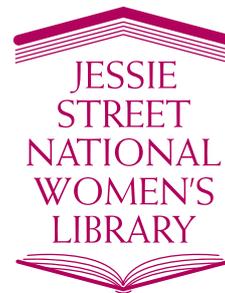


NEWSLETTER

To keep women's words, women's works, alive and powerful — Ursula LeGuin



FUTURE PROOFING OUR LIBRARY

The Library faces many technological and resource challenges into the future. As in many educational institutions, digital technology continues to unsettle and disrupt old ways of operating. Our volunteer librarians deserve recognition for their perseverance.

During 2015 our librarians have grappled with upgrades to Koha, the Library's management system, and changes to the rules for Libraries Australia's cataloguing standards. They have embraced these advances because of their commitment to keeping the Library relevant and responsive in a highly digitised world. The image below

In 2016, there will be a renewed focus on photographing the posters for which there is no corresponding image. Posters will be photographed as they are donated, in batches. Volunteer librarians with an interest in photography have recently completed the first in-house photographs, creating images and uploading them to the relevant catalogue records. The task is slow as imperfections are removed and each image is resized before being uploaded.

A corollary to poster cataloguing has been the ability to identify duplicate posters as a discrete item type. In recent months posters have been loaned for public exhibition,



shows the posters on the front page of our catalogue (see <http://jsnwl.calyx.net.au/>)

The Library's traditional role as the custodian of material for, by and about women remains paramount, but there is also an increasing focus on expanding our reach. Our Facebook page has many committed followers. It captures interest with informative and timely posts about notable women and relevant events. Readers can now access the Library catalogue effectively on any device, including mobile phones and tablets, as the web pages adjust dynamically to all screens.

Posters

A primary objective in the digitisation of the poster collection has been its potential to engage users. Visitors to the catalogue web page can now appreciate the artistic, historical and social value of the posters without visiting the Library. Approximately 1150 of the Library's 1600 posters can be searched on the catalogue, with an image in 70% of those entries. Dedicated poster cataloguers are continuing the exacting task of formal cataloguing.

for example to the conference 'Damned Whores and God's Police 40 Years On, the Colonization of Women in Australia' held at the University of Technology, Sydney last September. The Library participates in a range of public events to showcase its holdings. It is now possible to select duplicate items for display with the assurance that the original poster is safe in our collection.

Cataloguing

Certain new features of the Library's catalogue are of particular benefit to either casual browsers or researchers. The new 'Lists' feature, which appears in a drop-down box at the top of the catalogue home page, contains a growing array of lists of particular subject headings. Like the subject cloud on the catalogue's home page, it provides an introduction to the Library's holdings, enticing the browser to delve further. In contrast, the authority search tool is best suited to experienced researchers familiar with authority records. Searches for titles can be expanded to other libraries (WorldCat), databases (Google Scholar) and online stores.

Continued on page 6

Membership Renewal

Membership is by calendar year — see page 7. Thank you to those who have already resubscribed for 2016

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Jessie Street National Women's Library

Australia's National Women's Library is a specialist library, its focus being the collection and preservation of the literary and cultural heritage of women from all ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

Aims

- To heighten awareness of women's issues
- To preserve records of women's lives and activities
- To support the field of women's history
- To highlight women's contribution to this country's development

Patrons

Quentin Bryce AD CVO; Elizabeth Evatt AC;
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Our Facebook strategy

Launching the Library's Facebook page in January 2014, we took a different approach from the usual. Facebook provides a platform to promote contemporary events. But we wanted our Facebook page to be more thoughtful, more reflective. The unique look of the Facebook page is due to specially designed templates, and we showcase the Library's collections, promote Australian women authors and leaders, highlight important milestones for women in Australian history and promote Library events.

Writing the posts is fun: doing the research, tracking down information and sharing it with others. I have had the invaluable assistance of Hanne Marks. When the Facebook page was set up, I asked her, then a new volunteer, whether she would like to research Australian women authors and poets and identify relevant Library holdings. Hanne has now expanded her research to include Australian women composers, musicians and artists. Another volunteer, Sherri Hilario, will be trained this year.

