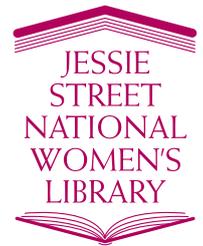


NEWSLETTER

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



STUDENT RESEARCH AND INTERNSHIPS

One of the Library's roles is assisting students with research and internships. It has an ongoing co-operative relationship with the TAFE Sydney Institute at Ultimo and Alaoise Barkmeyer, a student in the last stage of her Library and Information Studies diploma course, spent eight weeks this year, two days a week, gaining experience at our Library. She was introduced to a range of tasks including cataloguing audio and posters, editing records and digitised images, and beginning a framework for ephemera.

Alaoise is also studying for a communications degree at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), and her work for that led her to approach the librarians and archivists to access materials for a digitisation project. We were delighted to make the material available, and the assignment was completed in June. Alaoise has now written a report for us.

Women and war digitisation project

As part of a group assignment for Maintaining Digital Information at UTS, our group decided to digitise some of the Jessie Street National Women's Library holdings relating to women, war and peace. Our group comprised myself, Jesse French, Jaime Smith and Sarah Kazzi. With the help of both the librarians and the archivists, we managed to find over 20 items of various types which

related to our topic.

The items we were able to digitise included an audio recording of an interview with Megan Rutledge — a WAAAF Wireless Telegraphist during World War II, various badges, Pine Gap photographs and storyboards, a couple of banners, posters, a WAAAF Wing 'Good Sportsmanship' Shield, newspaper clippings and telegrams.



The banner *LEST THEY RECALL* is one of a number the Library acquired from the Canberra Women's Archives in 1993. It dates from the Anzac Day protest marches of the early 1980s, when hundreds of women protested against rape in war. In Sydney in 1983, 161 of the marchers were arrested.



The photograph shows a banner displayed at the Joint American/Australian Defence Facility at Pine Gap near Alice Springs during the Women's Peace Camp there in 1983. The banner was one of many attached to the barbed wire perimeter fence, along with festoons of ribbons and threads and other objects, by the 800 women protesters. In the background are several security guards and police. This banner was one of over 100 made by women throughout Australia and taken to Pine Gap. The photographic collective exhibited their work late in 1983, and the Library holds 37 storyboards containing photographs, letters, telegrams and other items.

We used an SLR camera and various lighting and mounts to take a high quality image of each of the items. As a group we decided to create an online collection for an imaginary UTS High School. Using a free to download program — Grenstone — we were able to input information about each item and tailor the interface to our needs. Initial feedback from our tutor was positive and so we look forward to receiving our results soon.

We have provided a copy of each of the items digitised to the Library in thanks for their help.

Alaoise Barkmeyer



The badge 'I am a woman for peace' dates from the 1980s.

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; Clover Moore Lord Mayor of Sydney; Laurence Street AC KCMG

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Editorial Team

Kris Clarke, Editor; Katharine Stevenson, Graphic Designer; Jessica Stewart

New acquisitions

The Library aims to update and modernise its collection. This is difficult and expensive since we rely heavily on donations. Credit from Gleebooks for surplus duplicates plus donations from Spinifex Press and UWA Publishing have helped. We have concentrated recent acquisitions on women in politics, indigenous women, Muslim women and refugee women, including:

- *Lady of the realm*, Hoa Pham, Spinifex Press, Australia, 2010 (novella)
- *Julia Gillard: my story*, Julia Gillard, Bantam Press, 2014 (autobiography)
- *Us women, our ways, our world*, Pat Dudgeon, Jeannie Herbert, Jill Milroy and Darlene Oxenham (eds), Magabala Books, Broome, 2017 (essay collection by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women)
- *Fighting Islam: women, faith and sexism*, Susan Carland, Melbourne University Press, 2017
- *Miss Muriel matters*, Robert Wainwright, ABC Books, 2017 (story of a little known Australian suffragist)
- *Skin deep: settler impressions of Aboriginal women*, Liz Conor, UWA Publishing, 2016
- *Conviction: the 1827 fight for rights at the Parramatta Female Factory*, Gay Henriksen, The Rowan Tree, 2016

Barbara Henery

Capital Investment Fund

Since it was launched in September 2009, the Capital Investment Fund has reached \$332,343. 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 page 7.

