantly on the study of gastroenteritis – a disease which kills five million people each year and is particularly devastating to young children and people in underdeveloped countries. In 1968, Ruth returned to work at the gastroenterological research unit at the Royal Children's Hospital.

It was fortunate that Ruth was in Melbourne when an epidemic broke out in 1973. Ruth, the senior scientist of the unit, had been attempting to isolate the cause of the disease and suspected the culprit was a virus. Using an electron microscope on tissue samples taken from one of the affected children, she discovered a single unknown virus that was responsible for the disease, the 'rotavirus'.

Since making this discovery, the unit has remained in the forefront of world research into the subject and the development of a vaccine. Ruth has become one of the world's leading authorities on the rotavirus. She has twice been chairperson of World Health Organisation scientific working committees related to diarrhoeal diseases. She received the 1978 Selwyn Smith Medical Research Prize and she earned a Doctor of Science degree.

Ruth was appointed Professor in the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Melbourne in 1995. She has been the Senior Principal Research Fellow of the National Health and Medical Research Council since 1992. She is also a member of the politics and networking group, Women in Medical Science.



Evonne Cawley (nee Goolagong), AO, MBE

1970 and 1971: First Indigenous Australian to represent Australia in world tennis and compete at Wimbledon

Evonne Cawley was born on 31 July 1951, at Barellan, a small town in New South Wales. Her father was a shearer and she was the third of eight children. Evonne was a sporty child in a very sporty family and she first developed tennis skills by hitting balls with a broom handle.

She started learning tennis properly when the one-week country tennis school visited her area once a year. The president of the local tennis club also encouraged her by buying her a racquet and taking her to country tournaments. At nine years of age she was already showing great potential. During school holidays she began living and training with Vic Edwards, her tennis coach, in Sydney. By twelve years of age, she was winning junior titles and, at fourteen, she moved to her coach's house permanently. She recalls that most of her childhood was spent playing competitive sport, and a lot of the time it was with boys. She attended Willoughby Girls' High School through to matriculation and also did a six-month secretarial course so that she would have something to fall back on.

In 1970, she was a member of the winning Australian Federation Cup team thereby making her the first Indigenous woman to represent Australia in world tennis. The following year as a nineteen year old she won Wimbledon, beating

fellow Australian Margaret Court. She also won the French Open and was briefly ranked No.1 in the world. She was named female Athlete of the Year and Australian of the Year. She was also awarded a MBE in 1972. She won the Australian Singles title in 1974, 1975 and 1976.

Evonne met Roger Cawley on her first tour to England in 1970 and they married in 1975. She took time off from tennis to start a family in 1977 but returned and won the Australian Open again in 1978. She was runner-up at Wimbledon in 1979, but won Wimbledon for a second time in 1980. In 1981 she gained permanent residency in the United States where she had a second child. She made another comeback in 1982 before a foot injury forced her to retire in 1985. Evonne took up coaching before returning to Australia to live in 1991.

Evonne raised the ire of Indigenous people when she played in South Africa in the early 1970s, but later in her career she refused to play there. She was both the subject of racial slurs from white people and the subject of abuse from Indigenous people who accused her of forgetting her heritage. In 1993, she published an autobiography *Home*. The book describes how she worked through these issues.

In Australia, Evonne is now a tennis legend.



Reverend Margaret Court, MBE

Margaret Court

1970: First Australian woman to win the tennis 'Grand Slam'

Margaret Court was born on 16 July 1942 in Albury, New South Wales. As a young 'tomboy' Margaret took up tennis, and when she found the girls to be an inferior opposition, she turned to playing against the boys. Originally a left-hander she switched to her right so as not to be thought odd and still beat the boys.

Margaret first came to prominence as a sixteen-year-old in 1959 in Brisbane, when she beat the Brazilian champion, Maria Bueno, in a quarter final of the Australian Singles Championship. The following year she won the Australian title and went on to win it eleven times out of the next fourteen championships. She also won three Wimbledon Championships, three Italian titles, four French, five American and three South African titles making it a grand total of 29 major world titles. Able to play on any surface, her career highlight was in 1970 when she won the 'Grand Slam' of four singles titles in one year. She was the second woman ever to perform that feat.

Margaret did not have it easy for she had a constant battle with nerves. Her first big test came in the 1963 Wimbledon final against the formidable Billie-Jean Moffitt (later King). Billie-Jean had beaten Margaret in the first round of the previous year's event so Margaret knew she had to come out confident in order to overcome her opponent. She attacked the ball from the start, going for the sidelines with strong ground strokes in order to overcome Billie-Jean's net-storming game. She won 6-3, 6-4 to become the first Australian Wimbledon woman champion. Her greatest victory was the 1970 Wimbledon defeat of Billie-Jean. Playing with torn ligaments, she had pain-killing injections before the game, however they wore off in the middle of this marathon struggle, the longest match in Wimbledon Women's Singles history. Margaret finally won 14-12, 11-9.

Margaret is now active as Minister in her Church.



Dr Germaine Greer

Germaine Greer

1971: First Australian woman to publish an internationally successful feminist treatise

Germaine Greer was born on 29 January 1939, and grew up in Melbourne's bayside suburbs. Germaine attended the Star of the Sea Convent in Gardenvale, and her good results led to scholarships. She first studied at the Teachers' College. In 1956, she transferred to the University of Melbourne to study for a Bachelor of Arts where she was also involved in student theatre and the university paper, *Farrago*. She was notorious and outspoken, which was unusual for a female student so she stood out from the crowd.

After completing her degree, Germaine moved to Sydney to study for her Masters at Sydney University. In 1963, she went to Cambridge to study for her doctorate and was received as a good student and actress. Her non-conformity made her a star and she continued to write, especially for underground magazines. She lectured at Warwick University from 1967-72 and participated in talkback radio. Germaine was approached by a publisher and, in 1969, *The Female Eunuch* was released. In it she argued that women have been castrated by patriarchal society, a theory which opened up much discussion. Her timing was excellent for women were ready to hear these words and it became an international best seller, despite it being a difficult read. It was translated into twelve languages. She became a most controversial public figure, the 'high priestess' of women's liberation as some

journalists called her. In 1971, she was voted Britain's 'Woman of the Year'.

When she visited Australia in 1971 she was well received, although her book aroused much debate. She spent a lot of time researching for her next book *The Obstacle Race: the fortunes of women painters and their work* (1979). That year she was appointed Professor of Modern Literature at the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma where she established the Tulsa Centre for the Study of Women's Literature. Her next books were literary but then she returned to writing about women with *Sex and Destiny: the politics of human fertility* (1984) and *The Change: Women, ageing and the menopause* (1991). This drew attention to a much hidden subject. In 1989, she published an autobiographical book about her relationship with her father entitled, *Daddy We Hardly Knew You*. She has since worked at Cambridge University and in 1998 became the Professor of English and Comparative Literary Studies at the University of Warwick.

Germaine certainly left her mark in Australia where her words reached suburban middle class women. As Beatrice Faust said, 'The value of her book is psychological, not political: it is like *Bicycle Thieves*, *Cathy Come Home*, *Kes*: it holds a mirror up to nature, and neither men nor women can avoid being moved by what they see there'.

Beatrice Faust

1972: Founder of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL)

Beatrice Faust was born in 1939, in Melbourne. Her mother died twelve hours after she was born. Growing up in middle class Caulfield in the 1950s, she found '*there was this terrible suburban deadness that you find in brick veneer and roast lamb on the weekend*'. Beatrice attended MacRobertson Girls' High School where its many immigrant students exposed her to a wider world. Winning a scholarship, she went on to get a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Melbourne in 1963 and a Master of Arts in 1965. As a student she married fellow student Clive Faust but the marriage did not last long. A few years later she decided to have a child. She was not married when her son was born and decided not to marry her lover.

By 1963, Beatrice had already had three 'illegal' abortions and this experience made her think deeply about this problem. She felt the existing laws did not work and only served to make the procedure unsafe. She believed strongly in freedom and, with a friend, they formed a Council for Civil Liberties, akin to the one in Sydney. She established a sub-committee on abortion to ascertain whether it was a civil liberties issue.

In the early 1960s, even the word abortion was taboo so she was taking a bold step. The Abortion Law Reform Association was formed and Beatrice developed a well-organised professional interest group. In 1966, she organised a 'teach-in' on abortion at the University of Melbourne that attracted much publicity.

1972 was an election year so Beatrice wanted to survey each political candidate and publish findings on where each

candidate stood on women's issues. She invited ten influential women over to her home in Carlton to discuss this proposal. They were all educated professional women with many contacts and together they formed the nucleus of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL). After a few more private meetings they went public and their membership just grew. Beatrice was adept at assigning tasks to people with experience and everyone worked hard. She went to Sydney and Brisbane to set up WEL groups and soon it was a national movement. With the elections coming up, women's issues were the hot topics and politicians had to address them. WEL published the survey results.

After the elections, WEL kept up the fight and one campaign of which Beatrice is particularly proud is opening up the administrative division of the Victorian Public Service to women. They adopted the strategy of having women with non-gender specific first names sit the required exam, but upon passing were denied entry because of their sex. Once WEL had succeeded, Beatrice was happy to back off and concentrate on Abortion Law reform.

Later in the 1970s, she moved to London where her then husband was working and she wrote a feminist book, *Women, Sex and Pornography* (1981). Beatrice then moved back to Australia and published several more books. She continues her feminist advocacy and is a regular columnist for *The Weekend Australian*.



1973: First Women's Adviser to an Australian Prime Minister

Elizabeth Reid was born at Taree in New South Wales in 1942. She attended St Felix's School in Bankstown, St Christopher's School in Canberra and Canberra High School. She then studied at the Australian National University (ANU) and Oxford University. Elizabeth returned to tutor philosophy at the ANU (1970-73) and became active in the Women's Liberation movement and particularly the Women's Electoral Lobby.

Teaching women's studies put her in the running to be appointed to the newly created position of adviser on women's affairs to Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. Elizabeth was chosen by the selection panel because of both her commitment to women and her intellectual ability. She worked as the adviser from 1973-75, apparently the first such appointment in the world. She spent the first thirteen months of her appointment travelling around Australia listening to women as they aired their concerns. Press interest in the position meant it became very public. Elizabeth suggested that an 'impact on women' statement be attached to all government submissions, which was eventually achieved under Prime Minister Hawke in the following decade.

Elizabeth worked tirelessly and some of her achievements were Commonwealth underwriting of the delivery of women's services, including women's refuges, rape crisis centres and women's health centres, of child care, and of working women's centres. She also pushed for policies for equal opportunities for women and girls in education, training, employment and access to housing. Important initiatives which came into place

in 1973 were the Supporting Mother's Benefit and, for the public service, three months' paid maternity leave together with one week's paid paternity leave.

Elizabeth persuaded the Whitlam government to commit to a community-based International Women's Year program in 1975. The objectives were to change attitudes, lessen areas of discrimination against women and contribute to women's creativity. Grants or seed funding were provided to an immense range of women's services, conferences, films, books and festivals. However there was a media backlash against the wasteful, spendthrift nature of the government and Elizabeth was targeted. Throughout her term she was dogged by the press who called her 'the PM's Supergirl' yet suggested she could do no right. By 1975, Elizabeth was suffering from exhaustion. She resigned and went overseas.

She continued working as an adviser, administrator and researcher on topics related to women and development for many organisations. She was principal officer of the United Nations (UN) Secretariat for the 1980 World Conference of the Decade for Women and later directed the UN HIV and Development Program in New York.

Elizabeth achieved a lot in a short time to encourage change for women. Her task was difficult because she faced opposition from male bureaucrats and politicians and distrust from a more radical section of the women's movement. Nevertheless, she was a pioneer for, and with, women.

Faith Bandler, AM

1974: Co-founder of the Australian South Sea Islanders United Council

Faith Bandler was born in Tumbulgum, New South Wales, on 27 September, 1920. Her father was a New Hebridean who had been blackbirded to work on the Queensland canefields. Faith later retold her father's story in the award winning novel *Wacvie* (1977) and *Marani in Australia* (1980, with Len Fox). Faith grew up in Murwillumbah on the New South Wales north coast and experienced prejudice but also had white friends.

Faith came to prominence when in 1956 she and Pearl Gibbs founded the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, a political body whose campaign for citizenship rights for Aborigines achieved success at the 1967 Federal referendum. In 1957, they launched a petition and began a ten-year campaign for a referendum to delete the 'discriminatory clauses' from the Australian Constitution. They were successful.

Faith remained active in the Aboriginal rights campaign as a member of the executive of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. She wrote *Turning the Tide: A personal history* (1989) about that period and also penned *The Time Was Ripe* (1983, with Fox) about her time in the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship. Faith refused the MBE that was offered her in 1976, but accepted an OAM in 1984.

With her gentle manner, incisive intellect and unswerving commitment to Indigenous rights and equity, Faith is an inspiration to our nation.

Dorothy Buckland-Fuller

1974: First woman to establish an Australian Migrant Women's Association

Dorothy Buckland-Fuller was born on 21 January 1922 in Port Said, Egypt, to Greek parents. She attended a Greek school in Egypt before going to the Lycee Francais Commercial, also in Port Said. She married three times and has one daughter.

In the late 1960s she studied for a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology at the University of New South Wales and gained her Master of Arts in 1972. She was the first Greek woman sociologist in Australia. She then tutored and lectured in Sociology for many years while becoming active in the community trying to assist migrant workers as well as migrant woman and their children. She was involved in the Women's Electoral Lobby in 1972. She secured funding through the International Women's Year to establish the Australian Migrant Women's Association in 1974, the first such association in Australia. Its aim was to bring together women from different ethnic communities as well as Australian-born feminists to exchange ideas and contacts. Franca Arena was one of the women involved before she branched out

to establish her own women's network in 1984. Arena and Dorothy were considered the 'matriarchs' of the migrant women's movement in New South Wales, which was the largest and best organised.

In 1977, Dorothy was appointed a part-time Commissioner with the New South Wales Ethnic Affairs Commission, responsible for women's issues. She had also been a migrant health educator with the New South Wales Health Commission working at Infant Health Centres and schools (1972-76). She made two documentaries in the 1970s on migrant children and migrant women. She has written numerous journal articles and conference papers on immigration, touching on the isolation of migrant women.

In 1982, she said, *'I believe in people; in the brotherhood of men; in 'global' economics, politics, etc.; in disarmament; in equality of opportunity for all people in Australia, regardless of sex or class; in working 'with' and not 'for' people; and in creating a better world for all children'.*



Marie Coleman
Marie Coleman

1974: First Chair of National Social Welfare Commission

Marie Coleman was born in Dubbo, New South Wales in 1933. She has been a journalist, public servant, educator, social worker, scriptwriter and consultant.

In 1969-70, Marie was a committee member of the planning group which established the Family Planning Association Victoria. Following the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972, Marie was invited by Minister William Hayden and Prime Minister Edward Gough Whitlam to Chair the newly created National Social Welfare Commission.

In 1975, Marie was invited by Minister Senator Margaret Guilfoyle and Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser to accept appointment as Director of the Office of Child Care in the Department of Social Security. As Director, she introduced the Family Support Program in Child Care.

Marie was the first woman to head a Commonwealth statutory authority, and was the first woman to hold, under legislation, powers of a permanent head of department, 1972.

She has been influential in the development of Australian social welfare primarily in areas of child care services, aged care services and health insurance.

Marie assisted in the development of plans for Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia, and was appointed Director, during her tenure at the Office of Child Care.

Marie is a member of the National Foundation for Australian Women and the Australian Reproductive Health Foundation.

Marie officially retired from the public service in 1995 but continues her *Canberra Times* column and her work as a consultant to advance the status of women, their reproductive health and Indigenous social development in remote areas.

Currently, she is involved in creating a Women's Archives Project to record the level, contribution to and achievements of women in Australian history and life.

Mary Owen, AM and Sylvie Shaw

Mary Owen & Sylvie Shaw

1975: Founding co-ordinators of the Working Women's Centres

Mary Owen was born on 8 February 1921 in Balwyn, Victoria. She was educated at Korowa Church of England Girls' Grammar School and Lauriston Girls' School. Following school she worked as a stenographer before marrying in 1942. She then had three children and worked in various secretarial jobs, including doing typing from home. She moved into sales and editing for the journal of the Association of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Draughtsmen of Australia, where she worked from 1963-75.

Mary became politically active in the late 1960s and was one of the early members of the Women's Electoral Lobby in 1972. Through its women's committee she co-founded with Sylvie Shaw the Working Women's Centre, which was an independent research and lobby group concentrating on women's issues in employment. They secured funding for it in 1975, International Women's Year, with a seeding grant and proceeded to set it up. Ongoing funding was received from the National Women's Advisory Council. They employed two part-time migrant liaison officers and focused on the particular needs of migrant women in the workplace.

Mary and Sylvie published a journal called *Women at Work* which had 6000 subscriptions in 1977 and 13,000 in 1982. The Women's Working Centre was absorbed into the ACTU in 1979 and made defunct in 1984.

Over the years, Mary has attended numerous conferences and sat on various committees related to women's employment and published many articles on the topic. She was a member of the Council for Civil Liberties, the Committee for Constitutional Change, Political Economy Group and the Australian Women's Education Coalition. She was a member of the La Trobe University Council 1983-90 and was appointed Deputy Chancellor in 1989.

Mary was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977 and the Order of Australia in 1984. In 1986, the first Mary Owen Dinner was organised in Melbourne to celebrate her retirement. It is now held annually with a female speaker and is attended by hundreds of women wearing purple, green and white.

Dr Anne Summers, AO



1975: First woman to publish a modern feminist history of Australia

Anne Cooper was born on 12 March 1945 at Deniliquin, New South Wales. She was educated at Cabra Convent in South Australia, then Adelaide and Sydney universities achieving a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and a PhD.

Anne came to prominence in 1975 with her feminist history of women in Australia, *Damned Whores and God's Police*. Anne was co-founder of the journal, *Refractory Girl* in 1972, as well as of the first women's refuge, Elsie's Women's Refuge, in Sydney. Anne wrote as a political journalist for the *Australian Financial Review* and *National Times*. In 1976, she won the Walkley Award for Print Journalism for her investigation into prison conditions in New South Wales. In 1982, she was elected first female president of the national press gallery.

Anne was First Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Status of Women in the Prime Minister's Department (1983-86). She was, with Senator Susan Ryan, Minister for Women's

Affairs, the architect of the Hawke government's landmark sex discrimination and affirmative action legislation. Anne went to the United States in 1987 and worked as Editor-in-Chief of *Ms* magazine, then Editorial Director of *Sassy* until 1989. Anne was adviser on women to Prime Minister Keating (1992-93). In 1993, she was appointed editor of the *Good Weekend Magazine* in the Fairfax Press, where she stayed until 1997. She has also jointly written *Her Story: Australian Women in Print 1788-75* (1980). In 1989, she was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to the media and to women.

In 1999, Anne published the first volume of her autobiography, *Ducks on the Pond*, and is working on the ensuing volumes.

Anne's writing is a lighthouse for feminist ideas and analysis in Australia.



Dame Margaret Guilfoyle, DBE

Margaret Guilfoyle

1976: First woman to be a member of a Federal cabinet

Dame Margaret Guilfoyle made history in Australian politics when she became the Minister of Education (1975) and Social Security (1975-80) in the Fraser Government in 1975. In those positions, and as Minister assisting the Prime Minister in Child Care Matters and later as Minister for Finance, 1980-83, she led many reforms – in particular for women. As Minister assisting in Child Care, she played a major role in ensuring that child care remained a priority in the Liberal Government, especially long-day care.

Margaret is highly respected in the community, and especially by women, for her fine example of how women can achieve in Australian politics and her leadership in areas as far-reaching as Deputy Chair since 1996 of the Victorian Infertility

Treatment Authority, the Mental Health Research Institute 1988, her involvement in University Council and Committees and as President of the Board of Management of Royal Melbourne Hospital 1993-95, member and Chair of the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the National Treasurer of the YWCA, 1968-76.

She has played a major role in encouraging the Liberal Party to pre-select more women as candidates for parliament and is seen as a mentor by many.

Currently Margaret is active on a range of national committees and in encouraging more Australian women to nominate and be accepted for the Orders of Australia.



Honourable Justice Elizabeth Evatt, AC

1976: First Judge of the Family Law Court in Australia

Elizabeth Evatt was born on 11 November 1933 in Sydney. Her father, Clive Evatt, was a QC and senior minister in post-war Labor governments and her uncle was also a lawyer, Leader of the Federal Labor Party and President of the United Nations General Assembly. She was brought up as a socialist yet she lived in a sheltered conservative environment. She attended Presbyterian Ladies College before studying law at Sydney University (LLB) and Harvard (LLM). She then worked in London for almost twenty years, first at the Bar from 1958 and then from 1968 for the English Law Commission where she developed an interest in law reform. In 1973, she was invited by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam to return to Australia as Deputy President of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, which became the Industrial

Relations Commission. She headed the Royal Commission into Human Relations (1974-77) which was established by the Federal Labor Government to inquire into broad issues of human relationships in response to rapid social and technological changes. She became the first chief Judge of the Family Court of Australia when it was established in 1976. She retained this role until 1988. From 1988-94, she served as President of the Australian Law Reform Commission and was also a member of the United Nations Human Rights Commission from 1993 to 2001.

In 1995, Elizabeth was awarded the Australian Human Rights Medal. She has international respect as a Human Rights lawyer.



Pat O'Shane, AM

1976: First Indigenous Australian woman barrister and the first woman to head a State government department in Australia.

Pat O'Shane was born on 19 June 1941 in Mossman, Queensland, to an Irish father and an Aboriginal mother. The eldest of five children, she grew up surrounded by poverty and prejudice. Her father, a wharfie, was active in the militant Waterside Workers' Federation. Her mother of the Kunjandi clan, was also active in women's and Aboriginal causes. They were determined that their children should receive an education so that they could make some positive changes to the world. When Pat was fifteen she became involved in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advancement League. She trained as a teacher at the Queensland Teachers' College in Brisbane where she was the only Aboriginal woman, and enrolled in a Bachelor of Education at the University of Queensland. In 1962 she married another activist, Mick Miller and they moved to Cairns where Pat was active in the Communist Party and Aboriginal political work. They had two daughters.

She taught in Cairns for a number of years but her life took a strange turn when her mother died tragically. Pat became mentally unwell and was in and out of psychiatric institutions. She went to Sydney and almost entered the Chelmsford Hospital for psychosurgery, however she consulted another psychiatrist, threw away her medication and began rebuilding her life. She had left her husband and was working as a typist to support her family. With the help of a study grant she began a law degree at the University of New South Wales which she completed in 1975. She was admitted to the bar the following

year, making her the first Indigenous person to achieve this status. She worked in Central Australia in the Aboriginal Legal Service before returning to New South Wales to work with the Mental Health Act Review Committee.

Pat then headed overseas before accepting a job in Canberra in the Office of Women's Affairs. In 1981, she was invited to head the new New South Wales Aboriginal Affairs Department, the first woman to head a government department in Australia, and inevitably she found herself in the crossfire of Aboriginal politics. It was an extremely difficult job which she managed until 1986. She found the bureaucracy to be male dominated and met a lot of resistance to change. However she was able to make some meaningful reforms, particularly in the area of housing, employment and education. From there she was appointed a magistrate, another first for an Indigenous person.

Pat has always fiercely defended the rights of woman and Indigenous people, and is not afraid to be outspoken on issues. In a paper titled 'Is there any relevance in the Women's Movement for Aboriginal Women?' she wrote, '*Sexist attitudes did not wipe out whole tribes of our people – racism did, and continues to do so.*' In January 1993 she dismissed charges against four women who had defaced a billboard featuring scantily clad women being sawn in half. She decided that the real crime '*was the erection of these extremely offensive advertisements*'. In 1995, she was appointed Chancellor of the University of New England, another first for an Indigenous woman.



Dr Helen Caldicott

1977: Founder of the Physicians for Social Responsibility group

Helen Caldicott was born as Helen Broinowski in Melbourne on 7 August 1938. She graduated in Medicine from Adelaide University and, in 1975, established the Cystic Fibrosis Clinic at the Adelaide Children's Hospital.

In 1971, Helen was angered by French nuclear testing in the Pacific so she began campaigning against nuclear weapons. In 1975, she worked with Australian trade unions to educate their members about the dangers of the nuclear fuel cycle, with particular reference to uranium mining.

In 1977, while living in the United States she founded the group, Physicians for Social Responsibility, which eventually boasted 23,000 members. These doctors are committed to educating people about the dangers of nuclear power, nuclear weapons and nuclear war. On trips overseas she began spreading the organisation to other countries. The international umbrella group, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. In 1980, Helen founded the Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND) in the United States. While there she was an

instructor in Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School and on the staff of the Children's Hospital Medical Centre until 1980 when she resigned to work full-time on the prevention of nuclear war.

Helen returned to Australia in 1987 and in 1990 ran for Federal Parliament as an independent. She narrowly lost on preferences to Charles Blunt, the leader of the National Party.

Helen has received numerous prizes and honorary degrees. She has written many articles and four books, including *Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do* (1979), *If You Love This Planet: A Plan to Heal the Earth* (1992) and an autobiography *A Passionate Life* (1996). She has also been the subject of several films including *Eight Minutes to Midnight* (1982) and a documentary, *If You Love This Planet* (1983). In 1995, she moved back to the United States to live on Long Island. She lectures, performs public speaking engagements, works in paediatrics and hosts a weekly radio talk show on WBAI (Pacifica).



Heather McKay, MBE

Heather McKay

1977: First woman to win the major international squash championship 16 years in succession

Heather was born on 31 July, 1941, at Queanbeyan, near Canberra. She was the eighth child in a family of eleven children. Her parents were sporty and encouraged their children to play tennis. She attended Queanbeyan High School where her sporting prowess was noticed and she was chosen to play hockey for Australia as a schoolgirl. She began playing squash in 1959 to keep fit for hockey. She was chosen to play hockey for Australia in 1967, 1969 and 1971, however there was no international competition at that time so she did not actually play. Throughout her squash career, she continued to play hockey.

Once Heather began competing she rarely lost. After playing socially for a few months she was encouraged to play in a New South Wales country championship where she won the women's and the junior's. She was spotted playing by the past president of the Australian Squash Association who encouraged her to enter the State championships. When she first played for the Australian title in 1960, she had only been playing for five months. She won the title in that first year, a title she retained until 1973. From 1962-76, she won the British Open championship, effectively the world titles,

every year. This remarkable achievement of sixteen successive titles is unlikely to ever be matched. In fact, through that period she did not ever lose a match. Commentators were lost for superlatives to describe her, but she is universally regarded as the best female squash player of all time for her style and sheer dominance of the sport. She trained against men. In 1967, she was voted ABC Sportsman (sic) of the Year.

The only disappointment was the pitiful prize money available in the sport, forcing her to leave the country and coach in Canada in 1975. She turned professional that year and won the inaugural women's world open title in 1976 and then again when she competed in 1979 at nearly 40 years of age. She then turned to racquetball, taking out the United States professional title in 1980, 1981 and 1984. She returned home to Australia in 1985 to coach at the Australian Institute of Sport.

In 1978, she published *Heather McKay's Complete Book of Squash*. In 1979, she was awarded a MBE. Despite her dominance of the sport, her achievements rarely attracted media attention and many people have not even heard of her.



1979: First woman to achieve maternity leave for women in the private sector

Anna Stewart worked hard to change the lives of Australian working families by helping women achieve a balance between the competing demands of work and family. She led the first campaigns in the 1970s for maternity and childcare facilities for workers in traditionally male industries such as car plants. She argued equal pay cases in industrial tribunals and raised awareness of sexual harassment as a workplace issue.

Anna worked with unions from 1974 until her untimely death in 1983 at the age of 35. She led by example, showing that women could combine a career and family. While working as a researcher in the Federated Furnishing Trades Society of Australia she spearheaded the successful Maternity Leave test case, which awarded leave to women in the private sector. At the time she was heavily pregnant with her third child. She also highlighted awareness of parenting issues when she breastfed her son in industrial relations tribunals. Anna set a precedent for many women who gained confidence from her example of combining motherhood with a career.

In 1975, she moved to the Victorian Vehicle Builders Federation and fought for childcare facilities in car plants. She was a foundation member of the ACTU Women's Committee established in 1977 and worked tirelessly on programmes to be incorporated into the Working Women's Charter.

In 1980, Anna became a Senior Federal Industrial Officer with the Municipal Officers Association (MOA). Anna initiated women's committees in most state branches of the union and developed strong policies in relation to women workers, particularly in the area of sexual harassment. She also developed an affirmative action policy which the MOA adopted in 1983. Anna was described as having a feisty personality, a jousting, acerbic wit and piercing intelligence.

Anna is remembered through the Anna Stewart Memorial Project which sponsors work experience places in unions. Over 1000 women have taken advantage of this project and many now represent their colleagues as union officials while others are simply more empowered in the work environment.



Deborah Wardley

1980: First Australian woman pilot to stake and win an equal opportunity case

On 2 August 1978 Deborah Wardley (nee Lawrie) lodged a written complaint with the Equal Opportunity Commission in which she alleged that Ansett Airlines had discriminated against her on the ground of sex in refusing to employ her as a commercial airline pilot. She claimed she had all the qualifications necessary: a commercial pilot's license, morse code rating, over 500 hours flying time, passes in the theoretical subjects necessary for a senior commercial pilot's licence, a Bachelor of Science and a Diploma of Education.

The Board ordered Ansett to accept Deborah in as a trainee pilot in their next round of intake. Ansett objected and began a costly legal case that went all the way to the High Court of Australia. Basically they did not want to take women on because they argued they were more expensive to employ than men, as when women become pregnant and have children they cease flying for long periods. However, it was to prevent such discrimination that the Commission was established.

Deborah won her appeal and began flying for Ansett in 1980. She believes that Ansett continued to try to discourage her from flying as there were always delays with the paperwork. They insisted she wear the same uniform as men, saying, '*You want to be a man, look like one*'. After about six months work as a pilot the men began to get used to her.

Deborah was a feisty red-head who firmly asserted her rights. By the time of the 1989 pilots' dispute Deborah was an experienced pilot with more than 6000 hours. Nonetheless, she felt the additional pressure to perform as a woman. She felt that her superiors would pounce on any mistake she made as grounds for dismissal.

Following the 1989 pilots' dispute, Deborah left Ansett and began flying with KLM, the Royal Dutch Airline.



Ita Buttrose, AO
Ita Buttrose

1981: First female editor of a major daily newspaper

Ita Buttrose was born on 17 January 1942 in Sydney. Her father was a journalist and she joined Australian Consolidated Press as a copygirl at age fifteen. When she was only 23, Frank Packer took her under his wing and appointed her Women's Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*.

Her rise within the industry was rapid and by 1972 she was the founding editor of *Cleo* a women's magazine. She was made a Director of Consolidated Press in 1974. From there she moved to Editor of the *Australian Women's Weekly* (1975-77). She attained a high profile in this role, particularly as a result of her TV advertisements for the magazine. Ita went on to become publisher of the Women's division of Australian Consolidated Press.

In 1981, Ita joined Rupert Murdoch's News Limited as Editor-in-Chief of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Telegraph*, the first woman to reach this position in Australia. In 1988, she started Capricorn Publishing and was Chief Executive (1988-94) and edited her own magazine, *Ita* (1989-90). She still maintains a high profile on national television and radio in Sydney and Melbourne.

Ita has used her influential position to promote many important causes such as the National Advisory Committee on AIDS (Chair, 1984-88) and the National Family Summit (Convenor, 1992). She has written two books, *Every Occasion: Your guide to modern etiquette* and *Early Edition: My first forty years*.



Dr Patricia Edgar, AM
Patricia Edgar

1981: Founding Director of the innovative Australian Children's Television Foundation

Dr Patricia Edgar is an Australian of great energy and vision who has made an enormous contribution to our society during her prominent and successful career.

Pat graduated from the University of Melbourne with a Bachelor of Arts, a Diploma in Education and a Bachelor of Education with Honours. Her involvement in television and the media began in 1967, when she commenced a Masters Degree in Film and Television at Stanford University. From Stanford, she proceeded to an academic posting at the University of Chicago, before returning to Australia. At La Trobe University, where she chaired the Centre for the Study of Educational Communication and Media, Pat combined teaching with study, and was awarded a PhD in 1974. In 1994, Pat was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters (Hon DLitt) from the University of Western Australia. Pat is currently Director of the Australian Children's Television Foundation.

Pat has published many significant and influential works, often challenging the complacency surrounding the impact of television on Australian society. Her pioneering work in the field of children's responses to television laid the groundwork for much of her success in producing quality television.

Her career came to a turning point in 1981 when she was appointed Task Force Director, responsible for setting up the Australian Children's Television Foundation based in Victoria. Since that time Edgar has been at the forefront in

the development of children's television both in Australia and overseas.

Pat has been the Executive Producer for a range of highly successful children's series including *Round The Twist*, *Crash Zone*, *Lift Off*, *Winners* and *Touch the Sun*. All of these productions have received a great acclaim, attracting a host of national and international Emmy Awards. Her programs are now viewed by children in over 100 countries around the world.

At the Chicago International Festival of Children's Films in 1986, the jury gave a Special Award which recognised the Australian Children's Television Foundation's outstanding achievement in developing quality films for the children's audience. This award resulted from the Festival's overwhelming response to the *Winners* series.

Pat's impact on the field of children's television will long be remembered. The quality of her work is a reflection of her belief that a successful program must capture not only the eyes and ears, but also the heart and emotions of its audience.

A major focus of Pat's work has been to bring educators and television producers together, and to provide an intellectual context for children's television. She has proven that quality television can encourage children to read, and sales of children's books related to her programs have reached thousands worldwide.

Dr Patricia Edgar, AM



In 1995, the Australian Children's Television Foundation hosted the 'First World Summit on Television and Children'. The Summit, held in Melbourne involved 637 delegates from 71 countries. The Summit has been followed by a number of regional summits in Asia, Africa and the Americas; and two world summits in London (1998) and Thessaloniki (2001). The Fourth World Summit on Media and Children will be held in Rio de Janeiro in 2004. This ongoing summit 'movement' brings together all those concerned in the development, production and transmission of children's audiovisual media around the world to debate issues, learn from each other and devise ways to co-operate and collaborate.

In Australia, Pat has served on a number of government committees including the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, the Australian National Commission of UNESCO, and the Council of the Australian Film and Television School.

John Morris, the former Chief Executive of the Australian Film Finance Corporation says about Pat: 'Patricia has the power of ruthless persuasion to her ends so that once she has decided something is worth doing, she will work relentlessly to make that happen and happily involve as many people as is necessary to achieve success without much regard for their sensibilities. This is the sort of single-minded determination to achieve results that only very great people have. Thank goodness she is nearly always right'.



Honourable Pauline Toner

1982: Victoria's first woman State Cabinet Minister

The Honourable Pauline Toner, Member for Greensborough, was born in Horsham, Victoria, and educated at the Brigidine Convent and at Melbourne and La Trobe universities. She was a most significant local and Victorian figure, who worked passionately for the Diamond Valley and Eltham communities.

She was also an important pioneer for women, being the first woman minister in the Victorian Parliament, as Minister for Community Welfare Services from 1982 to 1985, as well as first woman Shire President of Diamond Valley, in 1977.

She fought successfully for the establishment of the Diamond Valley Learning Centre, the Little Athletics Centre, the Eltham Copper Butterfly Reserves, St Helena

Secondary College, Diamond Valley Health Centre, Glen Katherine Primary School, new buildings for Yarrambat and Apollo Parkways primary schools, the bus route in Apollo Parkways and many other projects.

In her parliamentary career, from 1977-89, Pauline took particular interest in education, young people, community services and protecting the environment. Pauline was generous with her time and with community groups and her constituents and a mentor to many other women.

As the Minister for Community Services, one of Pauline's ground-breaking achievements was, after in-depth community consultation, the bipartisan revision of the Adoption Act.



Honourable Dame Roma Mitchell, AC DBE

1962 and 1991: First Australian woman Queen's Council and first Australian Woman Governor

Dame Roma Mitchell was born in Adelaide on 2 October 1913, to Harold and Maude Mitchell. Her father, a lawyer was sent to fight in France and he died in action when Roma was four. Her mother was untrained and struggled to support her two daughters, but it strengthened her belief in the importance of education, so she encouraged them to strive to reach university.

Roma was keen to be a lawyer so she studied hard at St Aloysius College and eventually won a scholarship to study law at the University of Adelaide. Even though her results were outstanding Roma was not confident of securing work in a law firm, however in 1934, at 21 years of age she found a job at an Adelaide city practice. She was subsequently admitted to the bar and for the next 28 years she represented clients in the courts. Roma specialised in matrimonial cases and eventually was promoted to partnership of a firm.

In 1962, she was chosen as the Australian representative at a United Nation's seminar on the Status of Women in Family Law. She was appointed a Queen's Counsel that year too. As a QC she supported change to legislation to enable women to sit on juries and advocated equal pay for equal work. In 1965, she was appointed Supreme Court Judge, an honour tinged with the sadness of having to leave the bar. After much arguing about how she should be addressed,

it was agreed to call her Justice Mitchell. From 1981 to 1986 she was the first Chair of the Human Rights Commission and she used this position to champion the rights of disadvantaged people such as Indigenous Australians.

When she retired in 1983 she was still the only woman judge of a Supreme Court in Australia. She was immediately appointed Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, thereby achieving another first for an Australian woman. From 1991-96 she served as Governor of South Australia and pushed the causes for the homeless and disadvantaged members of society.

In 1992, she achieved the highest honour for an Australian when awarded a Companion in the Order of Australia. In June 1999, Governor General Sir William Deane unveiled a life-size bronze statue of Roma in front of Government House. She also was made a Commander of the French Legion d'Honneur and Commander of the Victorian Order. She died of bone cancer on 5 March 2000. At her funeral Sir William Deane described her life as '...a life of wonderful achievements, including an incomparable number of nationally significant firsts, a life which blazed a trail for all Australian women, in law, in government, in academic life, in public and philanthropic service. A life which is truly an inspiration for all Australians'.



Matron Vivian Bullwinkel

Vivian Bullwinkel

1985: First woman trustee of the Australian War Memorial

Vivian Bullwinkel was born on 18 December 1915 at Kapunda, South Australia and educated at Broken Hill High School. After completing training at Broken Hill Hospital in 1941, she left for Malaya with the Australian Army Nursing Service.

Vivian served during the Malayan campaign and was among the final group of nurses evacuated from Singapore on 12 February, 1942, just three days before the island fell to the Japanese. She was on the *Vyner Brook*, a ship carrying evacuees, troops and civilians when it was attacked by Japanese aircraft and sunk off Bangka Island in the Straits of Sumatra. Vivian was among a party of survivors who swam ashore and surrendered to the awaiting Japanese. The men were shot and then the women, 22 nurses and one civilian, were marched into the sea and machine-gunned. Vivian was shot through the waist but was the only one who did not die. Thinking they had killed all the women, the Japanese left. Vivian let the waves wash her back to shore then hid in the jungle. There was a male who had survived when the men were bayoneted, Private Kingsley, but he too was badly wounded. They hid together for twelve days and Vivian nursed Kingsley and procured food from the local inhabitants. They eventually surrendered to the Japanese and Vivian was taken to a Prisoner of War (POW) camp where she was reunited with the nurses who had survived the sinking of the *Vyner Brooke*. She spent the rest of the war in a number of POW camps.

On her return to Australia Vivian was proclaimed a hero and was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal in 1947. She became an Associate of the Royal Red Cross. The citation said she had 'shown outstanding courage, selfless devotion to duty and a magnificent example'. She also gave evidence at the International Military Tribunal in Tokyo. Vivian helped establish the Melbourne Nurses Memorial Centre, which was designed for the welfare and advancement of nurses. She was also prominent in the push to move nursing education into universities and worked with the Victorian Nurses Wages Board to help improve salaries and conditions for nurses. She was matron of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital. She resigned on her marriage in 1977 to Colonel F.W. Statham.

In 1985, Vivian was appointed to the Council of the Australian War Memorial making her the first woman trustee of this institution. In October 1999, she donated her precious wartime diaries to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, the day before the dedication of the Australian Service Nurses National Memorial. When asked what enabled her and her fellow nurses to survive their terrifying ordeals she replied, '*Faith and a sense of humour. We all surprised ourselves.*'

Vivian passed away in hospital in Perth on 3 July 2000. She was honoured with a State funeral.



Heather Mitchell, OBE AM

Heather Mitchell

1985: First female President of Victorian Farmers' Federation and co-founder of Landcare

Heather Mitchell was born on 25 September, 1917, and educated at Albury High School. A trained nurse, she married Hopetoun pharmacist and fourth generation farmer Lester Mitchell in 1941. They had five children together and Heather Mitchell was involved in numerous organisations, including the Red Cross, Country Women's Association and Hopetoun High School Council.

Following the family's move to Horsham in 1968, Heather became involved in agricultural politics as well as the state Liberal Party's policy committee. Heather became the first female President of the Victorian Farmers' Federation in 1985. She was largely responsible for urban support for a Farmer's Fighting Fund during hard times. She was responsible for changing the perception of agriculture within the State Labor government leading to the creation of a Rural Affairs sub-committee of Cabinet.

In 1986, along with the Hon. Joan Kirner, Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Heather initiated Landcare, a community-based movement working to care for the land. Together, they created a highly autonomous network of groups from different walks of life which could work together to achieve land restoration, with departmental assistance. It proved to be a very practicable grass roots movement and, by 1990, 70 Landcare groups had formed. It then spread to other states until a National Landcare Program was developed. This was assisted by a historic partnership between the

National Farmers' Federation and the Australian Conservation Foundation. Bob Hawke declared the 1990s the 'Decade of Landcare'. By early 2000, there were over 4000 Landcare groups in Australia. Some groups consist of neighbouring farmers working together to solve common problems, while other more complex projects work to tackle problems at the catchment or regional level. Landcare was conceived by two women and it has created numerous opportunities for women's participation in land restoration. The Landcare model has been adopted in New Zealand, and is being introduced in the United States, Iceland, Canada and parts of Asia.