I have moved to Coffs Harbour in northern NSW but will continue posting on Facebook and updating the website. <https://www.facebook.com/nationalwomenslibrary>

Diane Hague

Annual General Meeting 2016

The Library's Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 7 April 1pm-3pm, with lunch at 12 noon in the upstairs Seminar Room of the Ultimo Community Centre, corner of Harris St and William Henry St, Ultimo, Sydney.

This is your opportunity to visit the Library, meet the Board and other members and join us for a light lunch.

Nominations are called for the following positions: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and no fewer than five and no more than nine ordinary members. Nominations close on Friday 11 March. Please consider nominating for the Board yourself or suggesting it to a friend. Nomination forms are available in the Library.

Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 12.30pm at the Ultimo Community Centre.

A visit to the UK Women's Library

I recently visited the UK Women's Library located at its new site at the London School of Economics. The library is a discrete element occupying the 4th floor within the LSE's Library of Political and Economic Science building. It has a handsome 40 chair reading room.

The Women's Library had been relocated in 2014 from its former heritage site in London's East End which the London Metropolitan University said it could no longer afford. It is hoped that after decades of repeated removals of Europe's oldest and most extensive collection of books, letters, diaries, magazines, protest banners, pamphlets and photographs on women's history, a home with the LSE will be a permanent and satisfactory arrangement.

Set up in 1926 and born out of the votes for women movement, it was run until 1977 by what would become known as the Fawcett Society and the library carried the name of prominent suffragist, Millicent Fawcett. Eventually, for financial reasons it was taken over by the London City Polytechnic (later part of the London Metropolitan University) and its name changed to the Women's Library.

Not all women are happy with the latest move to the LSE. One campaigner against the move said, 'The Women's Library was always a 'living library' used by activists, researchers and members of the public – not just historians and academics'. She asked 'Will its dynamic legacy as both scholarly and political resource survive?' The LSE director of library services has pointed out that the LSE has its own heritage of commitment to women's rights.

Despite not having made an appointment, I was given a tour by one of the library's dedicated specialist staff. Its collection covers centuries of UK women's lives with 60,000 books and pamphlets, 3,000 journals (including our *Newsletter*), over 500 archives and 5,000 photographs, posters, badges and banners. Already digitised are 35 rare books and some 300 items from the 16th century to the present.

I was inspired to read more about Millicent Fawcett – an amazing woman who was influential among other things in the achievement of the vote for women over 30 in 1918. Her life story makes fascinating reading, with many parallels to Jessie Street.

Lorna Paviour

Mary Ryan's diaries

The Library held a function in December to mark the handover of the diaries of Mary Ryan (1886-1968). Her son John donated the diaries, and we welcomed him and many members of the extended family to the Library.



John Ryan speaking at the function in the Library. Chair Jozefa Sobski is standing in the left foreground.

The 21 handwritten books are a fascinating record of the activities and thoughts of a community activist based in the cement works town of Portland, NSW. Mary and her husband Michael were dedicated Labor Party members, and Mary was also active in women's organisations. The diaries begin in 1943, when the Treasurer Ben Chifley, in his capacity as Minister for Post-War Reconstruction, appointed Mary to the Commonwealth Housing Commission.

Mary was a delegate to the second Australian Woman's Charter Conference, held in Sydney in 1946. Jessie Street had convened the first conference in 1943 to mobilise women behind a program of reforms for post-war planning. The large photograph high on the front wall in the Library shows Jessie Street and some 40 other women from the 1946 conference gathered on the roof of a building overlooking Hyde Park. We were delighted when Mary's descendants were able to identify her in this photograph.