CIF donations since May 2017:

Christine Burvill	Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Beverley Kingston	Wilga Pruden
NSW Retired Teachers Association	

Rediscovering Elizabeth Harrower

Elizabeth Harrower's rediscovered gem *The Long Prospect* proved an enjoyable read for the Library Book Club whose members meet in the Library on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 3pm. Originally published in 1958 it was recently reissued to critical acclaim by Text Publishing. David Winter, Text's senior editor says '... in 2012, we didn't know we'd go on to republish all of Elizabeth's work. But, ... we published in the Text Classics series, her earlier novels *Down in the City*, *The Long Prospect* and *The Catherine Wheel*.'

The Long Prospect is set in an industrial city based on the Newcastle of Harrower's childhood in the 1930s. Emily Lawrence, an unloved and emotionally neglected 12 year old, is being raised by her manipulative grandmother. Emily finds an unlikely mentor in Max, a middle aged scientist. This mutually rewarding relationship arouses prudish attention from onlookers who can only detect scandal. A superbly written psychological drama, it is cleverly observed, but also humorous and bitter. Text says that 'Harrower is one of the most important postwar Australian writers ... Recently published, *In Certain Circles*, her long-hidden and unpublished fifth novel went from the depths of the National Library's archives to being a BBC *Book at bedtime*, ... the great discovery of 2014'. There were no dissenters amongst the book lovers at the June meeting who felt similarly about *The Long Prospect*.

The Book Club's next selections are:

26 July – award winning play *The Drover's Wife* by Leah Purcell

23 August – *The Last Days of Ava Langdon* (based upon author Eve Langley) by Mark O'Flynn

27 September – a classic, *The Pea Pickers* by Eve Langley.

Barbara Henery

Your chance at great prizes

We are again fortunate to be able to offer covetable prizes in the Library's annual raffle, to be drawn at the Luncheon on 11 September 2017. A book of five tickets is enclosed with your Newsletter. We appreciate your selling them to assist with fund-raising. Prizes are:

1st Two nights' accommodation for two in a Deluxe City King Room at The Langham Hotel Sydney, daily full buffet breakfast for two in Bistro Remy, afternoon tea for two in Palm Court on one of the days during the stay, access to spa facilities and Internet Wi-Fi access, value \$ 1,500, donated by Teachers Mutual Bank

2nd Sterling silver brooch moulded from an olive leaf as a symbol of peace, value \$550, designed and made by Connie Dimas Jewellery

3rd David Jones gift voucher, value \$350, donated by Marie Muir

4th Gift voucher for Kinokinuya Books, to value of \$100, donated by Gail Hewison

5th Harbour Cruise, value \$78, donated by Captain Cook Cruises, Circular Quay, Sydney

6th Three signed books of play scripts by Alana Valentine, donated by the author, plus a bottle of wine

7th Two poetry collections by Colleen Burke, *Splicing air* and *Fermenting*, signed by the poet, plus a bottle of wine

8th, 9th 10th Two bottles of wine.

All wine produced by Mt View High School, Cessnock and donated by the NSW Teachers Federation.

Women of Pyrmont

At last year's International Women's Day morning tea in Pyrmont two of the local women, Mary Mortimer and Leone Hindmarsh, spoke of their lives and how they came to be in Pyrmont. This sparked an idea for Barbara Thompson to collect and publish the stories of other 'elders' of Pyrmont. With Leone's expertise as co-editor the book finally took shape with 40 stories, and was launched in April 2017.

The stories range from poetry to prose, complete with photographs. The authors come from all over the world and have wide ranging career and life experiences, and most have contributed with community service. Some of the tales are witty and breezy, some deep and moving, even harrowing at times. However the women have shown great resilience and drawn strength from relationships with other people to get to what for most is their 'happy place' beside the harbour. This is where they plan to stay for the rest of their lives.

The official book launch took place at the Pyrmont Community Centre where both the local Federal Member Tanya Plibersek, and the local State Member Alex Greenwich, were present to congratulate all who contributed to the book and send it on its way into the world. The function was well attended and the book is stirring much excitement in the local area.



The first printing is already sold out but a second is being organised due to a serious underestimation of the interest in *Women of Pyrmont*.

Helen McCarthy

Helen has donated a copy of the book to the Library

Rose Scott Women Writers' Festival

The Library has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Rose Scott Women Writers' Festival, which sets out how the two organisations will share information on their events with their memberships, building a network with a shared interest in promoting women's voices.