In 1989, Heather became Vice-President of the National Farmer's Federation, a position she held until 1990. She was a patron of the Victorian Bush Nursing Hospitals Association from 1991. In 1973, she was made a sister of the Order of St John of Jerusalem for her service to the Red Cross and St John's Ambulance. In 1979, Heather was awarded an Order of the British Empire for services to the Community. In 1991, she was made a member of the Order of Australia for services to primary industry. Heather was described as an inspirational speaker, and one of her philosophies was '*Don't talk about the problems, find the solutions*'.

She passed away after a battle with cancer on 12 November 1999. She is survived by her second husband the Honourable Gordon Carmichael, three daughters, one son and eight grandchildren.



General Eva Burrows, AC
Eva Burrows

1986: First Australian woman world leader of the Salvation Army

Eva Burrows was born on 15 September 1929 at Tighes Hill near Newcastle, New South Wales, to parents involved in the Salvation Army. In fact they named her after the daughter of the founder of the army, William Booth. She gained a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Queensland and committed her life to God for service as a Salvation Army officer at 22. She entered the William Booth Memorial Training College in London and also obtained a Post Graduate Certificate in Education at London University.

She went to the Howard Institute in Rhodesia to work as a missionary and educator for fourteen years. During that time she also obtained a Master of Education at Sydney University. Eva was given leadership roles and her interest was the training of African teachers and the development of school curricula.

In 1970, Eva was sent to London, first as Vice-Principal then as Principal of the International College for Officers. In 1975, she became the Leader of the Women's Social Services in Great Britain and Ireland, which gave her an insight into the lost and the lonely women of Britain's crowded cities. In January 1977, she began a ten-year period of territorial command, whereby she was the spiritual and administrative leader of the Salvation Army in various countries. She moved from Sri Lanka to Scotland to the Australian Southern Territory. In Australia, she initiated the 'Employment 2000' programme for unemployed youth.

On 2 May 1986, the High Council elected Eva to become General and world leader of the Salvation Army. Her variety of experience in the field made her well equipped for the role. She became the thirteenth general and only the second woman to hold this responsibility. Under the Army's constitution her five-year period in office should have ended in July 1991 however the movement's senior leadership requested Eva serve an additional two years. Accordingly she retired in July 1993. During her time as General she visited 62 countries and made contact with people at all levels of society. She met with Queen Elizabeth, the President of the United States and President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia. She initiated and implemented a far-reaching restructure of the administration of the movement internationally. After the collapse of communism she led the Salvation Army back into Eastern Europe.

She was honoured with a PhD from the University of Queensland in 1993, and was named Australian of the Year by *The Australian* newspaper. In 1994, she was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia. She retired to live in Melbourne, Australia, but is still much in demand as a public speaker. Perhaps her greatest accolade is being dubbed 'the people's General'.



Honourable Joan Child, AO

Joan Child

1986: Australia's first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives

Joan Child was born in Melbourne and educated at Camberwell Church of England Girls' Grammar School.

Joan was widowed quite young and had to work at all manner of jobs to keep her children fed and schooled. She joined and was active in the Union of Australian Women, particularly on equal pay and she became a key figure in the revival of the Labor Party in the seat of Henty in Victoria.

Joan first stood as a political candidate in 1972 and for the next two years worked as an adviser to the Foreign Trade Minister, Dr Jim Cairns, specialising in the manufacturing industry. In 1974, she won the seat of Henty and served 18 months as the first Labor woman in the House of Representatives in Victoria. She however lost this seat in Labor's landslide defeat in 1975. Joan then became the Executive Officer of

the Victorian State Colleges' Staff Association (1976-78). Joan also worked as private secretary to Clyde Holding (MHR for Melbourne Ports) and Dr Gerard Vaughan (MLA for Glenhuntly).

In 1980, Joan was re-elected to the House of Representatives for Henty. After being successful in the 1983 election, she was chosen as the Chair of Committees and Deputy Speaker, thereby becoming the first woman to occupy the Speaker's Chair in Australia. In 1986, she was elected Speaker in the House of Representatives, a position she held from 1986-89. Joan was also appointed as Australia's permanent delegate to the European Parliament.

Joan was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1990. She retired that year.



Janine Haines

Janine Haines

1986: First Australian woman to lead a political party

Janine Haines was born on 8 May 1945, in Tanunda, South Australia and educated at a number of schools in the country before completing a teaching diploma at Adelaide Teachers' College and a Bachelor of Arts at Adelaide University majoring in English and History. She began teaching in 1966 and got married in 1967. During the following decade she had two children and continued to teach while developing an interest in politics.

Janine arrived in politics via a strange route when she was chosen to fill a Senate casual vacancy, replacing the retiring Liberal senator, Steele Hall. In 1977, she became the first Australian Democrat appointed to Federal Parliament. She was committed to promoting women's issues, tax reform and education. She had to battle male prejudice both from within her own party and outside of it. When Senator Don Chipp retired from politics in 1986 it was thought that the Democrats could possibly be finished. However, when Janine

was elected to replace him she managed to increase support for the Party, especially appealing to women voters. By 1988, she was the most popular Australian political leader and had survived attacks from Democrat Senators John Siddons and David Vigor who subsequently left the party.

In 1989, Janine decided to 'go for broke' and contest the lower house seat of Kingston. Although she put up a good fight she was defeated and gave up her seat in the Senate as she had promised. Many believe that if she had contested the Liberal seat of Mayo, rather than the marginal seat of Kingston, she would have been successful and entered the House of Representatives.

In 1990, Senator Janet Powell became the new Federal Leader of the Party. In 1992, Janine published a book, *Suffrage to Sufferance: 100 Years of Women in Politics*.



Honourable Joan Kirner, AM
Joan Kirner

1986 and 1990: Co-founder of Landcare and first female Victorian Premier

Joan Kirner was born on 20 June 1938 in Essendon, Victoria. She went to Aberfeldie Primary School, Penleigh Presbyterian Grammar School and University High School. Following this she went to the University of Melbourne on a studentship and graduated with a BA, Dip. Ed.

Joan married, had three children and became active in Croydon North Primary School Mothers' Club from 1965-75. Joan became involved in the development of the Victorian Federation of State School Parents Clubs and the Australian Council of State School Organisations. She became President of the former from 1973-78. She was involved in numerous committees related to education during the 1970s.

In 1982, she entered state politics as Labor MLC for Melbourne West, continuing her efforts to shape education policies. Joan is a strong supporter of State education and also believes in the value of parent participation in education.

In 1986, along with Heather Mitchell, Joan Kirner initiated Landcare, a community-based movement working to care for the land. At the time, Joan was Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands while Heather Mitchell was President of the Victorian Farmers' Federation. Together they created a network of groups from different walks of life which could work together to achieve land restoration, with departmental assistance. It proved to be a very practicable grass roots movement and, by 1990, 70 Landcare groups had formed. It then spread to other states whereupon a National Landcare Program was developed. This was assisted by a historic partnership between

the National Farmers' Federation and the Australian Conservation Foundation. Bob Hawke declared the 1990s the 'Decade of Landcare'. By early 2000 there were over 4000 Landcare groups in Australia. Some groups consist of neighbouring farmers working together to solve common problems, while other more complex projects work to tackle problems at the catchment or regional level. Conceived by two women, Landcare has created numerous opportunities for women's participation. The Landcare model has been adopted in New Zealand, and is being introduced in the United States, Iceland, Canada and parts of Asia.

Joan moved to the Lower House in 1988 as the Member for Williamstown and the following year became the deputy leader of the ALP. Following John Cain's resignation in 1990, Joan became Premier but lost office in the 1992 elections. Carmen Lawrence had become Premier of Western Australia in the same year. Joan was the first woman Premier of Victoria and the second in Australia. In 1993, she resigned as leader of the Labor Party and was elected president of the Victorian branch of the ALP. In 1994, she resigned from her seat in parliament.

Joan continues to be active in community affairs, particularly in organisations related to women and educational issues. She is co-convenor of EMILY's List, a political, personal and funding network to elect more women into parliament. She is Chair of the Centenary of Federation's 'Women Shaping the Nation' Steering Committee.



Anna Booth
Anna Booth

1987: First Australian woman federal secretary of a union

Raised on Sydney's North Shore, Anna Booth attended Hornsby Girls' High School before studying for a Bachelor of Economics at the University of Sydney. Her father was an architect and her mother encouraged her in her endeavours.

After writing a thesis on the clothing industry, Anna joined the Clothing and Allied Trades Union as a researcher in 1977. She joined the Department of Trade for two years before returning to the Union. She counts one of her achievements as gaining the right to afternoon tea breaks for clothing workers in 1981. In 1987, she became the youngest and first female federal secretary of a union when she took over the amalgamated Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union. A few years later she was a member of the executive of the ACTU as joint national secretary of the TCFU and by 1991 was Vice-President of the ACTU until she resigned in 1995.

Through her work in the executive of the ACTU, Anna gradually moved more into the corporate sector.

In 1990, she was appointed to the board of the Commonwealth Bank. She attributes this appointment partly to the support of then Treasurer, Paul Keating. Anna also became a Director of NRMA Ltd. (1993-95). In 1995, she became Government Affairs Officer with the Sydney Harbour Casino. Anna was a board member of the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games from 1995 and Chairwoman of the Olympic Torch Relay Committee.

She then became spokesperson for the Property Council of Australia and as part of this, for its Shopping Centre Council. Part of this council's role is to create policy which will serve to improve landlord-tenant relations in these centres.

Among Anna's proudest moments was when she carried the Olympic torch down the steps of the plane onto Australian ground at Uluru and handed it to the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, to begin the torch relay lead up to the Olympic Games in Sydney, 2000.



Honourable Justice Mary Gaudron, AC

Mary Gaudron

1987: First female Justice of the High Court of Australia

Mary Gaudron was born on 5 January 1943, in Moree, New South Wales. She was educated at St Ursula's College in Armidale and Sydney University where she graduated with an LLB (Hons) and won the University Law Medal in 1965. Three years later she was admitted to the New South Wales bar.

In 1973, Mary successfully argued the equal pay case before the Arbitration Commission. She became a judge and from 1974-80 was Deputy President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. In 1979, she was appointed first chair of the Legal Services Commission of New South Wales.

In 1981, Mary became a Queen's Counsel and the Solicitor-General for New South Wales and in 1987 became the first woman Justice of the High Court of Australia.

She was a member of the full bench that handed down the historic Mabo decision in 1993. In March 1998, Mary was overlooked for the appointment as Chief Justice of the High Court. This broke with the tradition of appointing the next most senior judge to that position, previously broken only for political reasons. Fourteen years after her appointment she remains the only woman High Court judge in Australia.

Mary is an inspiration to women in law across Australia. She still speaks out occasionally and effectively on the need for equity for women in the legal profession and in the courts.

Dr Di Yerbury, AM

1987: First Australian woman vice-chancellor of a university

Di was born on 25 March 1941 in Devon in Britain where her mother worked as a barmaid. She was educated in the United Kingdom receiving a Law Degree from the University of London and a Graduate Diploma in Industrial Administration in Manchester. She then came to Melbourne where she became the first woman to receive a PhD in law in Australia, focusing her studies on industrial relations and industrial law.

She lectured in industrial relations at Monash University before becoming the Industrial Relations Assistant Secretary in the Department of Labour and Immigration. She became a foundation Professor of Management at the Australian Graduate School of Management. In 1984, she was made an Order of Australia and also was appointed General Manager of the Australia Council.

In 1987, she became the Vice-Chancellor and President of Macquarie University, making her the first woman in Australia to hold that position. She is also Professor of Management and Emeritus Professor of the University of New South Wales.

Di chairs the boards of several arts bodies, and has served on many boards and committees of education, government, business and arts organisations. She is a director of the Board of Citibank Australia. She is a member of UNESCO's National Education Network in Australia and President of IDP Education Australia which is the international development program of Australian universities.

Di has received numerous honorary degrees including Honorary Professor at the Beijing Normal University and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Western Sydney.



Kay Cottee, AO

1988: First woman to complete a solo, non-stop and unassisted voyage around the world

Kay Cottee was born on 25 January 1954, in Sydney. She attended Moorfield Girls' High School and Summerhay's Business College. Brought up in a sea-loving family, Kay was ocean racing at eleven years old. She founded a boat building and chartering business in order to earn enough money to achieve her dream of sailing around the world.

It became reality in 1988 when she became the first woman to travel solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world. It was a 189 day, 23,000 nautical mile voyage in which she set seven world records. It was the longest time spent alone at sea by a woman. She sailed in her twelve metre Cavalier 37 sloop *Blackmore's First Lady*. Kay suffered from a hole in the heart since birth which caused her to experience more tiredness than other sailors, but she still managed on only

six hours sleep per night during this voyage. She raised \$600,000 for the Life Education Centres, a drug education program. That year, she was named Australian of the Year and was thereafter much in demand as a motivational speaker. She worked for numerous charities, especially Life Education. Kay is also chairperson of the Australian National Maritime Museum Council.

After the voyage she found it difficult to be surrounded by people and threw herself into writing her story, *First Lady* (1988). She is said to be embarrassed and bewildered by all the awards, given that she simply set out to achieve a personal goal!

Kay is an inspiring public speaker and has become an important symbol for women of what they can achieve.

Dr Mary Bin-Sallick

1989: First Indigenous Australian woman to receive a doctorate

Mary Ann Bin-Sallick was born in Broome, Western Australia on 2 November, 1940. She remembers hunting and gathering, fishing and collecting bush tucker as a young child. When she was nine the family moved to Darwin. She considers herself lucky that her mother knew all her relatives and that she was not forcibly removed from her family. Her father drove a truck and her mother worked at a variety of occupations in order to send her daughter to Mercedes College in Adelaide for her secondary education.

In 1958, Mary commenced general nursing training at Darwin Hospital and in 1962 she became the first Aboriginal nursing sister to graduate from that hospital. She then married, had two children and continued nursing on an Aboriginal Reserve. She went to Europe with a friend and when she returned she separated from her husband and moved with her children to Adelaide. Unfortunately she could not find work and instead was forced to go on welfare to survive. They were living in near poverty so she decided to look for other work and began cleaning and washing dishes to make ends meet.

Finally, she found employment as a student counsellor to the Aboriginal Task Force at the South Australian Institute of Technology. As part of her contract she had to do an Associate Diploma in Social Work with a major in counselling.

Doing this course was very hard because of the unfamiliar terminology and language of sociology. Mary persevered and for four years worked full-time, studied part-time and raised her children. Eventually, in 1982, she became the co-ordinator of the whole program.

Once her children were older she became more involved in extra-curricular activities such as the National Museum of Australia, the National Committee Against Discrimination in Employment and Occupation and the National Aboriginal Employment and Development Committee.

In 1983, the Task Force mounted a Bachelor's Degree in Aboriginal Affairs Administration with a triple major: Public Administration, Australian Ethnology and Community Anthropology. Mary felt it odd that she was working to encourage students to pursue further education when she was not highly educated herself. With encouragement from Roberta Sykes and funds from the Aboriginal Overseas Study Award, she went to Harvard to do a Masters Degree. Sykes, through her Black Women's Action in Education Foundation, raised the money for her to continue to study for a PhD. She became the first Indigenous woman to receive a doctorate in 1989. She is using her degree to encourage others to become leaders in the movement and to break down racial barriers.

Gaby Kennard

Gaby Kennard

1989: First Australian woman to fly solo around the world

Growing up in the 1950s in Australia, Gaby Kennard was fascinated by the story of Amelia Earhart's journeys and disappearance on a world flight in 1937. Whenever she travelled on planes she loved the sensation, however it was not until she was a single mother of 34 years that she decided to pursue her passion seriously. She began lessons and gained a private license at the South Coast Aero Club, New South Wales in 1979. Her second husband, Nev, helped her gain a commercial license in 1984, a multi-engine command instrument rating in 1985 and a seaplane license in 1987. Unfortunately, during the next two years her marriage

broke down and with two young children and no spare money it seemed that her dream of flying around the world would never come to fruition.

However, Gaby persevered and in 1989 took off for a 99-day trip full of adventure. She endured instrument malfunctions, electrical storms, bureaucratic nightmares and engine failures, but through it all there were great rewards as well. She received a royal welcome in Atchison, Kansas, the home of Amelia Earhart, support from other female flyers and the satisfaction of achieving her lifetime goal.

Bernice Masterson



1989: First Australian woman assistant commissioner of police

Bernice joined the Victoria Police in September 1970. She initially worked out of Russell Street, but was moved to Heidelberg and Flemington before returning to Russell Street CIB in 1974. In 1975, Bernice achieved a 'first' when she was dux of the prestigious Detective Training School. The following year she was promoted to Senior Constable.

By 1977, she had been promoted to Sergeant but it took another decade for her to take the next step to Chief Inspector. From there she rose meteorically to Chief Superintendent

and was working in the area of personnel and in the planning and analysis division.

On 1 November, 1989, Bernice was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Victoria Police, the first woman in Australia to achieve this rank. Initially, she worked in the Research and Development Department but by 1991 she had been moved to the Internal Investigations Department. Bernice left the police force in 1992 when Chief Commissioner elect John Frane was not promoted to the post.



Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, AC

Lowitja O'Donoghue

1989: First woman chair of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Lowitja was born on 1 August 1932 at Indulkana, South Australia. Her mother was a Pitjantjatjara woman and her father was Irish. She was taken from her mother at two years of age and raised at the United Aboriginal Mission Home at Quorn, South Australia. She would not see her mother again for 33 years. Lowitja went to Unley Girls' Technical High School and then successfully fought to train as a registered nurse at Royal Adelaide Hospital. In 1956, she became the first Aboriginal woman to qualify as a nurse in South Australia. After spending a year nursing in India in 1961-62, she worked as a nurse with the Aboriginal Welfare Remote Communities for the next decade. She also was involved with the Aboriginal Police Liaison Committee and the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement.

In 1967, she joined South Australia's Department of Aboriginal Affairs and became Regional Director (1975-79).

In 1977, she became Foundation Chair of the National Aboriginal Conference. She chaired the Aboriginal Hostels Ltd (1982-90) and the Aboriginal Development Commission (1989-90). Lowitja went on to become the Foundation Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) from 1990-96 and went on to restructure Aboriginal bureaucracies. In 1993, she became a member of the Republic Advisory Committee and was also a key consultant in drafting the Federal Government's Mabo legislation.

She married in 1979, but her husband, Gordon Plumer Smart died in 1991. In 1984, Lowitja was named Australian of the Year in recognition of 'her enormous personal contribution in bridging the gap between Aboriginal people and the rest of the Australian community'.

Lowitja O'Donoghue is an outstanding Australian.

Emily Kngwarreye

1990: First Indigenous woman artist to have a major retrospective exhibition

Emily Kame Kngwarreye was born around 1910. She was raised in a traditional way in Alhalkere, north of Alice Springs. She was an Eastern Anmatyerre speaker, and was the adopted daughter of Jacob Jones, an important member of the Aywarre community. She first met white people when she was around nine years old. When she was young she worked as a stock hand on pastoral properties in the area. The land of the area inspires and is the subject of all her artworks.

In 1977, Emily was a founding member of the Utopia Women's Batik Group. At this time the community had recently regained title and returned to their lands. The Holmes a Court Collection sponsored similar projects and the Utopia artists became more widely known. Emily began painting, and her first acrylic works on canvas were exhibited in 1988. In 1989, she received the first Central Australian Aboriginal

Media Association Fellowship. She had the first of her solo shows in 1990, and in 1992 was awarded the Australian Artists Creative Fellowship. She had many other exhibitions in the first half of the 1990s, and gained great acclaim. Demand for her works grew, increasing her income substantially, which she distributed among kin. Her works are now in every major public, corporate and private collection in Australia, and in many overseas collections.

While she died on 2 September 1996, the 'fluent' exhibition, which included works by Yvonne Koolmatrie, Judy Watson and Emily, was Australia's official representation at the 1997 Venice Biennale. The same year the Queensland Art Gallery curated the major retrospective of her work, *'Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alhalkere – Paintings from Utopia'*.



Honourable Dr Carmen Lawrence

Carmen Lawrence

1990: First female Premier of an Australian state

Carmen Lawrence, currently the Shadow Minister for Industry, Technology and Innovation, Shadow Minister for the Status of Women in the Federal Labor Party, was born on 2 March 1948, in the small wheatbelt town of Morowa, north of Perth, where her parents were farmers.

She was one of seven children and the family were very poor. She was educated at the Dominican Ladies College in Dongara, Marian Convent in Morawa and Santa Maria College in Attadale. At the University of Western Australia, she was awarded a Bachelor of Psychology with first class Honours and a Doctorate of Philosophy. From 1969, she worked as a research assistant, university tutor, lecturer and research psychologist and worked in the Department of Health in research.

One of Carmen's early political activities was as a founding member of the Women's Electoral Lobby in 1972. This was a highly influential and well-organised group which lobbied government on issues such as equal pay, childcare, parental leave and abortion law reform. Her first foray into politics gave her an unfavourable impression.

In 1982, Carmen became Vice-President of the Subiaco-Wembley branch of the ALP. She unsuccessfully contested the Liberal seat of East Melville in 1983. In 1986, she was elected to the Legislative Assembly as the first Labor MLA for Subiaco for 30 years. In 1985, she became a member of the influential ALP Administrative Committee and a proxy delegate for the 1986 ALP National Conference. Somehow she managed to stay non-aligned to any factions during her career; she believed the faction system was 'undemocratic'.

After only two years in the Western Australian Parliament she became a member of the Dowding Ministry in February 1988, as Minister for Education and Aboriginal Affairs.

In February 1990, Carmen became Australia's first woman premier but, after a series of resignations and ministerial changes, found herself leading a government without a majority in either house of parliament. As Premier, she established the Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters (dubbed 'WA Inc.') whose findings proved devastating to her party. A year after losing the 1993 election Carmen resigned from State Parliament.

In 1994, she won the seat of Fremantle in the Federal Parliament and became the Minister for Human Services and Health and then Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women in the Keating Government. In 1994, Carmen Lawrence and Joan Kirner were instrumental in persuading the ALP to adopt a platform that would guarantee women preselection for 35 percent of winnable seats by the year 2002.

Carmen was the subject of a Royal Commission set up by the WA Court Government, over allegations of her role in what became known as the 'Easton Affair'. She was acquitted by the jury of all the charges. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate for the rights of woman, children, victims of abuse and the mentally ill. She has been involved in 'EMILY's List' which aims to support women aspiring to politics. She wrote a book on the woman's vote and has been outspoken on the way media portray women in politics.

Tracy Moffatt



1990s: First successful Indigenous Australian woman photographer and film maker

Tracy Moffatt was born on 12 November 1960 and grew up in Mount Gravatt which was a white working-class outer suburb of Brisbane. She was the second of five children, but her mother was not able to raise them herself. All except one brother was fostered out to an older white woman, and a friend of Daphne Moffatt's, Mrs Davidson, who they called 'Nan'. It was a busy and stimulating environment at the Davidson household as she was a key figure in the neighbourhood so all sorts of people came by for a chat. Every once in a while their mum would take them to see their relatives in Cherbourg, which Tracy felt was really home.

At school Tracy was only good at Art and English. After matriculation she worked hard to save money to hitchhike around Europe with friends for eight months. Following this she enrolled at Queensland College of the Arts. In second year she decided she wanted to major in filmmaking. She also studied painting, sculpture and photography. Occasionally she was politically active. She wanted to work with her community but was disappointed by the whole experience so decided to go independent. She moved to Sydney and made contacts and got some work as a photographer however she found the stints on the dole between jobs to be depressing.

Then she received a grant to make a short film, *Nice Coloured Girls* (1987) following which she became better known and was offered work with SBS-TV and Film Australia. She came into contact with many black radicals over this period and this inspired her to pursue her goals. She did some work for the Aboriginal Medical Service making health education videos and tried to make them in a way that people would watch them and learn. Her photography has also been well received. Her images were intricately composed, giving prominence to Aboriginality. She often placed herself in the picture.

In 1990, she made another short film, *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy*, which was more contrived and artificial yet with a stunning visual style. In 1993, Tracy produced her first feature film with a reasonable budget, *BeDevil*. She received a grant from the Australian Film Commission to script the film. It received an ambivalent critical response with its stylistic experimentation. It was only the second feature film to be directed by an Indigenous Australian, and the first to be released commercially.



Honourable Justice Deirdre O'Connor

1990: First female Federal Court judge in Australia

Deirdre O'Connor was born on 5 February 1941 in Sydney and educated at Bethlehem College, Ashfield and Sydney University. She commenced law studies in 1973 after working as a school teacher. She lectured in law at the University of New South Wales and then at Macquarie University. She also lectured at the Australian Film and Television School on media and law before being admitted to the New South Wales bar in 1980.

Deirdre was the Australian Government Representative to the UNESCO conference in Vienna on the teaching of human

rights in 1978. From 1983-85 she joined the New South Wales Law Reform Commission. Deirdre was chair of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal from 1986-90. She was frustrated by the inability of the Tribunal to control media ownership and described it as a 'toothless tiger'.

In 1990, she was made a Federal Court judge, the first woman in Australia to hold such a position. She was President of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (1990-94), President of the National Native Title Tribunal (1993-94) and President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (1994-97).



Professor Adrienne Clarke, AO
Adrienne Clarke

1991: First female Chairperson of CSIRO

Adrienne Clarke was born on 6 January 1938, in Melbourne and educated at Ruyton Girls' School and the University of Melbourne, where she majored in biochemistry. She gained her PhD then did post-graduate work at Sydney University and the University of Auckland. She also worked at the Baylor Medical School in Ann Arbor in the United States, where she was part of a Nobel Prize-winning team.

When she returned to Melbourne in 1969, she was married and pregnant with her third child and thought her career as a scientist might be over.

In 1981, she returned to the University of Melbourne to continue research and became Director of the Plant Cell

Biology Research Centre in 1982. Three years later she was given a Personal Chair in Botany. She is an expert on plant biology and her research has international recognition. She was a board member of the CSIRO from 1986 and was appointed to the Chair in 1991, a position she retained until 1996.

Adrienne was awarded the AO in recognition of her services to science. She has also been involved in business as a director in a number of companies including Alcoa Australia, AMP Society and Woolworths.

From 1997-2000, she served as the first woman Lieutenant Governor of Victoria.



Rabbi Aviva Kipen
Aviva Kipen

1991: First Australian woman to be ordained as a rabbi

Aviva Kipen was born in Melbourne and completed her Bachelor of Arts majoring in Jewish Studies and primary school teaching at Victoria College. She then worked for the Department of Education and in Jewish Day Schools. She was also a Sunday School religious program educator for the United Jewish Education Board. Aviva was secretary of a Jewish debating society for many years and the only Melbourne participant in the first international Young Leadership Mission to Israel.

Aviva moved to Brussels where she established a school of religion for expatriate English-speaking children and she became Vice-President of the European Board of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the umbrella body of Progressive Judaism. She moved to the United States as a young mother and in New Jersey she became a Vice-President of the synagogue Sisterhood of Temple Sinai Bergen County. In the United States she saw women serving their congregations as rabbis, a new phenomena.

When her daughter began primary school, Aviva applied for Rabbinic studies and completed her MA in Rabbinics. The following year, July 1991, she received her Rabbinic Ordination (semicha) from Leo Baeck College, London. She was the first Australian woman to become a rabbi. Aviva has served pulpits in England and New Zealand

as well as her home town of Melbourne, Australia. She is the Rabbi of the Victorian Union for Progressive Judaism and served Temple Beth Israel, St Kilda before becoming the sole Rabbi (part-time) of Bentleigh Progressive Synagogue. She specialises in the area of grief and frequently conducts funerals for the progressive funeral director, Beit Olam Jewish Funerals. Aviva also has a private practice in couple and family counselling, specialising in bereavement and loss.

Aviva has also been a teacher in the faculty of the Melton Adult Education Program, which is franchised from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and is now its co-ordinator. Aviva has been involved in various interfaith dialogues and conferences and has been the Executive Secretary of the Australian branch of the World Conference on Religion and Peace and Honorary Secretary of the Leaders of Faith Communities Forum. In 2001, she was appointed Program Director of the 'Sense of Place – Victoria's Multifaith Celebration' which brings to the stage representatives of Indigenous and religious communities.

Aviva is presently conducting doctoral studies at the Melbourne College of Divinity as its first Jewish student, and is researching the nature of prayers offered in the two Federal houses of Parliament and the relevance of the Christian texts to a multicultural population.

Evelyn Scott



1991: First female chair of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

Evelyn was born and grew up in a cane-farming town, Ingham, in far north Queensland. She is of Aboriginal and South Sea Islander descent. Her grandfather was 'black-birded' and brought out to Australia as a Kanaka slave to clear the land in Queensland for the sugar industry.

Growing up in Queensland she experienced some racism. In 1963, when she went to a shop buy a wedding dress she asked to try two on but was refused. She was told they could sell her a dress but it was against their policy to let her try it on. Even in 1999 in Sydney she was refused a taxi ride to the airport because of her colour. Back in 1963 she simply left and bought her dress elsewhere. In 1999, she took the driver to

the Anti-Discrimination Commission, she received apologies from the company and the driver and he lost his job.

Evelyn became chair of the Cairns and District Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation for Women and has been involved in Aboriginal affairs for over 30 years. She played an instrumental role in the establishment of Aboriginal Legal Services, Housing Societies and Medical Services in Queensland.

In 1991, she was appointed chairperson of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. This group worked for almost a decade before handing their final report to the government in December 2000. Evelyn is an outstanding Australian.



Janet Holmes a Court, AO

Janet Holmes a Court

1992: First woman member of the Australian Reserve Bank Board

Janet Holmes a Court was born in Perth on 29 November 1943. Her parents were socialists and as such were ostracised for their views during the Cold War. She won a scholarship to Perth Modern School and the University of Western Australia where she studied for her Bachelor of Science. In 1966, she married lawyer Robert Holmes a Court. In 1970, he became a businessman and built up an impressive land, property and mining portfolio. They had three sons and one daughter together. As the wife of a very powerful man she was invited to participate in many organisations. She devoted her energies to humanitarian causes and the Arts.

When her husband died in September 1990, Janet's life changed dramatically for she took over Heytesbury Holdings Ltd, making her the richest woman in Australia.

However, there was also a mass of debts to deal with so she began selling off many assets in order to better manage the company. It was a steep learning curve for her to successfully run such a large company. Down-sizing and restructuring were the order of the day. Heytesbury took over the John Holland construction group in order to boost earnings.

In 1992, under the Keating government, she was appointed as a member of the Reserve Bank Board, a position she held till 1997. She was the first woman to be a member of that institution, one which influences the quality of life of millions of Australians through its control of interest rates.

Janet is also chair of the Australian Children's Television Foundation. She is a strong supporter of the Arts, Australian Theatre, a republic and Indigenous people.

Louise Sauvage, AM

Louise Sauvage

1992: First internationally successful Australian female wheelchair athlete

Louise Sauvage was born on 18 September 1973 with a spinal condition known as myelodysplasia. As a child she gave up using crutches and callipers to walk and moved into a wheelchair. She began wheelchair sports at the age of nine and competed successfully until 1987. Then she underwent spinal surgery which forced her to take a two-year hiatus from competition. When she returned in 1989 she decided to focus on track and road racing. Sponsorship from the Australian Institute of Sport enabled her to compete internationally. Her other major sponsor is Invacare who make her wheelchairs.

Louise entered her first major road race in 1992 before setting off for the 1992 Barcelona Paralympics. She won three gold medals and one silver medal there. That year she was given the Order of Australia medal. At the 1996 Atlanta Olympic

Games she won five gold medals, including one for the demonstration 800 metre event at the main Olympics. She competed in the 42 kilometre Boston Marathon in 1997 and won. She repeated that achievement in 1998 and 1999. She holds numerous individual world records. Louise has been named Australian Paralympian of the Year in 1994, 1996, 1997 and 1998. In 1999, she won the World Disabled Sportsperson of the Year award at an inaugural international sports gala in Monaco.

Louise moved from Perth to Sydney to prepare for the 2000 Paralympic Games. At the Sydney 2000 Olympics she competed in an 800 metre exhibition event taking out another gold medal in front of her home crowd.



Gai Waterhouse

1992: First woman to gain a licence from the Australian Jockey Club

Gai Waterhouse is a track legend in her lifetime. Born in 1952, the daughter of famous trainer, Tommy Smith, she grew up with racing in her blood and a bubbly and determined personality to go with it.

Gai was educated at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Rose Bay, and was an actress, a journalist and stable foreman. She had to fight for her place in a very male world taking on a Supreme Court battle to win her license from the AJC in 1992.

She is now a star personality with her top flight horses at all major race events, recently training the winner of four consecutive Doncaster Handicaps, of the Golden Slipper in Sydney and the winner of The Victoria Derby, *Nothin Leica Dane*.

She is passionate about the sport of racing and being a first class trainer.

Michelle Grattan

1993: First woman editor of a major daily broadsheet in Australia

Michelle Grattan was born on 30 June 1944, and educated in Melbourne at Ruyton Girls' School, and then Taylor's College.

She always wanted to be a journalist but when she missed out on a cadetship she enrolled to study political science at the University of Melbourne. She tutored in Politics at university before joining *The Age* as a journalist in 1970 where she worked under editor Graham Perkin. It was an exciting and dramatic time to be a political journalist. By 1976, she was *The Age's* chief political correspondent. She was the first woman in Australia to hold such a post for a major metropolitan newspaper, and she retained the title for seventeen years. She won respect from politicians for her meticulous

reporting and integrity. Her work rate was prodigious. She won the 1988 Graham Perkin award for Australian Journalist of the Year.

In 1993, she was appointed editor of the *Canberra Times*, the first woman to become editor of a major daily broadsheet in Australia. She had been working in the Canberra Press Gallery for 21 years by that stage. By 1995 she had returned to *The Age* as political editor before moving to the *Australian Financial Review* in 1996.

Michelle is now the political correspondent for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and one of the most highly respected print and radio journalists in Australia.

Helen Lynch, AM



1993: First woman chief general manager of a bank in Australia

Helen Lynch was born on 12 April 1943 in Charleville, Queensland. She began her banking career at fifteen in the Charleville branch of the Bank of New South Wales. By 1978 she was Branch Manager of the Rockingham branch and became Regional Manager of City South in Sydney's central business district by 1984. In 1989 she was made General Manager for South Australia and Northern Territory.

As General Manager of Westpac's 'change program' she played a key role in the rebuilding of the bank after its \$1.56 billion loss in 1992 resulting from poor quality loans. In 1993, Helen became Chief General Manager of Corporate Affairs. No woman had ever gone higher in management of an Australian bank before.

In 1994, Helen resigned to pursue a second career as a professional company director. She is now non-executive Director of Coles-Myer, Southcorp, Westpac and OPSM Protector. Helen chairs the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia and is chairperson elect of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In 1990, Helen was named as the *Bulletin*/Qantas Businesswoman of the Year. She was made a member of the Order of Australia in 1994 for services to banking and finance. She is also involved with numerous arts and charity organisations.



Dr Simone Young

Simone Young

1993: First female Australian conductor to achieve international success

Born in Sydney on 2 March 1961, Simone studied at the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music, joining the Australian Opera in 1982. She made her conducting debut at the Sydney Opera House in 1985 performing *The Mikado* and the *Little Mermaid*. She joined the Cologne Opera in 1987 conducting a broad repertoire before joining the Berlin State Opera in 1993.

She made important debuts in Berlin and Vienna in 1992 and 1993, especially as the first woman conductor at the Vienna State Opera as well as the Bastille in Paris. She made her British debut in 1994, conducting *Rigoletto* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. She conducted a few more operas there before making highly acclaimed performances of *Elektra* at the Bavarian State Opera. In 1996, she travelled to New York where she performed *La Boheme* at the Metropolitan Opera followed by other successful operas. In 1997, she conducted *Macbeth* at Houston Grand Opera and in 2002 she will work with the Los Angeles Opera for the first time. She also has many engagements booked at the Vienna State Opera, the Berlin State Opera and Covent Garden.

Simone has performed in concerts all around the world including with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, the

Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, the Maggio Musicale in Florence, the ORF Radio Orchestra Vienna and the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Japan. In October 1998, she appeared with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to great acclaim. In 1999, she became chief conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

In between her overseas engagements Simone returns regularly to Australia. She conducted *Elektra* for the Sydney Festival in 2000. This year, 2001, she was appointed Opera Australia's music director. Some of her productions for this company have been *Tannhauser* in 1998 and *Falstaff* and *Don Carlos* in 1999. She has also conducted numerous orchestras around the country. She recorded *Strauss Songs* with the State Orchestra of Victoria on the Melba Recording label in 2000.

Simone won the Australian Mo Award in 1996 for 'Classical Performer of the Year'. In 1998, she was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Music from Monash University and has been honoured with the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from France. In 1987, she was Young Australian of the Year.



Jennie George
Jennie George

1995: The first woman President of the ACTU

Jennie George was born on 20 August 1947, at a displaced persons' camp at Trani, Italy, shortly before her Russian parents migrated to Australia. She attended Burwood Girls' High School in Sydney and won a scholarship to Sydney University. While studying Arts there, she joined the Eureka Youth League and participated in anti-Vietnam War protests.

From 1969, she worked as a secondary school teacher and became involved in the Teachers' Union from 1973. She became General Secretary of the New South Wales Teachers Federation from 1980-82 and later, President from 1986-89. She then became Assistant National Director of the Trade Union Training Authority (1989-91) and from

1991-95 was Assistant Secretary of the ACTU. She was the first woman to be elected to the ACTU Executive in 1983 and pushed such issues as childcare and the equal representation of women in politics and trade unions. In late 1995, Jennie was appointed to the presidency of the ACTU. She held that position from 1996-2000, the first female leader of the ACTU. On retiring she recalled her greatest achievement as the management of the Patrick stevedoring dispute '*because it was about the heart, soul and survival of the union movement*' (*The Age*, 8 March 2000).

Jennie will contest the seat of Throsby for Labor in the 2001 Federal election.



Professor Suzanne Cory, AC

Suzanne Cory

1996: First female Director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research

Suzanne Cory was born in Melbourne in 1942. Her parents encouraged her to pursue whatever career she desired and gave her confidence in her ability. Although she liked writing she had been inspired when she saw television for the first time, as the first program she saw was one on astronomy by Professor Harry Messel. She tried to combine an Arts and Science degree at the University of Melbourne however there were too many clashes so she opted for science in her second year. She became interested in biochemistry and soon was working in one of her lecturer's laboratories, researching and working towards her Master's Degree.

Once completed, Suzanne set her sights on a doctorate. She discovered that most of the scholarships were only available to male applicants. She did find one that inadvertently did not specify sex so she applied for it and won. She had decided to go to Cambridge as it housed one of the world's most successful biochemistry laboratories. For her PhD thesis, Suzanne determined the structure of a particular transfer RNA. She enjoyed working in an exciting, competitive, stimulating and hard-working environment.

At Cambridge, Suzanne met her scientist husband, Jerry Adams and they went to Switzerland together to complete postdoctoral studies at the University of Geneva. They worked together and have done so ever since. They then set their sights on the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne because it had a world-class research environment. However

there was no work being carried out in molecular biology at the time so they had to convince the Director, Sir Gustav Nossal, that it would be worth his while taking them on. Luckily he recognised the potential of their work, particularly in the field of immunology. The outcome of their research led to the cloning of the first mammalian genes in Australia. Their work was controversial and dangerous so they set up strict regulations about laboratory designs and procedures to ensure the safety of their experiment. In 1981, they turned their attention to the nature of genetic accidents that cause cancer. They have made numerous ground-breaking discoveries along the way. Next, they began the ambitious Human Genome Project, which aims to map and identify every single one of the 75,000 genes on our individual chromosomes and to determine their structure.

In 1996, Suzanne also became the first woman Director of the Institute. Suzanne has received numerous honours. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and the Royal Society of London and was a co-recipient of the 1998 Australia Prize and the 1998 Charles S. Mott Medal of the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation, one of the most prestigious awards for cancer research. In January 1999, she was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia. In 2001, she became the first Australian woman to win the prestigious L'Oreal-UNESCO Women in Science Award. This award celebrates the work of leading women scientists around the world and provides significant funds for the continuation of their research.



Betty Churcher, AO

1996: First female Director of the National Gallery of Australia

Betty Churcher was born on 11 January 1931, in Brisbane. She was good at drawing and wanted to be a professional artist. She won a scholarship to study painting at the Royal College of Art in London. She also studied Art History at the Courtauld Institute in London, where she attained a Master of Arts. While there she met and married Australian artist, Roy Churcher. On her return, she taught Art at secondary schools before becoming an Art lecturer at various tertiary institutions. In 1982, she became Dean of the School of Art and Design at the Phillip Institute of Technology in Victoria. In Melbourne, Betty chaired the Australia Council's Visual Arts Board (1983-87) before being appointed as the Director of the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth. She was the first woman to head a state gallery. In 1990, she replaced

James Mollison as the Director of the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra, another first for a woman. She built a reputation for bringing 'blockbuster' art to Australia such as the 1992 Rubens and the Italian Renaissance exhibitions which made a profit of more than \$1 million. She also presented 'The Age of Ankor' which showed 35 stone and bronze sculptures from the National Museum of Phnom Penh. *'My aim was for people who couldn't travel or would never travel to places where those great works could be seen, to have access to the art.'* Betty is said to have broadened the gallery's appeal through her 'public access' policy. Her publications include *Understanding Art* (1974) and *Molvig: the Lost Antipodean* (1984).



Nova Peris, AM
Nova Peris

1996: First Indigenous Australian to win an Olympic gold medal

Nova Peris was born in the Northern Territory on 25 February 1971 and raised in Darwin. Her father's family came from the Muran clan, traditional owners of Kakadu and Arnhem land. Her mother's family originally came from the Moola Bulla people in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, however their plight is one of two generations of stolen children. Her grandmother was taken when very young to be a servant in a white family. Her mother was taken to Melville Island off Australia's north coast and grew up in a mission there.