Mary's account of this conference runs over several pages of Book 13 of her diaries, and is a good example of the interesting detail and pungent commentary throughout the books. This is how she began, on 6 August 1946:

About 100 women, all taking themselves & their affairs very seriously, were assembled in the YWCA Hall when I arrived at 12 noon. Women's Rights were being defended in no uncertain terms and demands are to be put forward to the powers that be to make

more use of the brains & ability of women in public affairs.

Two days later she recorded:

The Woman's Charter Committee decided that they would seek public support in their fight for a better deal for women and so a public meeting was arranged and we had several speakers ... Also on the platform was Mrs Jessie Street who is Conference Chairman ... Mrs Street gave an interesting account of her visit to San Francisco as part of the Australian delegation ... Miss Della Nicholas made a very clever speech of which she herself was easily the most satisfied listener ... Today it was time to read my paper on Housing ... there were many questions afterwards in regard to home ownership, rents, interest free loans & many other subjects of the housing programme.



Mary's son John (centre) and grandchildren Cecilia Bersee, Myfanwy Ryan, Philip McDonald and Michael Ryan

Mary's paper captured the interest of the press, as she wrote the following day:

Today several delegates to the Conference chaffed me about having the headlines in the Telegraph a paper which I dislike and never read, much less buy. But of all the delegates who had the floor at the Conference, many of them of international repute, why the sub editor should have chosen to highlight my remarks is a mystery, and I do not for a moment imagine that the publicity I received was due to any special importance of what I had to say, but more likely the intention was to give a communistic flavour to the remarks made by a Labor woman.

The last remark picks up the Cold War theme which was to play such a large part in the lives of women like Jessie Street and Mary Ryan over many years. The Library's archivists look forward to researchers and interested readers coming in to enjoy Mary's honest comments on life in the 1940s and 1950s.

Jan Burnswoods and Beverley Sodbinow

LUNCH HOUR TALKS – third Thursday of the month

18 Feb: Members of WRN *
Recognising Indigenous people in the Constitution

Members of The Women's Reconciliation Network will discuss a public forum held in Sydney last year and a DVD, 'Exploring Perspectives', developed for use as an education tool. There will be an opportunity to purchase copies of the DVD.

*in Marconi Room, 4th Floor

17 March: Cecile Yazbek
Voices on the wind

Cecile's first book of fiction is based on her great-great-grandparents, Edmond and Lily Khalil, who left Lebanon to live in Queenstown South Africa in 1908. Granddaughter Eva, as the young Australian narrator, unfolds their story with observations of contemporary South Africa, juxtaposed with Australian ways.

21 April: Anne McLeod

The summit of her ambition: the spirited life of Marie Byles

Anne's talk focuses on Marie Byles, the first female solicitor in NSW and legal adviser to activist Jessie Street. A passionate conservationist, Marie helped save vast tracts of land for national parks. Turning to Buddhism, she wrote books that influenced a generation in the 1960s.

19 May: Gay Hendriksen

Conviction: the 1827 fight for rights in the Parramatta Female Factory

In 1827 over 100 women protested against poor living and working conditions. This talk explores the women's lives in the Parramatta Female Factory and this much debated event – one that is beginning to be discussed again and recognised in our histories.

Venue/Time: 12.00-1.30pm. Southern Function Room, 4th Floor, Town Hall House, 456 Kent St Sydney.

Cost: \$16 (members) \$22 (non-members) including light lunch. Pay at the door. **Book by noon Monday before the talk.** Ph (02) 9571 5359

'TAKING THE MICKEY' AND SURVIVING IN AUSTRALIA

Jessica Milner Davis, humour scholar at the University of Sydney, apologised for being unable to deliver her speech owing to sudden illness. She provided a transcript of her talk for the following report and thanked me for an 'excellent short report of what she would have liked to say'.

'Taking the mickey' is regarded almost as a national civil liberty in Australia. Former Attorney-General Phillip Ruddock, defending our rights to 'precious parody' in 2006, instigated legislation to protect satirists and cartoonists from claims of copyright infringement, reinforcing permission for taking the mickey between friends, in the workplace, and between older and newer arrivals to Australia.