The Rose Scott Women Writers' Festival has been held annually at the Women's Club in Elizabeth Street, Sydney since its inception. This year, its three sessions fall on Friday 16 and Saturday 17 September 2017. I spoke with the Festival Director, Dr Wendy Michaels, on the Festival's origin and this year's theme.

The Festival was founded in 2013 when several members of the Women's Club wanted to provide a space for members to engage with and support the arts in more depth. The first festival brought together authors 'in conversation' including Ita Buttrose, Susannah Fullerton and Helen Trinicia.

The Festival is named after the feminist activist, Rose Scott, born in 1847 (photograph on p.7, taken in 1913). Like Jessie Street, she spent her life giving voice to women and working to improve their material options through access to education, financial independence and public office. She held soirees at her home in Woollahra to bring people of influence together to discuss issues in politics, social science and the arts, and to learn from each other's experiences.

Dr Michaels, who has directed the Festival for the past few years, says that its boutique status allows for an intimacy that larger festivals cannot replicate. Writers and readers can engage closely with each other, to speak, listen and follow up in depth.

The sessions are designed to preserve the essence of Rose Scott's own soirees with their intimacy and opportunities for meaningful exchange. A Luncheon and a Soiree on the Friday and a full-day Symposium on the Saturday are limited to 90 attendees for each event. Panel discussions were introduced in recent years, allowing themes to be explored in more detail.

The Festival attracts some of the most well-known and respected women writers and commentators as speakers and moderators. The 2017 Festival theme is 'Women

Continued on page 7

LUNCH HOUR TALKS — THURSDAY 17 AUG, 12 OCT AND 23 NOV 2017 AT CUSTOMS HOUSE

17 August: Colleen Z Burke

The waves turn: a memoir

Colleen's memoir explores the early years: her working class Irish Catholic background in Bondi and her involvement in the burgeoning folk scene, where she met folksinger Declan Affley and developed her distinctive poetic voice. A selection of her poems is interwoven throughout her memoir. Colleen has facilitated poetry and creative writing workshops and is author of 11 poetry books and a biography of Australian poet and socialist, Marie EJ Pitt. Colleen is also co-editor of *The turning wave – poems and songs of Irish Australia*

12 October: Caroline Beecham

Maggie's kitchen: Finding courage and comfort in food

Inspired by real events during World War II when British restaurants worked with the Ministry of Food to help solve food shortages, this novel looks at how one restaurateur nurtured the community while overcoming her own grief. Caroline will talk about her research, the restorative power of food and how these communal kitchens are springing up again to help solve current food issues.

23 November: Marilla North

Yarn spinners

Three of Australia's most prominent women authors of the mid-20th century come alive in Marilla North's book, *Yarn spinners*. The friendship between Dymphna Cusack, Miles Franklin and Florence James is chronicled in North's weaving together their correspondence with press excerpts. *Yarn spinners* sets out their struggles with the publishing industry and their activism in social justice movements and for free speech, in the era of anti-communism.

Venue/Time: 12.00-1.30pm. Customs House Library, 31 Alfred St, Sydney – on Circular Quay, enter via front of Customs House
Cost: \$16 (members) \$22 (non-members) including light lunch. Pay at the door. **Book by noon Monday before the talk.** Ph (02) 9571 5359