Her mother taught her that 'you never get nothing for nothing, and if you want something, get off your bum and have a go'. Her stepfather, who came into their lives when she was ten or eleven years old, was a policeman and he taught her to be disciplined in her endeavours and to not steer away from challenges. Nova was a gifted young athlete but gave up athletics when she made the national schoolgirl hockey team as a thirteen year old.

Nova first made the Australian Women's Hockey Team, the Hockeyroos, in 1992. By that time she already had a young daughter, Jessica. She remained in this highly successful team

until 1996 when they won the gold medal at the Atlanta Olympic Games. Nova was the first indigenous person to win an Olympic gold medal and also the first Northern Territory athlete. Following this she decided to put down her hockey stick and return to track and field, her first love. She trained hard and won the Commonwealth Gold medal in the 200 metre sprint and in the 4 x 100 metre relay.

Her proudest moment was being invited to run the first leg of the Olympic torch relay for the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Australia's Governor-General, Sir William Deane, handed the torch to one of seven traditional land owners present at the ceremony at Uluru and they passed it from one to the next until it reached Nova who ran barefoot out of respect for the land. She ran the one mile leg with her daughter by her side. While she competed admirably in the Games, she did not make the 400 metre final, and, did not win a medal in the 4 x 400 metre relay.

Nova is also a self-trained artist and is achieving some recognition for her work in that field. She was the 1997 Young Australian of the Year. She also was involved as a Republican delegate for the Constitutional Convention.



Senator Margaret Reid
Margaret Reid

1996: First Australian woman President of the Senate

Senator Margaret Reid was born on 28 May 1935 at Crystal Brook, South Australia. She graduated LLB in Adelaide and worked as a barrister and solicitor.

Margaret first became a senator in May 1981, representing the Liberal Party in the Australian Capital Territory. She was re-elected in 1983, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996 and 1998. She was Deputy Government Whip (1982-83), Deputy

Opposition Whip (1983-87) and Opposition Whip in the Senate (1987-95). In May 1995, she became the Deputy President of the Senate and Chair of Committees. In August of the following year she became the first female President of the Senate in Australia.

Margaret has represented Australia at numerous overseas conferences during her career.



Brigitte Muir

1997: First Australian woman to climb Mt Everest

Brigitte Muir was born in Belgium in 1958. As a teenager she discovered 'caving' and decided outdoor adventures were more fun than watching television. Since 1976, she has climbed and bushwalked all over the world. En route she met and married Jon Muir who was from Woolongong, Australia and who shared her passion for adventure. They moved to Australia where she became an Australian citizen.

They began exploring the Himalayas together and pioneered an extremely difficult new route on the West Pillar of Shivling (6500 metres) and conducted nine expeditions to 8000 metre peaks. In 1988, Brigitte started a quest to climb the highest mountain on each continent. Four years later Brigitte and Jon started a company, Adventure Plus, as a way for her to reach the remaining two summits on her list, Mt Everest and Mt Vinson on Antarctica. They lead treks and climbs in Australia and overseas, as well as giving motivational talks

and selling books. The company is based in their home in Namituk in Victoria near the Grampians.

Brigitte completed the 'Seven Summits' in May 1997 when she became the first woman to scale Mt Everest. It was her fourth attempt. She carried two Australian flags and planted one on top of the mountain. When she returned home she said, *'I was thinking about how beautiful the world is and how lucky we are here to belong in Australia, which is really a unique place, and how we really should look after it'*.

Her next goal was to become the first woman to walk to the South Pole, following which she plans to pioneer a new route to the South Pole. In November 1998 she published an autobiography *The Wind in My Hair*. She was awarded the Order of Australia in 2000 for her services to mountaineering.



Robyn Archer, AO
Robyn Archer

1998: First woman to direct a major state festival of the Arts

Robyn Archer is a singer, writer, songwriter, director and lately artistic director of festivals. She has forged a singularly diverse career which not only earned her a prestigious international reputation as a foremost interpreter of the songs of Brecht, Weill and Eisler, but combined the work of a singer/songwriter/theatrical creator with strong positions on social, sexual and arts politics. She has performed on all the main stages throughout Australia and in as many unlikely spots on the globe (Rangoon, Bogota, Nullumbuy, Visby, Chiang Mai) as well as in the expected centres of London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin and New York.

Robyn was also the Chair of the Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council, a position indicating her rare coupling of a high degree of professional excellence with continuing concern for access and process. Robyn made history with the *Menstruation Blues* (1974), and with her appointment to the National Festival of Australian Theatre (1993-95) became the first woman in such a position in a major Australian Arts festival. She went on to be the first woman Artistic Director in the 40-year history of The Adelaide Festival of Arts (1998 and 2000) in her hometown,

and then to create 'Ten Days on the Island', Tasmania's inaugural international Arts festival (2001).

In all these positions, Robyn continued to support and enable the creation of new Australian work and to advocate it to audiences and presenters in Australia and throughout the wider world. She is currently the Artistic Director Designate of the Melbourne International Festival of Arts (2002-03), Adviser to the artistic program of 'Ten Days on the Island' (2003) and continues to sing, write and direct.

Robyn is a member of the Board of Directors of ISPA, Ambassador for the Crows football team, Member of the Australian International Cultural Council, Trustee of the Don Dunstan Foundation, Trustee of the Adelaide Festival Centre.

She has also been awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia, Chevalier du l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and an Australian Creative Fellow (1992-94).

Robyn is, in every sense of the word, a star.



Sue Natrass
Sue Natrass

1998: First woman Artistic Director of the Melbourne International Festival

Sue Natrass was born in Horsham, Victoria, on 15 September 1941 and brought up on Longerenong Agricultural College. After attending a one-teacher primary school, then Horsham High School, Sue was sent to board at Korowa Anglican Girls' School. In 1959, she commenced a Commerce degree at the University of Melbourne where she was distracted by the very lively student theatre of the time.

Although she was still a student, entrepreneur Clifford Hocking, somewhat reluctantly at first, employed Sue in 1962 as lighting board operator for Barry Humphries' first one-man show, *A Nice Night's Entertainment*, at the Assembly Hall in Collins Street, Melbourne. No woman had filled this role in the professional theatre previously.

In 1963, Sue was offered a job by the Union Theatre Repertory Company (later known as the Melbourne Theatre Company) as stage manager and electrician for a country tour. Later that year she joined the Tivoli Circuit and became the first female in Australia to stage-manage major musical productions. This meant that from the age of 22 she was managing performers and large, all male crews, and taking responsibility for the on-going artistic standards of the productions on which she worked both in Melbourne and the other cities of Australia and New Zealand to which they toured.

In 1966, Sue moved to J.C. Williamson Theatres Limited where, over the ensuing seventeen years, she was the first woman in

Australia to work in the following roles – Production Manager, Lighting Designer, Executive Producer and General Manager of a commercial theatre company. In these positions Sue was able to employ women, for the first time, in technical areas of the commercial theatre industry.

Late in 1983, Sue joined the staff of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust as Operations Manager, became Deputy General Manager in 1988 and General Manager in 1989. These positions were firsts again for a woman in Australia. While General Manager she was responsible for setting up the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres a body which has improved relationships and enhanced co-operative cultural development in the region.

She was the first woman to be appointed Artistic Director of the Melbourne International Festival, for the festivals of 1998 and 1999, and joined Millmaine Entertainment as Executive Director Producer Services in 2000.

Sue has sat on a large number of boards, foundations, trusts and committees in the areas of the Arts, health, leadership, education, international affairs, philanthropy, business and women's affairs. She was awarded the 1999 Victoria Day Award for Community and Public Service and the 1996 St Michael's Medal for Service to the Community.

Jane Fullerton
Jane Fullerton

1999: First woman Director General of the National Library

Jane Fullerton has worked at the National Library of Australia since 1968 in a number of areas including films, cataloguing, indexing and national bibliography. She was Assistant Director General in charge of the Collections and Reader Services Division prior to becoming Deputy Director General. In 1999, she became Director General of the Library, the first woman to be appointed to the position. Jane was the driving force behind the Library's development of the PANDORA Archive of Australian Digital Publications, and has

continued to inspire the Library's work in this area. Under her leadership, the Library is now embarking on a series of new digital initiatives including the Picture Australia service and a major new digitisation program.

Jane was recently elected Chair of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries. This is the first time that this prestigious position has been held by an Australian.



Air Commodore Julie Hammer

Julie Hammer

1999: First woman Air Commodore in the Australian Defence Force

Julie Hammer completed her schooling in Brisbane in 1971, placing eighth in the Senior Public (Matriculation) Examination in Queensland. She joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1977 after completing a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Physics at the University of Queensland.

Julie was initially an education officer but transferred to the Engineer Branch in 1981 shortly after it was opened to women. She was a staff member at the Engineer Cadet Squadron where she was instructed in electronics at the School of Radio. She managed maintenance on F-111, Iroquois, Chinook and Canberra aircraft at Amberley and worked in the engineering management of avionics equipment for the RAAF fleet. In June 1985, Julie was promoted to Squadron Leader.

Julie then went to the United Kingdom to study at RAF Cranwell where she completed a Master of Science in aerosystems engineering. In 1987, she returned to Canberra and served as technical intelligence analyst in the Joint Intelligence Organisation. Following this she worked in a major electronic warfare project, first as project engineer, then after promotion to Wing Commander, as a project manager. In 1992, she became Commander of the Electronic Warfare Squadron in Adelaide. She was the first woman to

command an operational unit in the RAAF and was awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross for that command.

In 1996, Julie returned to Canberra and completed a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Studies at the Joint Services Staff College. She was promoted to Group Captain and became Project Director of a number of command and control projects. In 1999, she was the only Australian student at the prestigious Royal College of Defence Studies in London, completing a course in strategic and international studies. When she returned she was promoted to Air Commodore, becoming the first woman in the Australian Defence Force to be promoted to One Star Level and the highest ranked woman. She is the Director General Infrastructure Services and is responsible for the delivery of the Defence's Information Technology and Transfer services. Her branch manages computer mainframe services as well as central, regional and overseas support for both administrative and operational computing systems. It is also in charge of the corporate communications networks and systems for voice and data including cryptographic support.



Cathy Freeman

2000: First Indigenous Australian to win an individual Olympic gold medal

Cathy Freeman was born on 16 February 1973 in Mackay, Queensland. As a child she showed potential as an athlete and won a scholarship to a boarding school and was able to have professional coaching.

Cathy first won gold at the 1990 Commonwealth Games in the 4 x 100 metre relay. That year, she was awarded the Young Australian of the Year and the following year she was the Aboriginal Athlete of the Year. In 1992, she became the first Aboriginal track and field athlete to represent Australia at an Olympic Games. She came seventh in the 4 x 400 metre relay. Cathy rose to prominence at the 1994 Commonwealth Games where she won two gold medals, in the 200 metres and 400 metres. She breached protocol by brandishing the Aboriginal flag on her victory lap, but won many admirers and became an overnight celebrity. The flying of these flags on the victory lap at the Commonwealth Games has been a lasting symbol for reconciliation in Australia.

At the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games Cathy set a Commonwealth record and won a silver medal in the 400 metres, coming second to Marie-Jose Perec in a great race. Cathy then won the 400 metres at both the 1997 and 1999 World Championships, thereby stamping her authority on that event. In 1997, she was named Australian of the Year. The Sydney Olympics were billed to be a showdown between Perec and Freeman in the 400 metres but Perec pulled out at the last minute.

The Sydney Olympics marked the highpoint in Cathy's illustrious career. She was given the prestigious honour of lighting the cauldron, in an opening ceremony that celebrated Australia's great female athletes. Shirley Strickland (de la Hunty), Raelene Boyle, Dawn Fraser, Betty Cuthbert and Shane Gould passed the torch around before handing it to Cathy dressed in a shimmering white body suit. Despite all the hyperbole surrounding this dramatic opening, Cathy managed to maintain her focus and won gold in the 400 metres, the first Indigenous Australian woman to win an individual gold medal. It was also Australia's 100th Olympic Gold medal. She also made it to the 200 metre final where she came seventh and ran fifth in the 4 x 400 metre relay in a new Australian record time.

In 2001, Cathy decided to take a break from competition, stating that she had lost the hunger. Although she made an overt political statement in 1996 she refrained from being outspoken on Indigenous issues, preferring to let her actions speak for themselves. Despite her great success, Cathy remained a very natural and humble person and one of great dignity. Cathy has proved to be a great role model for all young Australians.



Margaret Jackson

Margaret Jackson

2000: First woman Chair of QANTAS

Margaret Jackson graduated in Business from Monash University in 1973 after completing her schooling at Warragul High School.

She is one of the first women in Australia to hold multiple board positions with major companies.

From January 1993 to June 2001, Margaret was a highly successful Chair of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) with its very effective advertising campaign to lower the road toll. At the same time she was a Director on the Boards of BHP, Pacific-Dunlop, Playbox Theatre, Australian Wool Corporation and St Vincent's Medical Research Institute.

Currently Margaret is the first woman Chair of Australia's major commercial airline, QANTAS, Director, ANZ Banking Group, Deputy Chair of People Telecom Ltd and Director of Billabong International.

Outside of work, she is Chair of the Methodist Ladies College Council, Director, Howard Florey Institute, Director Brain Imaging Research Institute and board member of the Australia Foundation for Culture and the Humanities Ltd.

Margaret is an inspiration to all she meets, especially those who wish to succeed in the business community with integrity and respect.



Dr Jill Ker Conway

Jill Ker Conway

2000: First woman to chair a listed public company in Australia

Jill Ker Conway was born on 9 October 1934 at Hillston, New South Wales, and grew up on a sheep station. She attended Abbotsleigh Girls' School, Wahroonga before going to Sydney University where she attained a BA (Hons) in 1958. From there she went to Harvard University where she taught history while completing a PhD (1969). Jill left Australia after being turned down for a job in the Department of Foreign Affairs because she was a woman.

She became an Associate Professor before moving to the University of Toronto. She then became President of the prestigious Smith College in Massachusetts from 1975-85, the oldest and largest women's college in the United States. She then became a visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She also has numerous honorary doctorates. In 1962, she married John James Conway.

Through this period in America she became director of many corporations, including Merrill Lynch & Co (since 1980), IBM World Trade Americas/Far East Corp. (since 1977) and Colgate-Palmolive (since 1992). She was also involved in directing many not-for-profit companies. In 1992, she was invited to become a director of the Australian company Lend Lease, despite having been away from the country for so long. In January 2000, she was announced as the chairman-elect of the company to replace Stuart Hornery at the November 2000 annual meeting. Jill thus became the first woman to chair a listed public company in Australia. She is the first non-executive chairman of Lend Lease and is based in the United States.

Jill has long campaigned for women's rights and has written several works on women in history. She has also penned two autobiographical works, *The Road from Coorain* (1989) and *True North* (1994).



Carol Martin

2001: First Indigenous woman to be elected to an Australian parliament

Carol Martin was taken from her parents at twelve and made a ward of the state after ‘copping a hiding for being a mongrel kid’. She spent the next three years escaping and then being put into a range of children’s institutions and foster homes. She spent much of her time over the next few years evading authorities and hiding out with family around Perth. After her parents divorced she followed her mum, Rose Pilkington to Broome. Despite not having completed her schooling, Carol studied business management and found work as a social worker in Broome.

A few years later, she moved north to Derby where she married a builder, Brian Martin. He was a white person who had grown up alongside Carol’s relatives from the Yumanji tribe outside Geraldton. This area was known as Munni Mia, hence Carol’s nickname, the Munni Mia kid. Carol and Brian built a home in town and had two children.

A few years later, Carol won a scholarship to study social work at Curtin University, so the family moved to Perth to enable her to study. Once she earned her degree, they moved back to the Kimberley region, settling in Broome, with a thirteen-year-old son and a sixteen-year-old daughter who recently had a baby.

Carol decided to run for parliament as a Labor candidate in the Western Australian State Election 2001. Her husband had unsuccessfully contested the seat of Kimberley in the previous elections. The family all worked together to help Carol get into office. She easily won the seat of Kimberley, polling 43 percent of the primary vote, as part of the ALP’s decisive win across the state.

She became the first Indigenous woman to be elected to an Australian Parliament. The previous member, Ernie Bridge had been the first Indigenous person elected to the Western Australian Parliament in 1980. It was Ernie Bridge who had encouraged her to get involved in local issues. Carol won support from both the white and indigenous communities. She attributed her victory to her high public profile in the area and her support from the local party, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and EMILY’s List. She had travelled 60,000 kilometres to make herself known in some of the remote communities across the Kimberleys. She is now planning visits to all these towns again to thank the people who voted for her.

Commissioner Christine Nixon

2001: First woman Chief Commissioner of Police

Christine Nixon began in the police force in 1972 as a trainee. She has worked in the School Lecturing Section of the Criminal Investigation Branch, the Darlinghurst Police Station, the Commissioner's Policy Unit, the Police and Planning Branch and the Police Academy. Christine studied at Harvard University and undertook a secondment with the London Metropolitan Police. She has a Diploma in Labour Relations and Law, a Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy and Politics) and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard.

In 1994, she was appointed Executive Director, Human Resources and Development. As an Assistant Commissioner she was responsible for police and civilian personal matters, industrial relations, employee welfare and resource management. Christine was also in charge of recruitment, education and training. She was the Region Commander of the South

Eastern Region, incorporating Woolongong, Lake Illawarra, Shoalhaven and the Far South Coast.

In March 2001, Christine was named Chief Commissioner of the Victorian Police, taking over from Neil Comrie. She took up the job on 23 April 2001. The New South Wales Police Commissioner, Peter Ryan, said, *'This is a compliment to Commander Nixon's skills and abilities...she has been an exceptional leader of the South Eastern Region since May 1999, and has had broad experience of policing. She has achieved a great deal in the areas of her additional responsibilities, including community safety, targeting the aged, Neighbourhood Watch and Safety House'*.

Christine has also been a mentor and supporter of young policewomen. She is the inaugural President of the Australasian Council of Women and Policing.

Community Nominations

Renata Alexander
Renata Alexander

Domestic violence support services

Renata graduated in Law and Family Law from the University of Melbourne and Monash University. Her major research thesis was on 'Civil Remedies for Battered Women in Australia'. Renata won the Community Legal Centre Award Pro Bono Award 2000 for her 26 year undertaking as a volunteer at the legal service.

Renata was a founding member of Feminist Lawyers and the St Kilda Legal Service. She has been a volunteer at the

legal service for twenty years. She has contributed to the women of Victoria through both her extensive academic work and writing on domestic violence and battered women, and her professional roles as Registrar of the Family Court, Solicitor with Legal Aid and Policy Officer on Family Violence matters. She has given generously of her time and legal expertise to Victorian women for decades.



Reverend Mary Alfred

Ordination of women in the Anglican church

The Reverend Mary Elizabeth Alfred spent six years in the Collingwood and Fitzroy parishes during the war years and for a short period after the war. There she learnt to love and admire the people amongst whom she worked, as she witnessed their struggles in the midst of poverty and hardship. Within their limited means, they maintained their dignity as they gave their children the best upbringing they could.

The move to a more prosperous growing community in Dandenong brought different challenges to Elizabeth's ministry, but there was still a need for pastoral care for families with problems, illness and grief. But Elizabeth continued her involvement with youth work, and in teaching Religious Education in schools. Over a period of 30 years, Elizabeth taught within the Education Department and in church schools, teaching students from primary to matriculation levels.

Elizabeth also taught at tertiary level, lecturing at a missionary training college of the Church of England, the College of the Ascension at Selly Oak. As Principal of Deaconess House in Melbourne, Elizabeth also lectured deaconess students as well as teaching in the Religious Education field at Ridley College.

Having completed the first course in Clinical Pastoral Education, Elizabeth became the first full-time Chaplain at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne. The early mistrust with which she was first received – because of fears that she

might 'interfere with the work of the doctors' and 'pray over the patients' – was gradually overcome as nursing and medical staff realised that Elizabeth's ministry was one of support of both patients and staff. After nine years of this ministry, the value of Elizabeth's chaplaincy was recognised by the administration and, since that time, there has always been a full-time chaplain at the Royal Women's Hospital.

Elizabeth's work for the ordination of women in the Anglican Church began in the 1960s, at which time she was invited to participate in consultations and committees, and to accept nomination for election to the General Synod of Australia. Elizabeth was the first woman delegate from the Diocese of Melbourne to the General Synod. The struggle for the ordination of women continued for over twenty years, but ended in the Anglican Church accepting the ordination of women, first as Deacons in 1986 (of which Elizabeth was one) and as Priests in 1992, when Elizabeth was the first women priest to be ordained in Victoria.

Since retirement in 1979, Elizabeth has worked as an Honorary Assistant in Dandenong, has authored several books and has taken four groups of pilgrims to places of significance for Christians; Israel and the Palestinian territories, Greece, Turkey and Oberammergau.



Dianne Alley, OBE

Dianne Alley

Human rights

Dianne Alley has worked for human rights, social justice, raising the status of women, and the welfare of children.

Dianne was the daughter of Dr Frederick Duke, and his wife Eva (Collins). Dr Duke practiced in Holbrook, but died in 1932 at the age of 34, when Dianne was four. Her mother was left a widow at the height of the Depression. Dianne attended school at Clarendon PLC, Ballarat while living with her aunt. She then attended MLC in Melbourne, and after her mother re-married, Girton CEGGS in Bendigo. Dianne continued on to the University of Melbourne and received a BA Honours in English Language and Literature.

There she met Stephen Alley, a law student, whom she married in 1949, and they had four children. Stephen became a judge as Deputy President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. After her marriage Dianne did not re-enter the paid workforce, but applied herself to voluntary work.

This work has included lead roles in the National Council of Women in Victoria and Australia. From 1986-94, she was International Convenor of the Child and Family Standing Committee of the International Council of Women, and Chairperson of the Victorian Consultative Committee on

Social Development, 1985-86. She was a member of the Victorian Premier's Equal Opportunity Advisory Council 1978-82, the Federal Government's National Women's Consultative Council 1984-86, and the National Advisory Council on Social Welfare 1983-85. Dianne was a Honorary Magistrate in the Children's Court 1972-84, a Member of Fairlea Women's Prison Council 1979-83, and she has been an Executive Member and an Organiser of three National Conferences for Status of Women Committee - UNAA - Women and Taxation, 1982; Women and Technological Change, 1983; and Women and the Year 2000, 1984.

In 1993, Dianne received a Testimonial from the UN Co-ordinator for International Year of the Family (IYF), designating her an IYF Patron for exemplary support to the UN programme on IYF.

On retiring from the Children's Protection Society Board in 1999, Dianne was made the second only life Vice-President since its formation in 1986.



Major Mary Anderson, MBE

Court support services

Mary Anderson was born in New Zealand on 25 August 1875. She worked as a woolworker until she entered the Salvation Army's Training College, and was commissioned as a Salvation Army Officer (ordained Minister of Religion) in 1901.

For twelve years she served in Corps (parish) work where her concern was always for the poor, the disadvantaged and those with special problems. In 1913, she was appointed to the Melbourne Police Court to assist women and girls in distress.

The stories of Mary's work in the courts are legendary. She was never concerned with religious denomination, and she never gave up! She had a wonderfully spontaneous sense of humour and also the knowledge and tenacity of purpose to see a task through, which meant that many of the women and girls who came before the magistrates were able to be assisted and rehabilitated.

The officers of the court and police force placed great reliance on Mary's judgement and many women were kept out of prison by her intercession and acceptance of responsibility for them. From 1917 the matronship of Salvation Army Women's Shelters was added to her responsibilities. She received the Salvation Army's Long Service Order in 1927 and retired in 1935.

In 1943, Mary was the first Australian woman to be awarded the Order of the Founder, the Salvation Army's highest honour. In 82 years it has been awarded just 203 times;

24 times to Australians. The Order was inaugurated in 1920 to recognise Salvationists who had rendered distinguished service, such as would have specifically commended itself to the Founder, William Booth. The citation included:

'...has, for 25 years carried on a sacrificial and remarkable blessed ministry as Police Court Officer in the City of Melbourne, highly appreciated by Magistrates and the public, also powerful in influence among wrongdoers of many degrees.'

Although she retired in 1935, Mary continued her police work for a further eleven years, and was honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 1956, receiving the MBE from the Governor of Victoria.

Mary 'the Little Major' died on 9 August 1956. E.W. Tipping devoted his whole feature 'In Black and White' to a description of her funeral service. The City of Melbourne paid tribute to a selfless 'Advocate for the Troubled'.

Mary served the community before her own interests for almost 50 years, and made a very significant contribution to the wellbeing of women and girls, who in so many cases, were unable to help themselves.



Leader in Aboriginal education

Dr Mary Atkinson is a Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Elder. She is highly respected for her involvement in Aboriginal Education and her involvement in Women's Business.

Mary is currently the Manager of the Aboriginal Keeping Place in Shepparton, which is a Cultural Centre and tourist attraction. She recently received her Honorary Doctorate in Education.

Mary has been President of Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc for eleven years, a board member for both Deakin University and the University's of Melbourne,

Aboriginal Advisory Committees, and a board member for Koori Women Mean Business. Mary is past chair of the National Advisory Committee on Education and a Regional Councillor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

Mary has shown outstanding commitment to the Aboriginal community and has been involved in a variety of work for it.



Bianca Baldassi, AM
Bianca Baldassi

Support for Italian community

Bianca Baldassi is a battler, a pensioner, very much an ordinary Australian who has worked hard to make a new life in a new country. For the last twenty years she has contributed to the Victorian community as a leader and advocate within the Italian elderly community.

Bianca arrived in Australia after World War II and was one of the Bonegilla migrants. After leaving the migrant camp, Bianca and her husband worked in the restaurant industry.

In 1979, Bianca's husband died and her attention turned from successful restaurateur to a leading advocate for women in the Italian community. She has inspired other people to become involved, to contribute in their small way and to take control of their organisations/associations. Bianca's voluntary work is done with great joy, verve and style.

For the last seventeen years Bianca has been President of the Northcote Italian Pensioners Association, and for the last eleven years President of the Italian Senior Citizens Association of Victoria. The association has 90 member groups from all over the state. Her elevation to the position of President has encouraged other women to join their own associations as

members and to stand for the position of President of their association. As a result of Bianca's example and support, 45 percent of the position of President are now held by women. For many years Bianca has also spent one day a week at Caritas Christi Hostel to spend time with elderly Italians who are dying and have no family or visitors. She recently had a mastectomy and within three weeks had resumed her voluntary work in the Italian Pensioner Association.

Bianca is a fine example of the first generation of post World War II Italian Australians – hardworking, quiet and streetwise achievers. A generation that 'just got on and did it'. It is a particularly outstanding achievement that an Italian Australian woman was voted President of an association, made up mostly of first generation Italian men. Bianca has remained in that position for eleven consecutive years, while continuing as President of the Northcote Association.

Bianca has received an Order of Australia Medal and an Affirmative Action Medal from the Government of Italy.



Nola Barber, OBE

Local government

Cr Nola Barber, JP, was born in 1901 in Woodend, Victoria. She was a co-founder of the Australian Local Government Women's Association. Three times a parliamentary candidate herself, Nola was for many years a councillor and encourager of women candidates for public office. Trained as a secondary teacher, from 1962 she was active in a wide range of community organisations. In 1948, she became the first woman councillor in Chelsea (now Bayside Municipality). From 1962-63 she was Mayor of Chelsea, the first woman mayor of that municipality. Her role in the establishment of many services for women and children, despite great opposition, has been widely acknowledged. She worked to establish the first Meals on Wheels on a voluntary basis, before its adoption by local government. The Aspendale kindergarten was named in

her honour. A notable campaign between 1948 and 1972 was Nola's effort to get a local library. She taught swimming and lifesaving, was a member of local school councils, and the Red Cross.

Beyond the local area, Nola was a vigorous participant in a number of spheres, not only the ALGWA, but the League of Women Voters/AFWW, the Aborigines Advancement League, the Australian Labor Party as chair of its peak body for women and the Women's Central Organising Committee. Always keenly interested in the cause of peace, during the period of the Vietnam War she became foundation President of the Save Our Sons organisation.

Nola died in 1985.



Karen Batt
Karen Batt

Public sector unions

Karen Batt has been the Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Community and Public Sector Union CPSU/Public Sector Federation Union since 1993. She is the first elected Secretary of the Union and the first woman Secretary of the Union in its 115 year history!

Within her time of leadership, the union's achievements include the first whole of Public Sector Public Service Award, and a groundbreaking determination which allowed the termination of 10,000 'compulsory' Australian Workplace Agreements.

Karen holds a Master of Arts degree, and a Graduate Diploma in Industrial and Commercial Law.

Karen was the Senior Vice President of the National CPSU from 1995-98 and an ACTU Executive Member from 1996-2000.

Karen has been an effective leader and advocate for equity for women in the broader labour movement, and continued to set new pathways for women when she became the second woman President of the Victorian Trades Hall Council from 1995-98.



Dame Beryl Beaurepaire, AC, DBE

Beryl Beaurepaire

Outstanding leadership for women

Dame Beryl Beaurepaire was born in Camberwell in 1923 and educated at Fintona Girls School, Balwyn and the University of Melbourne, where she studied sciences.

During World War II, she left university to join the WAAF and did not return to study. In 1946, she married Ian Beaurepaire. They have twin sons and six grandchildren.

Throughout her life she has leant her voice to a wide range of social issues and has been influential within the organisation of the Liberal Party.

As convenor of the National Women's Advisory Council 1978-82, Vice President of the Victorian Section of the

Liberal Party 1976-86, and Chairman, Federal Liberal Party Women's Committee 1974-76, she has been one of the most important influences on issues affecting women in the Liberal Party, particularly in the time of Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, 1975-83.

Dame Beryl is much admired by many women across Australia for her unswerving advocacy for women and equity and her unstinting community service in areas like the Citizen's Welfare Service 1970-86, and the Young Women's Christian Association YWCA (Australia) 1969-77. She was also the first woman Chair of the Australian War Memorial from 1985-93.

Laura Bell



Gunditjmara leader in Aboriginal education

Laura Bell is a Gunditjmara Elder, mother of nine children and grandmother of 21. She resides in the township of Heywood in the Western District of Victoria and has been a member of the Heywood Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group since 1976.

Laura was involved in Regional Parent Forums from 1976-78 in the Western District including Horsham, Warrnambool and Ballarat.

She is a leading activist in Aboriginal education as a worker at the Barwon South Western ACFE Koori Program and

as the Higher Education Specialist Representative on the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association. She is a Board Member on the Deakin University Aboriginal Board of Management, the Miriambiak National Aboriginal Corporation, the South West Institute of TAFE, the Glenormiston Agricultural College and the Heywood and District Hospital. She is also on the Church of England Parish Council and a founding Member of the Winda Mara Aboriginal Co-op.

Aunty Laura is a legend in the Aboriginal community and beyond for her work in education.



Jean Blackburn

Jean Blackburn

Conservation

Jean Blackburn was born in 1909. She remained single all her life, and joined many organisations which catered for her love of the outdoors. First she joined the Girl Guides, then in 1934 she joined the Melbourne Women's Walking Club. She served on the committee and as President and Vice-President of that Club. Jean joined the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in 1935 and took part in their outdoor activities. Her love of nature was so great that she resolved to help conserve the wild places that she loved and in 1946 she joined the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV). While with the FNCV she was Excursions Secretary from 1949-51: she wrote articles for the *Victorian Naturalist* and became deeply involved in preparing the historic Report on Victoria's National Parks which was favourably received by Parliament and led to the formation of the National Parks Authority. The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) was formed in 1952 to promote the cause of national parks. Jean was also a member of the Native Plants Preservation Society.

Jean did not just join organisations – she worked for them with great skill and commitment, but always in the background. She was the typical 'quiet achiever'. She was an excellent nature photographer and had a valuable collection of slides of scenery and plants which she was happy to lend.

Jean joined the VNPA in August 1953, just a year after its formation. She became Treasurer in 1959 and held that position until her death in 1983. Jean maintained the Association's finances and in the early days before the VNPA had an office and staff, she kept the membership records, and sent out the minutes to members. Jean never missed a council meeting and was a valued member of council because of her great knowledge of the Victorian bush and its plants, as well as for her accounting skills and her sound financial judgement.

Jean worked for the Victorian Employers Federation, and in her later years she was able to work part-time which left her free to pursue her many other commitments with voluntary conservation organisations. Even when hospitalised with cancer she continued her work as Treasurer for the VNPA, and upon her death she left part of her estate to the Association so that their work in promoting national parks could be continued.

Jean Blackburn is honoured for many years of voluntary work she willingly gave to the conservation cause in this and other organisations.



Dame Margaret Blackwood, DBE

Margaret Blackwood

Science

Within weeks of Margaret Blackwood's enlistment into the WAAF's the Director of Signals sought her assistance. Royal Air force (RAF) ciphers coming from England were lost at sea and 'Blackie' as she was known to her friends, colleagues, and students, helped construct the first Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) cipher code (Andusair) for Allied use in the war in the Pacific. She was soon promoted to Officer Commanding of the No. 1 Depot, later Head of Recruit Training, and retired as Wing Officer.

For nearly 40 years, 'Blackie' was a member of Soroptimist International, a worldwide organisation of women in management and the professions working to advance human rights and the status of women. She was President of the Melbourne Club 1957-59 and then Chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee of Soroptimist International Australia which became the Federation of South West Pacific. She was probably the best known, loved and respected Soroptimist in Australia.

Within the University, 'Blackie' was very popular as she was very supportive of the students and did her utmost to help them. In her role as Dean of Women she was conscious of women student's welfare and in 1975 was Convenor of the University Assembly's Working Group on Women in the University.

In 1980, Margaret was asked to head a thirteen member Consultative Council on Health and Human Relations Education to advise the then Minister for Education.

Margaret was an outstanding role model for women who wanted to achieve their full potential and then serve their community using their intellectual talents. She was able to relate to people and gain co-operation.

She was the founder of Janet Clarke Hall, and the first woman to be elected as Deputy Chancellor in the University of Melbourne. Margaret was the first woman to confer degrees of the University of Melbourne, and the first person to be appointed an Honorary Life Member by the Association of Women on Campus at the University of Melbourne.

Her name is perpetuated by a Prize in Genetics, established by her Department, and also by a Scholarship for a second year student in Genetics created by Soroptimist International of South West Pacific.

Her Honours were given in recognition of her services to education and her fine record of public work.



Pamela Bone

Pamela Bone

Promotion of human rights as a journalist

Pamela grew up as one of seven children in a poor family in the small Riverina town of Finley, New South Wales. Her background was very disadvantaged. In accordance with the conditioning of most girls in those days, she left school at fifteen to work in a shop until she was old enough to get married. Pamela was lucky enough to get a job in a chemist's shop, which was considered quite a high status position because you wore a white uniform and found out who was on the pill! She worked there for six years until she married and went to live in Shepparton where she had four children.

To help make ends meet she worked night shift at the SPC cannery during the fruit season, standing for eight hours picking rotten pieces of peaches off an assembly line before going home to get four hours sleep until the baby woke up. Pamela later got a job at the local TAB, then a job at another chemist's shop. This was about 1970, during the second wave of the feminist movement. Always a voracious reader, Pamela was influenced by Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*.

She decided to undertake an Arts Diploma by external study, while at the same time working and looking after small children. She then got a job as a proof reader at the local newspaper, the *Shepparton News*. She began doing some writing for the paper and before long she was taken on as a full-time reporter.

Pamela then applied for a job at *The Age* and was lucky enough to be accepted.

But she was only on a cadet's wage and had to cope as a single mother and rent a house in Melbourne, so it was very hard financially for a few years. She delivered pamphlets at weekends to make ends meet. But her four daughters all went to the University of Melbourne and at one stage were all there at the same time, which might almost be a record.

Pamela started at *The Age* as a court reporter. One of the things of which she is most proud is her reporting of a case in which a County Court judge had ruled that it was not against the law for a man to rape his wife. Pamela was the first reporter to get the story, *The Age* put it on the front page and the outcry was so great it ended up with the law being changed.

Pamela eventually became the paper's first female leader writer, and then was the first woman to have a regular opinion column. Pamela often writes about human rights and social justice and issues affecting women. She is the only journalist in Australia who regularly writes about poverty in developing countries.

Pamela has won many awards, including: the NSW Office of the Status of Women Award for writing on women's issues 1995, the Melbourne Press Club *Quill* Award for best newspaper columnist 1998, a Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Award and a United Nations Media Peace Prize; the Results Australia Leadership Award for writing on issues of world poverty and hunger in 1999; and a Vida Goldstein Women in Media award in 2000.



Mother Margaret Bourke

Margaret Bourke

Excellence in girls' education

Brigid Bourke was the youngest of three daughters born to Laurence Bourke and Catherine Murphy in Ballinahinch County Wicklow, Ireland on 5 June 1887.

She received her early education at the local St Anne's School and then boarded at the Brigidine Convent in County Tullow Carlow for the first part of her secondary education. It was her parents' wish that Brigid receive a continental education which was rich in the diversity of languages and culture, so they sent her to the Ursuline Convent in Brussels which taught pure Sorbonne. Here along with German, Polish and Scandanavian girls, Brigid followed the school routine in the morning, and in the afternoon had special tuition in French, Italian, Physics, Astronomy and Botany.

It was Brigid's dream to enter a religious congregation, and with this in mind she sailed to Australia and arrived in Melbourne on 16 July 1908. She immediately took lectures conjointly at the Teachers' Training College, Carlton and the University of Melbourne, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education with First Class Honours in Education.

Brigid Bourke entered the Brigidine Novitsat at Albert Park on 6 January 1910 and was given the religious name of Margaret Mary. She was professed as a Religious Sister on 11 July 1912 and for the next fifty years her educational work and vision

became as legendary as her name, Mother Margaret Mary. At a time when the education of girls was considered to be of lesser importance, Mother Margaret Mary was the alternative voice. As Principal of Kilbreda College for 39 years, her vision was that of an education where young women would have the confidence, poise and education to take their place in society and to be leaders in their fields. She was a woman with a vision which far exceeded her time and she had the personality and charm to carry it out.

Her legacy remains at Kilbreda today where there is the same broad approach to learning and a concentration on assisting each girl reach her full potential and make a positive contribution to society. As a leading Melbourne girls' school, it is proud to carry on the tradition of educating the women leaders of tomorrow.

Mother Margaret Mary established and maintained a model for the education of young women that was exceptional in its time and would be remarkable in any time. She encouraged generations of girls to strive for intellectual excellence and to be the leaders of tomorrow. As a Catholic nun, she engendered in her girls a sense of independence, responsibility and worth.

Geraldine Briggs, AO



Leader in human rights and Aboriginal health

Geraldine Briggs, AO, is honoured for her contribution to the Aboriginal community's health and cultural identity.

Her grandfather was the Aboriginal leader Barrkabili Dhulunyagan of the Ulupna clan of the Yorta Yorta tribe.

Geraldine's involvement in Aboriginal Affairs began when she saw her three sisters (Margaret, Evelyn and May) taken from the family under the Aborigines Protection Act.

With her late husband, Selwyn, Geraldine was a leading activist in the fight for human rights on the Cummeragunja reserve, resulting in the well-documented 'Cummeragunja walk-off'.

Geraldine and her husband had eight daughters Frances Mathyssen, Margaret Wirrpunda, Hyllus Maris (deceased), Leah Andres (deceased), Lois Peeler, Zeta Thomson, Laurel Robinson and Thelma Andrews, and one son, Rod Briggs, who followed their parents' example by having extensive and effective involvement in Aboriginal and human rights issues.

Geraldine was a founding member of the National Aboriginal and Island Women's Council, the Uniting Council of Aboriginal Women, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and the Victorian Legal Service.

She was a councillor on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council and served on the advisory committee of the Victorian Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

She was involved in the protests and petitions to win the 'yes' vote in the 1966 referendum, permitting Aboriginal people to vote, and was there when the Aboriginal tent embassy opened outside Parliament House, Canberra.

Now living in an Aboriginal Elders' hostel in East Brunswick, Geraldine is a senior Elder of the Ulupna Clan, Yorta Yorta tribe, and a life member of the Victorian Aboriginal Advancement League and Worowa Aboriginal College.

She was named Aboriginal of the Year in 1992 and awarded the Order of Australia in 1991.

Joyce Brown

Joyce Brown

Champion Australian Netball Team coach

Joyce Brown, was coach of the World Champion Australian Netball Team. She has had a long history of involvement in sport. She captained the Australian team which won the first World Championship in 1963, then coached Australia to the World Titles in 1975, 1983 and 1991. She has extensive hands-on knowledge of the individual, the team, and planning winning strategies.

Joyce went to school at University High School, Melbourne and is a physical education graduate from the University of Melbourne. She was a teacher for twelve years. She is married and has four children

Joyce played for Victoria from 1958-62 and was captain and wing attack for the first world netball championship in 1963. She coached Victoria from 1974-78 and Australia from 1975-83 and 1990-94. Joyce was also Netball Director of Coaching from 1980-83.

Joyce is a member of the Sports Hall of Fame for coaching (1989). She is often a radio commentator on sporting issues on ABC radio. She has served as a board member for the Australian Institute of Sport, The Confederation of Australian Sport, and the Olympic Park Board of Management and as a Director in private business.

She is a public speaker in the corporate, education and sports areas on management, teamwork, leadership, communication and the human value and is a lecturer at Deakin University for the Applied Science Degree – Sports Coaching and Management.

At present, Joyce is a consultant coach to the South Africa Netball Association; and is Head Coach of Melbourne Phoenix in the National Netball League.



Betty Burstall

Australian theatre

Betty Burstall was born in Melbourne on 4 February 1926. She was educated at the Methodist Ladies College and the University of Melbourne.

She married Tim Burstall in 1948 and together they built a mud brick house in Eltham, and had two sons.

Later Betty joined the staff at the Eltham High School and taught there for ten years.

In the mid-60s Tim was awarded a fellowship to study in the United States and Betty and sons Don and Tom accompanied him. It was during these years in New York that Betty discovered off-Broadway coffee-house theatre, and particularly Ellen Stewart at the La Mama Theatre.

On returning to Melbourne in 1967, she found a suitable building in Carlton and set up Melbourne's La Mama,

intending it to be a showcase for contemporary Australian writers, actors and directors.