The term 'taking the mickey' was inherited by colonial Australians from Cockney slang. A euphemism for an older term 'taking the piss', it has in recent years been largely displaced by the younger generation's revival of the cruder term. In Cockney rhyming slang, the variant terms 'mike bliss' and 'mickey bliss' stood for 'piss'. Thus, 'to take the mike/mickey [bliss]' meant 'to take the piss', 'to make a fool of someone; to pull someone's leg'. The usual explanation of why 'mike/mickey bliss' should stand for piss is that the slang aided Cockney gangs in resisting the forces of law and order. But 'piss' is also something that is a worthless consequence of much drinking, hence a fake or poor substitute for the real thing (as in 'piss-weak'). Consequently, 'piss/mickey bliss' invites ideas of exposure and laughter: beer passes in, is transformed and passes out in much the same quantity and colour – but worthless.

During the 1990s the first Australian-born generations of non-English speaking families who had arrived post-war produced successful comedians who joked back publicly against the established majority that had mocked them and their 'otherness' into conformity. They joked about both their earlier tormentors and their own family communities.

Many of these artists in stand-up comedy, theatre, radio, TV and film emerged from the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, including Vince Sorrenti, Magda Szubanski (pictured on right), Eric Banadinovich (Eric Bana), Rachel Berger and Akmal Saleh. Those who developed scripts and personae based on their own life experiences, reflecting the tensions of the 'them and us' divide, include Ernie Dingo with his Indigenous background, Rachel Berger (Jewish diaspora) Nick Giannopoulos, Mary Coustas, George Kapiniaris, Simon Palomares and John Barresi (Greek-Australian), Hung Le and Anh Do (Vietnamese-Australian) and Shaun Micallef (Irish/Maltese Australian).

Comedian Le Trung Hung (Hung Le, who co-starred in the *Wogs Out Of Work* series) escaped Saigon by boat aged nine to become 'a lanky, skinny, yobbo, dreadlocked Vietnamese classical violinist who's also a comedian.'



Appropriating the derogatory term 'Ching-chong' in order to defeat it, he joked about 'the ugliness of a lot of old migrants towards the new migrants'. The character of Habib Halal, a comic Australian-Lebanese drug dealer from the popular SBS TV series, *Pizza*, was played by Tahir Bilgiç, 'Australia's only Turkish stand-up comedian'. At Sydney's Enmore Theatre in 2009, Habib and friends drew a largely Australian-Lebanese and Australian Serbo-Croatian audience at a time when divided feelings within – and against – the relevant local communities were running high. In The Hague, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was conducting the Milosovich trial, attention was focused on emerging threats of Islamicist terrorism, and members of the Lebanese communities in Sydney were complaining about racial backlash while a major court case involving gang rape was being heard. But at the Enmore, hands waved high in response to the query from the stage, 'Anyone here from Campbelltown?', greeted quickly by, 'Have you got any shoes on? Well, hey, bro, that's cool!' This was followed by 'Anyone from Marrickville? Try to take a shower once a week, willya?' One reviewer wrote, '[t]he audience squirmed and groaned' with a mixture of embarrassment and laughter. Those with Serbian background were invited to mock those with Croatian, and vice versa.

Many of these self-styled ethnic comedians enjoyed commercial success, and social conventions about how to take the ethnic mickey have evolved. In conducting a public 'piss-take' of one group, you first attack yourself and/or your own group before targeting others. Traditionally, comedians have favoured this technique as a means of bonding with their audiences, basing their material first on their own life stories.

While permission for mickey-taking in Australia certainly implies a two-way street, there is also an unwritten convention that new arrivals should not rush to assume equality in returning retaliatory fire. Grasping such nuanced rules surrounding joking behaviour is crucial to social adaptation in any culture. In *Dancing with strangers* (2003), historian Inga Clendinnen speculates that this traditional permission to 'joke back' at the expense of those more newly-arrived and those more senior than oneself may already have been a pre-existing part of Indigenous cultural custom at white settlement.

Humour plays a vital role in supporting self-esteem in the face of racial tension and social disadvantage, as is apparent in many personal narratives. The stories of deprivation and survival found in Ruby Langford Ginibi's books record a humour that is used both offensively and defensively to take the mickey from a dominant Australian culture that casually disrupts Indigenous lives.

Australian conventions about mickey-taking require that you take no offence and demand no retribution, regardless of whether the taker and the victim are friends or strangers, equals or superiors. The final cultural rule for mickey/piss-taking assures us that 'when *you* are insulted, you should rejoice: you too are an Aussie!'

Report by Kris Clarke

ELLEN THOMSON — A REASONABLE DOUBT ?

Vashti Farrer has written numerous adult short stories, plus children's fantasy, humour, history, non-fiction, verse and plays. She spoke about her first adult non-fiction work, *Ellen Thomson A Reasonable Doubt?* (2014)*, a grim account of the only woman executed in Queensland.

Vashti first encountered Ellen in 1997. The Courthouse museum in Port Douglas, 1800 km north of Brisbane, had an exhibition about an 1886 murder. Photos showed the co-accused Ellen Thomson and her younger 'lover', John Harrison – but not the older victim, William Thomson. The exhibition highlighted age differences between the three protagonists suggesting a crime of passion. Ellen's descendants shunned her memory. Vashti scented a novel.

Back in Sydney reading microfilm newspaper reports of the trial, Vashti says she was 'immediately hooked'. She enjoys the research and character development in fiction. She pictured a far north Queensland full of hard workers and drinkers. In 1876 with gold discovered at Hodgkinson River, Port Douglas, today's holiday resort, had practically overnight become a tent city with 50 pubs. Thousands arrived, heading inland to the diggings. Ellen, widowed with four children, came from Cooktown 270 km north.

But Vashti pursued various leads with limited success: if Ellen had become a barmaid what were hotels like back then? What about the Sisters of Mercy who visited Ellen in prison? Census records, certificates – of birth, death, marriage, execution – and archives yielded only crumbs. Vashti's familiarity with colonial gaols, scaffolds and cramped condemned cells contributed little to her tale. After years drafting novels from protagonists' viewpoints, she was advised by a freelance editor, 'Throw away the history and write the story!' Some writers take this approach. Vashti, however, decided that doing Ellen justice required non-fiction to better portray her in her social context.

This proved rewarding. Hitherto, Vashti had sought only what seemed appropriate for fiction. She now examined two Queensland State Archives digital 300 page files – uncovering more complexity. She drew on two family historians for Ellen's early life in NSW, and later as a washerwoman in Cooktown and Port Douglas before she became Thomson's housekeeper, then his wife in 1880.

By 1885, bustling Port Douglas had 12,000 residents, a local newspaper, and weatherboard churches, banks and several pubs. Nearby, successful miners farmed selections amid killings sparked by Aboriginal displacement and growing racism against Chinese diggers working on 'white' land.

After the murder of 66 year old selector Thomson, Ellen, 41, and the 27 year old labourer, Harrison, were arrested in January 1887 and tried in May at Townsville Supreme Court some 400 km south. A strong-minded Englishman, Harrison had deserted the Royal Navy in 1885; he met Ellen less than two months before the murder. Irish Catholic Ellen, illiterate, hard-working and gregarious was a devoted mother. Harrison's final confession claimed he goaded Thomson into killing himself and stated Ellen took no part in the struggle but was 'in on the plan'. Ellen considered herself not guilty, not having pulled the trigger,

and expected to inherit the property which she thought she could manage with Harrison. Each denied loving the other.

R e n o w n e d British 'justice' at that time in Queensland decidedly favoured the prosecution: an accused could not mount a defence, call witnesses, or cross-

examine Crown witnesses except at preliminary hearings.