Her enterprise was successful and has played a pivotal role in the renaissance of Australian drama.

After ten years as director of La Mama, Betty handed the theatre over to Liz Jones who has directed its activities ever since, and in whose capable hands it continues to flourish and expand.

From 1975-90 Betty lived mainly in Greece. At the age of 54 she began to paint and this has been her primary interest ever since.

Since her return to Australia, she has held several solo exhibitions, and her paintings of the Peninsula and inner suburbs of Melbourne have become well known through a series of postcard reproductions.



Muriel Bush, OBE
Muriel Bush

Girl Guides training

Muriel Bush gave 59 years continuous volunteer service to Guiding, and was a pioneer of the Guide Movement in Victoria. She had a huge influence upon the spirit, morale and happiness of the Girl Guide Movement in its formative years.

Muriel founded Girl Guides in Bendigo, Victoria. She was the first to hold several pioneering positions within the Guide Movement which 'called for pioneer vision and *creative* administration'. As each department was established, she broke fresh ground.

She was awarded the World Chief's Guide's Diploma for Training for 'conspicuous service rendered by those who already hold the highest qualification for training Guiders'. This was the only one ever to be awarded in Australia.

For many years Muriel was the best known Guide in Australia. For her qualities of deep sincerity, integrity, initiative, hard work and original thought and sympathy, she earned the gratitude, admiration and affection of Guiders throughout the Commonwealth.

In so-called retirement she continued to give the benefit of her long Guiding experience to the various Training Departments and to individual Guiders, not only in Victoria, but also interstate. Muriel had a strong and simple faith, a wide and far reaching interest in her country's past, present and its future and a deep concern for civic matters. Her interest in the education of the young never waned.

In short Muriel was a visionary who was never content just to dream; she wanted, and got, results. She had an enormous influence in developing training for Guide Leaders and ensuring that this was of the highest standard. The end result was that the girls received a high standard of Guiding. This showed particularly in the outdoor camping area of the program where girls had to learn to work together and share resources.

She has received an OBE for her services to Guiding.



Val Byth, OAM

Women's Electoral Lobby

Val Byth symbolises the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) in Victoria. She has been a mentor for young activist women since 1972 and recently retired after sixteen years as Victorian Co-ordinator – an extraordinary commitment of ability, time and enthusiasm.

Val has represented WEL in many national and state forums; schools, institutions and community groups, metropolitan and rural Victoria. She established the WEL Young Feminists' Group and was a co-founder of Women's Information Referral and Exchange (WIRE).

She is also a member of the Older Women's Network.

She has a continuing involvement in WEL and WIRE and is actively involved in the Rural Women's Network, of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Val was awarded the Order of Australia in 1994 for her service to women, particularly through the Women's Electoral Lobby.



Professor Hilary Charlesworth

Hilary Charlesworth

Human rights

Professor Hilary Charlesworth is a leading academic specialising in the areas of international and human rights law. She is currently the Director of the Centre for International and Public Law at the Australian National University.

Hilary graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1979 with an LLB and BA. After completing her Articles she worked as an Associate to Justice Ninian Stephen of the High Court of Australia. She graduated from Harvard Law School with an SJD in 1986. In 1987, Hilary was appointed as a Lecturer at the University of Melbourne Law School. From 1993-97 she was John Bray Professor of Law at the University of Adelaide.

She has held numerous other positions relating to international law and human rights. In 1993-94, she was a part-time Commissioner with the Australian Law Reform Commission on its reference into Equality before the Law. From 1994-99 she was a Hearing Commissioner with the Human Rights

and Equal Opportunity Commission. She is currently a member of the Foreign Affairs Council of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. She is also President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of International Law. She is Co-Editor of the Australian Yearbook of International Law, and a member of the Board of Editors of the American Journal of International Law. She is also a Professor in the Global Law Faculty of New York University.

In 1997 Hilary wrote, with Burns Weston and Richard Falk, *International Law and World Order. The Boundaries of International Law*, written with Christine Chinkin, was published by Manchester University Press in 2000. This book won the American Society of International Law's Certificate of Merit in 2001.

Hilary gives freely of her time as an advocate for human rights and social justice.



Mary Crooks
Mary Crooks

Social justice

Mary Crooks joined the Women's Trust as Executive Director in December 1996.

Mary is a woman of great energy and enthusiasm, qualities that are contagious. She has a deep commitment to, and understanding of, social justice and is intellectually rigorous in her application of facts and due process.

Mary graduated Master of Arts from the University of Melbourne in 1978. She has made a leading contribution to the theory and practice of community participation in decision making, for example, as Chair of the Environmental Effects Assessment Working Group, Brunswick – Richmond Powerline Officers and as Chair of the Victorian Government Social Justice Consultative Committee, 1989-92.

In 1995 she was co-editor of *Putting the People First: Government Services and Rights in Victoria*, a tough but fair critique of the Victorian Government of the day.

In 1997-99 as Executive Director of the Women's Trust she was Project Director of the ground-breaking Purple Sage Project. A project in which some 6000 Victorian women and men were involved in identifying issues of common concern and ways to act to strengthen community.

Since Mary took up the Executive Director position at the Victorian Women's Trust, she has undertaken some 450 speaking engagements. She is a pathfinder in new ways of enabling community consultation and participation on the major issues of society.



Dr Zelda D'Aprano

Zelda D'Aprano

Women's liberation and equity

Zelda D'Aprano has been a community activist for decades, campaigning for equal pay for women. Her autobiography *Zelda*, documents the women's movement of the 1970s. It is insightful criticism of the way our society is structured, and a reclamation of the exuberance of the Women's Liberation Movement, a reminder that the personal is always political.

Zelda is renowned for her persistent activism for women's rights from 1950-80. Her activism was as diverse as chaining herself to the Commonwealth Bank Building, and refusing to pay full price on Melbourne trams, to letter writing, conference planning and policy discussion as well as organising protest marches, some of which were attended by hundreds of people.

Born in 1928 in Carlton, Zelda spent her early years of childhood amongst the poverty and devastation of the Great Depression. Her parents were European Jews who, both orphaned at a young age, sought a better life by migrating to Australia. Although Zelda was a good student, she left school before she was fourteen, partly because it was 'unthinkable' that she would stay on. Her first job was in a factory putting the jam onto shortbread biscuits; sales and clothing manufacturing followed this. Six weeks after her seventeenth birthday, Zelda was married, and soon after she had her daughter, Leanne.

Zelda then stayed home to look after and love her new family. However, the delights of motherhood did not compensate for the isolation and boredom she experienced. During this period Zelda heard of increases in the prices of gas and electricity, and started door knocking the area where she lived, asking other housewives to start a discussion group. This was the beginning of Zelda's political activism. She soon joined the Communist Party, and after returning to full-time work as a dental nurse, joined the union. She was almost immediately in confrontation with the all-male executive over matters of accountability, open process of elections, and fairness of wages.

A prolific public speaker and writer, Zelda was prominent in the militant trade union movement for several years, later working as a switchboard operator for the Meatworkers' Union, and organising her activism around her work commitments. This all came to an abrupt end in 1970 when she clashed with a union leader and fellow communist who was also her employer. A dedicated communist up to this point, Zelda struggled with the contrast between ideology and practice, which saw workers revered in ideology, but disdained in action, a contradiction that was mirrored in the union movement.



After much difficulty, due to union interference and media hounding, Zelda was employed as a postal officer at the Melbourne Post Office. From this time, Zelda's activism occurred without any union or communist support, and as always, was self-funded from her employment.

Zelda, along with five other women, founded the Women's Action Committee in 1970, which led to the birth of the Women's Liberation Movement in Melbourne, and captured popular attention after the visit of Germaine Greer. Representing Women's Liberation, Zelda presented a submission to the Arbitration Court in support of the equal pay case in 1972, which was successful.

Now in her seventies, Zelda is regularly invited to speak at conferences across Australia about feminism, and in April 2000 she was awarded an honorary Doctorate from Macquarie University, Sydney. She has just finished her second book, a biography of Melbourne activist and communist Kath Williams, which will be published by Spinifex Press in 2001.

Zelda's role in bringing media attention to the unequal pay of women cannot be understated. She campaigned constantly for nearly 30 years for equal pay, whilst also addressing other union issues such as health and safety and minimum wages.

She experienced substantial personal cost and discomfort to bring these important matters to the public's attention. Zelda and her supporters were working class, uneducated women over 40.

Zelda has given generously of her services to numerous women, and to those suffering injustice and poverty. The import of them has been recognised by Macquarie University's awarding of an honorary doctorate to Zelda. She has proven her courage many times over, often at considerable personal expense to herself.



Dur-e Dara, AM
Dur-e Dara

Women in leadership and business

Dur-e Dara was born on 18 September 1945 in Ipoh, Malaysia where she attended Methodist Girls' School.

As a second generation Malaysian Indian, she came to Australia in 1962 to complete her secondary education at Heidelberg High School, and then Presbyterian Ladies College (PLC) in Burwood. Dur-e finished her education studying Social Work at the University Melbourne; where she was a resident in St Hilda's College. Her first professional position after graduation was as a social worker with the Youth Welfare Division of the Social Welfare Department. Her first major restaurant job, then partnership, was with Stephanie Alexander at Stephanie's restaurant, an award winning and leading Melbourne restaurant.

Dur-e is one of few women of non-English speaking background who has made it in business and industry. Her focus on gender balance, harmony, ethics, efficiency, partnership, and 'customers are people' has placed her differently as a woman in a man's world of restaurateurs.

Dur-e's dedication to philanthropy and in particular her leadership of the Victorian Women's Trust (VWT), has enabled minority women's groups such as the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition to receive grants to assist their capacity to represent immigrant and refugee women's voice in this state.

Professionally Dur-e is a waiter, restaurateur, business woman, food consultant and musician.

The two restaurants in which she has had partnerships are the Nudel Bar and Donovan's. She founded and brought together these partnerships and is grateful that both these businesses are vibrant and successful. They demonstrate her commitment to harmonious, efficient and ethical business, and work, customer and product orientated organisations.

Dur-e regards her Convenorship of the Victorian Women's Trust and her Presidency of the Restaurant and Catering Association of Victoria (RCAV) as serious business, people and policy management tasks. The VWT has an investment portfolio of over \$1 million, a membership and fundraising strategy, and many business and career enhancing initiatives for women in business. In addition the VWT has an office infrastructure of paid personnel – an executive officer, public relations officer and four other administrative staff as well as numerous groups of voluntary and government and academically assigned project officers. The organisation is robust, healthy and effective.

Dur-e Dara, AM
Dur-e Dara

The RCAV which Dur-e inherited as President some three years ago is no longer in deep debt, and made a first time profit in 1997. The gender balance on the board is now equal and is a result of a renewed investment by women and younger restaurateurs and caterers in the industry.

The association's determination to work for accountability, credibility and careful management is increasing its membership, and affording it the relationship it now has with Government, state education bodies, the business community and the corporate sector.

Dur-e's broad involvement reflects her commitment to all areas of community life. Her consulting business is an avenue of work which she carefully selects and manages, in order to sustain a balance in work, play and leisure.

Dur-e was awarded the Order of Australia in 1997 for services to the community, and to promotion and fundraising activities for women's groups. She was also made a Legend of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival in 2001 and received the 2001 Vida Goldstein award from the Women's Electoral Lobby.

Mary Jeevaranee Eliezer

Mary Jeevaranee Eliezer

Service to the Tamil community

Ranee graduated from Government Teachers College in Singapore in 1944 and then obtained a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) 1984 from the University of Melbourne with a Masters Preliminary in Archaeology and Anthropology. Her thesis was on 100 Years of Tamil Migration to Australia.

She taught English in Singapore and Malaysia until she went back to Sri Lanka. She continued her teaching career in Malaysia until she migrated to Australia in 1968, where she started teaching English again.

Ranee was one of the pioneers in Ceylon, during its colonial days, to create awareness among women of their rights and responsibilities. She started a number of organisations for women, such as Nangayar Pani Kulu (or Women Service Group), Ceylon House Wives Association and functioned as the founder President of these organisations.

She played a significant role in the development of the Young Womens Christian Association (YWCA) until her departure in 1968.

Ranee has been actively involved in the linguistic and cultural activities of Tamils, partly to protect, preserve and develop Tamil language and culture. She was a founder director of Bharatham Dance Company, the first institution formed to teach and promote Bharatha Natyam or Indian Classical Dance in Australia.

She played a significant role in the formation of the Ceylon Tamil Association Victoria. Inc. in 1978, the first Tamil Community organisation in Victoria, and has been an active member of its management committee for many years.

Ranee also started the first Tamil language radio program in Victoria with Radio 3EA (now SBS) in 1979, and was the co-ordinator of this program until 1992.

She was also instrumental in starting the Tamil language school in Victoria in 1979, which has now grown to accommodate hundreds of students, and teaching up to VCE level. She also started a program with the University of Melbourne during the late 70s to teach Tamil under the then Department of Indian Studies.

Ranee was also the initiator of the establishment of the Tamil Christian Congregation (1984) and the Tamil Senior Citizens Fellowship Inc. (1988), Victoria. Through this contribution to the community, she helped provide peace of mind to the hundreds of Tamils who arrived in Australia as refugees.

As a result of ethnic violence against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, thousands of Tamils arrived in Australia as refugees under the Special Humanitarian Program announced by the Australian Government. Ranee was instrumental in mobilising the community support for these refugees, in addition to providing and arranging accommodation, food and clothing for hundreds of refugees.

Mary Jeevaranee Eliezer

Mary Jeevaranee Eliezer

She played an active role in the formation of the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations Inc., an umbrella organisation which brought all the Tamil associations in the region together, and focused on the dissemination of information about human rights violations against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

Ranee was also a founding director of the Australian Foundation for Human Rights, which has been actively involved in the campaign for human rights in South Africa, East Timor, Sri Lanka and other Asian countries.

Mary Evans



Community nursing

Mary Evans was born on 23 June 1915 in Adelaide, South Australia.

Mary left school at fourteen, at a time when her parents separated, and commenced general nursing training at the age of nineteen at Royal Adelaide Hospital. On completion of her nursing training, Mary commenced work at Queen Victoria Hospital, Melbourne in December 1938 where she subsequently completed her midwifery training.

After travelling and working in South Australia, Mary was appointed to the midwifery staff of the then Melbourne District Nursing Service (MDNS) in 1943.

In the early 1950s Mary became the Secretary for the Nurses Christian Fellowship for Victoria and Tasmania. Around this time Mary gained qualifications in maternal and child health, and in 1959 received a scholarship from MDNS to complete a public health community health course in England over a nine month period.

Whilst overseas Mary looked at nursing training in America and Canada and returned to Australia after twenty months to take up the position of Deputy Director of Nursing with the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS).

Mary played a central role in establishing the Education Department of RDNS and in creating the RDNS Liaison Service, providing discharge planning services at all major public hospitals in Melbourne.

In the early 1960s Mary was responsible for establishing the first RDNS suburban centre at Camberwell – a development which has progressed to almost twenty centres today.

In 1963, Mary became Director of Nursing with RDNS, a position she held until her retirement from nursing in 1978.

For the next three years Mary undertook advisory work with the Australian Council of Community Nursing Services, travelling interstate and working with community-based nursing agencies encouraging them to develop standards, improve their quality of work, and introduce education for staff.

In 1981, Mary Evans received an OBE for services to district nursing, in recognition of her leading role in community nursing in Australia over twenty years.

Between 1986 and 1990, Mary was a Director of the Baxter Retirement Village near Frankston, the largest retirement village in Australia. Mary was also Vice-President of the Airdrie retirement place for nurses in Canterbury.



Dr June Factor
June Factor

Children's folklore

Dr June Factor is a writer, critic and folklorist. For a number of years she was Senior Lecturer in English at the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Melbourne. Since 1989, she has been a Senior Fellow at the Australian Centre at the University of Melbourne.

As a writer, June has developed a special interest in the lives of children. In 1978 she co-edited *Cinderella Dressed in Yella* with Ian Turner and Wendy Lowenstein. Her compilations of schoolyard rhymes, beginning with *Far Out, Brussel Sprout!* have made her work widely known and loved among Australian children.

June is recognised internationally as an expert on the lore and language of childhood. She has written many articles and papers on the subject, and her book *Captain Cook Chased a Chook: Children's Folklore in Australia*, won the prestigious American Opie award in 1989. In 1991, she published a major national study, *Australian Childhood: An Anthology*, co-edited with Gwyn Dow. As well as writing for children, June has published short stories and poetry and a variety of literary reviews and essays.

For more than 25 years, Dr Factor was the Director of the Australian Children's Folklore Collection, the major public archive of children's folklore in Australia. In 1999, she presented the Collection to Museum Victoria. June was a foundation Board member of the Children's Museum in the Museum of Victoria, and has initiated and planned a number of exhibitions of childhood, including *Tops, Tales and Granny's False Teeth* at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

June has also been involved in many community activities. She is a past president of the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties (now Liberty Victoria). For a number of years she presented a radio program for the VCCL on community radio and edited *Liberty*, published by the VCCL.

From 1995-99 she was President of Friends of the ABC (Vic.) and the national spokesperson for this organisation.



Miles Franklin

Miles Franklin

Australian literature

Miles Franklin was born in 1879 in Talbingo, New South Wales. She is honoured as an early feminist journalist and one of the first Australian women to show insight into the distinctive Australian culture in Australian writing. Through her writing and her bequest, the Miles Franklin Award for Australian Literature, she continues to require that the successful novel portrays Australian life.

Her writings included her autobiographical book, *My Brilliant Career*, published in 1901. This won her public recognition. In 1906, Miles, having worked in Australia with suffragists, Vida Goldstein and Rose Scott, went to New York and worked with the National Women's Trade Union League. One of her jobs was editing a journal for women workers. In her articles, she united the literary with the industrial and with women's rights. In England she worked in similar feminist and labour networks, working in housing and urban

reform movements. Returning to Australia in 1932 she was active in the Fellowship of Australian Writers.

Miles supported the new literary journals, *Meanjin* and *Southerly*, and various fellowship schemes to nurture Australian writers. Her contributions to Australian literary history and appreciation culminated in lectures delivered at the University of Western Australia (1950), published posthumously as *Laughter, Not for a Cage* (1956).

Miles' feminist and literary vision of Australia survives in the annual Miles Franklin Award (first won by Patrick White for *Voss* in 1957), her published work, the international screen success of the film starring Australian actress Judy Davis based on Miles' novel *My Brilliant Career* (a development she anticipated for Australian novels in the 1930s), and in her voluminous papers, willed in the Mitchell Library, Sydney.



Dame Phyllis Frost, AC

Phyllis Frost

Community welfare

Dame Phyllis Frost is an outstanding role model, particularly to the older members of our community, as at the age of 82 years she still works tirelessly on behalf of disadvantaged and marginalised people in our communities.

This is demonstrated by her involvement in numerous areas including improved conditions for female prisoners, projects such as the Australian Contact Emergency Service Inc. which has researched and promoted the benefits of personal emergency alarms for the use of aged, frail and infirm members of our community.

Dame Phyllis led the Victorian Relief Committee for many years. The organisation is concerned with the welfare of disadvantaged people in our community and Dame Phyllis devoted much of her energy to this cause.

She is Patron of the State School's Relief Committee Inc., a program which provides assistance to disadvantaged children in schools.

Dame Phyllis founded the Keep Australia Beautiful Council and was its inaugural Chair. While she no longer retains this position, she still takes an active and keen interest in its affairs.

Dame Phyllis is deeply interested in the problems encountered by young people in the community and is adviser to the Youth Opportunity Project, a unique undertaking which benefits young people at risk. She is an Honorary Life Councillor of the Victorian Women's Prison Council.

She is, or has variously been, patron, life governor, life member, chairman, past chairman and vice chairman of some 42 statutory, welfare, community and other concerned groups, involved in community concerns.

There can be no doubt that she has made an outstanding contribution to the well being of people and continues to do so.

Her sense of compassion for disadvantaged people is extraordinary and is the motivation for all she does.



Raffaella Galati Brown
Raffaella Galati Brown

Secondary education

Raffaella Galati Brown has made a distinguished contribution to the government education system as a school principal at Northlands Secondary College.

She has achieved as a female principal in an area that is still male dominated, and supported and led her school community in their successful fight to keep their school open.

She is committed to Koori education. The success of Northlands Secondary College's Koori education program was recognised nationally yet the school was closed with no alternatives initially proposed for these young people. Raffaella led her school community in a legal and political battle which resulted in the reopening of Northlands Secondary College in 1995. Today, with Raffaella as Principal, it is still a leader in educational programs for all students and has received national recognition for its contribution to Koori education.

Raffaella went to Sacred Heart Primary School and then the Academy of Mary Immaculate in Fitzroy. In 1978 she completed a BA (Honours) at the University of Melbourne and a Diploma in Education at Melbourne State College.

She has been a member of the Technical Teachers Union of Victoria and the Australian Education Union Victorian Branch.

In 1991, she became the Principal of Northlands Secondary College, a college with a major Koori education program. The school community at Northlands is proud of its achievements which include the school winning the Australian Education Union *National Reconciliation Award* for its whole school contribution to Koori Education.

In 2000-01, the school introduced an *Adventure Leadership Program* for students in Year 10 funded by Melbourne Rotary and run by YMCA. It pilots this as a Certificate I in Vocational Studies and it is a model for other schools.

In 1999, the school introduced the Senior Northlands Alternative Programs (SNAP) to cater for students who have dropped out of school.

The success followed the 1997-99 million dollar refurbishment of the College. This, and the raising of more than \$250,000 for a new Performing Arts and Music Technology Wing, were led by Raffaella.

The story of Raffaella and the Northlands Secondary College fight to stay open, then re-open after closure by the Kennett Government is legendary.

Raffaella Galati Brown
Raffaella Galati Brown

On 20 November 1992, Don Hayward, Minister for Education, announced the closure of Northlands Secondary College and 54 other schools. The fight began immediately.

However, by December 1992 the school population was transferred to Thornbury Darebin Secondary College.

Raffaella helped organise and lead the campaign to re-open Northlands Secondary College. She co-ordinated the legal battle with Herman Borenstein and Melinda Richards from Holding Redlich.

After the rebel school was locked out of the Northlands Secondary College building, Raffaella helped Deirdre Baksh in establishing the rebel school in Thornbury. Raffaella helped organise funding and materials for the rebel school.

The battle with the Government continued for four years. Northlands Secondary College won the battle before the Equal Opportunity Board in December 1993 but the decision was overturned by Justice Beach in January 1994.

Seven months later the Supreme Court decided discrimination had occurred and sent the case back to the Equal Opportunity Board in August 1994.

On 14 December 1994 the Equal Opportunity Board ordered the Government to reopen the college and the Government appealed to the Supreme Court.

The full bench of the Supreme Court ordered the re-opening of Northlands Secondary College on 17 February 1995 and the school was re-opened 1 March 1995. The school continues to prosper.

Helen Garner *Helen Garner*

Australian writing

Helen Garner was born in Geelong Victoria and educated at the Hermitage Gallery and the University of Melbourne. She first came to public notice as a teacher at Fitzroy High School in 1972 from where she was controversially dismissed for teaching sexual issues and using 'bad' language in the classroom.

The school's loss was a gain for the world of literature and drama. In the mid-70s Helen was involved with the Women's Theatre group and began writing for several prominent publications. Amongst others she wrote for the Melbourne Feminist Collection 1 and the Melbourne paper *Vashti's Voice*.

Helen has written a number of successful novels including *Children's Bach* (1984), winner of the South Australian Premier Festival Award (1986). The short story collection *Postcards from Surfers* was published in 1985 and won the 1986 New South Wales Premier's Award.

More recently, she has written several film scripts, including *The Last Days of Chez Nous*. Helen lives in Melbourne.

Jeanette Winterson, *Sunday Times*, wrote of Helen's work '*...there is much to be discovered...Her situation and insights are ones that apply to us all. Lost love, broken hearts, tentative relationships and the compromises of life fuel her stories, but her abiding theme is life!*'

Amanda George

Community legal work

Amanda George is currently a community lawyer at Brimbank Community Legal Centre in Melbourne's western suburbs. In the 1970s she was involved in the first community legal centre in Western Australia. When she moved to Melbourne she volunteered at various community legal centres as a lawyer and on management committees and was part of the establishing collective of the Women's Legal Resource Group in the early 1980s. She has been an employee of community legal centres since the late 1980s. Between 1986-89 she was a member of Women against Racism and the Aboriginal Rights Solidarity Group.

Between 1988 and 1992 she was on the committee of Another Planet Posters and Redletter press. These were community arts screen printing and design workshops. Amanda has also been involved in community radio. Between 1988-94 she co-presented a weekly community legal centres radio show on 3CR and for four years she presented a 3CR women's world music show.

In 1988 the organisation Women Against Prison, of which she was a founding member, received government funding to set up the first accommodation service for women and their children leaving prison – Flat Out. She is still on that managing collective. In that year she co wrote a report on women's prisons in Victoria. So that the report would not sit in libraries she decided to bring together a broad coalition of community groups – the Coalition Against Women's Imprisonment to organise the first Wring Out Fairlea. The Wring Out became a biennial action of encircling Fairlea Prison to focus media attention

on the issues around women's imprisonment. In 1992 she was involved in organising the first commemoration of women dying since leaving prison. The consciousness raising from this commemoration led to major ongoing research on the issue of post-custodial death.

The Wring Out Fairlea campaign became the Save Fairlea Campaign in 1993 when a decision was made to close Fairlea Prison and replace it with a private prison. The government wanted to move women into Jika Jika prison in the mean time and this resulted in a year long campaign, 24 hour vigil outside the prison and action in the Equal Opportunity Commission to stop the move. Amanda was centrally involved and the government eventually backed down. Amanda has remained in the centre of the action against private prisons.

Between 1989 and 1993 she was also involved in taking a successful case to the High Court around the issue of compensation for childhood survivors of sexual assault. In 1996, as a member of the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence she co-wrote *'Blood on Whose Hands? The killing of women and children in domestic homicides'*. This book, which interviewed surviving family members of deceased women and children received an award from the National Committee Against Violence.

Amanda has received a variety of awards for her work including the Avon Spirit of Achievement Award, Tim McCoy Trust Award, WEL Vida Goldstein Award and from the Law Institute of Victoria.

Hetty Gilbert



Equal pay in education

Hetty Gilbert was appointed Monitor Teacher at Dana Street State School, Ballarat in 1902. In 1906, she became a Junior Teacher and in 1926, she transferred to Secondary Roll and taught at Essendon High School and Collingwood Girls School. She was a member of the Union Council from its inception (1926-49) and became an Executive Member from 1934-49.

At the 1941 conference Hetty, who had been Women's Vice-President for seven years since 1934, was elected president of the Victorian Teachers' Union (VTU), thus, making her the first woman elected to this position. At that time the VTU was the only government school teachers' union in the state covering both primary and post primary schools.

Hetty was re-elected to the position at the following conference, an impressive feat in a male dominated union.

During the early 1940s two of the main issues facing the VTU were class sizes and equal pay for women.

During Hetty's years as Vice-President, the Technical Teachers Branch of the union formed a Women's Branch in 1938. The union took a prominent role in the equal pay issue.

A retired teacher remembers Hetty from his student teaching days as energetic and a strong unionist.

After retiring from teaching, Hetty continued her commitment to Victoria's children through her work as President of the Children's Cinema Council of Victoria.



Helen Gow
Helen Gow

Social justice

Helen Gow's career included secondary school teaching and work in youth unemployment services with the Council of Social Services, Community Services Victoria and the Social Justice Strategy Unit (Department of Premier and Cabinet).

In 1992, Helen started her own community consultancy, working for Northcote, South Melbourne, Brunswick, Doncaster and Essendon City Councils, Melbourne Water, Victorian Women's Trust, Brotherhood of St Laurence and VCOSS.

She has worked with people in many disadvantaged urban areas and is much admired for her insistence on involving those who are affected and for her innovative policy work and understanding of social justice.

She was the Community Liaison Manager with the Melbourne Olympic Candidature, a panel member of the Melbourne Water Resources Review and the Docklands Consultation Steering Group, and a consultant to Victorian Women's Trust.

Helen died recently.



Brigadier Doreen Griffiths

Doreen Griffiths

Family support services

Doreen Evelyn Griffiths was born in Melbourne on 3 March 1921. She came from a large family, and early in her life made links with the Salvation Army. She worked as a domestic until eighteen years of age. She was commissioned as an officer in the Salvation Army in 1940.

From 1940, she served at various Salvation Army church and community centres in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania. She came to Victoria in 1966 where she commenced fourteen years distinguished service in the Family Welfare Service, based at 69 Bourke Street, Melbourne.

Her work for families in crisis was unceasing. She was non-judgemental and positive in her response and had a special capacity for expressing compassion. Her service was practical, sometimes needing to shovel filth and dirt off the floor for people who simply did not know how to cope. Then there was the unforgettable day when she embraced a premature baby born to heroin addicted parents just before he died.

Her love was not given sparingly, time was not counted, her financial rewards were small, but she brought hope to many.

She was awarded the Salvation Army's Long Service Award in 1965 and awarded the Long Service Star in 1975.

In 1980, Doreen took up an appointment as the Children's Court Welfare Officer in Melbourne. In this role she has given completely selfless service to the young people coming before the courts, to their families who so very often need guidance and support at a traumatic time in their lives.

Also the magistrates, court officials and departmental officers have found the Brigadier an unfailing support. She became an honorary probation officer in 1980, and this position was gazetted in 1981.

She continued in her appointment at the Children's Court until her official retirement on 1 January 1983. Many letters of appreciation for her work were read at her retirement, and Commissioner (later General) Eva Burrows paid a personal tribute to Doreen. However, because of the effectiveness of her ministry, many requests were made for her to continue with her work of love and compassion, and so the Brigadier gladly agreed to continue on in retirement.

She often works 80 hours a week, meeting the needs of children and teenagers who find themselves caught in the legal process. Often they need clothes, some have not eaten for days, but most of all they need personal and emotional support.

She continued to work in the Children's Court until limited by ill-health in 2000, and has thus provided over 60 years of caring for people in crisis since commencing her vocation as a Salvation Army Officer.

In 1988, the Victorian Employers Federation Community Service Award was presented to Doreen. Testimonials from magistrates and court officials showed their appreciation for the quality of service which she rendered at the Children's Court.



Disability and equity

Edith Hall was born in 1931 and her contribution to the disability field has been at state, national and international level.

Her community involvements in Victoria were as Deputy Chairman Adult Education of Victoria and President of the Yooralla Society of Victoria. She is also a member of the first Planning Committee Melbourne City Council's Access Committee, the Institute of Architects Access Committee, the Steering Committee for Wheelchair Accessible Transport and she was also President/Secretary/Treasurer of the Disabled Motorists Association of Victoria, Deputy Chair – Victoria State Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons, Board Member – La Trobe University Brain Behaviour Institute, President ACROD Victoria and President Non Government Agencies Committee on Access Victoria.

Her national involvements were as Past President of ACROD National, Member National Women's Advisory Committee, Convenor National Women's Consultative Council, Member National Library Committee, Deputy Chairman International Year of Disabled Persons Committee, Member Social Security Advisory Committee, Member Review Committee Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services, Founding Governor Bicentenary Youth Foundation, Consultant to the Commonwealth Employment Service on disability services, Consultant to the Department of Civil Aviation on Accessible Airports and Convenor of Women's Committee of ACROD for the 1st National Conference on Incontinence.

Edith has gathered more experience on her overseas study tour; Architectural Employment and Transport issues and other related disability matters 1987 – United States, Canada, England and Europe as a Commonwealth Delegate for Non Government Women 1985 – End of Decade for Women Conference – and as an Australian delegate for UN Rehabilitation International Conferences – India 1986, Japan 1988.

She was the Executive Director of the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of Victoria from 1982-89. After her retirement she moved to the coast in New South Wales due to her husband's health and has been active in the following areas: Chairman of the Mid North Coast Area Health Service, Chairman of the Boundaries Commission NSW Local Government Department, Chairman of the Hastings Macleay Community Transport Service, and Chairman of the Southern Cross Port Macquarie's Campus Advisory Committee.

Edith has received the following awards Order of Australia AM, Life Governor Royal Children's Hospital Victoria and Life Memberships to the Yooralla Society Victoria, the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of Victoria, ACROD and the Disabled Motorists Association Victoria.

ParaQuad Victoria has recognised Edith's contribution by making her a Life Member. She is a person who has greatly improved the lives of Australians with disabilities.



Felicity Hampel, QC

Felicity Hampel

Civil liberties

Felicity Hampel was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1996. She has practised as a barrister since 1981, specialising in criminal, anti-discrimination/human rights and administrative law. Felicity spends a considerable part of her spare time teaching advocacy skills to Australian lawyers, and is an internationally recognised leader in the field of advocacy teaching. She has, by invitation, trained trainers and taught advocacy skills to practising lawyers in most common law countries in the world. She was an inaugural member of the teaching committee of the Australian Advocacy Institute, a not for profit organisation established in 1991 to provide advocacy teaching to the legal profession in Australia, and is the inaugural chair of its management committee.

She was a founding member of the Women Barrister's Association, and served as its convenor in 1995, an inaugural Board Member of Australian Women Lawyers, and is also a member of Victorian Women Lawyers and Feminist Lawyers. She was involved, through the Victorian Bar's Equality Before the Law Committee, in the commissioning of the groundbreaking report '*Equalising Opportunity for Women at the Bar*'.

Her interest in equal rights is linked with a commitment to the broader issues of human rights and protection of individual freedoms. A long involvement with Liberty Victoria, the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties led to Felicity serving as president of the Council from 1998-2000. She gives many speeches on issues relating to women, human rights and civil liberties and discrimination.

Felicity was also a member of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee for two years and on the Board of Options, a joint venture between the Mental Health Foundation and Liberty, which produced award-winning projects on mental health and human rights issues. She is also a member of the legal advisory panel of the VicHealth Centre for Tobacco Control.

A committed republican, she was a candidate for election to the Constitutional Convention in 1997, and was a deputy convenor of the Victorian branch of the Australian Republican Movement for the two years after that, which included the time of the referendum on the republic. She was made an honorary life member of the Australian Republican Movement after the referendum.



Women in town planning

Roz Hansen was instrumental in the formation of the Women's Planning Network, Victoria Inc. (WPN) in 1994, exactly one year after the 1993 National Women and Planning Conference in which Roz had also played a pivotal role.

The WPN was formed in response to recommendations to the National Conference, namely that women's planning organisations be established in each State or Territory.

To date, Victoria is the most advanced in having a formal Network, which initiates and implements activities and events on behalf of its membership.

At the WPN's first AGM in 1994, Roz was elected President and remained as President until her retirement from office in July 1998.

Roz has provided strong effective leadership to the Network and over the four years she was President, the Network had completed many projects and conducted many informative meetings and seminars which have made a positive contribution to planning in Victoria. Some of these projects and milestones are:

- Liaison with the Municipal Association of Victoria; Roz as president of WPN was instrumental in the formation and leadership of the Local Government Women's Charter.

- Successful completion of a number of publications, including the *Women's Transportation Needs Study* (1995), *Women's Perception of the Central City Study*, the *Women's Guide to Town Planning* (1997), and the continual production of the quarterly newsletter *Vantage* since 1995.

Roz was largely responsible for the establishment of the WPN Annual Award, which recognises members of the Network who have made significant contributions to the planning profession and the Network in general.

Since 1997, Roz has been actively involved in the development and implementation of the WPN Mentoring Program, a unique formal mentoring program designed by women especially for women in the planning and related professions.

Throughout Roz's Presidency of the Network, she has also successfully managed her planning consultancy business which included a number of work trips to Vietnam.

As the President of the Women's Planning Network, Roz has led with enthusiasm, energy, efficiency, effort and equality. Her leadership has resulted in the ongoing success of Network since its infancy in 1993. Members come from a diverse range of planning related interests and embrace a cross-section of age groups as well as public and private sector professionals.



Norasiah Hasan
Norasiah Hasan

Services to Islamic women

Norasiah Hasan is a member of the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria. She is the Founder of the 'Muslimah Women's Group', of the Western Region Muslim Community in Wyndham and a member of the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition. She is a volunteer worker in her local community, assisting mainly Muslim women in the City of Wyndham in disadvantaged situations access critical support services. This includes, voluntary assistance with women in domestic violence services, dealing with: Legal aid, police, emergency accommodation, court hearings, domestic violence services, counsellors, Centrelink, family services (e.g. Anglicare, St Josephs) and the Health Department.

Norasiah is also a foster parent to many adolescents. She spearheaded the 'visiting group' of women in the Wyndham area to visit the refugees from Kosovar based in Puckapunyal. She is a founding member of a food co-op in Wyndham that targeted low income migrant families and a member of the Wyndham Ethnic Communities Committee.

For the past decade, Nora has volunteered her time and efforts selflessly, for the benefit of other women in her

community. Presently she is in Malaysia, undertaking a course in 'Family Counselling Therapies', which she hopes will enable her to greatly assist the many Muslim families she already deals with in Victoria. Nora has consistently demonstrated a generous and tireless compassion for the less fortunate. She truly is a champion for the numerous migrant women who have come to depend on her kindness so frequently. Nora has never sought recognition or validation for the tremendous work she does, as she sincerely believes that charity is its own reward.

Nora possesses a spirit of human compassion that is rarely seen in a society where the best of intentions remain only as that – intentions. But with Nora, her good will has enabled countless women and children to experience an improved quality of life. As a strong Muslim woman, it is clearly her values of dignity, compassion and love that underpin Nora's outlook on life and give her a seemingly endless commitment to help others.



Jessie Henderson, CBE

Jessie Henderson

Social justice

Jessie Isobel Dowdell was born in Hobart Town in 1865, the seventh of eleven children of Charles and Martha Dowdell. She was educated at the Ladies Grammar School. She married George Henderson in 1890.

In November 1915, Jessie was elected to the Lyceum Club, on the grounds of her philanthropic work.

The Hawthorn Ladies' Benevolent Society was the first of her charities. She later became President of the Victorian Association of Benevolent Societies. She was known to appear in the local court on behalf of those she felt in need of some help with authorities; she had a great feeling for the battlers and the larrikins.

In 1921, she was President of the National Council of Women of Victoria, and subsequently she became a life Vice-President of this influential body.

Her Presidential Address was delivered at the Annual Congress in Melbourne in November 1921 and reprinted in full in *Women's World*. As well as an agenda for the Council it reveals her own social philosophy and her priorities. She was concerned first for the right education of children in good citizenship and held that *"the importance of play in the self-development of the child calls for our attention...the community cannot afford to pay the cost of not having playgrounds – the cost in stunted minds and bodies"*. She supported the teaching of Domestic Science and the raising of the school-leaving age to fifteen. She said reforms in housing should be essential policy for those

seeking election to municipal bodies. She was concerned about juvenile crime and held that *'women with a sympathetic comprehension of the nature of young, both girls and boys, could, as Justices, do much to assist in the matter of reform... We must petition for only qualified women, women capable of comprehending the laws of their country'*. She advocated more women in local government bodies and the support of a Bill to amend State electoral laws to enable women candidates to stand for Parliament.

She courageously supported the cause of women with venereal disease, pointing out that it was not a moral issue and that *'three-fourths of the victims of the scourge are innocent sufferers'*. She was in favour of expert intervention in cases of child neglect *'the State need not be clumsy, wasteful and rigid in its administrations. It is only this because it lacks the ready and devoted help of experts'*. She challenged her fellow-members through standing committees to *'condense, analyse and formulate'* information and views of experts to lay before political bodies, but emphasised detachment from party politics and the need to rouse community concern.

Her article is a remarkably far-sighted and statesman-like promotion of social awareness and legislative reform, free from sentimentality and moralising. She concludes with a tribute to the Women's Movement of the preceding ten years *'nothing like it has ever been seen'*. As a manifesto for feminism and social welfare it could hold its own in any age.

Jessie Henderson, CBE
Jessie Henderson

In 1930, Jessie was asked to join the State Relief Committee set up to meet the poverty and misery of the Great Depression. Her particular concern was for the unemployed girls, who received just seven shillings and sixpence a week towards their food. She invoked the help of Miss Muriel Heagney and Mr Albert Monk, trade union stalwarts, in organising a factory where the girls could learn to be machinists and make clothes for themselves and to sell. She solicited spare sewing machines from her friends and from the public and donations of material from wholesalers and drapers. It was a resounding success; at any one time the factory had over a hundred girls at work. It gave them skills, support and self-confidence and when it finally wound down the girls presented her with a handbag which she greatly treasured.

Her abiding interest and major contribution was undoubtedly in the Melbourne District Nursing Society – later renamed the Royal District Nursing Service. This she joined in 1912 as a member of committee. She became President in 1922 and remained in that office for twenty-five years until 1947.

In 1923, the year after Jessie became President, the society set up a fund for an After-Care Home, to take mothers needing a rest during or after pregnancy and patients who the District Nurse decided needed nursing care but were not sick enough to qualify for admission to a public hospital. This was formally opened in 1926 in Victoria Parade and was soon used to ease the pressure on public hospital beds rather than for referrals from the District Nurses.

The Society was always innovative. It established its first Ante-Natal Clinic in 1930, under the supervision of Dr George Simpson. In 1934, they set up a Women's Welfare Clinic for advice on birth control – the first in Victoria. This had the enthusiastic support of the President, but in the climate of the times a great deal of tact and talking were needed to overcome moral and religious opposition. Victory was in no small measure due to the negotiating and persuasive skills of Jessie. With the further acceptance and availability of contraception the need for the MDNS clinic evaporated by 1940.

Another pioneer venture was the inauguration in 1928 of a committee of Almoners from among the members of the Society's general committee. The social and financial needs of their patients had always been core concerns of the nurses, and these 'almoners' were able to access charitable funds, advise on pensions and appear in the Children's Court as needed. It was the first and only organisation in this field until in 1933 the Institute of Almoners was established with professional advice and training from Great Britain.

The range and success of her work were recognised when she was created a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1937, an honour which she wore lightly.

Jessie died in 1951 at the age of 86.

It was the life of a vigorous, intelligent and intensely human woman, a very private person tempered by love for her family and those she perceived to be in need.