Justice Cooper was reputedly severe in criminal cases. Descriptions of Ellen as a 'loose woman' and Harrison as 'her latest fancy man' by Thomson's brother played to Cooper's prejudices: his notes during the trial, worked into his official report, suggest a mind made up – they refer to Ellen's happy life with Thomson but not his reported violence, paranoia, alcoholism and hatred of Chinese. Cooper accepted some dubious evidence including from Chinese witnesses Vashti suspects colluded against the accused to improve their own community standing. Cooper told the jury: 'the law assumes murder has been committed until the contrary is proven' – newspaper reporters reminded readers of the 'innocent until proven guilty' principle. For the defendants, Mr Leu, a Swiss solicitor was no match for the Crown Prosecutor (later Supreme Court judge) Mr Power, practical, brilliant and witty. In newspaper reports, Vashti detects Ellen's growing desperation. Her cross-examination of Crown witnesses at preliminary hearings had not helped and, when asked to speak before the sentencing, Cooper thought her 'impassioned oration' of nearly an hour suggesting possible causes for Thomson's death made her appear guiltier. Unsurprisingly, both prisoners were sentenced to execution.

Appeals for commuting Ellen's sentence – by a juror at the trial, by letters to newspapers from the Customs Official/Port Douglas Harbour Master, and a telegram to the Governor from some Brisbane businessmen – were unsuccessful. As Vashti comments, a 19th century woman accused of murder was judged more harshly than a man. The execution proceeded in June. Thomson's brother and heir erected an ornate headstone. Ellen's and Harrison's graves in Brisbane are unmarked.

But Ellen's family no longer reject her. And Vashti doubts Ellen's guilt was proven beyond a reasonable doubt: a biased 'hanging judge'; a clever Crown Counsel and 197 depositions on one side; on the other an inexperienced country solicitor and no witnesses. Given a smart defence lawyer and today's justice system including changed laws of evidence, a jury might have delivered a different verdict.

Transcription by Helen Ruby

Report by Margot Simington

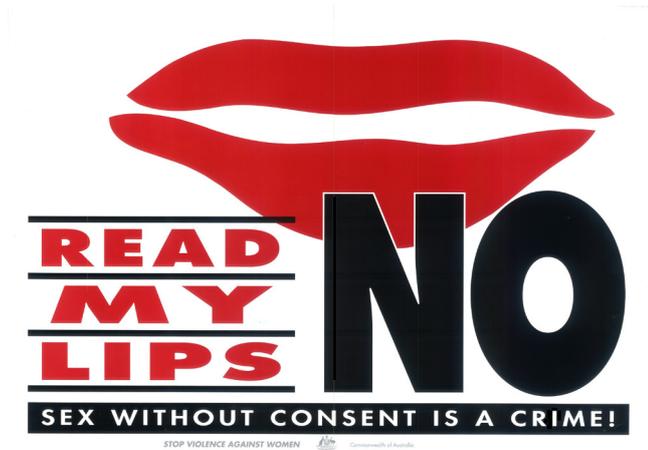
* Vashti has donated a copy of her book to the Library.



Future proofing our Library

Continued from page 1

A number of operational changes have brought ancillary benefits for the librarians. The paperless stocktake is now a reality with the inventory and stocktaking tools on Koha being utilised to maximum advantage with the use of a tablet.



The team of archivists, in consultation with Calyx, the Library's provider of Koha, have commenced cataloguing archival material. As it does not typically fall within the ambit of a library catalogue, considerable work was required to customise the frameworks of the catalogue to incorporate relevant information. Work is proceeding with 44 archival records already appearing on the catalogue. The recent *Newsletter* article about the Library's badge collection has led to further donations. The cataloguing of this part of the collection is a future project.

Calyx is continuing to work with Libraries Australia to enable the upload of our original cataloguing to the Australian National Bibliographic Database, Australia's largest single bibliographic resource. The process of refreshing and re-synchronising our holdings on that database is onerous, as is much of the work required to maintain the Library's standing in the community of libraries throughout the world.

As a consequence, the Library is receiving an increasing number of requests for interlibrary loans of rare items. We must protect unique material, while also endeavouring to satisfy the needs of the individual researcher and being mindful of the rights of the creator. Certain categories of holdings, for example audio-visual items, are typically designated as not suitable for interlibrary loan; other

requests are considered on their merits.

The changes to the Library are strategically aimed at benefitting its many stakeholders, including members and volunteers, donors, authors and creators, users, sponsors, other library organisations and the community. The recent implementation of Libraries Australia's Authority Control system, a major challenge for the Library's cataloguers, was consistent with our commitment to deep linking with Trove. The authority record goes beyond a standardised heading, incorporating useful listings of possible variations of names or terms and additional details where applicable.

The new descriptive cataloguing standard, Resource Description and Access (RDA), adopted by Libraries Australia, remains a key focus for our librarians. This new standard takes into account the proliferation of items created in digital form and clusters different editions, translations or formats of a work.

Much more to do

A blog by a Charles Sturt University student whose group visited the Library last May unreservedly praised the passion of our volunteers. However she also expressed concern that the collection does not yet extend to current items on digital platforms, and there is a very real risk that recent feminist history will be lost. The proliferation of feminist newsletters of the 1970s has been replaced with online news publications and blogs, which may not enjoy the longevity, albeit fragile, of their hard copy predecessors. The evolution of the Library will be determined by changes to the way in which information is created in the future.

Our volunteer librarians perform a professional and demanding service for the community of women and men who value the collection and recognise its importance to preserving women's and feminist history.

Members of the Library, donors and supporters can be assured that its future is secure though that future continues to be unpredictable. Technological challenges will continue as our large media outlets, film and record companies and our major educational institutions have realised. We adjust to developments over which we have little control. We are well positioned to respond because of the generosity, dedication and commitment of our volunteers: Megan Barnes, Rima D'Arcy, Isobel Dewar, Heide Finger, Barbara Henery, Sherri Hilario, Jane Lander, Lynne Morton, Christine Smith, Bev Sodbinow and Aleit Woodward among others.

We thank them all for maintaining a standard of which we can be proud.

Lynne Morton with Jozefa Sobski

Erina Johnson

The Library is very grateful for the donations recently received in memory of Erina Johnson, who died in December aged only 38.

Her parents, family, friends and colleagues at Transport for NSW made donations to the Library in lieu of flowers at her funeral. The total so far is over \$1000, a very welcome addition to our Capital Investment Fund.

Erina was a talented journalist and policy analyst, wholeheartedly committed to feminism, social justice and equity. Her funeral reflected her deepest commitments, including a reading from a 1910 essay entitled *Woman Suffrage* by Emma Goldman, an American anarchist

and fighter for women, although not a supporter of the campaign for woman's suffrage:

'The import is not the kind of work woman does, but rather the quality of the work she furnishes. She can give suffrage or the ballot no new quality, nor can she receive anything from it that will enhance her own quality. Her development, her freedom, her independence, must come from and through herself. First, by asserting herself as a personality, and not as a sex commodity. Second, by refusing the right to anyone over her body ... [including] by making her life simpler, but deeper and richer ...'

Jan Burnswoods

Robyn Kemmis

The sudden passing of Deputy Lord Mayor Robyn Kemmis in December was a shock to Library members and supporters. Robyn was a City Councillor for eight years, from 2004 to 2008 and again since September 2012 when she became Deputy Lord Mayor and Deputy Chair of Council's Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee. Commitment to social justice, women's rights and social housing communities as well as her professional administrative and commercial skills earned her the respect and love of City of Sydney's residential, business and education communities.

Robyn was always available to advise and support the Library when we had issues needing clarification or resolution. She gave her time and good counsel generously. She was committed to organisations working for the most disadvantaged and marginalised. In 2014, she arranged the use of Glebe Town Hall for the Joyce Stevens memorial service for which the Library prepared the video of Joyce's life and work.