Elizabeth Hoffman



Indigenous activist

Elizabeth Hoffman is a Yorta Yorta woman and a widely respected Elder in the Victorian Aboriginal community. Elizabeth Hoffman House in Melbourne was named in her honour in the 1970s in recognition of her work with the Victorian Aboriginal Women's Refuge, an organisation Liz was instrumental in founding. She served on its Board of Management for many years and her long involvement continued until recent times.

Elizabeth Morgan was born in 1927, at Cummeragunja Aboriginal Reserve near the Murray River in New South Wales, one of seven children to Michael and Maude Morgan. Her schooling up to the age of fourteen was at Cummeragunja. For a number of years after her mother's death, Liz lived with the nurses at the Medical Clinic on the Reserve. Permission to visit her family had to be gained from the Reserve manager, and leave was given only for her to have a meal. Afterwards she would return to the clinic where meals were taken separately from the nurses and she slept on the verandah. Her family left to find a better life away from the oppressive conditions at the Reserve as part of the walk-off from Cummeragunja in 1939. She worked in the canning factory at Mooroopna in northeast Victoria, and then moved to Swan Hill where she worked until she married at eighteen.

In 1971, Liz moved to Melbourne and started work at the Aborigines Advancement League as Matron of the Gladys Nicholls Hostel in Northcote. She was elected President of the League's Management Committee three times and Vice President and Treasurer. This was followed by her appointment as Director of the Aborigines Advancement League in Victoria in 1976. During this time she was appointed as adviser on Aboriginal Affairs to the City of Northcote Council.

Liz served as Commissioner with the Aboriginal Development Commission and a member of the Steering Committee of the Land Council. Other appointments and offices held were Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service for three years; Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Housing Co-operative and an elected member to its Steering Committee; Executive of the National Aboriginal and Islander Women's Council. When she returned to live in regional Victoria for a time, Liz worked for the Aboriginal Women's Council at Echuca.

Liz is now retired but continues to inspire others in the Aboriginal community. Most recently she has been involved with her family and other Yorta Yorta descendants in their fight for recognition of native title to Yorta Yorta land around Echuca on the Murray River.



Janet Horn
Janet Horn

(WIRE) Women's Information Referral and Exchange

In 1961, Janet Horn moved to Melbourne from New Zealand. After graduating with her first degree in Home Science, Janet undertook an Arts Degree in Education and Philosophy and later a Bachelor Degree in Education. For ten years Janet tutored part-time at Monash University.

Janet has a long history of volunteering. She was a founding member of the Monash Women's Society and was President of the society for a term. As a Monash Women's Society member Janet was a delegate of the National Council of Women and later became the Education Representative.

Like a lot of mothers, Janet volunteered at her children's school and at the local Scouts, as well as tutoring students from non-English speaking backgrounds at Princes Hill High School for several years.

In 1982, Janet joined the planning committee that set up WIRE – the innovative Women's Information Referral and Exchange network. Since then Janet has remained a member of WIRE, as well as volunteering in the office for the last ten years. She is also a volunteer at the Statewide Women's Community Housing Service.

Up until 2000, Janet had also volunteered at the Ecumenical Migration Centre for twenty years.

Janet is a fine example of the many, many women in Victoria who ensure, through voluntary work, that information services are available to women in need. We thank and honour them.

Shirley Horne



YWCA

Shirley Horne has a lifelong commitment to the equality of women. She has worked with various community and women's organisations, most notably with YWCA and National Council of Women (NCW).

Shirley made the maternity leave presentation to the Arbitration Commission on behalf of National Council of Women, and also presented the Equal Pay case for National Council of Women.

An enduring image of Shirley is her rising to her feet with a bundle of press clippings and some carefully drafted notes in her hand, to propose a motion or to recommend a submission to this or that enquiry. The outcome of the great Equal Pay case in 1972 was significantly influenced by the contribution from the National Council of Women, presented of course by Shirley. Here we saw the fruit of the careful preparatory work so characteristic of this capable woman and those with whom she works. It is to be hoped someone will one day write a detailed account of the impact of the NCW 'Women & Work' Standing Committee where so much of the background work was done on the 'Equal Pay for Equal Work' campaign. Other significant interventions of this type have related to the recognition of the need for some paternity leave and to promote a universal retirement income scheme.

There isn't space to deal chronologically with all the calls to government boards and committees, and the many leadership positions taken up by Shirley, especially since the 1960s, but we can touch on some of her organisational involvements.

For example it was as a representative of the YWCA that she first came to be involved with National Council of Women in Victoria. At the Y she was renowned as an encourager of the contributions of others. One woman, who was quite young when she began to work with Shirley within the Y, has spoken of how valued she was for her *'ability to encourage the contributions of others, especially the young'*. They recognised her outstanding ability to make appropriate and timely interventions in debate. They acknowledged too the importance of her gentle but constant reminder of the social justice values of the organisation.

There is no doubt that it was with the Y that Shirley refined her capacity to deal with many sided debate and long range strategic planning. During her time on the Y Council, that body was faced with two major challenges, the physical shift from Russell Street to Elizabeth Street, and the cultural change from a somewhat archaic federation to a national body closely in tune with the needs and aspirations of young women. The ability to keep contact with the young has been an outstanding strength of her work and she has shown her openness in this regard by her regular involvement with capable young people of every type – through her teaching, her association with the young overseas academics in residence at Graduate House, and through her work with the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

Many women in Victoria will testify to Shirley's reliability, rigour and her forward looking approach.



Philomena Horsley

Women's health

Philomena Horsley is one of the co-founders of Women's Information Referral and exchange (WIRE). She was part of the inaugural collective where she co-wrote the funding submission that established the centre. She was the first worker, 1983-85 and was involved in lobbying for the establishment of Healthsharing Women, the first state government funded women's health service in Victoria.

Philomena was also involved in Women in Industry and Community Health (WICH) – Board of Directors from 1989-91. WICH focuses on health education to working women from non English speaking backgrounds.

Philomena helped establish one of the first sexuality education and counselling services for people with HIV/AIDS in Australia. She advocated on issues such as sexual rights, the sexual abuse of people with HIV/AIDS, the right for women with HIV/AIDS to parent, forced sterilisation of women with HIV/AIDS, the need for greater legal protection of the rights of people with HIV/AIDS, including lobbying for the establishment of the Office of the Public Advocate.

She is co-author/producer of 'So you won't get AIDS' (1990), the first HIV/STD prevention resource for people with HIV/AIDS in the world, an education/prevention kit developed in conjunction with people with HIV/AIDS. Also, author of

Sexuality Rights and Choices: Sexuality, Sexual Abuse and Appropriate Behaviour Education for people with intellectual disabilities (1991); and 'Babies – Our right to choose' (1993), book for women with HIV/AIDS.

From 1992-96 she was employed at Healthsharing Women Health Resource Service (now Women's Health Victoria), providing statewide education and community consultation sessions for women; advocacy and health care provider training on women's health and lesbian health issues.

From 1996-99 she was Co-ordinator of Positive Women Victoria with responsibility for development and maintenance of support services to women with HIV/AIDS, lobbying and advocacy on behalf of HIV positive women nationally.

From 1999, to the present she is founder and convenor of the Victorian Lesbian Health Workers Network, to network, share information and support/advocate for action around lesbian health issues and a Board Member and Vice President of Victorian AIDS Council.

In 2000, she became a Community representative on the Victorian Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases. Philomena is widely respected for her commitment to women's health including lesbian health and community health delivery.



Councillor Nellie Ibbott, MBE

First woman Victorian mayor

Nellie Ibbott arrived in Australia in 1923, only four years before her election as a Councillor to the City of Heidelberg in 1927. Her husband had received severe war injuries, and the family came to Australia seeking a warmer climate. She was horrified at the state of the roads. As a result of bumping along the rutted tracks in transit to her new home, her household goods had been damaged. She went to a local JP to make a statutory declaration for an insurance claim.

The JP, a councillor, became a mentor who later encouraged her to stand for election on precisely this issue of the condition of roads.

Born and bred in Scotland, Nellie took an active part in Victorian public affairs. She became a member of the local branch of the (then) United Australia Party, and this political base stood her in good stead when she stood for Council. She became Victoria's first woman mayor in 1943.



Donna Jackson
Donna Jackson

Women's circus founder

Donna Jackson came from a family in which her father drove a truck and her mother did piece work for the local cardigan factory – not a circus-type family! The closest she got to circus was the little carnival that camped a mile from her house at the Mordialloc Beach.

Donna was sent to ballet, youth theatre and then gym classes from an early age. After she left Teacher's College, her first place of work was a refuge for women escaping domestic violence. The feminist processes of the refuge and the very strong and stroppy women who worked there made a huge impression on her. Many of the processes now used by the Women's Circus are a reflection of that experience.

She wanted to start a women's circus after she heard of another women's circus which happened around 1979-80. Donna met Ollie Black, who had been in it, and looked through her photos and press clippings. Her first thought was, *'Why aren't they around now so I can join?'*

The rationale behind the circus was to create an environment where women can come together to train in a non-competitive, supportive, safe environment. The circus gives women a vehicle for expressing political views and beliefs to an audience made up from the general public.

The first women invited to join the circus were survivors of sexual abuse. Membership was then offered to women generally, with an overwhelming response from women of many different backgrounds. The circus gives them a chance to explore the strength, endurance and skill their bodies can attain.

The Women's Circus started as a small project and has grown beyond all expectations. The reason that the circus is successful is that a diverse group of women have come together to realise shared ideas and because women like Donna dream, organise, persist and win through.



Sandy Jeffs
Sandy Jeffs

Mental health survival and support

Sandy Jeffs is a community educator, speaking at numerous AGMs of Doctors and Psychiatrists, as well as community health centres, high schools and other associations about madness. She strives to make people understand the experience of insanity, and combined with humour and down to earth language has an amazing success in this, drawing on her own experience of bi-polar disorder. Sandy also contributes to a poetry collective called Loose Kangaroos which combines the efforts of several individuals and their experience of mental illness.

Sandy has contributed to the mental health community in a very significant way. She has been a member of the Board of Management of the Schizophrenia Association of Victoria; and is a regular spokesperson on mental health matters on television and radio. Sandy has been interviewed by *Triple J*, *The Age*, *The Big Issue*, *Good Morning Australia*, and numerous ABC radio stations across Australia. She combines seriousness and humour in her approach, speaking on behalf of those suffering from mental illness. Her poetry is also widely known by medical and psychiatric practitioners who she addresses at numerous AGMs.

Sandy was born in 1953 and grew up in Ballarat, Victoria, with her parents, a brother and a sister. A good student, talented musician and a very keen sports player, Sandy excelled in softball, women's cricket and tennis, primarily to distract herself and others from happenings at home. With an alcoholic mother and a violent father, Sandy and her siblings survived rather than thrived in their home environment.

After studying history at La Trobe University Sandy had her first psychotic incident and was hospitalised, ironically only a few years after her father had taken her to play music for patients at a Ballarat asylum. For the next twenty years Sandy was dogged by recurring episodes of madness resulting in numerous hospitalisations.

During this difficult period Sandy wrote poetry, which was published in magazines and anthologies. In 1933 Spinifex Press published her first collection *Poems From The Madhouse*, a thought-provoking collection. This collection won second prize in the Anne Elder Award, and also received a Highly Commended Human Rights Award. Her poetry explores the bleak despair and the black comedy of lunacy, the stereotype of the mad woman in the attic, the containment of madness in language and the clash in the mind between sanity and insanity.

After her parents' death in the early 1970s Sandy began to revisit the terror of her childhood, and her second poetry collection *Blood Relations* explored the topic of domestic violence.

Her poems express the dual sympathy and revulsion ignited by her parents' relationship and the fallout after their deaths.

She has suffered and triumphed. Her words have helped numerous sufferers of mental illness feel that they are not alone, and their carers understand what the experience of insanity is like.

For someone like Sandy, survival has been an achievement. For her to do so with such generosity of spirit and humour is remarkable.



Councillor Stella Kariofyllidis

Local government

Councillor Stella Kariofyllidis achieved the significant milestone of being elected as the first woman Mayor of Moreland City Council in 2000. Of equal national significance, in becoming the Mayor of a city, Councillor Kariofyllidis became the first ever Greek-born Australian woman to become a Mayor.

Stella has lived in Moreland for over 23 years. Born in Greece, Stella came to Australia when she was fourteen years old and is now married with two adult sons. She works locally as a bank officer in customer service.

As an endorsed candidate for the Australian Labor Party, Stella was elected at the March 1999 Council election for a second term, having served since 1996 on the first democratically elected Council of the City of Moreland.

During the first two years of her first term, she was Portfolio Councillor for Social Development and then had project responsibility for Sport and Recreation. In this role she played a key role in securing Council's commitment to the redevelopment and improvement of recreational facilities throughout the City. This included extensions to the Coburg

Leisure Centre and the establishment of new facilities at the Coburg Outdoor Pool.

The improvement of Council services in the City's north was a personal priority for Stella during her first three years on Council. The opening of the Fawkner Citizens Service Centre and the consultation surrounding Council's plans for the improvement of C.B. Smith Reserve were highlights of this work.

Stella has a keen interest in highlighting the significant role women undertake in community life. As a result, Council appointed Stella to the portfolio of Councillor responsible for Women's Issues in 2000 and 2001.

Stella has a commitment to serving her local community and in furthering the interests of Greek peoples in Melbourne. Stella's involvement in many community based organisations such as her current election as the President of the Philanthropic Association of Imathia 'Veria', is testament to the high esteem in which that commitment has been recognised and supported by the wider citizenry.



Lillian Klood

Community work

Lillian Klood was born in England and educated at universities in Scotland and England.

During World War I, she met and later married a wounded Australian soldier. Coming to Melbourne in 1919 in a converted troopship with a fifteen month old son, and very pregnant with her daughter-to-be, the family settled in South Melbourne. Her husband worked as a printer for *The Age*.

As soon as the children were ready for school, Lillian became involved with the school's Mothers' Club. Lillian soon realised that, while each Mothers' Club did a worthwhile job for its own school, together they could lobby forcefully for reforms in matters concerning children. She founded and became the first President of the Victorian Federation of Mothers' Club. At the initiative of this Federation, the Safety Council and the Children's Cinema Council were formed.

Concerned with inner city youth, Lillian developed the Richmond and Collingwood Opportunity Clubs, providing young people with a cut lunch that became known as the 'Oslo lunch' using bread from the Oslo bakery.

In 1937, she was a candidate for the State election. Her election brochure stated: I make no promises, because

promises cannot always be kept, but I will do all in my power to develop:

- Economic security
- The scientific distribution of food
- An adequate housing scheme
- Free education from kindergarten to university
- A national health and insurance scheme

Some of the voters of the Albert Park electorate accused her of trying to take a man's job and did not support her.

As President of the National Council of Jewish Women of Victoria (1933-36), she was closely involved, in the late 20s and pre and post World War II years, with meeting migrants and refugees at Port Melbourne, providing hospitality and helping to settle people into accommodation and employment. When the Klood children left home in the morning, they could never be sure with whom, or with how many, they would be sharing their home and their dinner in the evening.

Lillian is honoured for her contribution to community service and social justice.



Mary Lambe

Mary Lambe

Community Services: Guide

Mary Lambe 1912-2000, served 76 years as a Guide and was involved in Guiding in six countries (Canada, England, Scotland, Germany, Italy, Australia). In particular, she is honoured for her 30 years volunteer involvement with disabled Guides.

In 1965, Mary led the first contingent of disabled Guides to travel overseas. Twenty-two handicapped girls, eighteen helpers from Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia, plus medical and general staff went on a three week tour of New Zealand. Many of the contingent had never flown in a plane, stayed in a hotel, chosen meals from a menu, handled money nor done their own shopping. It took three years to prepare, raise money, find and train staff.

Mary was also a trained social worker. Her employment included Assistant Almoner at the Children's Hospital, social worker for wartime day nurseries and the Victorian Society for Crippled Children. She gained a Guide Training Diploma in 1943 and represented Guides Australia at several international conferences. Mary addressed meetings in England, Scotland, Denmark, Singapore, the United States and Canada

on the work of the Disabled Section in Guides Australia. She was also the first Guides Victoria State Archivist

Mary's citation from the Guide movement reads:

'Her influence with and understanding of the handicapped girl has been felt not only in Victoria but in Australia through the International Conference/training for leaders of the Extension (Disabled) Section.'

A young guide who had suffered from polio said, *'Miss Lambe quietly and unobtrusively showed girls and young women how to cope with what life had thrown up for them'*.

Mary's influence on girls and young women was widespread. She was a woman to whom you could not say no. She got things done. Her primary concern was always for the girls in her care. She had an extraordinary affinity with disabled people. She helped those in her care to be more self-confident and self-assured by not giving them an easy way out. Mary, or Cap as she was known in the Guiding world, is included in the *Honour Roll* for the positive contribution she made to the hundreds of lives she touched.

Professor Marcia Langton

Leading Indigenous woman anthropologist

Marcia Langton was born in Brisbane on 31 October 1951. Her grandparents and parents worked on stations in southeast Queensland and endured appalling treatment. Marcia attended eight different primary schools. Racism and segregation were everywhere and it was just accepted. However, at Aspley State High School Marcia objected to the racism in a text they were using and she was expelled. This was despite the fact that she was a prefect and a good student.

In 1969, Marcia was accepted to study for an arts-law degree at the University of Queensland. She was by then already politically active and had actually been taken to her first political meeting at age sixteen by Kath Walker. She printed and distributed anti-racist leaflets and staged land rights demonstrations. Her anthropology lecturer believed that Aborigines were intellectually inferior to white people and promptly failed her in that subject, although she received good grades in everything else. She learned that the Brisbane police were clamping down on black radicals, so at eighteen years of age she took her young son Benjamin and cleared out. She spent five years travelling the world, from New Guinea to Japan, across Asia to Switzerland and North America, working as she went.

When she returned to Brisbane she was greeted by the same old racism so she moved to Sydney. She got a job as Nutrition Co-ordinator at the Aboriginal Medical Service and also worked with Professor Fred Hollows in the area of optical health. With a few other women she started the Black Women's Action group and published a newspaper, *Koori-Bina (Black Ears)*. Marcia also worked at Black Theatre.

In 1977, she went to Canberra for a year as she was elected general secretary to the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. She enrolled in Anthropology at the Australian National University, and worked part-time to survive financially. Marcia worked as a consultant with the Australian Law Reform Commission working on its Terms of Reference on the Recognition of Customary Law. At the Australian Institute of Aboriginal studies she became the history Research officer. By the time she graduated in 1984 she had a lot of experience in the field.

She went to work as senior anthropologist at the Central Land Council in Alice Springs and accomplished a great deal in land claims. In 1988 she gave birth to a daughter, Ruby Nakarra. After six years in Alice Springs she took up the position as Head of the Aboriginal Issues Unit of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody for fifteen months, 1989-90. Her group produced a booklet, *'Too Much Sorry Business.'* Ultimately she was disappointed with the results of this commission. In 1990, she returned to Queensland to work as Assistant Head of the Division of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. This job did not work out and fifteen months later she was forced to resign. In 1992, Marcia was appointed Chair of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra then became Chair of Aboriginal Studies at Northern Territory University's Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Currently Marcia Langton is a Professor of Indigenous Studies, the University of Melbourne.

Eleanor Latham, CBE



Community

For over 100 years the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne was run by women, outstanding amongst whom was Ella Latham, President of Committee of Management, 1933-54.

She was a remarkable leader and one of her finest achievements was to implement the Children's Hospital change in status from a charity hospital to a teaching hospital recognised internationally. She believed a hospital needed highly talented salaried medical staff in key areas of administration, medicine, surgery and research. With Dr Vernon Collins as Medical Director, these positions were created and sessional staff were paid to work exclusively with sick children.

Ella was the only child of English migrant teachers, who were active in civic affairs in Northcote. An Arts graduate from the University of Melbourne, she married John Grieg

Latham in 1907, and in the next years was busy raising three children and supporting her husband in his lecturing, legal and political life which culminated in his appointment as Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia. Her organising skills fitted her well for the Presidencies of the Lyceum Club in 1923, and the Children's Hospital in 1933.

Recognising the need for social support to families of crippled children she introduced social workers and established a University course. She saw the need for education and vocational training of children with long term illness and became founding President of the Victorian Society for Crippled Children in 1936.

Ella was a catalyst and pioneer in the establishment of modern Paediatrics in Victoria and throughout Australia.

Ilma Lever



Disability advocate

Ilma Lever was born in 1912 and contracted polio one year later. Throughout her life she has been a role model and active campaigner for people with a disability.

She was the first disabled person to obtain a Driver's Licence in Victoria, and established the Disabled Motorists Association (Victoria). She has been an active member of the Northern Polio Support group since its inception.

ParaQuad Victoria has recognised Ilma's contribution by making her a Life Member. She is a person who has shaped Victoria for people with disabilities.

Ilma tells her story this way:

I had always been keen to drive, as my way of life became more difficult, I began trying to find a way this could be achieved. I spent some months phoning various firms trying to find controls that I could use, the only one available was in New South Wales, this was vacuum operated and very expensive. I finally applied for driving lessons with a Driving School, when the instructor arrived he looked at me, asked what I could do, I said I thought I could use my right foot. He was a brave man, he allowed me to sit behind the wheel and steer while he operated the clutch and brake, and took me into the Motor Registration Branch where the Constable in charge, Sargent Seger came out to speak to me and asked did I really want to drive and told me to get in touch with Sid Ross of New Zealand who had designed a control which would be great for me.

My Father was somewhat shocked, but after some thought decided he could buy a small car and we wrote to Sid Ross. His reply was he needed to fit three cars to enable him to

pay his expenses to come to Melbourne. Father was friendly with Norm Spencer, who at Radio 3DB conducted an afternoon program. The story was told on air and we finished up with six requests for car fittings.

Father bought a beautiful tiny Morris Minor, and I waited for six months for Sid to fit my car and local ones in our yard. Sid asked me to be his Agent, this I refused because I felt I could not talk to people, but both Sid and Dad decided I could do it, I decided to try and became his unpaid Agent for about 25 years. When Sid died I continued for his wife until she became ill. At that time there were other controls available and driving for Disabled was the normal thing. The newer controls are replicas of the original Ross.

I learned to drive quickly, obtained my license, then in my job as Agent I had to get publicity. With Dad urging me on I made an appointment with the RACV to show them the controls. I had to drive three engineers around Melbourne, which I did in fear and trembling. They were very impressed. After a short time I was asked to show the control to 'Roots' the distributors of the Hillman car.

After a year or so I felt it would be great to have a club, where we could have driving competitions etc. I was concerned that other motoring clubs would be against us. I asked for a meeting with RACV again and got the President's support.

Noel Bergere, the solicitor who also had polio, was very helpful and told me to contact as many disabled people as I could, then call a public meeting and take it from there. We did and the Disabled Motorists Association (Victoria) was formed.



Joan Lindros
Joan Lindros

Conservation and environment

Joan Lindros is a busy person. She has four adult children and owns four pharmacies, which she manages with her son – which would seem to be more than a full time job. But Joan is also deeply involved in the conservation movement and interested in terrestrial and marine issues. Many of the organisations she works with are based in Melbourne and this entails a lot of time spent driving between her home in Geelong and Melbourne. Her friends wonder how she finds the time to serve on so many different committees and they marvel at her achievements.

Joan was a founding member of the Geelong Environment Council in 1972 and is now its President. She has been a member for many years of the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) and a councillor for ten years. Three years were spent as President and two years as Vice President.

Joan served on the National Parks Advisory Council for a four year term and on the Geelong Regional Commission. She has served as delegate and President on the Conservation Council of Victoria, the Western Victoria Coastal Board and the Environment Protection Authority Storm Water Committee.

Joan is chairperson of the Great Ocean Road Committee, which deals with planning issues in the area. The Committee has raised \$385,000 to purchase part of the Anglesea Heathland, which is to be added to the Lorne/Angahook State Park.

In marine conservation, Joan is lobbying for marine national parks for the southern end of Port Phillip Bay and Point Addis. She has taken a particular interest in the dredging of a shipping lane in Corio Bay and aquaculture in Swan Bay.

Joan believes strongly in the need to preserve our native forests and through various organisations she has endeavoured to save what is left of them – particularly in the Otways.

Some of Joan's achievements as leader of the VNPA includes the proclamation of the Alpine National Park in 1989. Some other important issues during Joan's presidency were forestry in East Gippsland, conservation of native grasslands, the route of the proposed Very Fast Train, and the Marine Parks Committee.

Joan served on the Land Conservation Council when the Grampians National Park was recommended and proclaimed.

Her work for the Geelong Environment Council included a successful campaign opposing the removal and storage of chemicals from Coode Island to Point Lillias.

Beryl Lindsay

Education and unionist

Beryl Lindsay was a Victorian teacher, who taught at Methodist Ladies College during the 1930s and went on to become Vice-Principal of the Elsternwick campus from 1946-60. Beryl played a pivotal role in achieving the first industrial award for teachers; the Teachers (Girls' Schools) Award in 1946.

'It is 50 years now since the first group of teachers in Victoria succeeded in achieving an industrial award to regulate their conditions of employment. The honour for this achievement lies with a small but valiant group of women known in their time as assistant mistresses. In order to accomplish this goal, in 1921 they formed themselves into a professional organisation – the Assistant Mistresses' Association of Victoria. It was an organisation which struggled for twenty-five years to have put in place the Teachers' (Girls' Schools) Award'.

Though Beryl was one of the best paid women teachers at MLC, at times the maintenance man and the gardener received more pay than she did. She was annoyed that her male colleagues were paid more, and resented the fact that female teachers were not recognised as professionals. *'She was angry that the male-run school councils seemed to think the women teachers being the daughters of clergymen and retired professional men could be expected to work for pocket money.'*

Beryl had been part of the Assistant Mistresses' Association of Victoria (AMAV) for some time and became the President of the AMAV at the Annual General Meeting on 11 March 1938. Her leadership was confirmed in an election the following year.

She was seen as a conservative, establishment figure and her 'militancy' was confined to the issue of achieving fair salaries and conditions for women teachers. *'She was clear-minded, strong, persistent and very determined, she was a superb strategist.'*

At the time, the Rev. A. H. Wood was the Principal at MLC. Dr Wood believed that teaching was a vocation rather than a career. In his opinion, that meant dedication, hard work and loyalty. Beryl showed great courage in leading a campaign which was opposed by her own Headmaster and school council. The story of this achievement can be found in *The Only Abiding Solution – A History of the Teachers (Girls' Schools) Award* by Kathleen Spence, 1997. This is a publication of the Victorian Independent Education Union.

Beryl was not only a great strategist but the one who did the really hard work. She was the person who was the driving force in getting the Award up. It was Beryl who recognised the importance of using the central industrial body to force the formation of an appropriate negotiating body.

The achievement of the first industrial award for teachers in Victoria was the foundation stone for the proper regulation of wages and conditions for Victorian educators.



Dr Lorna Lloyd-Green, OBE

Lorna Lloyd-Green

Obstetrics and family planning

From the time of her graduation from the University of Melbourne Dr Lloyd-Green has had a distinguished medical career at hospitals, including the Royal Melbourne Hospital, the Royal Children's Hospital and the Royal Women's Hospital, but most notably the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital. There she was Medical Superintendent (1939-41), Honorary Gynaecologist (1945-69), Dean of the Clinical School (1964-65), and Honorary Consultant (1969-85). Her status in her profession can be measured in part by the fact that she was the first woman to be a fellow of the Australian Medical Association (1969) and is a Fellow of both the Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Obstetricians.

During this long and busy period of active practice Lorna found time to participate in a major way in organisations that were fighting to advance the social health and the educational and professional status of women, both in medicine and in the wider community. In terms of women's general health and well-being, one particular contribution was her major role in the development of Family Planning Services in Victoria. In advancing the educational and professional status of women, she served as President of the Victorian Women Graduates Association (1951-52) and then as President of the Victorian Womens' Medical Society in 1948; Vice-President of the Australian Federation of Medical Women (1950-54 and 1962-65); Vice-President of the Medical

Women's International Association (1958-68) and President (1962-65), being made a Member of Honour of that organisation in 1972. In 1970 she chaired the Congress of the Medical Women's International Association held in Melbourne.

Lorna's achievements set a wonderful example of the way in which women can adapt their lives and continue to serve the community after retirement from their initial career.

Throughout her medical practice Lorna maintained her skills as a pianist; in 1989 she commenced a new role as Music Therapist at the Bethlehem Hospital. In that year she was scheduled to speak at the Annual Dinner of the Australian Federation of University Women – Victoria on 'Music as Therapy for the Terminally-ill'. On the morning of that occasion she had to have exploratory surgery on her throat. It was assumed she would have to cancel her engagement for the Dinner. But Lorna is a remarkably determined and courageous woman. She attended the Dinner and fascinated and inspired her audience with an account of how her work is capable of extending the boundaries of medical practice, bringing a measure of relief and positive acceptance to patients who are at the stage when medicine's power to cure is exhausted.

Lorna's long history of service has made a difference in the lives of many Victorians.



Toni Lamond
Toni Lamond

Television and theatre

Toni Lamond was born in Sydney on 29 March 1932. Her parents, Stella Lamond and Joe Lawman were theatrical performers in variety and vaudeville, most notably on the Tivoli Circuit. Toni grew up wanting nothing more than to follow them into the ‘family business’

She began as a child performer, aged ten, during World War II, singing on radio and entertaining the troops at military camps and convalescent hospitals. She progressed to variety shows as a regular performer for two years at the Plaza Northcote. This experience as a singer, dancer and appearing in comedy sketches was invaluable. She was then cast in a show starring George Wallace Senior and Gladys Moncrieff. This brought her to the notice of the Tivoli management.

A show starring British comedian Tommy Trinder was due to go into production and Trinder was seeking a ‘new discovery’ to work with him in his comedy routines. Toni was chosen and at nineteen was introduced nightly as ‘Australia’s youngest leading lady’.

She toured Australia and New Zealand for two years with Trinder and at the end of that time married dancer Frank Sheldon. They formed a song and dance act. They appeared in shows at the Theatre Royal Brisbane, when in 1955 Toni took a short leave of absence to give birth to her only son, Tony Sheldon – who has also joined the ‘family business’.

During a season at Chequers nightclub in Sydney, Toni and Frank were spotted by someone from J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd. Since the end of the war Williamson’s had imported overseas stars along with the overseas musicals and plays they produced. No new Australian stars had been groomed to replace Gladys Moncrieff, Max Oldaker and Don Nichol. In 1956 it was decided to gamble on starring young Australian talent, for the first time in more than a decade, in ‘The Pajama Game’. Toni was cast as the female lead and the show ran for two years. Toni and Frank were booked, for a week before the opening of Pajama Game, for the gala opening of the new Bendigo Street studios of GTV9 – a variety show to be beamed live to air. Toni Lamond and Frank Sheldon were the first act on the bill after the official speeches, making Toni the first Australian woman to appear live on Victorian television.

Toni joined Channel 9 as a regular cast member in 1960 and became the first woman in the world to host a Tonight show. Toni hosted the programme In Melbourne Tonight on Monday nights and continued to work on a variety of television shows.

In 1976, she relocated to the United States where she worked consistently in theatre, cabaret and television. Returning home to Australia in 1996, Toni published the first part of her autobiography called *First Half*. She has no plans to retire!

Aunty Iris Lovett-Gardiner

Aunty Iris Lovett-Gardiner

Leader in Aboriginal education

Aunty Iris Lovett-Gardiner is an Elder of the Gunditjrnara tribe. Born in 1926 at Lake Condah Mission, Aunty Iris was the eldest of six children of Ernma Lovett (nee Foster) and Herb Lovett. In 1934, the family moved from the mission site to a hut at Green Vale. Aunty Iris's clan is the Kerrup-J-Mara from Lake Condah.

At seventeen years of age Aunty Iris started working on the showgrounds and married Tiger Williams. For seven years they travelled with the showgrounds while Tiger was boxing and Aunty Iris undertook a range of showground jobs. Aunty Iris also worked as a domestic, in the canneries in Mooroopna and as a community worker. In particular, she taught the history program at Koori Kollij at which time she researched her own family history; and established the Aboriginal Community Elders Services (ACES), a hostel for Aboriginal Elders in Brunswick East in Melbourne. In 1996, at the age of 70, Aunty Iris graduated from Deakin University with a Graduate Certificate in Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation.

Aunty Iris' view of life is perhaps best told in her own words: *'To acquire learning is a great feat. There is all sorts of learning as we don't know everything. Our people, the Australian Aboriginal was a great teacher as they knew what to do with the land they had and how to control it as they lived with the earth and animals on it. They learned their children what to do.*

From the days at school we learned how to read and write and count numbers. In the days when I went to school there

was no easy way of learning. There were no electronics that help nowadays, these were not invented when I was learning.

We learn many things, but unless you are smart, there were a lot of things to be learned. Nature can teach us a lot, especially birds and animals - that is another way of learning. I think as we go along we learn something new, from childhood on through life. I don't think we can learn enough.

In 1995, I decided to go to university. I thought I'd get myself into this school to stop me being home-bound. ACES was doing alright so I didn't have to be rushing backwards and forwards so I thought I'd go and get into this school.

I studied a Graduate Certificate in Natural and Cultural Heritage interpretation at Deakin University After I finished my exams I graduated with four high distinctions. Being 70 years old, I think that's an achievement.

The graduation ceremony was very impressive. It was at Dallas Brooks Hall. There was all these deans and they had a mace and the organ was playing the university song. Then they started calling out the students' names. What made it more impressive was us Aborigines wore our Koori colours around our gowns.

It was great being at the university and it feels great when you do something that you strive for. In the old days, for us, you were lucky if you got any sort of education.

I think you never stop learning. I thirst for knowledge. You could learn a new thing every day if you wanted to.'



Judy Maddigan

First Woman Deputy Speaker in Victoria

Judy was elected to the position of Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees in 1999, the first woman to be elected to this position in the history of the Victorian Parliament.

Judy Maddigan is a Librarian by profession and was elected to the Parliamentary seat of Essendon in 1996 representing the Australian Labor Party. She holds a Masters Degree in Library and Information Sciences.

She was strongly involved with the 'Defend Public Libraries' campaign during the 1990s which was organised to protect public libraries from the effects of compulsory competitive tendering and amalgamations.

Judy was a Councillor from 1985-91 with the City of Essendon and during this time received the State 'Clean Air Award' by leading the campaign to ban incinerators in the City.

Essendon was the first local government area to ban incinerators in Victoria.

Judy has a long history of involvement in local community groups including Women's Organisations, the Essendon Historical Society and the Friends of Essendon Library.

Judy is a member of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee of the Parliament and is currently chairing the Women's Advertising Project which is looking at the portrayal of women in outdoor advertising. She is also Interim Chair of Women Inmates Speaking Aloud, which is a self help group currently being set up to assist women prisoners when they are released from prison.



Eve Mahlab, AO

Feminist advocate in business and community

Eve Mahlab came to Australia in 1939 as a refugee from Nazism. She was educated in Melbourne and trained as a lawyer, practicing in Family Law for some years before starting a business. She joined the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) in 1973 prior to the Victorian State elections and designed and chaired the WEL Forum, 'Why should women vote for you?' held in the Dallas Brooks Hall and attended by 2000 women.

This was the first time that the leaders of all the major political parties had appeared on the same platform, and were required to be accountable to women. This process raised an agenda of State related women's issues such as health, access to abortion, childcare and education. As leader of the project, Eve facilitated the sale of the television rights to the Forum to Channel Seven. The proceeds of the sale funded WEL for several years.

Over the next five years Eve was an articulate advocate for the advancement of women. She travelled widely and wrote articles, letters and speeches about workplace conditions, women's portrayal in the media and advertising, women in corporate life, small business issues facing women, family law, and access to finance.

In 1979, she was elected by Victorian women to represent their interests in Canberra in developing an *Australian Plan of Action for International Women's Year*. Following that she went to Copenhagen as one of WEL's representatives for the International Decade of Women United Nations Forum.

After practising law, Eve founded and built the Mahlab Group of Companies and was involved in various other business activities. She was named Australian Business Woman of the Year in 1982. The presentation was attended by the Prime Minister and various captains of industry and her acceptance speech was about the need for work-related child care. This led directly to the establishment by Esso/LendLease of the first work-based childcare centre in New South Wales.

Her role as a female business person, a feminist, a wife and a mum gave her a profile which led to her being the first woman on several government, business and community boards, where she still continues to advocate on behalf of women. In 1988 she was honoured with an AO for services to government, business and the community – particularly women.

In 1992, she was the executive producer and financier of a film on women called 'Not a Bedroom War.' The film was televised in Australia on SBS.

Today Eve is a partner in MindMatch International. She is on the Boards of the Westpac Banking Corporation, the Triton Foundation, the Walter and Eliza Hall Medical Research Institute, Film Australia and several charitable organisations.

She continues to work for the recognition and value of women in all aspects of life.



Commissioner Melba Marginson

Melba Marginson

Protection of migrant women from violence

Melba Marginson was a public school teacher in the Philippines prior to arriving in Victoria in 1989, where she became a full-time union official. Melba devoted her early years in Australia to community work and eventually landed a full-time job as Settlement Planner with the Inner Western Region Migrant Resource Centre. She finished her Master's Degree in Social Science (Policy and Management) at RMIT in December 2000, after three years of juggling a full-time job, part-time study, family and community activism. She is associated with many community organisations some of which she has pioneered. In July 2000, Melba was appointed one of three new Commissioners of the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Melba Marginson gained public attention in the late 80s to first half of the 90s for her advocacy work on behalf of Filipino women victims and survivors of domestic violence. Shortly after she arrived in Victoria in July 1989, a Filipino woman was strangled to death by her Australian ex-husband. Disturbed by the incident, Melba investigated similar cases and found that the issue of Filipino brides and domestic violence was rampant in Australia. She pursued the issue by networking with other Filipino women across Australia and found there was a significant number of cases where the women were either murdered or disappeared. Using her organising skills, Melba set up support groups, and

connected with other support groups, for Filipino domestic violence survivors which eventually led to the establishment of the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia. The CPCA documented the murder and disappearance cases and in 1991 sought the help of the Federal Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) for a possible inquiry. In 1995, HREOC commissioned the University of New South Wales Institute of Criminology to study the cases. The book '*Gender, Race and International Relations, Violence against Filipino Women in Australia*' was launched in 1997, the culmination of Melba's work to get the issue to public attention.

Melba's achievement in putting Filipino women's fight against violence lies in the public interest that was aroused by the media coverage of the book's publication. While not all media coverage may have been fair, in relation to the portrayal of Filipino women, the coverage assisted in raising public awareness and reinforcing the need to combat domestic violence in whatever form and against whatever race and ethnicity. Additionally, the constant exposure of Melba and other Filipino women articulating their views have empowered Filipino, and other migrant women, to leave violent relationships.

Commissioner Melba Marginson

Melba Marginson

Having established Filipino organisations to address women and family issues, Melba moved on to work more widely with migrant women. In 1994, she organised the first statewide conference of immigrant and refugee women in Victoria. The assembly of 200 women unanimously voted to set up a statewide advocacy body which eventually was established in 1997 by Melba and a core of twenty dedicated immigrant and refugee women. The Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition is now a dynamic peak advocacy body of 40 member organisations.

Melba Marginson is a migrant woman who has made a significant difference for women and the community in Victoria and Australia. Her exposure of violence against Filipino women contributed to public acceptance that domestic violence is a public and community issue.

Betty Marginson, AM



Local government and older persons

Betty Marginson was born in Clifton Hill, Victoria, in 1923. She graduated as a primary school teacher in 1947 and held various teaching appointments.

Betty completed the two year, full-time post graduate Diploma Course in Public Policy at the University of Melbourne in 1985 at the age of 62.

She was President of University College of the University of Melbourne 1986-91, and a member of its Council from 1983 to 1993. Betty was founding President of the Hawthorn Chapter of the University of the Third Age.

As a Councillor, she was key to the commissioning of a report on the *Needs of the Ageing* in the Hawthorn area and the establishment of a Day Care Hospital serviced by Mount Royal. During this period the Hawthorn Council created, with the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, a pilot programme for recreation for older citizens. She was appointed Chairperson of the Consultative Council on Senior Citizens set up by the State Minister of Health.

Subsequently this body was replaced in 1988 by the State Government Older Persons' Consultative Council, of which she was appointed Vice Chairperson. In February 1992 she was appointed to the newly created Adult Community and Further Education body, and as their representative on the Council for Adult Education (CAE). She has also been a member of the Consumer Forum for the Aged that was set up to advise the Federal Minister for Aged, Family and Health Services.

Betty was for many years a voluntary worker at the Museum of Modern Art. Her special interests are: access to education by older people; adult, community and further education services; provision of a wider range of community recreation facilities; participation of women in local government and policy in the field of aged services.

Hyllus Maris



Leader in Indigenous education and culture

Hyllus Maris was the daughter of Selwyn and Geraldine Briggs. She was Yorta Yorta through her mother and Wurundjeri through her father's blood line. She was fiercely proud of her heritage and her tribal connections on both sides of the family tree.

Hyllus lived with her parents at Cummeragunja, a government Aboriginal Reserve on the banks of the Murray River near Echuca. At a very early age, Hyllus experienced the struggle for Aboriginal social justice. In 1938 her family took part in the historic Cummeragunja Walk Off, when the residents walked off the Reserve in protest of the poor conditions and harsh treatment by the government – appointed Reserve Manager. After leaving the reserve the family settled in the Mooroopna/Shepparton area where Hyllus grew up. The family maintained a strong connection with Cummeragunja and Barmah Forest, the heartland of the Yorta Yorta ancestral lands.

Hyllus' interest and love of the culture was reflected in her activities. She was the Chairman of the Victorian Council for Aboriginal Culture, which operated from a modest house in George Street, Fitzroy. This Council organised one of the earliest Aboriginal art exhibitions which was held at *The Age* Gallery. The Council also operated Koori Country, an Aboriginal art and craft gallery in Gordon House in Little Bourke Street. Hyllus wanted to ensure that Aboriginal cultural was passed on to Aboriginal children.

Hyllus became involved in the Aboriginal struggle at an early age and remained committed to it throughout her life. As a member of the National Council of Aboriginal and Islander Women Hyllus, along with other women, prominent in Aboriginal Affairs, was instrumental in the establishment of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and later the Aboriginal Legal Service. She also assisted in the establishment of similar services in Queensland. She was the first Chair of the Advisory Body on Aboriginal Affairs to the Cain Government and, at the community level, maintained an involvement in the Aborigines Advancement League.

In 1977, Hyllus was awarded an overseas scholarship through the Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs, she travelled to London to study Social Policy and Community Development under the noted sociologist Richard Hauser.

Hyllus had a great respect for all the cultures of the world. She established links with other Indigenous groups and with our Maori brothers and sisters and there were many cultural exchanges. She was forever proud of her Aboriginal heritage.

On her return to Australia Hyllus devoted her energy to the development of an Aboriginal school. In 1980, Hyllus established 'Kurrarook' on a small farm at Yarrambat with Sister Bridgida Nailon from the Brigidine Order and with financial support from the Green Hills Foundation and World Vision.

Hyllus Maris

Kurrarook was a pilot project to test the teaching methods and curriculum relevant to the needs of Aboriginal children.

Following the completion of the pilot project the group moved to Frankston where the school was registered as Worawa Aboriginal College to become the first Independent Aboriginal Secondary School in Victoria. In 1985 the College moved to 'Barak Park' Healesville, a 136 acre property which the school now owns and still operates. At Worawa College the curriculum approach was guided by Hyllus and takes account not only of the children's academic and cultural needs but also their physical, moral, and emotional development.

Hyllus co-authored the television series, *Women of the Sun*, a four part documentary which tells the story of the Aboriginal people from the time of white settlement to contemporary times, from an Aboriginal perspective. The series won the Australian United National Media Peace Prize. In 1983, it won the Australian Writers Guild Drama Award, and the Canadian BANFF Award, an international award for a television script. In that year it also won an award at Cannes.

We honour Hyllus and acknowledge the contribution local Aboriginal women, now and in the past, have made to education, cultural preservation, community development and the advancement of Indigenous people.

Frances Mathyssen

Leader in Indigenous community affairs

Frances Mathyssen has been actively involved in building community relationships relevant to Aboriginal issues. She marched for women in equality, land rights and Aboriginal rallies, always with her children close by. She was a member of the committees which co-founded the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Aboriginal Child Care Agency, and the National Council for Aboriginal and Islander women.

Frances was a co-founder of the first Statewide Aboriginal Welfare Committee, and a co-founder of the Rumbalara Aboriginal co-operative and medical service that serves the largest Aboriginal population outside of Melbourne. In the early days she ran the medical service from her home. The founding committee lobbied the state government for the return of the Rumbalara housing settlement (Mooroopna) for community use. After four years they were eventually successful in the return of the land.

Frances has been instrumental in the development of links with the Goulburn Valley Hospital and the Aboriginal community. This has culminated in a local agreement between the hospital and the co-operative, the first of its kind in Australia. Frances has worked on developing community relations through active participation with shire, police housing and government committees or working groups.

She has held a number of key positions in Indigenous community affairs. Frances has served as a founding Director of the Aboriginal Keeping Place in Shepparton, the Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and Chairperson of the Yorta Yorta Advancement Group Incorporated and Worawa Aboriginal College. She has been a guest speaker at a number of forums in relation to welfare, women, health, land and culture.

At age 66, Frances was elected as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Regional Councillor (1996-99).

She is currently Chairperson of the Goulburn Valley Aboriginal Elders Committee and is a member of the Goulburn Valley Hospital Koori Committee in Shepparton, and the Goulburn Valley Advisory Committee to the Department of Human Services in Woodonga. She is also Deputy Chairperson Koori Women Mean Business Incorporated, and on the management committee Worawa Aboriginal College.

A member of the Yorta Yorta Clans elders committee for the last eight years she has been involved in the Yorta Yorta land claim. Frances is mother to ten children, grandmother to twenty and great grandmother to five.



Shirley McKerrow

Community service and political leadership

Shirley McKerrow's commitment to community organisations has spanned many years and covers an array of sporting, social, childcare and cultural activities.

In her early years of community work she served as either president or executive secretary of many committees. At this time she lived in Sunbury (1960) and had a young family of four children and did not work outside the home. Shirley believes that the fact that she owned a typewriter was probably also a factor in her election to these positions.

The committees included the:

- St Andrews Kindergarten Management Committee (Sunbury)
- Shire of Bulla Infant Welfare Centre Building Committee (the fund-raising body to establish the first purpose-built baby health centre in the Shire)
- Sunbury Lawn Tennis Club
- Sunbury Swimming Club
- Sunbury Pony Club
- Sunbury Library Committee (the lobby-group to have the library established)
- Sunbury Girl Guides Association

- Sunbury Boy Scouts Association
- Sunbury Primary School Mothers' Club
- Sunbury Music and Drama Group

Her most intensive involvement was during the years 1956 until the late 1970s. During this period the population of the township expanded from approximately 800 residents to over 13,000 residents. Most of the committees and associations above were formed to provide a growing number of amenities for the rapidly expanding population.

Shirley also served on the Gisborne Bush Nursing Hospital committee in its formative years.

In 1968, Shirley joined the Sunbury Branch of the Victorian Country Party in the State Electorate of Gisborne.

From 1981-87, Shirley McKerrow was the Federal President of the National Party of Australia. The first female to be elected to such a position in a major political party in Australia.

She was the number one candidate for the National Party on their senate ticket in 1984, but was unsuccessful and has since moved to the Northern Territory where she remains active in the community in activities ranging from the Voluntary Euthanasia Society to the Darwin Sailing Club and Zonta International.



Hilary McPhee and Diana Gribble, AM

McPhee & Gribble

Independent publishers

McPhee Gribble Publishers was a women-owned publishing house showcasing emerging Australian authors and developing an export market for them.

In 1975, Hilary and Diana established their own independent business, McPhee Gribble Publishers. The company initially co-published a large series of internationally successful children's books with Penguin Books Australia.

They then focussed their attention on developing and establishing a large Australian list of writers, including Tim Winton, Rodney Hall, Drusilla Modjeska and Helen Garner. Their publishing was highly regarded in Australia and overseas.

Fifteen years later, the company was acquired by Penguin Books and both women moved forward in their careers to work in the Arts, publishing, and various related endeavours.

Hilary was a publishing director at Pan Macmillan Australia from 1992-94. She was Chair of the Australian Council of the Arts from 1994-97. She chaired the Major Organisations Board and has held senior directorships for Film Australia, Australian Multimedia Enterprises Ltd, and is currently a council member for the Victorian College of the Arts, and board member of the State Library of Victoria and the Melbourne Community Foundation. Hilary is the inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Melbourne.

Diana joined the Text Media Group, where she holds the dual positions of publisher and Executive Director, and was awarded an AM in 1993. She held the position of Deputy Chair of the ABC from 1995-2000, and has formerly served on the Boards of Circus Oz, the Australia Council and Austrade.

Lee McIntosh



Youth services

Lee McIntosh is included in the *Honour Roll* as one of the many women who work in the field supporting young people to fulfil their lives.

Lee lives and works in Frankston and has qualifications in early childhood development, counselling, staff training, business management and health and community services.

She began work as the child care co-ordinator at the Peninsula Women's Refuge assisting the residents with parenting issues. She moved from a volunteer with the Frankston City Council Family Support Service, to the Department of Human Services as a Parole Officer then Frankston City Council as an Outreach Worker. In 1989 she became a member of the Department of Human Services Health Prevention Unit specialising in HIV/Hepatitis issues for young people.

From 1990-96 she was the Bayside HIV/AIDS program manager at the Frankston Community Health Centre and today she is the Youth and Family Services Manager at the Frankston City Council.

In addition, for the last few years, she has been a facilitator of the 'Young People and Substance Abuse Program' for the Victoria Police and for the Department of Human Services. She speaks regularly at community forums and gives her time freely, particularly to community groups interested in young people and community health issues.

Patricia McPherson, MBE



Health and Community Services: Nursing

The AIM launched exciting new work in experimental itinerant nursing in the Kimberley area in 1965. This was a fresh concept, conducted by an outstanding young woman, Sister Pat McPherson. In her unique ‘Tailboard Ministry’, she was able to identify the needs of Aboriginal mothers and children in a way that guided the AIM’s response. She could see the necessity for follow-up to her infant welfare work, so the AIM established a special Aboriginal preschool in Hall’s Creek, under the skilled guidance of Maisie Ross, the itinerant nursing Sister in that area. This meant that there was now a flow-through from birth to school age, enabling preventative work in those crucial years.

Pat’s ‘Tailboard Ministry’ was so successful that the Western Australian Public Health Department gave enthusiastic approval, and she was later awarded by MBE for her splendid community service.

Pat’s work at the Aboriginal camps was conducted from the back of her vehicle using its tailboard as a table for her equipment while the scales for weighing babies was slung from the branch of a convenient tree. It took her two years to persuade station managers to erect simple bough sheds

and provide tables so she could have shelter from the heat and somewhere to lie the babies when she examined them. But it was both a practical and a symbolic victory because the erection of a permanent structure, even if only a bough shed, was an acknowledgment that her work was ongoing. However, early identification of serious health problems meant more babies and young children were being admitted to the Fitzroy Crossing hospital. In one six-month period alone, 69 children under the age of two were admitted.

Pat’s work also established a link between nurses and the Aboriginal camps to the point where she and her colleagues were accepted and welcomed as friends. When the health scheme was widened to include the whole community, the necessary relationships were already in place. But it only happened because there were people such as Sister McPherson whose vision and commitment were strong enough to see beyond the immediate, seemingly impossible obstructions.

Pat was one of a number of nurses who pioneered community health work among Aboriginal communities in the outback but have never received proper acknowledgment. Pat now lives and works in Victoria.

Doris McRae



Education, leadership and women's rights

The unionist Doris McRae who was born in Victoria 1894 and died in 1988, was regarded as a significant leader of Victorian teachers for more than three decades. She taught in Victorian secondary schools becoming the first woman principal of a secondary school when she was appointed head of the Flemington Girls School. An active unionist, she was first elected to the council representing Secondary Women in 1935, becoming Vice President in 1947. The Australian Teachers' Federation adopted the policy of equal pay for men and women in 1940 but Doris, as a Victorian delegate, noted that the women members she represented realised that having such a policy was no guarantee of the whole union working to attain that objective.

During World War II she was active in encouraging her colleagues to greater efforts, doing innovative work on the provision of after-school programs wherever Victorian women had been drawn into the work force as part of the war effort. At this time Australian teachers' organisations began to affiliate with state trades and labor councils and to seek membership of the ACTU. Doris championed the building of bridges between teachers and the wider

community. She was convinced of the importance of wider collaborative activities to teachers engaged in a struggle to improve conditions in schools.

An anti-feminist campaign in 1948 resulted in Doris being prevented from becoming president of the VTU. However, during the 1950s, as women teachers began to demand permanency, Doris' leadership was once again appreciated as she played her part in ensuing the passage of the *Teaching Service (Married Women's) Act* (1956). While she was a target for some critics of teacher unionism because of her alleged 'leftism', her contemporaries acknowledged her selfless work for all teachers. The motion honouring her for her work as Vice-President noted '*She never allowed her own view to interfere with the work of the union*'.

Doris McRae was a founding member of the Union of Australian Women 50 years ago. On her death, a friend wrote:

'Doris McRae was a woman who knew peace and human rights could be achieved throughout the world. She never ceased to play her part.'



Joy Mein, OBE
Joy Mein

Community service and political leadership

Mrs Joy Mein, OBE, born in Melbourne in 1918, was the first Women State President of any major political party in Australia. Internationally she is, and has been since 1990, the Chairman of the International Democrat Union, IWDU.

Joy spent her youth in metropolitan Melbourne. With her brother, two years her senior, she developed a sound understanding of the business world from her father who was a successful business owner, and a love and empathy for rural Australia from her mother, an accomplished violinist, who grew up in Ballarat.

She was formally educated at St Margaret's Girls' School and, from an early age, demonstrated an interest in community matters and an understanding of the importance of the role of the volunteer. After finishing secondary school at eighteen, Joy became a member of the Red Cross Link of Service. She continued active involvement with the Red Cross after she married in 1941 and moved to an isolated country property 54 miles from Hay. Through the difficult war years that saw rural Australia plagued with drought, dust storms and petrol rationing, Joy assisted her husband run a large sheep station and still travelled long distances to volunteer her time to the Red Cross.

Joy's life long involvement with community groups, voluntary organisations and ultimately her understanding

that women have a special and distinctive contribution to make, has led to her public acclaim. In 1997 Joy received the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal for her active contribution '*to the life, progress and welfare of the Victorian community*'. In 1981 she was presented with the prestigious Award of the OBE for '*outstanding service to the community*'.

From her first position in 1938 as secretary to the managing director of Engineering Products Pty Ltd, to her 30 years as a Director of an engineering business, Joy continued her interest her interest and commitment to community matters and the advancement of women.

Her interest in rural women and Liberal politics led to her election as Country Vice-President 1973-76, and ultimately as the President of the Liberal Party of Australia, Victorian Division. She continued her involvement as Federal Vice-President 1980-91 and then as State Treasurer 1992-96.

Joy worked constantly to encourage and promote the participation of women in politics. Her recognition that the international exchange of ideas served to wipe away the prejudices which even now in so many parts of the world keep well qualified women from public life, led to her involvement, and ultimate Chairmanship, of the Pacific Democrat Union Women's Committee in 1982.



Noreen Minogue, AM
Noreen Minogue

Red Cross

Noreen Minogue's distinguished career began in 1941 when she joined the Australian Red Cross as a volunteer. She took up a staff appointment as personal assistant to the head of Red Cross Youth and Publicity while continuing to study Law part-time at the University of Melbourne. In 1963, Noreen was appointed to the national position of Deputy Secretary-General which she held until her retirement in 1986. During that time, she acted as Secretary-General for periods of up to a year and was seconded to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation in Geneva for special relief and development assignments.

Between 1972 and 1974, Noreen played a key role as a member of the Australian Government delegation to the Diplomatic Conference for the development of Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions (Protocols 1 & 2). As the foundation Executive Officer of the National International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Advisory Committee for Australian Red Cross, Noreen was instrumental in developing an IHL profile in all States and was a member of that Committee until 1994.

Following her retirement, Noreen was invited to Geneva by the ICRC in 1998 to assist with the preparation of international celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary

of the Red Cross movement. Between 1988 and 1994, she worked as the national Research and Advisory Assistant on HIV Litigation for Australian Red Cross. In 1994, Noreen served as Acting Deputy Secretary-General prior to the appointment of a new Secretary General.

Within the Victorian Division of Australian Red Cross, Noreen took up the position of Chair, IHL Advisory Committee in 1992 and continued in this role until October 1998. This was a period of significant development for IHL in Victoria through the establishment of the Australian Red Cross Chair of International Humanitarian Law at the University of Melbourne, the highly acclaimed 1997 Conference on International Humanitarian Law and the growth of the IHL Department and activities. Noreen also contributed to the successful work of Australian Red Cross in Victoria (ARCV) through her membership of the ARCV Executive and Council until October 2000.

For her tireless efforts and commitment to Australian Red Cross over the decades, Noreen has been awarded the AM and the following Australian Red Cross awards, Distinguished Service Award (1996), Medal for Meritorious Service (1972) and Honorary Life Membership (1978).



Merle Mitchell, AM

Merle Mitchell

Social justice advocacy

Merle Mitchell has recently been elected to her second two year term as President of the Australian Council of Social Services. She has been involved in honorary positions with ACOSS and the Victorian Council of Social Service for over a decade – having been VCOSS President from 1984-87 and on the ACOSS Board from 1985.

She has been involved in policy development and advocacy on social security and taxation issues affecting low-income people and has served on a number of senior government advisory groups at the national and state levels.

She has a particular commitment to ensuring services are relevant and accessible to people of non-English speaking backgrounds. This stems from her day-to-day work for the last 30 years in the outer Melbourne suburb of Springvale, which has a high migrant and refugee population.

Merle is much admired for her commitment to social justice and her inclusive approach to decision making.

Lady Elizabeth Mitchell, CBE



Country Women's Association

Lady Elizabeth Mitchell's life was dedicated to humanity and good works.

She was the daughter of Dr. Morrison, the first Headmaster of Scotch College. Her husband, Sir Edward Mitchell, KCMG was for many years Leader of the Victorian Bar.

In 1915, she was working in the headquarters of the Australian Red Cross in London. When the Australian Detachment was formed, she was its Commandant. In 1918 she was awarded the CBE for her services.

On returning to Australia in 1919, she was active in organising the 'Society of Overseas Settlement for British Women' in Victoria.

Her flair for organising was outstanding and she associated with many philanthropic schemes, which included the Bush Nursing Hospitals.

Early in 1928, Lady Somers, wife of the State Governor, asked her help in starting the Country Women's Association in Victoria, and she became the first State President, holding that position for two years and later for a further term.

Her wise counsel helped the Association over many a stony path in the early years, and her vision and ideals were an inspiration to all who knew and worked with her.

Country women greatly benefited from Elizabeth's work and the friendships she engendered.



Vicki Mitsos

Ethnic communities support

Vicki Mitsos began her career as a self-employed dairy farmer Vicky. She slowly became involved in multicultural affairs first as an interpreter, then community development officer and finally as a counsellor.

Vicky has worked closely with the ethnic communities in Shepparton and District ensuring they develop skills in working together to improve their services and conditions. Vicky has also developed a close working relationship with the peak multicultural bodies in Victoria constantly ensuring that the experiences, needs and stories of Victoria's regional ethnic communities are heard and included and incorporated into planning and services.

Vicki has worked to ensure that regional Victoria has the necessary English language classes, vocational training and services so that migrants arriving in Australia – either as refugees or skilled migrants – can look to the Goulburn Valley as a legitimate alternative to settling in the Metropolitan areas.

Examples include the establishment of NAATI examinations in the Goulburn Valley Region. Vicky was instrumental in fundraising \$900,000 in 96 days for the Shepparton Multicultural Hostel. This provides a culturally appropriate hostel to ensure that the needs of the ageing members of the community are met without them needing to leave their families and communities.

Vicki has also become involved in many organisations including President of Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District since 1990, Commissioner for the Victorian Multicultural Commission since 1998, Executive Member for Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria 1997-2000, Sydney Olympic Torch Committee, City of Greater Shepparton 1999, CHIS Board appointee 1999, Member of Shepparton Iraqi Advisory Committee 1999, and Member of DEET/DSS Advisory Committee 1997 onwards.

Vicki has also received the Hellenic Distinction for Victoria 1998, the 1997 Woman of the Year, Business Professional 1997, National Rural Woman delegate 1997 and North East Victorian Woman of the Year 1997.



Leonie Morgan

Leonie Morgan

Women in decision making

Leonie Morgan's vision, advocacy, professionalism and commitment to Australian women is demonstrated by her introducing the concept of EMILY'S List to Australia and negotiating its successful establishment and growth.

Leonie Morgan, BEd, MEd, GradDip Women's Studies, has extensive experience in policy and program development, evaluation and implementation, and people and project management. Her particular expertise and commitment is in the area of diversity and equity across the private, public and community sectors.

Leonie is currently auditing the Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training of policies and programs to promote diversity and inclusiveness. Other current projects include the development of a *Women's Participation Information Kit* to provide advice to new women local government councillors. This project is being done for the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association and will be a companion volume to *A Gender Agenda*, an information kit Leonie developed in 1998-99 to encourage women to stand for local government election.

Leonie also works part-time for the Australian Film Commission managing the Women in Television Project. This Project, funded in partnership with the Nine Network, Seven Network, Network Ten, ABC and SBS, aims to advance the careers of women across Australian television.

Leonie's career has spanned many program areas. These include education, employment, training, equal opportunity, workers compensation and human services. She has worked as a teacher, equal opportunity officer, researcher for a community organisation, public sector project manager and as a senior manager in the Public Service.

Leonie's community action is currently focused on ensuring more women are represented in political decision making with a focus on local, state and federal parliaments. She does this through her continuing representation on the Victorian Women's Coalition, EMILY's List Australia, co-convenor Victorian EMILY's List Advisory Group, Victorian ALP Women's Policy Committee President and the Victorian Local Government Women's Participation Project.

As an active member of the National Committee of EMILY's List Australia she has, to date, devoted seven years to guaranteeing the successful establishment and perpetuation of EMILY's List in Australia.

There seems no doubt that EMILY's List Australia may not have been established so quickly, if at all, without the extensive research, advocacy and pioneering work undertaken by Leonie during the early 1990s.

Leonie is on the *Honour Roll* for her energy, commitment and ongoing advocacy for women to be equally represented in political decision making across Australia.

Nora Morrisroe

Arts

Nora Morrisroe is a dedicated teacher and administrator, working untiringly to help the young musicians of our community. She has devoted her whole working life to assisting the musical development and appreciation of our youth, many of whom have gone on to make fine careers in the musical field throughout the world.

Locally, on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, to the national level, she is recognised as a gifted and generous music educator. She has taught at a number of country and city Victorian high schools and introduced comprehensive music programs for tuition and performance into each school. She has assisted in curriculum development for music as a key learning area on the VCE Board of Studies and the National Curriculum.

From 1997 onwards, Nora taught at Canterbury Girls' Secondary College and increased the number of small chamber ensembles, established the Canterbury Orchestra and Junior Choir as well as maintaining the four concert bands, stage band and two chamber string orchestras.

From 1988-96, Nora was Co-ordinator of the Statewide Music Resource Centre that she established to ensure a specialised music reference and loan service was provided to all schools.

She wrote the initial *Arts: Music Discussion Paper* and assisted with planning and presenting the 1994, 1995 and 1996 professional development programs as part of the National Music Teacher's Professional Development. Her annual Music Teacher's Resource Guide provided an annotated listing of resource centres, support organisation, performing artists and other programs developed for schools, as well as University entrance requirements for music courses.

In 1997, Nora had a Paul Harris Fellow bestowed by the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International and in 1999 she was given Life Membership of the Australian Music Educators' Association. Nora's life is truly dedicated to music education.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, AC, DBE

Philanthropy

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch was born in Toorak and educated at Clyde School, Woodend. From her early years she has actively and enthusiastically supported her lifelong interests: children's health and welfare, the arts, and gardening.

In 1933, at 24 years old she joined the Board of Management of the Royal Children's Hospital and from 1954-65 held the position of President. She was a founding Trustee of the Taralye Council for Children with Impaired Hearing.

Dame Elisabeth has been an influential patron of the arts and she was the first woman to be appointed Trustee of the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968. She is now an Emeritus

Trustee of the Gallery. As well, she has been a member of the Boards of Management of both the McClelland Art Gallery and Sculpture Park, Langwarrin, and the Victorian Tapestry Workshop.

Dame Elisabeth helped to establish the Elisabeth Murdoch Chair of Landscape Architecture at the University of Melbourne and was for 27 years a member of the Maude Gibson Gardens Trust, in support of the Royal Botanical Gardens and Herbarium.

Dame Elisabeth lives by her belief that, '*A caring role in the community gives me the greatest happiness.*'



Joy Murphy Wandin

Wurundjeri Elder and community leadership

Joy Murphy Wandin is an elder of the Wurundjeri People of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Region. She has been actively involved in Aboriginal Affairs for over 30 years and held positions in Executive Policy and Community Development in all Levels of Government.

She has a keen interest in the Arts and has produced and directed local, national and international performing arts projects over the past five years. She is a storyteller, writes short stories and is currently working on a television mini series.

Joy has worked in the Department of Premier & Cabinet as Executive Officer of the Victorian Aboriginal Interim Committee, in the Ministry of Planning & Environment, Aboriginal Affairs & Projects Branch, the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Unit and the Museum of Victoria.

She has also worked at the local level as the Aboriginal Community Development Officer in the Shire of Yarra Ranges and as a Tribal mentor of the Victorian Equal Opportunity Board/Anti Discrimination Tribunal for ten years.

From 1994-99 Joy was a committee member of the National Indigenous Reference Group of the Australian Local Government Association.

From 1996-99 she was a Board Member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Aboriginal Affairs. In 1999, she was awarded an honorary professorship by Swinburne University of Technology. In 2000, she became a Trustee of the National Gallery of Victoria.

For the past six years, Joy has been privileged and proud to give traditional Welcome to Wurundjeri Land on many occasions.

Some of the visitors she has welcomed to her land include: Mohammed Ali, Michael Jackson, Cardinal Martini, Xanana Gusmao, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip, Nelson Hurricane Carter and Naomi Campbell.

Joy has worked with many people in Victoria to raise awareness and understanding of reconciliation with the first peoples of Australia. They include private and public schools, local government, numerous religious denominations, corporate businesses and community groups.

Her work for the Aboriginal community for over the past 30 years has been outstanding and an inspiration to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.



Judith Newnham
Judith Newnham

Red Cross

Mrs Judith Newnham joined the Mordialloc Unit of Australian Red Cross Victoria (ARCV) in 1968 and was its secretary from 1971-74. She attained First Aid Certificates in 1969-71, a Home Nursing Certificate in 1972 and qualified for her First Aid Medallion in 1972.

Judy left the State of Victoria to live in New South Wales in 1974 and while there joined Hills Detachment NSW in 1975, regularly attending meetings and working voluntarily at the Psychiatric Hospital, Paramatta, FESPIC Games (disabled) and Marathon Runs. Judy taught first aid in numerous elementary schools, senior classes and for the Girl Guides, helped with the Army Training Company and taught CPR. Judy also assisted at first aid posts for the annual Castle Hill Show and local sporting events.

On her return to Victoria in 1980 Judy re-joined the Mordialloc Unit. She obtained her instructor's certificate with special mention of the high standard she attained in her first aid training. In 1981, after leaving Mordialloc, and moving to South Melbourne, she was instrumental in forming the Southport Red Cross unit after seeing a need in the area. After becoming secretary of this unit Judy was elected as Regional Chairman to the newly formed City Metropolitan Region.

In 1983, following the Ash Wednesday bushfires Judy received a Letter of Commendation for her work during this disaster.

In 1983, Judy became ARCV's first full-time paid First Aid Instructor. With the completion of these courses she joined the Training Department and in 1988 became Assistant Manager of the Health and Safety Education Department, ARCV. As a First Aid instructor, Judy was chosen to travel to Papua New Guinea in 1991 to teach local government and community groups first aid. In 1994 Judy's reputation as an authority on first aid once again made her the obvious choice to work with a team of three on the new *First Aid Manual*. Having completed the manual she then worked on writing a guide to accompany the manual.

After completing these projects, Judy moved back to voluntary work. From 1987-94 Judy was a member of the Australian Resuscitation Team. Judy was elected Regional Chairman in 1997 and currently still holds this position. Judy is currently on the First Aid Advisory Committee, a member of both Divisional Council and Divisional Executive of ARCV and Chairman of Working Party for Commonwealth Games 2006 First Aid. In November 2000 and February 2001 Judy represented the Red Cross in Canberra at the National Council and the National Executive.

Judy's knowledge and expertise in first aid, her dedication and commitment to the Australian Red Cross, and her untiring efforts in the community make her a truly deserving candidate for this recognition of her service.

Elizabeth Nissen



Red Cross and first aid

Elizabeth Eleanor Nissen has served the community for over 60 years primarily as a voluntary aid. She has distinguished herself by exceptional and great devotion to victims of countless disasters.

South Eastern Australia is particularly vulnerable to bush fires and rural communities are severely affected with major stock losses, property damage and, worst of all, there is often loss of human life with many others injured or dispossessed.

Elizabeth has contributed much to the relief of these human tragedies. Our disaster-prone State can also be afflicted by windstorms and a whole variety of incidents including house fires and industrial accidents. Elizabeth has never spared herself in meeting these all too frequent challenges.

Her earlier years were spent mainly in direct involvement in disaster relief in a practical way, using her very considerable skills as a voluntary aid. Additionally, she was committed to training programs and community education. As the years passed, Elizabeth became more senior and experienced and her role changed. Increasingly she played a more prominent part in disaster management, rather than attend at the scene, she inspired the acceptance and development of Red Cross training programs and worked towards their successful implementation.

For over 50 years she has been associated with First Aid and Home Nursing training and is a highly qualified instructor.

Elizabeth has instructed and examined hundreds of adults and schoolchildren and was a major contributor towards the compilation of the *Red Cross First Aid Manual*.

Her record is a long history of commitment and service at all levels of the Red Cross and other community organisations as a voluntary aid, first aider, trainer, committee member, officer-bearer and many other roles. She has been honoured by receiving municipal awards for service to community immunisation campaigns, the Australian Assistance Plan, Citizens Advice Bureau, Aged Care and others. Her Red Cross Awards are numerous, including the Service Award (1958), Distinguished Service Award (1968), Meritorious Service Award (1969), Honorary Life Membership (1982) and the Florence Nightingale Award (1987).

Elizabeth served as Vice Chairman of the Victorian Division of Australian Red Cross Victoria, was a member of the National Health and Safety Education Committee, and has chaired or been a member of numerous other Red Cross Committees over the many years she has served the organisation.

Elizabeth remains an office-bearer of the Brighton Red Cross and continues to support and dedicate her time to fundraising and to the services of Australian Red Cross Victoria.



Dame Ada Norris, DBE

Status of women

Dame Ada Norris was dedicated to raising the status of women. She chaired the UNAA Victoria Status of Women Committee for many years, and when International Women's Year 1975 was proposed she was responsible for forming the UNAA Status of Women Committee to be a focus for the year, and a means of informing the community on the issues. This committee was so successful that it became a Committee for the Decade of Women. Dame Ada chaired it until 1980.

Dame Ada was a highly intelligent woman with a great understanding of the need for raising the status of women. She attended Melbourne High School, then the University of Melbourne where she was awarded a DipEd in 1924 and an MA in 1926. She received an Hon. LLD (Melb) in 1980. She married J.G. Norris (later Judge Norris) in 1929. She was a teacher in Leongatha High School and Melbourne High School 1925-29. After her marriage she devoted herself to voluntary community work except for the war years when there was a shortage of teachers.

Dame Ada was always very generous in her support for younger women, and she was a great mentor. In 1961-63 she was Australia's representative at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which she found very stimulating. In those days it was always a leading NGO woman who was the Australian representative to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. She was the first Australian woman to become a member of the Order of St Michael and St George.

She was the President of the National Council of Women (NCW) of Victoria 1951-54, and Australian President 1967-70. In 1969 she wanted to increase the status of women in Papua New Guinea, and she raised the idea of a Hall of Residence for Women at the University of Papua New Guinea. She chaired an appeal committee from 1969-73, with Dame Margaret Guilfoyle as Treasurer. They succeeded.

Dame Ada became an enthusiastic supporter of the International Council of Women (ICW). She convened the ICW Migration Committee and was an Australian representative to ICW from 1950-71. She was NCW representative on the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council 1950-71. She threw herself behind such issues as Japanese wives of Australian servicemen to become citizens.

Dame Ada formed the Old People's Welfare Council, which later became the Victoria Council on the Ageing. This led to the formation of similar Councils in all States. She also devoted herself to those suffering from a disability, and was made patron of the Victoria Society for Crippled Children and Adults, which became the Yooralla Society of Victoria. She was Hon. Secretary of the Society from 1935-51, and Vice-President from 1951-76. She was a life member of ACROD.

She has written the history of the Victoria Society for Crippled Children and Adults, *The Society* 1974, and the history of the NCW of Victoria, *Champions of the Impossible* 1978.



Ailsa O'Connor

Arts and community

Ailsa O'Connor was born in Victoria in 1921. When she began her art training there were only five art teachers in training for the whole of Victoria. Like many other women at the time she put her own struggles aside to campaign for humanitarian causes. Ailsa and her associates who founded the Union of Australian Women, lived the feminist principle that 'politics is the personal'. Ailsa's enduring success was to link her art to society, both in the themes she developed in her art works and in the essays she prepared to explain to others the role of art in society. Like many other women for years her '*bit of sketching*' had to fit round the edges of family and work, the struggle to survive.

While for many years she was an art teacher in government secondary schools, including Flemington High, she also found

time to organise the Asian Australian Child Art Exchange in 1953-56 – a brave attempt to counter the Cold War and anti-Asian climate of the time. Later she exhibited her drawings and sculptures, completing a number of commissions.

Her sculpture 'Mary Gilbert' – representing the blacksmith's wife who was the first immigrant woman to settle in Melbourne – was purchased by the City of Melbourne in 1975 and is on display in the Fitzroy Gardens. Another piece is in the collection of St Catherine's Girls' Grammar School. Ailsa died in her late fifties, her potential not fully realised.

Fifty years ago, Ailsa was a founding member of the Union of Australian Women and remained active on behalf of working women till her death in 1981.



Margaret Oates, AM

Margaret Oates

Assistance to women and children and aged in inner city areas

In 1988, Margaret Oates was honoured by the Bicentennial Authority as one of 200 'Unsung Heroes and Heroines', in 1989 she was Citizen of the Year, City of Collingwood and in 1997 Citizen of the Year, City of Yarra.

In 1998, she featured in the *Oh! Mrs Oates* ABC documentary, 1988 and *The Angel of Collingwood* Channel 7 documentary.

For over 50 years Margaret provided love, succour, material assistance, and endless non-judgemental support to the young and old in the inner-city of Collingwood. She was an unassuming but indefatigable community leader – helping to establish and guide community services and contributing to policy development on the prevention of social problems of her time.

Her roles include being a voluntary community worker for the Society of St Vincent De Paul and a Founding Mother and unpaid Chairperson of Share Care. She was Co-founder of the Yarra Drug and Health Forum and a Community activist on many local issues such as the redevelopment of the Good Shepherd Convent site and supporter of the Collingwood Children's Farm.

Margaret has made a significant contribution to the establishment of Share Care – a community managed foster care program, recognised by the Department of Human Services in 2001 as best practice in respite care. She was also involved in the Margaret Oates Soup Kitchen, and the Yarra Drug and Health forum, Margaret has been described as occasional foster mother, everybody's grandmother and an earthly angel.

She was motivated by spiritual values and deep Christian faith, but she never evangelised nor discriminated. She was a staunch supporter of women's rights and a model for women's achievements. Her clarity came from an uncomplicated conviction that we are all responsible for our community's children. She showed us how to support struggling parents, and when they failed from time to time, she showed us how community networks were the essential backstop in providing children with identity and a sense of belonging. In a post-modern world, she affirmed unfashionable values of charity and unprofessionalised caring, and her lessons continue to enrich our lives.



Lecki Ord

Lecki Ord

First Woman Lord Mayor of Melbourne

'As Lord Mayor I had opportunities to try new experiences which gave me a better self-knowledge and which influenced my personal values.'

In 1987, Lecki Ord became the 46th Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne – the first woman to achieve this position.

She graduated with a Fellowship Diploma of Architecture from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology 1975.

A year later she also gained a Diploma of Education (Primary). These two disciplines were combined as she became involved in the use, management and design of community-based childcare centres in the inner-Melbourne area.

She has become involved and taken responsibility for community and public affairs and represented the community in a wide variety of contexts.

In particular Lecki's experience of chairing committees of the Melbourne City Council, and then becoming Melbourne's first female Lord Mayor during the bicentennial year 1988 opened up opportunities to negotiate with governments, communicate

through the media, show leadership in advocating human values, formulate and present ideas, participate in the management of a corporation of 3000 workers, host many events for thousands of international visitors, and launch Melbourne's 1996 Olympic Bid.

From 1989-96 she was involved in the setting up of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre in central Melbourne, salvaging part of the historic hospital building for a focal point for women to meet and exchange ideas in an inclusive and supportive environment.

Lecki and her husband have raised two children and developed an architectural and strategic facility planning practice.

In twenty years this has become a leader in computer-based information systems for the building industry, particularly in database development.

Currently, Lecki is a director of her own company which specialises in resource planning, pre-design analyses and other architectural services.

Nurcihan Ozturk



Leadership in industry

Nurcihan Ozturk was seven years old when she arrived in Australia from Turkey with her family in 1969.

Nurcihan learnt at a very young age of the needs of newly arrived migrants to Australia. From a young age she had to learn how to interpret and translate for her family and friend of the family.

Nurcihan left school after completing year eight and entered the workforce. She started work in a clothing factory making tee-shirts and sweatshirts. Even though she was only a junior she was expected to produce the same as the adult workers. Finding this unfair, she handed her notice to her employer who would not accept it as they believed she was too young to resign. The employer asked her to bring her parents to the factory, when she did, she told her employer that if they expected her to produce the same as the adults, the company should pay her the same wages as the adults. At sixteen years of age Nurcihan started to receive adult wages and began her life in the Trade Union Movement.

After working in the clothing industry for many years and holding a delegates position, she was asked to join her Union, the Clothing & Allied Trade Union (CATU). She started as an Occupational Health & Safety Officer in 1985. In her fifteen years in the Union, Nurcihan has moved through the ranks of the Union Movement.

Nurcihan's experience of being a first generation migrant has assisted not only herself, but many people during her years in the Union Movement.

Nurcihan has held a number of positions within her Union, as Occupational Health and Safety Officer and Trainer, Union Organiser and Industrial Officer. She has held her current position as the Assistant State Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Textiles, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia (TCFUA) for the past six years.

Apart from the internal Union positions, Nurcihan has also represented her Union in the following positions: the first Turkish/Australian Unionist delegate to the Asian and Pacific Region, Women's Committee Chairperson and as a delegate to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and ACTU Youth Committee.

Nurcihan's achievements include being the first Turkish woman to hold an elected position within the Trade Union Movement.

Nurcihan is also active in the Turkish Saturday School as Secretary.

Nurcihan is a dedicated Unionist, keen to serve the members that she represents. She is a strong determined woman and can stand up to any challenge.

'Nettie' (Janet) Palmer

Literary culture

Born Janet Higgins at Bendigo in 1885, she studied languages in Europe before completing her Master of Arts at the University of Melbourne in 1912. As a student of comparative literature she knew French, German and Greek and later in life studied Spanish in order to be able to read Latin American literature.

In 1914 she married Vance Palmer and together they became immensely influential in Australian literary circles in general, but particularly in Melbourne, although they also lived for a time in Queensland (1925-29). Their literary partnership and their extensive literary contacts at home and overseas form the basis of *Fourteen Years* (1948), extracts from the journal kept by Nettie between 1925 and 1939. In the words of the *Oxford Companion to Australian Literature*, this constitutes a unique document in Australian Literature. It was re-published in 1988 along with a selection of her poetry, articles, reviews and essays.

During the 1920s and the 1930s, Nettie's literary journalism was exceptionally important in bringing Australian writers to public attention and in developing serious critical approaches. She also did important work in keeping Australian readers in contact with international literary movements and writers. Journals to which she contributed included the *Australian Woman's Mirror*, *The Bulletin*, *The Argus*, *The Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*, *Brisbane Sunday Mail* and *Brisbane Telegraph*, and from 1928-38 wrote a personal column for *All About Books*. In the 1940s and 1950s she was frequently heard on radio for the ABC and she gave several lectures in the Commonwealth Literary Fund lecture series.

In 1924, she published *Modern Australian Literature* (1900-23), the first systematically critical study of contemporary twentieth century writing. At this stage she, like most of the Australian public, was unaware of the identity of the expatriate Henry Handel Richardson, who is therefore not included in the study. A mutual acquaintance, Mary Kernot, enlightened her, and this led to a long correspondence between the two and to a determination on Palmer's part to gain an Australian audience for Richardson's work. Palmer's *Henry Handel Richardson*, published in 1950, was the first full-length study of the writer.

Nettie is sometimes seen as having subjugated her own talent to that of her husband, for whose novels she frequently did research, and she was by no means unaware of feminist issues involved in dual career families. She worked hard to ensure that women novelists and poets received due recognition in literary circles. In recent times the distinctive nature of her role in developing Australian literature has been recognised in studies such as Vivian Smith's *Vance and Nettie Palmer* (1975) and Drusilla Modjeska's *Exiles at Home: Australian Women Writers* (1981) as well as in her separate entry in the *Oxford Companion to Australian Literature*.

When the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards were established in 1985, the non-fiction award was named for Nettie in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the development within the community of a national literary culture.

Professor Judith Parker

Nursing education

Professor Judith Parker has been involved in nursing education since 1963, particularly in the transition of nursing education from a hospital based system to the tertiary sector, where she is an acknowledged scholar and leader. She has been the Foundation Professor of two university Schools of Nursing and the Foundation Editor of the Australian based international nursing journal, *Nursing Inquiry*.

Judith has made a significant contribution to the community from a female dominated profession, which when she started her training in 1954 was typified as a handmaiden vocational roll. Amongst her major achievements, are her influence on the nursing profession and her research. Judith's PhD thesis was 'Cancer Passage: Continuity and Discontinuity in Terminal Illness' and she has continued with significant studies in this area of grief and palliative care.

She has published extensively in national and international journals and books. She has also undertaken research in the following areas: nursing labour force; evaluation of palliative care; twenty four hour home nursing; critical care education; patient progress notes; handover; narratives of nursing; recording nursing practice; best practice rosters; nursing case mix; evidence based nursing; nurse practitioner evaluation; and palliative care.

She has been on the boards of management of the Wesley Central Mission, the Alfred Group of Hospitals, Victorian

Hospitals Association, Victorian Palliative Care Education and Training Committee, Very Special Kids, Case Management Society of Australia, Victorian Case mix Consortium and is a current Director of the Victorian Centre for Evidence Based Nursing Practice and the Victorian Centre for Nursing Practice Research.

Judith has written many papers for both Australian and International audiences. Quality nursing practice is her focus. She has represented the nursing profession on Commonwealth and State government committees over the past decades.

She has three remarkable firsts, two foundation chairs and the first Editor of *Nursing Inquiry*. Her major professional interests are discipline development in nursing through research and scholarship; policy practice and training in home and ambulatory care; organisational change and educational administration; historical and philosophical issues in nursing; feminist thought in nursing and looking after the whole person.