Commenting on her passing, our Chair Jozefa Sobski said, 'Robyn was a wonderful friend to the Library and a valued supporter of its work. My memory of her was as a quiet and unassuming, but effective worker for women's causes. She got the first 'Girls Can Do Anything' campaign off the ground with Joan Bielski in NSW in 1979, and we have the posters in our collection.' She engaged all communities in local government decisions that affected their lives, with a particular interest in supporting local village economies and programs for young people. She was an active member of her own community in Glebe and passionate about preserving its heritage and character.

Her long experience as a brilliant administrator included senior management positions at the then NSW Public Service Board and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration) at the University of Technology, Sydney.

We will miss her.

Suzanne Marks

A warm welcome to our new members

John Fisher Regis McKenzie Robin Smith
Hilary Taylor Susan Tracey

General donations since November 2015

Donations of money help meet day-to-day running costs:

Pam Carter Nola Harris Rosa Needham
Valda Rigg Valwyn Wishart Maria Zarro

Donations of material expand our collection:

Dale Dengate Agnes Godfrey Beverley Kingston

Capital Investment Fund

Since it was launched in September 2009, the Capital Investment Fund has reached \$238,107. Our target is \$500,000, the interest from which will provide essential support for Library operations. If you would like to contribute, please indicate on the membership/donation form on this page.

CIF donations since November 2015:

Julie James Bailey* Barbara Snell
Family, friends and colleagues of Erina Johnson

* Monthly or other regular donations are acknowledged annually.

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

I wish to: join the library renew my membership
 make a donation

Date:/...../.....

Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr/other

Name:.....

Address:.....

Tel: (h)..... (w)..... (m).....

Email: (Please print BLOCKLETTERS)

Please send newsletters by email instead of hardcopy.

Membership Category

- Full Member \$60 Life member \$1,000
- Organisation \$120 Student \$20 (conditions apply)
- Concession \$30 (Pensioner/Centrelink Concession Cardholders)

A membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Members joining after 1 October are financial until 31 December of the following year.

Donations (donations over \$2 are tax deductible)

- I wish to make a donation of \$.....
 - to the Library for general purposes
 - to the Library's Capital Investment Fund
- I am willing to have my name published in the Newsletter
- I wish to remain anonymous

Payment Details

- Enclosed is my cheque/money order for \$..... (payable to Jessie Street National Women's Library)
 - Please charge my MasterCard/Visa with \$.....
Name of cardholder:.....
Card no.....
Expiry date/.....
- Signature:.....

Auto Debit Authorisation

- I authorise JSNWL to charge this, and all future membership renewals as they fall due, to the credit card number above on this form.
- I authorise JSNWL to charge \$.....annually to the above credit card as a donation to
 - the Library for general purposes or to
 - the Library's Capital Investment Fund.

Signature:.....

Become a volunteer

- I would like to help the Library by becoming a volunteer. (You will be contacted for an interview.)

Please forward the completed form to:

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GPO Box 2656, Sydney NSW 2001

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523–525 Harris Street (cnr William Henry Street), Ultimo

Please use the intercom for admittance

For level access, enter via the Ultimo Community Centre in Bulwara Rd

Opening times:

The Library is open to the public Monday to Friday 10 am to 3 pm

Borrowing policy:

The public can access items using the interlibrary loan system. The public cannot borrow items but may use them in their library of choice. A loan collection is available to financial members

How to reach the Library:

There are several ways to travel to the Library:

- ▶ The Library is a 20 minute walk from Town Hall Station (through Darling Harbour) or from Central Station (via Harris Street)
- ▶ Bus 501 (Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre stop) from Railway Square
- ▶ Light rail from Central Station to Exhibition stop
- ▶ If you drive, there is limited two hour street metre parking available

Postal Address:

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www.nationalwomenslibrary.org.au