Her contribution to Australian nursing has been a leading force in changing approaches to patient care. She established the Victorian Centre for Nursing Practice Research to bring together often competing stakeholders from health and tertiary sectors into a collaborative effort.

Mary Paton



Nursing mothers

Mary Paton saw the need for establishing a network of support for mothers, in particular breastfeeding mothers. In 1964, Mary held the first meeting in her home and enlisted the help of five other ladies and founded the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA). These women, with Mary in a very active leading role, worked to establish the association with a constitution and a strict code of ethics. Continuing with counselling mothers and organising education of all officers of the association, Mary also liaised with government departments and medical associations to improve knowledge available to mothers and their medical advisers. Mary was the first public face of the NMAA.

Mary was the inspiration behind the Nursing Mothers International Workshop, titled Nurturing Tomorrows World, the first international meeting of mothers representing breastfeeding groups, held in Sydney in 1981. Women representing eighteen countries together with noted health professionals, met for four days. The Workshop was opened by Lady Cowen, wife of the Governor-General and the

agenda included organisation and management, coping with rapid growth, the physiological, medical and social factors influencing lactation.

The work of Mary and the NMAA has led to an increase in breastfeeding awareness, an increase in breastfeeding rates and a greater awareness in the value of breast milk. The NMAA has established an amazing network for women to support each other and to give women the opportunity to contribute to their community and their own growth. The NMAA has more requests for counselling each year than there are babies born in a year in Australia. At present there are over 380 Nursing Mother groups nationwide with 145,000 members over 35 years.

Mary has been an inspiration to members of the Nursing Mother's Association and wider community for over 35 years. The association Mary established is a voluntary organisation and has helped thousands of women around Australia to confidently breastfeed their babies.



Sister Muriel Peck

Infant welfare

Sister Muriel Peck, a pioneering nurse in the infant welfare movement in Victoria, was appointed Sister in Charge of the first Victorian Baby Health Clinic (VBHC) established in Richmond in 1917. This clinic resulted from the efforts of Dr Isabella Younger Ross, Mesdames Hemple and Ramsay and the Richmond City Council which initially provided space. In conjunction with the subsequent emergence of several other inner city baby health clinics or centres, the Victorian Baby Health Centre Association (VBHCA) emerged.

Sister Muriel's salary was soon to be paid by the Municipal Council, subsidised on a 50/50 basis by the State Government. Sister Muriel came well equipped for this pioneering position having augmented her Australian nursing qualifications with studies at the Royal Sanitary Institute in London. She also studied with Dr Eric Pritchard, Head of the Association of Schools for Mothers and Infant Consultations and leader during World War I of all the voluntary infant welfare organisations in England.

On Sister Muriel's return to Victoria before taking the Richmond job she had worked for the Talbot Institute, educating new mothers in their homes about how to ensure a safe supply of milk for their children, a challenging task in those days.

In 1920 she was appointed Matron of the newly opened VBHCA Training School for Infant Welfare Nurses, becoming the first nurse to be employed by the VBHCA. During this period she also travelled for the VBHCA,

promoting its work in various contexts thus influencing the development of many pioneering infant welfare nurses and centres throughout Victoria. Most well known perhaps is her contribution to lecturing and consulting with parents and children and advising mothers about their babies through the Women's Section of the Victorian Railways Better Farming Train. This train travelled regularly to many farming areas in Northern Victoria. Often as many as 800 people came to consult with her about their babies and attended the lectures and demonstrations she conducted in the train as it stopped at various stations.

In 1927, she joined the Victorian Public Health Department to become Assistant to the First Director of Infant Welfare, Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown whose position had been established in October 1926. As well as her work on the train, she participated in important program planning and implementation, Sister Muriel continued her distinguished community education work across the burgeoning spectrum of infant welfare services. She also acted as an inspector, giving advice on buildings and equipment and maintaining open negotiations between the Health Department and the Municipal Councils. Her publications *Your Baby* and *Motherhood and its Preparation* were widely consulted. According to an obituary published at the time of her death, she patented the widely acclaimed Baby Safe Cot and the CoolSafe for mothers without refrigeration in their homes.

In the early 1940s ill health led to her resignation from the Health Department. She died in 1947 after a lifetime of devotion to the well being of mothers and babies.



Janet Powell
Janet Powell

Community leadership

Janet Powell was born in Nhill, Victoria in 1942. She trained as a secondary school teacher and throughout her personal, professional, community and political life, Janet has always shown her dedication and passion for the rights of women. This dedication has been a constant in her life, whether in her role as a senator, mother or as President of YWCA Victoria.

Janet was the Federal Parliamentary Leader of the Australian Democrats 1990-91. She served as Temporary Chair of Committees and Acting Deputy President of The Senate 1987-89, including Committee of Privileges, Scrutiny of Bills Committee, Legal and Constitutional Committee, Transport and Communication Committee and various select committees.

Janet was the first woman to attain passage through both Houses of a Private Member's Bill. The Bill banned the print

advertising of tobacco products. Passed in 1989, it was only the thirteenth Private Member's Bill since Federation

Her political activity includes State President and National Deputy President of the Australian Democrats 1984-86.

She has been a community and parent representative on various education and youth-related councils and committees in the Northern Region of Victoria 1974-86.

Janet is currently President of the Friends of the ABC, Director of the Anti-Gun lobby, immediate past President of the YWCA, Victoria 1994-2000. She was Deputy Chair, National Multicultural Advisory Council (advising the Prime Minister through the Office of Multicultural Affairs), 1993-96.

When women need action, Janet is always there.



Jeanne Pratt, AO *Jeanne Pratt*

Philanthropist for arts and community

Jeanne Pratt was born in Lowicz in Poland and migrated to Australia as an infant just prior to the outbreak of World War II, where she grew up in Sydney. Educated at Sydney Girls' High School, and Sydney University, she became a journalist and feature writer for some years in both television and print. After her marriage to Richard Pratt in 1959, she continued her career, most notably as a reported on the Channel Nine program *No Man's Land*.

Jeanne has devoted much of her life to community service through her support of an extraordinary range of philanthropic and arts activities. Jeanne sat on the Board of Melbourne Theatre Company for ten years and was a Director of Spoleto Melbourne, now Melbourne Festival for a similar period of time.

As the Chair of Arts 2000, the most ambitious collaborative arts event ever seen in Australia, she was instrumental in raising more than \$1 million for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Theatre Company, Opera Australia, The Australian Ballet and the Victorian Arts Centre. She is also a member of the Metropolitan Opera National Council in the United States and an Arts Angel at the Victorian Arts Centre. Jeanne is a Life Governor of Opera Foundation Australia and recently retired as its Chair.

Outside her arts involvement, Jeanne is a Director of Visy Board, a Director of Combined Emergency Services Victoria, a Trustee of the Epworth Medical Foundation for the past thirteen years and a Patron of Open Family Foundation.

Jeanne is a Director of her family's philanthropic arm the Pratt Foundation which donates about \$10 million a year to various groups, one of which, the Visy Cares Centre, is a unique one-stop shop for youth services in the Dandenong area of Melbourne.

Jeanne is also committed through patronage to Montefiore Homes for the Aged, Jewish Museum Australia, the National Centre for Women and the Museum of Lilydale and the Addiction Research Institute.

During the 1980s Richard and Jeanne acquired the National Trust classified property, Raheen, and made it their family home. The dedicated and painstaking restoration and extension of this magnificent property have been admired by many. Raheen has been made available for countless charitable functions, and since the mid 1980s it's estimated that this hospitality has raised \$80 million for charity.

In 1998, together with Richard, Jeanne established The Production Company. The Production Company is a non-profit organisation assembled to provide work opportunities for performers and others in the Arts and related industries, as well as establishing itself as a leading arts organisation presenting shows that are commercially viable. Jeanne is hands-on in all facets of the company.

Jeanne's work within the community was acknowledged by the Government in 1989 with an Order of Australia and again in 1998 when she was presented with a B'nai B'rith International Gold Medal for distinguished services to the community and to the Arts.



Tara Rajkumar
Tara Rajkumar

Arts and education

Tara Rajkumar has established a distinguished reputation as a brilliant performer and teacher of the Classical Indian Dance forms of Kathakali, earning high acclaim from both critics and the general public in Australia, the United Kingdom, Europe and India in a career spanning over 30 years including seventeen in Victoria. She has successfully taken her art form to traditional temple venues in India and to prestigious theatres such as the South Bank in London, the Opera House in Sydney and the Victorian Arts Centre in Melbourne.

After migrating to Australia in 1983, Tara set up the Natya Sudha School and Natya Sudha Dance Company in Melbourne. The school is recognised for its high standard of training in South Asian dance. Her numerous acclaimed productions from Melbourne have been toured in Australia, the United Kingdom, India, New Zealand and Thailand.

With the support of the Commission for the Future, Asia Link and Multicultural Arts Victoria she developed a unique cross-cultural project, Traditions in Transition, which culminated in a season of performances at the CUB Malthouse. She was Artistic Director of the project which brought together for the first time classical and contemporary dance from Japan, China and India, highlighting the contribution made to the Australian national cultural fabric by high calibre artists resident in Australia.

Tara was also artistic director and lead dancer of the Indian dance component in the Australian Festival of Asian Arts – From Japan to Venice programme – at the Victorian Arts Centre.

Tara's projects through the Academy in the UK and her work in Australia have been successful in creating a cultural bridge and forging a deeper understanding between the different communities including the host community. She developed, for the first time in Australia, a course, New Dance form Old Cultures, for undergraduate students at Monash University. Through such programmes, she has made Classical South Asian Dance accessible to the community at large.

Tara's work is featured in the Immigration Museum in Melbourne in recognition of her contribution to the community as an immigrant to Australia. For over 30 years, seventeen of these in Victoria, Tara has worked tirelessly to promote the awareness of Indian Classical dance and culture in a trans-migratory context in the Australia and the United Kingdom.

Through her distinguished and acclaimed contributions as a dancer, choreographer, artistic director, educator, researcher and communicator, she had demonstrated a strong and unswerving commitment to forge cultural bridges and a deeper understanding between the migrant South Asian community and the host community in Australia. Through her art forms she has made pioneering in roads into arts education and community service in Victoria.



Jill Reichstein, AM
Jill Reichstein

Leading edge philanthropist for social change

As Chair of the Lance Reichstein Foundation, Jill is actively involved in developing partnerships with the community groups the Foundation supports. After graduation from Monash University, Jill helped establish the first women's refuge in Victoria. She then went on to develop community based childcare for the City of Brunswick where she gained experience in social planning, community consultation and community development. After working at the Institute of Multicultural Affairs, Jill co-ordinated the Victorians Co-operative of Children's Services for Ethnic Groups. While Executive Officer to the Reichstein Foundation, she furthered its commitment towards progressive philanthropy and social change. Still actively involved in philanthropy, Jill acts as a consultant to a wide range of community groups on funding and organisational development.

Jill sits on several boards including the Foundation for Young Australians, the Community Support Fund Community Advisory Council of Australia Centre – Melbourne University, the Trust for Young Australians, the Turning Point – Drug and Alcohol Centre, Melbourne Community Foundation, Koori Heritage Trust, the DGL International. She is Chair of the Royal Children's Community Reference Group MHSKY – Mental Health Services for Kids and Youth. She is a Past President and has been a board member of Philanthropy Australia for the last ten years.

Jill's work and cutting edge team approach to social change has made a difference to many people's lives in Victoria and Australia.



Irene Renzenbrink
Irene Renzenbrink

Grief education and support

Irene Renzenbrink has had a varied and distinguished career and consistently contributed to the development of loss and grief theory, education and practice in Victoria, Australia and internationally.

A founding member of the National Association for Loss and Grief (Australia), which emerged as a direct result of the Granville Train Disaster in 1977, she was then instrumental in the development of the Victorian State Branch later in the same year.

For the past 24 years, Irene has been a vital force in the conception and development of support services for the community and professional education on issues and matters of loss and grief. In particular, her efforts have realised statewide and national developments related to palliative care and death and dying support services, which also resulted in the foundation of the Centre for Grief Education in Victoria of which she was also a founding member.

She has influenced the development of grief and bereavement programs and services in hospitals, pastoral care environments, community agencies, non-government services, chronic illness support agencies and palliative care services.

Her work has transcended state boundaries and also influenced the development of services in other states of Australia. In addition, she is a member of the prestigious International Working Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement and convenes a number of International Working Group Committees and Task Groups.

Irene's recent appointment to the Irish Hospice Foundation to develop palliative care and bereavement support services throughout Ireland acknowledges her skills, expertise and demonstrated track record as a leader and major contributor to grief education and support.



Mavis Robertson, AM

Industry superannuation

In 1998, on the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Mavis Robertson was named as one of 50 'Great Australians' by the Australian Human Rights Commission for her contribution to the protection of human rights and services to humanity.

Mavis attended Kew Primary School, Tintern CEGGS, and then the University of Melbourne. She then worked for the Eureka Youth League and later edited *Left Review*. She worked in the Peace Movement, Anti Vietnam War Movement, while being simultaneously involved in the Women's Liberation Movement.

Mavis is the National Spokesperson of Women in Super (WIS) the national network of women who work in the industry and lobby for appropriate pension provisions to the casual and part-time workforce who are mostly women. This network assists women to understand the retirement income system in Australia.

Under Mavis' guidance the Annual Mothers Day Classic Walk/Run is held in Sydney and Melbourne to raise awareness of breast cancer and raise money for research into the causes and treatments of breast cancer. In just three years of fund raising, WIS has raised a quarter of a million dollars for breast cancer research. As a direct result of her commitment to breast cancer research, she has been appointed as a Trustee of the National Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

Mavis also established with others the Jessie Street Trust in honour of a pioneering anti-war feminist. This Trust provides seeding grants to women and groups working for the concerns of Jessie Street's life – equality, peace and the rights of Aboriginal Australians.

In recognition of her commitment to world peace, Mavis was elected in the 1980s to the post of Vice-President of the International Peace Bureau, an early Nobel Peace Prize winner. She is the first Australian so honoured by this organisation.

Her compassion extended beyond wars involving Australia. Mavis raised money to support Chilean refugees fleeing from the coup against Chile's Allende Government in 1973, in particular through cultural tours of Chilean artists in exile, such as the now world renowned Inti Illimani.

Mavis became involved in the Superannuation (Pensions) Movement in 1984 when Australian building and construction unions made a claim for superannuation, a benefit which then did not exist in this highly mobile, casual industry. This was the beginning of compulsory superannuation in Australia.

She became one of the architects of industry superannuation which now delivers benefits to more than half of Australia's paid workforce, including most women.

Mavis Robertson, AM



In 1990, she initiated the Conference of Major Superannuation Funds (CMSF) which held its first conference in 1991. Today CMSF is the conference of choice for fund trustees of corporate, public sector and industry funds. Held annually in March it is a forum where government, industry regulators and community bodies seek to speak to Trustees and dialogue with them to find solutions to problems. Mavis is the Executive Chair of CMSF.

Mavis was the first women CEO of a national industry superannuation fund and the first Chair of an eligible rollover fund.

In 1991, Mavis became CEO of the then several funds of the Construction Industry and led the work to merge these funds into one in 1994. She remains a Director of C+BUS.

Today C+BUS (Construction and Building Superannuation) provides benefits for over 300,000 members Australia wide through more than 20,000 participating employers. C+BUS has more than \$3 billion of funds under management.

Mavis is a Foundation Director of Industry Fund Services (IFS) which initiated a range of new investment vehicles for superannuation fund members and employers including Super Members Home Loans, Super Business Loans, Industry Funds Property Trust and Development Australia Fund.

Mavis is honoured as the first woman in Australia to head up a major national Industry Superannuation Fund, C+BUS, and the first woman in Australia to chair the Australian

Preservation Fund (APF), the largest eligible rollover fund in Australia.

Mavis has spent her life working for wage justice for men and equal pay for women in the trade union movement and in the superannuation industry.

She has worked internationally for peace and been nationally recognised by the award of an AM. She assisted in the development of women's refuges in Sydney for women escaping domestic violence, and in the establishment of women's health centres.

Mavis saw women denied access to home loans, business loans and other financial services without a male co-signatory. She saw the need to ensure that women have access to financial services in their own right, and for women to be financially independent, both at paid work and during their retirement years.

Prior to the work undertaken by Mavis, the majority of Australian working women had no access to superannuation or retirement pensions. She continues to work to ensure women understand retirement income policy. She regularly speaks to international meetings and conferences on the Australian Retirement Incomes Policy. She is a member of the Washington-based Center for Working Capital.

Mavis is tireless in her efforts to improve the financial, social and political situation of women in Australia.



Irene Robins
Irene Robins

Community: Scouting

During her 84 years, Irene Robins was a shining example to others and a great inspiration to all who came in contact with her. She was Cub Leader for ten years of 11th Melbourne Scout Group, which was initially attached to the St Mary's Mission and later to St Peter's Anglican Church at Eastern Hill. She later became District Cub Leader of Melbourne District and then in 1959, Assistant District Commissioner for Cubs, which was a rare honour for a woman at that time.

Irene was born in 1916 and was raised by nuns as a foundling orphan at Travancore in Flemington. From the age of eleven, she was strongly influenced by priests associated with St Peter's. With only a basic education, Irene was determined to 'better herself'. She took night classes to improve her skills and become a clerk with ICI in East Melbourne. It was here that she remained until her retirement, decades later.

The children in the Melbourne area around Eastern Hill mostly came from broken homes (now termed single parent families) and therefore could not afford subscriptions to join the Scouts or cost of the uniform required and somehow Irene found the resources to ensure that each boy had a uniform and was able to enjoy fully the programmes provided by The Scout Association. Irene knew all her boys and became part of their families, providing support in many roles, including just being there to provide a pair of sympathetic ears for all who would confide in her.

To provide additional training for her Cubs from low income families, now extending to Fitzroy and Carlton, Irene wrote and produced scripts for *Melbourne District Cubby Capers*, a variety concert with a cast of over one hundred boys, all willing to take part in the show and thus learn self-confidence and self-esteem.

Irene also had a number of migrant children in her Cub Pack, including Russian, Greek, Italian and, at one stage ten Aboriginal boys. Her magic as a leader included all, regardless of their colour or race and she was able to have the boys' respect and teach them to learn from each other.

She joined the *Melbourne Gang Show*, a variety show performed by the Scout Movement, in 1953 and was their prompter for fifteen years, encouraging all the young performers.

For her outstanding service to Scouting, Irene was awarded the Medal of Merit in 1957, Bar to the Medal of Merit in 1970 and the Silver Acorn in 1978.

Her service to both scouting and the community was further recognised by Her Majesty, the Queen, being appointed to the Order of the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 1971.

Irene was deeply committed to her chosen church, St Peter's at Eastern Hill. As part of the parish hospitality centred in the guild room after mass, catering was her forte. It was Irene who could 'feed the masses' so apparently effortlessly.

Irene Robins *Irene Robins*

She was a wizard. For some 70 years, Irene made a huge contribution as a parishioner of St Peter's.

At Scout Jamborees, Irene was always in demand for her catering and cooking skills. One particular incident was in 1955 at Clifford Park in very wet circumstances – it rained for ten days solid. The New South Wales contingent of Scouts and Leaders arrived and because of the weather, were without any opportunity to cook for themselves. Irene stepped into the breach and performed what one could have considered a modern day culinary miracle. The interstate Scouts were soon fed and could then return to the task of settling in and coping for themselves in the unseasonal weather and challenging conditions.

Illness in some form was constantly with Irene and it was an enormous frustration for her to face head on the trauma associated with what finally meant double amputation of her legs. However, she never lost her sense of humour – the right false leg was Albert and the left was Elizabeth. She never became downhearted, but saw life as a series of challenges.

During the Depression, Irene spent an enormous amount of time visiting families and providing money to purchase food or providing clothes, supplied by the Sisters of the Holy Name. To walk the streets of Fitzroy, at this time, took courage and Irene never lacked that, either when there was work to be done or in her own illness. Boys in the local area were taken on country holidays, where 'food' was available. Always one boy had to sample it and if it was okay, the signal was 'bog in boys'.

To all in scouting and the community, Irene was the example of 'never give up', always conduct good programmes for youngsters to keep them busy, challenged and happy and to believe in Baden Powell's Promise and Law, which are the foundations of scouting.

A generous and compassionate woman, the late Irene is well deserving of consideration for inclusion in 'Women Shaping the Nation'.

Councillor Mary Rogers

Mary Rogers

Local government

In 1920, Mary Rogers was the first woman to be elected to a Victorian Municipal Council. She was a Labor stalwart entering a solidly Labor council. Mary stood for pre-selection three times for Richmond Council before being selected and was subsequently elected at a by-election in 1920. She was a widow and her late husband had also been a pioneer in the Labor movement in Richmond. She was active in union affairs and a keen member of the Labor Party. She was chief woman organiser of the Victorian branch, a member of its State Central Executive and a member of the Eight Hours Committee. Essentially, Mary was a Labor activist drawn temporarily into municipal affairs because of her concern for child health and clean milk.

Despite her impeccable credentials as a member of the local, civic establishment, Mary's entry into the Council was reported in a way which suggests some uneasiness on the part of her colleagues simply because she was a woman. According to a contemporary source, when Mary first took her seat at the Council table, her colleagues presented a well-groomed and well-brushed appearance, and one even wore a posy. But looking back, Mary remembered that *'they didn't make a fuss over my being the first female councillor'*.

Mary is renowned as a pioneer in local government for women.

Joan Rosanove, QC

Joan Rosanove

Protection against violence

Joan Mavis Rosanove was born in Ballarat in 1896. She battled prejudice against women in the legal profession, in particular at the bar. She also represented women who otherwise would not have had access to legal representation.

Joan was admitted to practice on 2 June 1919. She became the first woman barrister in Victoria when she signed the bar roll on 10 September 1923. She faced prejudice and rejection by the otherwise all-male bar, and on many occasions in her practice, by the all-male bench. In 1925, when an opportunity arose for her to secure chambers in Selbourne Chambers from her colleague Philip Jacobs, the other tenants protested, outraged at the thought of a woman's presence amongst them. The directors rejected Philip's temporary lease offer to Joan threatening to terminate his lease.

Joan decided to leave the bar. She removed her name from the Roll of Counsel and went back to practice as a solicitor and advocate in the fields of criminal law and divorce law. She specialised in defending women, and appeared on two occasions on behalf of women accused of murder, one of whom was allegedly a 'backyard abortionist'. Although the women were not acquitted, in both cases they were found guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter.

By 1930, Joan had become renowned for fighting for women's interests in divorce cases, where the law operated in favour of husbands. Joan was known for speaking out

about injustice against women and people of non-English speaking backgrounds. She was approached to defend the Jewish Czech journalist Egon Kisch, in the now famous constitutional law case. Apart from her solicitor and court duties, Joan took an active role in visiting the ship where Egon Kisch was being held on a number of occasions in order to secure his release.

On 7 October 1949 Joan re-signed the bar roll and worked exclusively as a barrister. She also succeeded in her long-held ambition of working from Selbourne Chambers, after 25 years of exclusion. Joan was a strong advocate for women's access and entry to professional life, as well as equal pay. She did not believe women who married should have to remain at home, to be supported by their husbands. She publicly urged women's organisations and women lawyers to work for more rational divorce laws which would reverse the beneficial treatment received by men. In 1954, Joan researched and prepared a report, which was published in the *Australian Law Journal*, on the divorce laws and proposed changes.

Despite her seniority and excellence as a barrister, she was turned down as Queen's Counsel when she applied in 1954. Joan continued to apply to take silk but was denied every time, while her younger, less experienced male colleagues were becoming Queen's Counsel and judges. It was not until 1965, that Joan was granted silk. Joan became Australia's

Joan Rosanove QC
Joan Rosanove

second woman Queen's Counsel. Joan continued her work, and continued to fight prejudice and discrimination against women, both within the law and outside it.

The third generation of an Australian legal family, Joan, at the height of her career, was reputed to have one of the biggest divorce practices in Australia. She was a childhood friend of the 'great' Bob Menzies, who later became Prime Minister of Australia, and a galaxy of eminent lawyers and judges. Yet she rubbed shoulders also with rogue's gallery of criminals she defended in scores of trials. She appeared in three murder cases; the only woman barrister at that time who had been briefed to defend persons accused of murder.

Modern divorce reforms have been based on her recommendations. She had a deep faith in the sanctity of marriage – yet she handled the legal break-up of thousands of marriages.

Joan retired in 1969 and died on 8 April 1974. On 14 April 2000, the new Victorian Chambers were named after her and in her honour. Joan not only fought for women's rights and justice as a professional, but within her own profession. Without her the bar and the legal society would have taken longer to begin to accept women in the profession.



Dominica Rossi

Dominica Rossi

Migrant support services

Australia's identity was changed radically with the waves of migration after World War II. These migrants contributed much to Australia. They arrived here and rolled their sleeves up and started working almost immediately. They did this without hesitation and with much energy. Social welfare needs were not high on the agenda for this group of people, and so when individuals in the community started to feel the impact of separation of the family, depression, ageing and isolation there were not many places to turn. Dominica created places for migrant women in the North of Melbourne to turn to at social clubs and community health centres. She assisted in developing and providing services and programmes for migrant women to improve their quality of life.

Dominica was born in Italy in 1937, and arrived in Australia in 1962 to support her husband and children. For more than twenty years she worked in her home, cooking, cleaning and rearing her children. She saw little of the world outside, rarely venturing further than the local shops. When her marriage broke down she became increasingly depressed with being housebound.

For six months she remained isolated at home and then, after finding out a Migrant Resource Centre in Reservoir was setting up a social support group for migrant women in the area she became involved, spearheading the project. At the first meeting four women attended, within months the group had a membership of 90. After 21 years the group has turned into a senior citizens group as its membership aged. Assisting her own generation of migrants with depression and isolation has improved the health and quality of life of a generation that have never imposed on asking others for help.

Dominica has also become involved in the committees of many health organisations in the North of Melbourne, including, the District Health Council, the committee of the Community Health Centre of East Preston, the committee of the Women's Health in the North group, the Reservoir Community Health Centre Establishment Committee and the Progress Association of Reservoir.

Dominica has also received an Order of Australia honour and a Certificate of Appreciation from the National Australia Day Council.

Marilyn Rowe, OBE



Australian ballet

The Australian Ballet School opened its doors in 1964 and Marilyn Rowe was one of the first students chosen to undertake the initial two year course. She won a scholarship from the Frances Lett School of Ballet and a bursary from Mrs Louisa Jones of Rippon Lea.

Marilyn graduated from The Australian Ballet School in 1964 after only twelve months of the course and was taken into The Australian Ballet in 1965 at the insistence of Dame Peggy van Praagh. She was promoted to Principal Artist in 1970 and was the first ballerina produced by the School. In 1968, while still a soloist, Marilyn received her first invitation to Russia from Igor Moiseyev, who choreographed 'The Last Vision' for Kelvin Coe and Marilyn that same year.

In 1973, Coe and Marilyn won individual Silver Medals and the Publishers' Prize for the most outstanding couple at the Second International Ballet Competition in Moscow and in 1978 they were the first Australians to be invited to dance with the Bolshoi, Riga and Vilnius ballet companies.

Marilyn was honoured by Her Majesty, The Queen and awarded the Order of the British Empire for services to ballet in Australia.

In August 1980, following a tour to China, Marilyn temporarily retired from The Australian Ballet to await the birth of her son. In December her husband Christopher Maver, Stage Director and Lighting Designer, was killed in a plane crash. Their son Christopher was born in May 1981.

In 1981, at the invitation of Gailene Stock, Marilyn was appointed Associate Director of the National Theatre Ballet School, Melbourne. After the 26-day strike which tore The Australian Ballet apart in October/November 1981 Marilyn returned to the Company. As part of the Terms of Settlement, and at the request of the dancers and Board, she was engaged as Artistic Adviser and Guest Artist.

Following the resignation of the then Artistic Director, Marilyn Jones OBE, in January 1982, Marilyn was appointed Ballet Director and Acting Artistic Director for the Company's 1982 season. In 1983, she was appointed Deputy Artistic Director to Maina Gielgud and, in 1984, was appointed Director of The Dancers Company, a post she held until 1990.

Marilyn has directed and coached many of the leading dancers of The Australian Ballet and has produced and directed major works, both classical and contemporary for the Company and The Dancers Company. She has also adjudicated and taught at private ballet schools for the Royal Academy of Dancing, the Cecchetti Society and the Australian Institute of Classical Dance.

Marilyn has been a Board Director of The Australian Ballet since 1994. She is also a director of Britannia Imports and Hunky Dory Australia and a member of The Australian Ballet Career Development Committee.

In January 1999, she was appointed Director of The Australian Ballet School.



Mary Salce

Women in agriculture

Mary Salce is a partner with her husband in a dairy farm in Clydebank, Victoria. She has been involved in agricultural politics since the late 1960s. For about the first twenty years she was more often than not the only woman represented on committees or boards. Through her participation and observations Mary realised women's voices were not being heard. It seemed one woman's voice was not enough, women had the ability but not the confidence or self-esteem to be heard.

During these twenty years many subsidies and tariffs disappeared, hurting farming families and rural communities. In times of hardship Mary, along with other farming women, felt the men were talking only about farm expenses, interest rates and the price of new machinery. Never was it said how farming families, including the women and children suffered stress from long hours of work for very little money.

In the mid 1980s, Mary knew it was time to put her energies into assisting women to regain their confidence and self-esteem so they could be involved in trying to solve some of the problems associated within working in the rural and agricultural sector. After much lobbying with the Victorian Government, in 1985 the Victorian Rural Women's Network was set up with the support of the State Government particularly the Rural Affairs Sub-Committee of Cabinet.

In 1991, Mary travelled to Canada to seek out new ideas to enable farming women to be recognised for their invaluable contributions. She soon saw the problem of recognition for farming women was worldwide.

Mary then decided to host an international conference for women in agriculture in Australia. She felt the aims of the conference should have clear parameters defining all important aspects of farming life and promoting a co-operative relationship between Australian and international agriculture networks through women in agriculture. She wanted to raise awareness of the contribution women make to agriculture and rural development, and increase the awareness of the economic, social, legal and cultural factors affecting their status and to provide a learning opportunity to develop new skills and access to information and networks.

Most importantly, the main aim was to raise the awareness of women in agriculture around the world. Mary had the foresight and confidence in Australian women farmers to host the conference to change the misconception of farming women worldwide. Mary knew that outcomes from such an event would empower women through the networks and information so that they could return to their communities with greater confidence and self-esteem and become involved in the decision making at all levels.

Mary Salce

Mary's vision of collaborating and convening the International Conference for women in Agriculture in 1994 has permanently changed the lives of many women working in agricultural industries. Her influence and profound leadership masterminded unprecedented change not only for Australian farming women but for farming women worldwide. Mary's initiative has accelerated all farming women to the forefront of being recognised as major contributors to the agricultural sector. Post Conference women are rarely perceived as 'farmer's wives'. They are respected in their own right within the agricultural industry.

Since the conference's inception in 1994 a further conference was held in 1998 in the United States for which Mary assisted the Australian Embassy in Washington, USA to organise. The scheduled event was announced in 1997 by President Bill Clinton. Currently a third conference is being planned and organised for Spain in 2002. Mary's vision and commitment to rural and agricultural industry at the local, state, national and international level has created an infinite domino effect of positive outcomes in the industry, in particular for women.

Mary's dedication, passion, tenacity and importantly her vision and strength has not only changed rural women's lives but also enabled our city counterparts to gain a better understanding of women's roles within the rural and agricultural sector. Mary has greatly assisted to break down barriers and prejudice between city and rural, men and women, government and non-government agencies.

Louisa Angelina (Lena) Santospirito

Louisa Santospirito

Welfare assistance to Italian migrants

Throughout her life, Lena Santospirito was a tireless worker for people in need within the Italo-Australian community, particularly during the post-war period. As the President of the Archbishop's Committee for Italian Relief, Lena co-ordinated the welfare work of the Italo-Australian community, as it strove to meet the needs of hundreds of arrivals from Italy.

Lena was born in Ballarat on 4 April 1885. Her parents migrated to Australia from the Aeolian Islands, off the north-east coast of Sicily. Bartolo Virgona, her father, came to Victoria in 1890 and was joined by his wife Bartolina and their son Vincent in 1892. Like many immigrants from the Aeolian Islands, Bartolo worked as a fruiterer.

The Virgonas moved from Ballarat to a house in Smith Street, Fitzroy not long after Lena was born. Lena and her sister Maria went to St Joseph's College in Collingwood, and Lena went on to study at the Catholic Ladies College. After school, Lena worked as a telephonist in the Postmaster General's Department from 1913-25.

In 1925, Lena married Antonio Santospirito. Antonio was born in the Aeolian Islands in 1892 and came to Australia in 1897. He ran a flower-stall off Flinders Lane in Melbourne and was known to many as 'the Flower King!' After their marriage the Santospiritos moved into the home at 79 Bouverie Street, Carlton, which was soon to become the headquarters for Italian welfare in Melbourne.

The Archbishop's Committee for Italian Relief was established in June 1940 by Archbishop Daniel Mannix. The Committee was formed to provide assistance to Italians who were interned by the Commonwealth Government on Italy's entry into World War II. The internment crisis brought great hardship to many Italian families in Victoria, and many others suffered due to their new status as 'enemy aliens'. Lena was a founding member of the Committee and worked throughout the war organising fundraising dances, concerts and bazaars.

Lena took over as President of the Archbishop's Committee in 1946 from Father Moditti. As President, Lena presided over the most turbulent and dynamic period of Italo-Australian history. The focus of the Committee's work shifted towards providing services to post-war Italian migrants. Unassisted migrants from war-torn Italy began to arrive in Australia from 1946, and the number of arrivals steadily grew over the ensuing years. Many people know of the hardships endured by assisted migrants in the Bonegilla Reception Centre. However, only 20 percent of Italian migrants were assisted – the situation for unassisted migrants was even worse.

The Australian Government's policy of 'assimilation' meant that almost no culturally-specific services were provided for post-war migrants. Unassisted migrants required help finding accommodation, employment and to deal with Australian government departments. This assistance was provided by

Louisa Angelina (Lena) Santospirito



the Archbishop's Committee, which largely operated out of the Santospirito household in Bouverie Street, Carlton.

Lena used her contacts in the Italian and wider communities to find work placements for many migrants. She also found jobs for people by sending migrants off to various companies with her 'letters of introduction'.

Financial assistance was also given to many migrants who turned up at Bouverie Street. The work of the Archbishop's Committee was funded by various events organised by Lena and the Committee. Weekly dances at St George's Church Hall, Carlton and Cathedral Hall, Fitzroy were an opportunity to raise funds and provide social opportunities for the community. Concerts and bazaars were other fundraising sources.

Much of Lena's time was spent corresponding with the Department of Immigration, making representations on behalf of Italians whose applications had been refused. She was assisted in this aspect of her work by her friendship with Arthur Calwell, Australia's first Immigration Minister, who personally intervened at her request in many cases. She resigned from the Archbishop's Committee in 1955.

Lena continued to work for various charitable organisations after her time with the Committee. She was President of the St Francis Xavier Cabrini Hospital Ladies' Auxiliary in 1958, and elected Patroness of the Hospital in 1959.

Lena died in 1983. Her community work was never recognised or acknowledged by the state or federal governments in Australia. The Centenary of Federation celebrations are an opportunity for the Australian people to honour and remember ordinary women who achieved extraordinary things for the community.



Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown, OBE

Maternal and child welfare

Vera Scantlebury Brown graduated in medicine at the University of Melbourne and became Resident Medical Officer at Royal Melbourne Hospital in 1915, and in 1916, she was Resident Medical Officer at Children's Hospital where she became a Senior RMO before the year's end.

In 1917, she travelled to London where she worked as a Medical Officer with rank of Lieutenant at a major military hospital (Endell St). In 1920, Vera was a Resident Medical Officer at Women's Hospital, before going into private medical practice.

Post-war, she had Honorary appointments at Women's, Queen Victoria and Children's hospitals and was honorary Medical Officer to Victorian Baby Health Centres Association and the Free Kindergarten Union.

Vera realised, on returning from war service, that there was widespread poverty, poor housing and high infant mortality in the community. Some groups of volunteers, led by Dr Isobel Younger Ross, had established some baby health centres with assistance from municipal councils, but she was the prime mover in bringing about the structures that put maternal and child well-being on the community and political agenda.

Her main achievements were development of a formal network of Infant Welfare Centres throughout the State, introduction of ante-natal and preschool medical services through a comparable network of clinics and the establishment of the tradition that all personnel – medical, nursing and early childhood education – who served mothers and children in the community should be properly trained.

The Vera Scantlebury Brown Scholarship, created after her death in 1946 and awarded annually, recognises her insistence on trained staff.

Vera is honoured for her achievements in improving the health and welfare of women and children in Victoria. Her vision, energy, persuasiveness, leadership and organising ability made this possible.

The services required co-ordination, integration, expansion, public and professional education, standards of facilities and training, as well as the extension of services to rural areas, where mobile services, a correspondence scheme and radio broadcasts were among strategies used.

Dr Jocelynn Scutt
Jocelynn Scutt

Human rights

Jocelynn Scutt is a lawyer, writer and publisher. She studied law at the universities of Western Australia, Sydney, Michigan and Cambridge, and Arts at the University of New South Wales. She was Director of Research with the Legal and Constitutional Committee, then Deputy Chairperson, on the Law Reform Commission, Victoria.

As an author, Jocelynn has specialised in law, feminism, and the investigation of the roles of women in history and modern society. Her books include: *Even in the Best of Homes – Violence in the Family*; *The Incredible Woman – Power and Sexual Politics*.

In 1993, Jocelynn completed a national study of Australian sexual assault laws with recommendations and a draft bill for national uniform rape laws, and wrote *Wage Rage – Women’s Struggle for Wage Justice*. She is a strong believer in democracy, and to this end supports an Australian Republic by direction, not autocratic fiat.

‘I want women and men to have a right to vote for a female president, and women from around Australia to have a right to stand. Anything else denies democracy and supports rule by the establishment.’

Jocelynn frequently did pro bono work for women in legal cases in which she believed, such as the Heather Orland case. She has her own publicity company, Artemis Publishing. Her publications range from crime novels to the stories of ordinary women leading extraordinary lives.

Jocelynn is much admired across Australia for her fearless advocacy for women’s equity. She is currently Tasmania’s Anti-Discrimination Commissioner.



Honourable Kay Setches

Equity and social justice

Kay Setches worked in the retail industry from 1976-82. From 1978-82, she was the co-ordinator of a women's refuge. From 1982-92 she was a member of the Victorian Parliament for the seat of Ringwood.

From 1982-88, Kay created and chaired Victorian Government Women's Caucus and from 1987-88, Kay chaired the Victorian Women's Health Policy Consultation 'Why Women's Health?'. From 1988-90, she was the Minister of Conservation, Forests and Lands and the Minister of Community Services and Minister responsible for Child Care 1990-92. Kay established her own consulting business in gender education, work and family in 1993.

As part of her community service, Kay has successfully worked for the introduction of Affirmative Action rule in the Victorian ALP (1993-94). She has been a Board member of the Victorian Women's Trust, the Kathleen Cunningham Foundation (National Breast Cancer Research Foundation) and she was an Executive Member of the National Council for International Year of Family (1994-95).

As a Foundation member of EMILY's List, she has assisted the establishment in 1996 of EMILY's List Australia by Labor women, based on EMILY's List (USA), as a powerful financial and political network to elect more Labor women to all Australian parliaments. She continues to work to build EMILY's List as one of the most effective new women's political organisations in Australia.

Some of Kay's specific achievements as Minister for Community Services and Minister responsible for Childcare include: the expansion of childcare places, from 390 in 1984 to 15,000 when she left office; the introduction of a welfare-based Child Protection system with 24 hours 7 days a week service; a corresponding community education campaign regarding child abuse; a Young Women's Action Plan for gender specific residential services for young women using Community Services Victoria (CSV) services; intensive in-home support to 700 families through the Families First Program; proclamation and implementation of the *Children and Young Person's Act*; increases to all Family Violence Prevention and Support Funding; commencement of the Maternal and Child Health After Hours Telephone Service, and increases in places for homeless people in supported housing from 1500 to 5000. All of this was achieved in two short years.

Whilst a Minister, Kay recognised the need for a specific focus on women's health. She convinced the Victorian Government to support and fund the 'Why Women's Health?' Consultation.

The Consultation received input from 7000 women across Victoria during 1987. The outcome was the establishment of eight Women's Health Centres, eight Sexual Assault Services around Victoria, a Women's Health Information Service (now 'Women's Health Victoria'). Unusually at the

Honourable Kay Setches

time, all these services were run by women for women. The Consultation also recommended the Review of Birthing Services which led to the *Having a Baby in Victoria* report. The Victorian Women's Health Program was the forerunner of the National Women's Health Program.

At the time of Kay becoming Minister for Community Services in 1990, Caloola was a 125-year-old bluestone institution. Initially built to house the criminally insane, Caloola at that time was an institution for 451 intellectually disabled people.

Kay was shocked and repelled by the appalling and Dickensian conditions she encountered on a tour of the facility soon after taking on the portfolio – in particular the Women's Locked Block – a bluestone dormitory which had a packed earth exercise yard attached. She decided on the spot that something must be done and spent the next fourteen months ensuring it was achieved.

With the support of the Premier, Joan Kirner and her Cabinet, Kay and her team proved that it is possible to close down a large and established institution like Caloola on time, on budget and with positive outcomes for all stakeholders. The closure of Caloola Institution required only a one-off allocation of \$18 million in addition to the \$25 million annual operating budget. Kay's success influences policy on the care for intellectually disabled to this day. Not only that,

but the Victorian Government was recognised worldwide for the manner in which it was conducted.

Following the success of Caloola, Kay was able to commence the transfer of intellectually disabled residents from Aradale and May Day Hills (Beechworth) and were subsequently closed.

Kay has spent her life working to restore balance to the community – to benefit the vulnerable and disadvantaged and bring equality to women. As a minister in the Victorian Labor Government Kay's feminism and concern for the community informed and drove all of her many achievements.

Kay continues to work as an unpaid activist and has remained true to her earliest convictions.

Kay identifies a problem and immediately applies an astonishing determination to right it. She is a woman with an unswerving and unstinting capacity for action.



Una Shergold
Dr Una Shergold, MBE

Children's health

Una Shergold is a pioneer in women and children's health. Una's career has spanned a period of approximately 43 years from the middle of the 1930s to 1978, when she took early retirement from the Royal Children's Hospital at the age of 63.

Una Shergold did her internship at St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne where she was always on call to Father Frank Coaldrake at the Brotherhood of St Laurence. He would call on her anytime he needed a medic to work on some poor soul in the street and lanes of Fitzroy. Una was even known to climb over fences in full evening dress to work on someone needing her help. She met her husband Dr Brian Justin O'Day while interning. After they were married they went up to Kaniva and set up a practice, which she looked after on her own after he went away to World War II.

There would still be some people in Kaniva who remember the 'Young Lady Doctor'. When the O'Days came back to Melbourne to live in Kew, Una worked looking after the health and welfare of unmarried mothers before and after the birth of their children. Una worked from her own home and also with the nuns at St Joseph's.

From there Una moved on to the Royal Children's Hospital where she worked in the Systick Fibrosis Unit with those children and their families for so many years.

These children had previously only had a life expectancy of five years, and now, some or many of them are surviving into young adulthood. All of these things Una has worked tirelessly towards during her years at the Children's.

So high is the esteem in which she is held that even though she has been retired for 23 years, there are families, such as the Kennedy's of Cranbourne and Moama, who still keep in touch, particularly at Christmas, and as each young adult passes yet another milestone birthday.

Una is considered a very special part of their families, and, as such, has been invited to many of their weddings, and also mourned at all of their passings.

Other families regularly drop into Alfred General Hospital if passing. Some even make a special trip down to Melbourne from country Victoria to see this wonderful feisty old lady, whose zest has not diminished with the years. Even though she is now severely disabled, the mind is as clear as a bell and she is always ready with support and advice to anyone who needs her.

Nancy Spence



Disadvantaged schools

Nancy Spence was a tireless supporter of government schools and the Heidelberg community. She devoted her whole life working in a volunteer capacity on numerous parent organisations, school councils, area committees, statewide committees and organisations such as the Victorian Council of Schools Organisation. She fought hard to ensure funding by governments of quality programs for schools with a high number of students from poor socio-economic backgrounds and for effective and meaningful parent consultation and involvement.

The key motivating factor for Nancy becoming involved in education and becoming an activist was her concern that the special needs of her foster son, Rodney, were being ignored at school. In her attempts to ensure that he gained appropriate support she quickly came to see that the regional and statewide frameworks and policies were too often ill informed and made the situation worse rather than being of assistance.

This led her to join the Mothers' Club and, as a natural community networker, she extended this and soon became a key local contact for the state bodies working for progressive educational reforms.

She then represented statewide organisations on the local area committees of the Supplementary Grants Program (later the Disadvantaged Schools Program). As the local

area representative, Nancy worked closely with a number of local schools, with the Waterdale School Support Centre and the Northern Metropolitan Regional Office of the education Department in ensuring the funding and delivery of quality programs. She carried out a continuous war for over a decade against notional funding, insisting that it was quality programs that had to be the focus. She saw her role here as a natural extension of her parenting and community activities and never lost sight of children in the schools.

Nancy also became committed to Supplementary Grants because a key element of the submission process was that it included parents, students and teachers in the decision-making process at every stage. And apart from all students having every opportunity possible regardless of economic background, what Nancy was most passionate about was real parent participation.

Nancy was also a major participant and contributor to the West Heidelberg Community Education Network and supporter of its Officer, Barbara Romerill. She worked closely with and supported Heidelberg Technical School, Heidelberg High and La Trobe High schools through her service on the Heidelberg Technical School Council and was part of the amalgamation committee which oversaw the three schools becoming Banksia Secondary College.

Nancy Spence
Nancy Spence

She also became involved with the East Preston Community Health Network and was part of the group that fought for and succeeded in getting a Community Development Officer funded to work with the Waterdale group of schools and the local community.

From 1982-83 she became a member of the State Executive of VICCSO. She represented them on departmental statewide committees specifically the School Reorganisation and Quality Provision committees.

In 1984, Nancy joined the Northland Secondary College Parent's Association. After Lydia Horvat resigned, was the school's Community Development Officer, and later became involved in the volunteer reading program listening to children read.

She also worked as volunteer teacher aide for three days a week. She was so impressive in her relationship with students and worked so well with them that after a number of years, in 1990, Bill Maxwell, the Principal, organised for her to be employed as an Integration Aide, first for one day a week, then more and finally at 0.7.

Nancy was given some of the most difficult students to work with – and she thrived on it. She had a magic touch with kids and she had students who wouldn't work for anyone else, wrapped around her little finger. Students loved having her support them in class and were always incredibly respectful of her even when they might have been swearing at someone else in the same breath.

She resigned the position once the school was forcibly closed by the Kennett Government in December 1992 because she didn't want to work anywhere else and returned to Northland to work as a volunteer when it reopened in 1995. She was School Council President from 1995-99.

Nancy was a true believer in people and the power of people to change lives for the better.



Sarah Stegley
Sarah Stegley

Philanthropist

Sarah was born on 16 October 1951. She was educated at the Star of the Sea Convent, Gardenvale and Sacre Coeur Convent, Glen Iris. Sarah obtained a Diploma in Agricultural Science at Massey University, (USA). From 1974 until 1976 she worked with the United Nations on a food and agricultural organisation project in Lesotho, Southern Africa. From 1977 she has been the co-owner and operator of Howqua Dale Gourmet Retreat and Gourmet Tours of Australia. She is the winner of Mietta O'Donnell's 2001 Restaurant Award and the Jaguar Award for Excellence in Gastronomic Tourism. She is a Trustee of The Stegley Foundation since its inception in the early 1970s. Stegley is a Founder of Women in Philanthropy, a Founding member of the Women Donors Network and a Founding member of Australian Association of the Philanthropy. Sarah is involved in Project Mansfield, which is designed to protect and enhance the environment in Mansfield, Delatite Open Spaces Committee. She is a member of the Mansfield Performing Arts Centre, the Mansfield Mullum Wetlands and the Bentley Nursing Home Therapeutic Garden.

She is a founding member of Howqua Valley Landcare Group and has served on the Alpine Advisory Committee and the Mansfield Hospital Board.

The Stegley Foundation was established as a limited life philanthropic trust in 1973, and Sarah became a trustee in 1979. For almost 30 years the Foundation has supported organisations and groups working within local communities, or with communities of interest, to challenge discriminatory policy and practice, build social infrastructure and promote social justice and equity.

Between 1997 and 2001, the Foundation's funding priorities have included enhancing local government's capacity to effectively represent and to be responsive and accountable to its constituents, supporting community advocacy, to strengthen the voices of those working for social justice and equity and strengthening Koori identity and addressing issues of discrimination and dispossession.

The Foundation has also played an active part in promoting progressive philanthropy. It has done this by mentoring, and forming partnerships with new philanthropists and in hosting public forums which raise discussion and debate about the need to go beyond handouts to the poor, to supporting those people working to change the social and economic structures which disadvantage and discriminate.



Gwynnyth Taylor

Gwynnyth Taylor

Conservation

Gwynnyth Taylor worked for many causes, but it was as a conservationist that she was best known. She was a noted botanist and a bush walker. She had a great love of the Australian bush and inspired, educated and encouraged a generation of Australians to appreciate their natural heritage. Gwynnyth worked as a landscape gardener with Edna Walling in the 1930s and when she married solicitor, Ronald Taylor, in 1940 they lived as the Walling village of Bickleigh Vale, Mooroolbark until 1946. Later she created gardens using only native plants at homes in Montrose, Wartook (south of Horsham) and Forest Hill. Her work with Edna Walling is documented in the book *The Gardens of Edna Walling* by Peter Watts and her native gardens are featured in several books.

The Taylors had two children, Peter and Sue, and lived in Williamstown during their school years in the 1950s. Gwynnyth began her years of community service by joining the mothers club and parents and citizens associations of their local schools, and was a delegate to both state and federal conferences. She joined the Williamstown Historical Society and early environmental groups trying to preserve historic and unspoilt Williamstown.

She joined the Victorian National Parks Association in 1957 and was president from 1968-71. This period was notable for the Little Desert controversy, which made conservation front-page news and a political issue. The Minister for Lands

proposed to subdivide 80,000 hectares of the Little Desert for farms. This was strongly opposed by conservationists whose campaign was taken to *The Age* in editorials and letters to the editor. Gwynnyth organised the existing small conservation groups into the Save Our Bushland Action Committee (SOBAC). She arranged two public meetings – the first in the Lower Melbourne Town Hall on 28 September 1969 and the second in the Palais Theatre on 26 October 1969 at which the public showed overwhelming support for the conservationists' stand. The Minister for Lands lost his seat at the next election, and Premier Bolte gazetted a Little Desert National Park in December 1969. To avoid such 'battles' in the future, the Premier established the Land Conservation Council (LCC) to advise on the use of public land.

(Recommendations of the LCC have increased the area of national parks in Victoria from 0.6 percent in 1969 to more than 13 per cent today). Gwynnyth helped the groups in SOBAC organise into a permanent body – the Conservation Council of Victoria – so that they could speak with one voice in future. This was a turning point in the history of conservation in Victoria.

At this time Gwynnyth was also very active in the campaign to save Lake Pedder, she later worked with the Wilderness Society to save the Franklin River. The Taylors moved to the Grampians in 1973 where Gwynnyth helped with conservation and local study groups and created a now-famous native garden from what had been a bare paddock.

Gwynnyth Taylor

Gwynnyth Taylor

Returning to Melbourne in 1980 she worked in the offices of the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Wilderness Society on a regular basis. She also re-established links with her local groups – the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society, the Montrose Environment Group and the Maroondah Group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. She did everything quietly and capably – office work, giving advice on plants, arranging displays, attending working bees in reserves, and a myriad of other tasks. She continued her work even in the early stages of Parkinson’s disease.

At a memorial celebration of her life at Dixon’s Creek on 3 May 1998 her friends marvelled that one person could achieve so much. Issues as large as the Little Desert and the Franklin River and as diverse as saving a hut in the Bogong High Plains and the endangered Helmeted Honeyeater all attracted Gwynnyth, and she inspired many people to join her. Gwynnyth Taylor’s spirit is in all the wild places that she helped save.



Ethel Mary Temby, MBE

Ethel Mary Temby

Disability education and support services

It is impossible to pinpoint exactly when Ethel Temby's commitment to teaching and learning, protection of the Victorian countryside, human rights and social justice began. It has been that way for all of her long life. The Victorian community has been the primary beneficiary of all of her work, but her influence has stretched to national and international spheres.

In 1945, Ethel Temby was the full-time Organising Officer of the Youth Hostels Association (YHA) employed by the National Fitness Council.

To further the YHA aim of assisting young people to develop a greater love of the countryside by providing simple, inexpensive accommodation, Ethel helped establish youth hostels throughout Victoria.

Ethel has been a member of the Silverleaves Conservation Association in Phillip Island and its Hon. Secretary for over 30 years. In all that time she has worked tirelessly to preserve the natural character of the area, both personally and by organising work parties for the prevention of erosion of the foreshore, the elimination of pest plants threatening indigenous vegetation and replanting programs in the area's reserves.

Ethel began the Council of Adult Education (CAE) Adult Literacy Pilot Project in 1974/75 and continued until 1995. She pioneered experiential learning in adult education and

shaped the methodology of the programme and demonstrated that teaching/learning began with the student's own experience – her teaching was always an affirming process. Ethel's commitment to human rights and social justice appears to have been part of her life for as long as she has lived. However, the fact that the Temby's sixth child was born with an intellectual disability in 1958, has meant that, for over 40 years, a great deal of that commitment has been channelled into gaining greater recognition for the rights of people with an intellectual disability throughout Victoria and Australia wide.

In 1962, Ethel was already an active member of the Kew Cottages Parents Association. At this time there were practically no community services to support families whose intellectually disabled members were living at home. Conditions in all institutions were appalling and overcrowded, but especially at Kew Cottages. With a State election due Ethel organised a hand-written letter which was sent to every political candidate, informing them of this situation and asking what they intended to do about it. At public meetings candidates were again challenged on these issues. As a direct result of this campaign the overcrowded conditions at Kew were greatly alleviated and the development of support services in the community was accelerated.

Ethel Mary Temby

A series of leaflets written by Ethel and printed and distributed by the State Association for the Retarded (STAR), was placed in schools, health centres, doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms, shopping centres and indeed anywhere where they could reach people and help to change their attitudes.

Ethel took on the full-time job of running the new STAR, office, training volunteers to help staff it, setting up a library (for many years the only source of information for parents and professionals in the field), providing emotional and practical support to families, producing material for various journals and publications, public speaking, liaising with other organisations and attending annual meetings and conferences in other parts of Victoria, interstate and overseas.

Ethel introduced to Victoria ideas that have now become commonplace and accepted throughout the intellectual disability field, if not the general community.

She introduced Australians to concepts such as early intervention, 'normalisation', integrated education and to programs such as Parent to Parent, Interchange and Citizen Advocacy, all of which have become successful and widely used models to support and enable people with an intellectual disability to live in the community – in ordinary families, in ordinary neighbourhoods, with ordinary friends and with the same rights as everyone else.

Ethel worked to empower parents to fight for better, more integrated services for their sons and daughters. In the mid 1960s and 1970s, when it was still the widely accepted practice to institutionalise people with an intellectual disability at birth, Ethel did her utmost to convince parents, politicians and the community that something better was both necessary and possible.

The fact that these ideas and principles now have broad credence throughout Victoria and indeed Australia, is largely attributable to the work of Ethel.

Ethel has worked tirelessly to ensure that people with an intellectual disability, their families, friends, and the community, are properly informed about, and take an active part in, shaping our society to be one which really can and does include and support people with an intellectual disability as citizens of equal value.



Mother Mary Temby

Catholic education

Mother Mary Eymard Temby trained as a primary teacher with the Victorian Education Department, before joining the Presentation Sisters in 1929. She completed her Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Bachelor of Education (Hons) at the University of Melbourne, gaining first place in her Diploma of Education year and topping the Honours course in Bachelor of Education in 1950. She was elected as a Fellow of the Australian College of Education and became a member of the Education Faculty of the University of Melbourne.

Sister Mary spent most of her teaching years at Star of the Sea College, Gardenvale, holding the position of College Principal for eighteen years.

In 1967, a Catholic Teachers' Training College, Christ College, opened in temporary premises in the grounds of Kildara College, Malvern. Sister Mary was appointed first Principal of Christ College and was largely instrumental in drawing up a course of training for the students and in planning the layout and equipping of the new College at Chadstone. Her tenure as Principal of Christ College was brief as she was elected at the end of 1967 as Superior General of the Congregation of Presentation Sisters, Victoria.

However, in her year at Malvern, Sister Mary had done much to create a vibrant community of competent staff and well-prepared students and to ensure that the new premises at Chadstone were ready for occupation in 1968.

In 1971, Mother Mary was elected President of the Victorian Conference of Major Superiors of Religious Orders, being re-elected for a second term in 1974 and was representative of the Major Superiors on the Melbourne Board of Catholic Education.

In 1976, Mother Mary was chosen as one of two Australian delegates to attend the International Triennial Assembly of Superiors General of Religious Congregations in Rome.

Mother Mary was an outstanding educationalist, being awarded the Dwight Prize in Education in 1950. She was an inspiring teacher who believed in encouraging and training her students to think deeply, to have an informed opinion on matters of concern and interest and to defend their opinions intelligently and fluently.

As leader of over three hundred members of the Victorian Presentation Sisters' Congregation, during the critical period following the second Vatican Council. Mother Mary courageously faced the challenge of these difficult times, as she worked with the members of her congregation to discern and adopt a course of action aimed at making religious life relevant to the present-day world and at directing the services of the sisters to the areas of greatest need.

The work of Mother Mary and of later principals and staff of Christ College was instrumental in training and inspiring a dedicated, efficient group of primary and secondary teachers who were able to assume positions of leadership and support in Catholic schools.

Freda Thompson



Pioneer pilot

There are not many books on the subject of aviation in Australia in the 1930s which fail to mention Freda Thompson.

Freda was the first Australian woman to fly solo from the United Kingdom to Australia and gained her Private Pilot License on 16 September 1930. She gained her Commercial Pilot License in August 1932. In 1933, Freda gained her Instructor Rating, becoming the first woman instructor in the British Empire. She followed this up with Great Britain Air Ministry Private Pilot Certificate No. 6715 gained on 7 July 1934. This entitled her to 'fly all types of flying machines'.

Freda set out from the UK and flew solo to Australia in a Gypsy Moth Major. The journey took 39 days flying time and made Freda the third woman pilot to accomplish a solo flight of this magnitude, and the first Australian woman to fly UK to Australia. She established a record for the Koepang-Darwin leg.

In 1937, Freda won eight Aero Club trophies and represented Victoria at the Sydney Centenary Celebrations in 1938. She was also the leader of 'a highly successful all-woman formation flying team'.

During the years from the 1930s onwards, Freda served a term as the first woman President of the Royal Victorian Aero Club, was made a Life Member in 1941, and honorary membership of the Indian Women Pilots' was conferred upon her.

She was a foundation member of the Australian Women Pilots' Association, and participated in many aviation events.

She flew a Hornet Moth on a 10,000 mile flight around Australia in 1950, taking five weeks, and toured New Guinea for three months in 1952. In 1972, Freda was awarded an OBE for services to Aviation. She had also received the George VI and Elizabeth II Coronation medals.

The concept of the Freda Thompson Aerial Derby was created in 1972 by Shirley Smith, then President of the Victorian Branch of AWPA. Freda had won many trophies and had left some of the large ones in the care of the Royal Victorian Aero Club at Moorabbin. As a member of the RVAC Shirley found the magnificent 'John Haig Cup' which Freda had won in an Aerial Derby from Essendon to Mornington Race Course in 1934. She thought how much fun it would be to organise a similar race to give Freda some pleasure in her lifetime.

The Federal Executive of the AWPA was approached and gave their approval to such a race, providing Freda consented to the use of her name and to donate the John Haig Cup as a perpetual trophy. They also agreed to a small personal memento for the winner and to the race being flown 'solo'. Freda was loathe to accede but she eventually agreed to a solo race around Port Phillip Bay and she would 'flag off' the contestants each year. This she did until 1981.

Freda Thompson
Freda Thompson

Shirley, Annette Hislop and Mavis Davies set to work planning and organising the race and when the Department of Aviation gave their approval, they complimented the team on their thoroughness. There were 26 starters.

Especially to women pilots, Freda has been a source of inspiration and encouragement. Her death on 11 December 1980 was a sad occasion for all those who knew her.

A biography by Joan Palmer, *Goggles and God Help Y6C* relates many of Freda's adventures.

After her death, the Aerial Derby was flown by both men and women pilots until 1988. In 1993, the Freda Thompson Aviation Award was donated in her memory, by her sister Claire and Ken Embling.

Jean Tom, AO



Services to country women

Jean Marion Tom AO, graduated from the University of Melbourne with a Master of Science. In 1946, Jean married a farmer and has lived on farms most of her life. She has five children and nine grandchildren. Her father fought in World War I, and returned totally and permanently incapacitated. He joined the Romsey Branch of the RSL. Jean's husband served in World War II, was a Tobruk Rat and died in 1982 leaving Jean a war widow.

Jean is an outstanding country woman who holds high ideals and believes they should be exemplified in the way we live, work and care for each other.

Her particular mission is to utilise every opportunity to nurture and encourage women to broaden their horizons, particularly rural women who have limited opportunities to take on new perspective, so that they are aware of the diverse information and options available when making decisions.

Examples of Jean's commitments to selfless service to her local community include her membership of the Romsey Auxiliary for the Windarring School for the Mentally Handicapped (1970-80); the Romsey Historical Committee; the Romsey Auxiliary for the Lancefield and District Bush Nursing Hospitals (1960-75).

She was a sponsor of a project funded through the Community Programmes Committee (a Rural Outreach Programme from

the Sunbury Community Health Centre). This resulted in a book establishing a profile of the social needs in the Woodend, Newham and Romsey Shires.

In her role as a member of the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc., Jean has exemplified outstanding voluntary service and fellowship. She has been dedicated to the pursuit of justice on social issues on behalf of all women and children, particularly those in rural and remote areas of Victoria, as well as nationally and internationally.

Jean has held various positions at State level from 1972-91 including being National President from 1988-91. She is a Life Member of the Association Country Women of the World (1975-99). Jean has been the leader of voting delegations representing the CWA of Victoria at a number of world conferences.

Jean's outstanding leadership skills and broad knowledge on all issues affecting rural and remote women have been acknowledged and utilised for the benefit of the community by her service independently of the Association. She has been a volunteer on many committees including a member of Victorian Women's Advisory Council to the Premier (1983-88), and a member of the National Women's Consultative Council (1989-92). Jean helped set up the Victorian Women's Trust as a Board Member (1984-94).

Jean Tom
Jean Tom

She is a member of Australian Women in Agriculture (1994-99) and a member of the Rural Women's Network Reference Group (1986-99).

Her State and Federal committee memberships have been by invitation of the State and Federal Governments of all political persuasions. They range from agriculture to local government to domestic violence in rural and remote areas.

Jean was appointed Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (1993) ANZAC of the Year – 1999; Life Member Presbyterian Ladies College Old Collegians Association and Life Member of Janet Clarke Hall Society. She is one of the most impressive women in Australia today and she is still working for and with communities.

Marge Tucker

Aboriginal community worker

Margaret Tucker was born at Warangesda, New South Wales. She spent her early childhood with her family on the Cummeragunja and Moonacullah stations. She was removed from the latter in 1917 by police and Aboriginal Protection Board officials, and sent to the Cootamundra Girls' Home for training for domestic service in white middle-class homes. Hating the experience, she ran away twice and once attempted suicide. After finally leaving the home at sixteen, she worked in Sydney, in rural New South Wales and then in Melbourne; where she married.

During World War II, Marge went to live in Seddon, Melbourne. She was among the first of many high-profile Aboriginal women in Victoria to speak out publicly for the rights of Aboriginal people.

Marge worked tirelessly with William Cooper and the Australian Aborigines League to raise the profile and highlight the plight of Aboriginal people amongst white Australians. In the 1960s, she became the first Aboriginal woman to serve on the Aboriginal Welfare Board, and together with Aboriginal opera singer, Harold Blair, sang to raise fund to assist Aboriginal communities living in dire poverty on the edges of white society.

Known by her tribal name Lillardia, a name given to her by William Cooper, Marge was an entertainer of renown. Singing was an important part of Marge's life and she gave the gift of music and song freely to benefit others.

Like many women in the west, Marge supported herself and daughter Mollie during the war years, working for local industry. Marge worked alongside Greek and Italian migrants who, like Aboriginal Australians, were often the victims of racism and discrimination. Friendships often ensued between Aboriginal people and the southern European migrants of Melbourne's west.

In her biography, *If Everyone Cared*, Marge recalled the Christmas break-up concerts at Kinnears and the rousing response of the Italian workers to her rendition of 'Silent Night', sung in Aboriginal Aranda tongue.

She also recalled the police taking her and her sister, May, forcibly away from her primary school and her mother. Her mother resisted fiercely, but to no avail.

'Then we were taken to the police station, where the policeman no doubt had to report. Mother followed him, thinking she could beg once more for us, only to rush out when she heard the car start up. My last memory of her for many years was her waving pathetically, as we waved back and called out goodbye to her, but we were too far away for her to hear us.'

I heard years later how after watching us go out of her life, she wandered away from the police station three miles along the road leading out of the town to Moonacullah. She was worn out, with no food or money, her apron still on.

Marge Tucker
Marge Tucker

She wandered of the road to rest in the long grass under a tree. That is where old Uncle and Aunt found her the next day. They had arrived back with Geraldine from the Deniliquin hospital and they were at once surrounded by our people at Moonacullah, who told them the whole story. Someone immediately offered the loan of a fresh horse to go back and find Mother. They found our mother still moaning and crying. They heard the sounds and thought it was an animal in pain. Uncle stopped the horse and got out of the buggy to investigate. Auntie heard him talking in the language. She got down and rushed to old Uncle's side. Mother was half demented and ill. They gave her water and tried to feed her, but she couldn't eat. She was not interested in anything for weeks, and wouldn't let Geraldine out of her sight. She slowly got better, but I believe for months after, at the sight of a policeman's white helmet coming round the bend of the river, she would grab her little girl and escape into the bush, as did all Aboriginal people who had children.'

Margaret remains an inspiration to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and to reconciliation.

Elizabeth Turnbull

Good Neighbourhood Council

Elizabeth Turnbull was born in 1920. She became a Girl Guide in 1932 and has been active in guiding for 69 years and in the Country Women's Association for 49 years. She was one of seven Victorians selected as Australian Volunteers for the Guides International Service assisting displaced persons in Europe following World War II.

Elizabeth held 21 various positions in Guides Victoria from Company Leader to Assistant State Commissioner. She was leader in charge of the first Victoria State Camp in 1957 and has helped run many local, state and international camps.

She was an active member of the Good Neighbour Council which led to two years (1947-49) as a member of Guide International Service (GIS) carrying out relief and welfare work in Germany with displaced persons from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

The GIS was registered with the British Government as a voluntary society, one of the first team-making societies to form the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad. Board, lodging, transport, uniform and equipment were supplied from government sources. Relief stores and amenities

from military sources. GIS volunteers were unpaid but received pocket money of ten shillings a week. They worked in displaced persons camps in Europe and Asia. Among other things they distributed food and acted as teachers to the children. The GIS supplied thirteen teams. The first team left England in June 1944 and the last three volunteers withdrew from Germany in March 1952.

Elizabeth, along with her peers helped write Australia's Guide history through her work with the GIS.

On her return to Australia from Europe, she worked on the Good Neighbour Council helping migrants and new settlers in Australia.

Elizabeth has introduced a generation of young women to the benefits of outdoor camping. She is a woman of strong character who is as good as her word. She never asks of others what she is not prepared to do herself. She has served as a positive role model to hundreds of girls and young women and has had a profound effect on many young lives. She has a highly developed sense of community and continues to play a role which supports her commitment to the greater good.



Italian community services

Elda Vaccari came to Australia (as Elda Nicoletti) in the late 1930s as an Italian-language teacher. In the post-war period she was involved with a variety of philanthropic work for the Italian community.

In 1939, Elda was a teacher of Italian in Catholic schools. This led to the introduction of Italian in primary schools in Melbourne. She then became an honorary interpreter in Melbourne's public hospitals for Italian internees and prisoners of war from 1940-45.

In 1966, she was instrumental in establishing the social welfare organisation, Comitato Assistenza Italiana (CoAsIt), in Carlton. She became the first President of the organisation for twelve years. It was the first ethnic welfare organisation to receive Australian government funding.

She is currently co-trustee of the charitable organisation known as The Gualtiero Vaccari Foundation (GVF) which was established by Elda's late husband in 1971. She is actively involved in all grants and aspects of the Foundation. In 1980, she was made *Commendatore all' Ordine della Repubblica Italiana* by Italian Government, an honour never before bestowed on a woman resident of Australia. In 1981, she was instrumental in the Foundation's decision to endow the chair of Italian Studies at La Trobe University, Melbourne. In 1983, the Foundation commissioned Australia's first general social history of Italians *Buongiorno Australia* (1987).

Mr Vaccari stated that it was his desire that special consideration be given by the Trustees to the establishment or support of any authorised charity which has as its primary object or as one of its primary objects the benefit of the Italian community in the State of Victoria.

The affairs of the Foundation are managed by four Trustees, including Elda.

Over the years, GVF has provided assistance and made a number of substantial grants for charitable purposes. These include in 1969-71 the founding of CoAsIt and the grant for the Italian elderly through the the Italian Community Service Fund. Grants have also been made towards the acquisition by the National Gallery of Victoria and the La Trobe University of important examples of Italian art.

From 1993, GVF provided a grant to Scotch College Language Centre for the teaching of the Italian language and culture at Scotch College, a leading educational establishment in Victoria. The Centre is available to the public.

Elda and her family have made a significant contribution to the recognition and development of Italian culture in Australia – an important part of Australia's history.

Jessie Mary Vasey

Founder of the War Widows' Guild

Jessie Mary Herbert was born at Roma, Queensland on 19 October 1897. When the family moved to Victoria, she attended Lauriston Girls' School until 1913 before becoming a weekly boarder at the Methodist Ladies College, Kew. While living at Kew she met her future husband, George Alan Vasey and the couple were married in May 1921 and had two children, George and Robert. While her husband was away in Europe, Jessie became involved in many organisations including the AIF Women's Association and had the idea of establishing flats for war widows. In March 1945, just four months before the World War II ended, Major General George Vasey, having survived Crete Libya and the Kokoda Trail, was killed in an aircraft accident off the coast of Queensland. Jessie became a war widow.

The War Widows' Craft Guild was established and although it supported groups such as the RSL and Legacy, in 1951 it purchased its first property which was renovated and turned into eight bedsitting rooms. By 1963, the Guild had created £1 million worth of housing throughout Australia.

Jessie died in 1966 on the way home from a holiday in Cairns and after a service in the Toorak Presbyterian Church, she was buried at Lilydale Cemetery beside her son George. Later her other son, Robert commissioned Andor Meszaros to make a plaque for her grave. It depicts a woman turning to other women who are clasping their children and bowed in grief. Her legacy was the 326 flats scattered on eleven blocks of land around Melbourne, giving better security at low cost to many women. She provided the inspiration for all other Guild Housing schemes that flourish throughout Australia. Jessie had led and worked tirelessly for the Guild for twenty years and received a CBE in 1963.

The War Widows Guild was founded by women of vision and run in the principles of human rights and human dignity. They had to fight hard to enforce the right of the widows to support their commendability for practical and persistent support. Jessie's advice to War Widows was *'Think Big!... Tell that man behind the desk he's there to help you!'* Advice that still applies today.



Vietnamese community support

Prior to her arrival in Australia in 1982, Hong Vo played very active roles in refugee camps and provided significant support to people in a wide range of activities ranging from charity to education and administration.

In Australia, Hong has been tirelessly working with women and children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, through paid employment and voluntary work.

Hong was a founding member of the Vietnamese Women's Association of Victoria and has been President of the Association since 1997. Hong has been heavily involved in the establishment and development of this Association which plays very vital roles in advocacy, empowerment, representation for women; preserving family and cultural values, thus enhancing family and social relationships.

Hong is an active member of the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition and a Member of the Yarra Ethnic Community Council. Hong also networks and strongly supports a large number of groups and agencies, namely Collingwood and Richmond Neighbourhood House, North Yarra Community Health, Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women, Vietnamese Professional Society, Vietnamese Student Association Victoria, Vietnamese Student Association Australia, Vietnamese Elderly and Women's groups around Melbourne, just to name a few.

Hong is an active member of the community, who is extremely committed to promote the lives of young children, women and families. Hong resources and supports others organising social, cultural and educational activities for Vietnamese people and the wider community. Hong also jointly organises activities and projects with others. She also advocates for social justice and equity of children and women in Australia and in Vietnam.

Hong makes a significant difference for Vietnamese women and women in the community. As a very enthusiastic community activist, she works closely with disadvantaged individuals and groups including elderly, young people, women and children to provide resources and support for all members of the community. Her main objectives include promotion of cultural understanding and tolerance, social harmony; empowering the community through information provision and participation in the decision-making process. She has developed very strong links with community groups, agencies and local workers through local community and cultural events.

Hong is currently a Vietnamese Access Worker with Northern BreakEven Problem Gambling Services and a Family Day Care Resource Officer with the City of Yarra.



Noel Waite, AO
Noel Waite

Women in leadership

Noel Waite, is a well-known identity in the fields of human resources and women's affairs. She is Chair of the Waite Group, Director of the Australian Institute of Management and the State Training Board. Her background includes directorships of private, public sector and educational boards and committees.

She is Founder President of Women Chiefs of Enterprises International, the Australian Branch of World Women Entrepreneurs, and was a Member of the World Task Force for Strategic Planning.

Noel has extensive networks, having written and delivered many papers both in Australia and overseas including 'Business Leaders in a World of Change', 'Restructuring and Developing Human Resources and Down-sizing', 'Global Partnerships and Human Resources for SMEs'.

She is a Certified Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants in Australia, Chartered Fellow of the Australian Human Resource Institute, Fellow of the Institute of Company Directors, Fellow and first woman President of the Australian

Institute of Management, and is a member of the Australian and International Institutes of Career Counsellors.

In 1982, Noel established Womensearch, the only Executive Search firm of its type in Australia. Many senior women executives and directors have been placed as a result.

In March 2001 the Waite Group was successful in securing the contract to manage the VicWomen Directory on behalf of the Office of Women's Policy. The Directory is aimed at promoting women to Victorian Government Boards and Committees.

Noel has also designed the successful Steps Career Development Programs including Top Steps for women in middle to senior management, the Ultimate Step for senior executive women and The Board Step for senior executives seeking personal mentoring and counselling for Board and/or Committee appointments.

In 1993, Noel was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for 'service to business and management, particularly through advancing the development of women in management'.



Vicki Walker
Vicki Walker

Reconciliation

Vicki Walker is a descendant of the Mutthi Mutthi tribe of southwest New South Wales, her home country is centred around Lake Mungo, New South Wales, and she is the proud mother of teenage daughter, Tamara. As the Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Melbourne (ACMM) Vicki has worked tirelessly since 1988 for the rights of Indigenous people, in particular Indigenous Catholic people in Victoria. In 2000, Vicki was elected as Chairperson of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) for a three-year period, the first woman to hold this position.

Vicki supports the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of Victoria by maintaining a Centre that is a place of welcome and of spiritual healing. This unique facility is so often a conduit for personal empowerment of Indigenous peoples, Catholic and non-Catholic. At the same time, she is able to facilitate communication between the 'official' Catholic church and its Indigenous members and the wider Indigenous community, in a way that would not otherwise be possible. By opening the avenues of communication, the hopes and ideals of all are able to be formed into a dialogue that both informs and creates action.

Vicki's role over the past ten years has positioned her as a leader in the reconciliation process in Victoria. She was a member of Faith Advisory Group to the

National Reconciliation Council. However, it is her work in the local community especially in the field of education that has had a profound impact. Catholic schools – primary and secondary – throughout Victoria have benefited from Vicki's wise and passionate input in regard to Indigenous issues. Many, hundreds of Catholic students and staff members over the past ten years have been awakened to issues of justice for Indigenous peoples through Vicki's work – the flow-on from this work cannot be overestimated.

Vicki has been able to be an influential agent of change within the hierarchical levels of the Catholic church, winning many concessions that allow her people to worship and celebrate in ways that are culturally appropriate. St Patrick's Cathedral now acknowledges Indigenous presence and spirituality, by a mosaic presentation at the front of the Cathedral and by housing an Indigenous Message Stick within the building. Both of these initiatives came about through Vicki's suggestion and action.

Vicki's work is never confined to regular working hours. Her dedication to her work and willingness to be available to the community sets her apart from the ordinary. Her influence extends beyond the Catholic community of Victoria. For example, in 1999 and 2001 her work has been acknowledged by the Darebin City Council with Australia Day awards for work for reconciliation through community

Vicki Walker
Vicki Walker

events programmed in 1998 and 2000. Each of these events had a profound effect in raising awareness of the issues involved in reconciliation in the wider community.

As Chairperson of NATSICC, Vicki's sphere of influence extends to a national level. NATSICC is the advisory body to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and is responsible for keeping the Australian bishops abreast of Indigenous issues and ways of responding. She is responsible for listening to and bringing together, the diversity of needs, ideals and vision of Indigenous Catholic communities right across the nation – remote, rural and urban. This requires great skills in understanding, listening and communicating. These skills she has in abundance and they gain for her the respect of her own community and all in the wider community who are privileged to experience her work and her person.

Vicki's ever-widening experience and influence has included the curating of two travelling art exhibitions. *Invisible No More* (1997) and *Dreaming in the City* (1999-2001). These exhibitions travelled throughout Victoria and nationally. *Invisible No More* told the story of the development of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, thus bringing it and its work to the attention of a national audience. *Dreaming in the City* is a vibrant exciting exhibition of Indigenous urban religious art, that is providing Victorian religious communities with evidence of a living, growing Indigenous religious expression.

Throughout the past ten years, Vicki has brought about vital change within the Victorian Catholic church in regard to the acceptance of Indigenous faith expression and an awakening to issues of justice in regard to the wider Indigenous issues of reconciliation, land rights and the stolen generation.

In regard to this latter issue, Vicki was asked to become a member of a national working party of the Australian Leaders of Religious Institutes to examine the issues and to develop an appropriate response to the members of the Stolen Generation who had been affected within institutions under the control of these Religious Orders. The result of this work was the production of a book – *A Piece of the Story* – which not only tells the story but is a tool to assisting members of the Stolen Generation in their search for their backgrounds and their families.

There is no doubt that Vicki's work has had a profound effect within the community and one that has brought about institutional change and lasting benefits. Her work and her influence continues.



Jude Wallace
Jude Wallace

Civil liberties and human rights

Jude Wallace has had a long-term personal involvement in access to justice and civil liberties advocacy.

In Liberty Victoria, she was a member and committee member from 1984-97 and President from 1996-98. Liberty Victoria is an organisation which pursues civil liberties and human rights in Australia.

Jude is also a member of Springvale Legal Service, Tenants Advisory Service, Feminist Lawyers, Legal Services Bulletin/Alternative Law Journal, a contributor and member of the editorial committee of the *Law Handbook*, an annual publication of Fitzroy Legal Service.

Jude co-edited *Rights and Freedoms* in Australia, 1990 Sydney, Federation Press, a general text on law, with royalties going to Liberty.

She has maintained her interest in legal education, access to justice and legal professional reform principally through

membership of Law Institute of Victoria committees, editorship of the Property *Law Bulletin*, and as a conference contributor.

Jude has developed course and materials dealing with access to justice, legal aid, landlord and tenant, borrowers and lenders and Aboriginal land rights during her twenty years as an academic. As Law Reform Commissioner 1986-92, she chaired the projects in land law reform and access to justice.

She worked on a World Bank project consulting in land rights reform from time to time in Indonesia in 1999-2000, and in February 2000 provided advice on land rights in East Timor as an Australian Volunteer Abroad to the United Nations Administration in East Timor for the Land and Property Unit.

In 1998, Jude ran as a very effective Labor candidate for Higgins.

Jude is honoured as a civil liberties and human rights advocate for access to justice and land rights reforms, especially for Indigenous people.

Councillor Ellen Weeks

Women in local government

In Victoria, two organisations addressed themselves to the problem of boosting the participation of women in local government: the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) and the Women's Electoral Lobby. From the early 1960s women in local government was the sole preoccupation of ALGWA.

ALGWA emanated from a meeting of women held in Canberra from 12-15 October 1951 on the last evening of the Jubilee Women's Convention, an aspect of the Commonwealth of Australia Jubilee Year. These women

included several who were involved in local government who 'found they had so much in common of vital interest to themselves alone they felt it should not end there'.

The first National Executive included a president, Councillor Ellen Weeks of Alexandria Shire in Victoria and Councillor Nola Barber, Chelsea, as Vice-President.

Ellen gave great service to the Alexandria Shire and to women in local government across Australia.



Wilma Xiberras
Wilma Xiberras

Indigenous affairs

Wilma is a Wurundjeri Elder. She has been involved in the Aboriginal community since birth. Her mother after coming off Corranderk, a Aboriginal station located at Healesville, was taken around as a child assisting Aboriginal women and their children.

Wilma was literally born in the gutter in North Melbourne, her mother not making it to the hospital. Her early childhood was on the streets of North Melbourne, based around what is now known as the starting point for Aboriginal politics within Victoria, her mother being instrumental in this movement.

Wilma then married and had two children, her daughter following in her political footsteps. She got a job as a process factory worker in a Coffin factory – making coffin handles. She was definitely one of the first Aboriginal women to be heavily involved in the unions, in particular the Metal Workers Union.

Wilma has dedicated her life to other women, in particular Aboriginal women making waves in what has been seen as an injustice. She has been a leader in the development

of cultural heritage within Melbourne, being one of the instigators of the Kulin Nation Cultural Heritage Organisation, now incorporated, thanks to Wilma.

Wilma has been instrumental in working towards self-determination for Indigenous people, particularly her people, the Wurundjeri, who are the traditional owners of the Melbourne region. In this, she is the Chairperson for the Kulin Nation Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, a board member for the Wathurong Co-op in Geelong and a member of the Museum of Victoria Indigenous Advisory Committee and has been recognised for her work in these areas.

Wilma is a quiet achiever, although she can make waves and challenge the norm. She does not want praise for her work as she sees it as a part of her life, her aim is to see the culture passed down to the next generation.

Working for nothing in areas where little funding is available, Wilma is deserving of high praise.



Wilma Young, AM

World War II veteran and community work with the RSL and war veterans

Wilma Young was born at Glenorchy, Victoria, on 17 August 1916. Her young life and schooling as one of five children was spent at Rupanyup and Murtoa, in rural Victoria. Her father had a wheat farm.

In 1934, she became a trainee nurse at the Warrnambool Base Hospital. After graduating in 1937, she moved to Melbourne to work for some time before training to become a midwife.

In 1941, following the declaration of World War II in 1939, Wilma applied to join up as a trained nurse and was accepted into the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS). In September 1941, as a member of the 13th AGH, she sailed into Singapore. After some weeks there, in the 13th AGH,

she joined with the 24th Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) to set up an ill-equipped hospital at Johore Bahru (now in Southern Malaysia).

Just before the fall of Singapore in February 1942, Wilma, along with other Australian nurses, was evacuated aboard a small vessel, the *Vyner Brooke*, which was sunk by the Japanese in the Bangka Strait off Sumatra. She became a prisoner-of-war until 1945.

After the war Wilma married and settled on a dairy farm at Cardinia in Victoria, where she still lives. She had four children and has worked from that time with the RSL, particularly with war veterans.

Autographs
Autographs



Centenary of Federation