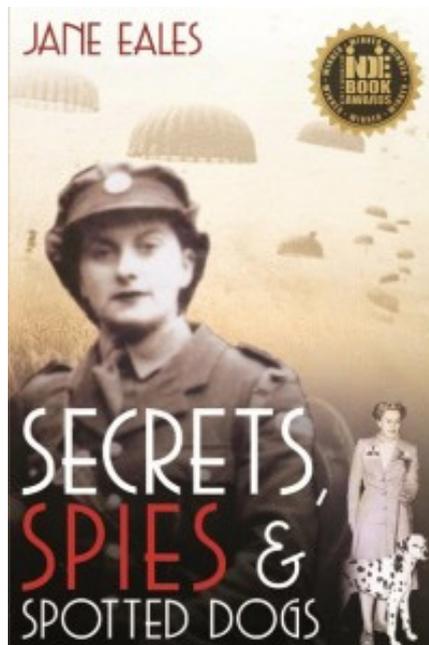
SECRETS, SPIES AND SPOTTED DOGS

Jane Eales' book, *Secrets, Spies and Spotted Dogs* (2014) tells the interwoven stories of her adoption, search for her birth mother and the extraordinary life she uncovered. Jane wanted to lift the taboo around adoption and to shine a light on women's history, recording one of its many untold stories. A third dimension to her book is the particular impact on families of caring for disabled children and society's move away from institutionalised care. Jane established Middle Harbour Press with her husband and self-published: publishers insisted that the stories be separated. She wanted to keep them intertwined. Now in its second edition, her faith in her own telling of these stories has been rewarded, as it won a prize in the 2015 Next Generation Indie Book Awards.

Jane was born in England in 1947 and moved to Zimbabwe where she grew up with her parents and brother. At 18, looking for her birth certificate to apply for residency in South Africa, her innocent query was met with a summons to come home. There, her parents told her some of the facts around her birth and her world changed forever.

Betrayal was her first and overwhelming sense on being told and she felt entirely alone – her brother had known of her adoption. It was followed by shame and insecurity. Although her parents could not keep it a secret any longer, they impressed on Jane deeply that she must never speak of it again and never look for her birth parents. She was warned they might ask her for money. The impact of closed, secret adoptions on the lives of all those involved was immense. She felt the stigma intensely of her 'illegitimacy' and her birth mother's shame. She also became acutely aware of how she differed from her adopted family, physically and in personality.

She was also to learn that her adopted parents had placed a son, born with Downs Syndrome, into an institution in the UK, as was the best advice at the time. Their adoption of her was a replacement of sorts, part of coming to terms with this loss. Jane spoke frankly about how a healthy relationship with her parents was impeded not only by the circumstances of her adoption but also by the prevailing ignorance and shame about disability. She felt she was a constant reminder of the son they had left behind. Added to that, the knowledge that she was related to two other families hurt too much to think about. Jane eventually came to an understanding with her parents, knowing that they loved her and had done their best but, as she says, she 'became very good at forgetting'. It was not until the 1990s, a decade after her migration to Australia with her husband, that her curiosity was rekindled. In a parallel with her mother's life, Jane also has a son born with a degenerative condition and she began to relive the grief her mother had kept inside for so many years. She became intensely interested in her medical history.



On travelling to the United Kingdom, she discovered that her birth mother, Phyllis Margaret Kleyn, had been married several times, leaving her first husband in 1932 along with her baby son Paul when he was only two months old. What had caused her to abandon her family? Finding her birth mother's death certificate was a cruel blow, dashing her hopes of ever being able to ask some of her many questions. There was compensation, however, in meeting her half-brother Paul who shared his memories. Most poignantly, he had some photographs and for the first time, she was able to see her birth mother's face!

She found that her birth mother had joined the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY), an elite troop in which she drove army vehicles and ascended the officer ranks. In 1944, it seems she was recruited as a spy. With a Dutch husband, proficiency in four languages, knowledge of Europe and a trained army cook, it was plausible. She started looking for her biological father who had worked with Margaret during the war. In this she had less success though she discovered the circumstances of her conception – a curious thing to explore, she laughed. Her father's identity would remain another of her birth mother's secrets

Ultimately, her book is an impassioned plea to open up the secret stories held in every family: record them, talk about them, better understand each other. She writes that the damage caused by her family's secrets 'distorted our relationships for a lifetime and caused a huge amount of grief and sorrow.' As she said, these stories are 'like jewels – we should treasure them.'

Report by Jessica Stewart

 The Vale for Alice Eather, posted on 11 June, reached 2096 people, touched by her sad early death.

'This is very sad news. Alice Eather died last weekend at only 28 years old.

She led an extraordinary and successful campaign, including her slam poetry, to stop fracking by US company, Paltar Petroleum in Arnhem Land.'

The quote is from her family and friends.

Vale
Alice Eather
b 1989
d June 2017



"A leader, a fierce warrior
for her country, an
educator and poet"

LETTERS FROM THE PUBLIC TO A GRIEVING MOTHER

The National Library of Australia holds amongst its vast collection 200 boxes of letters sent to Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton since the disappearance of baby Azaria became a media event in 1980. The story of the dingo taking Lindy's baby and the ensuing legal battle to prove her innocence of the baby's murder has become enshrined in Australian mythology and captured the public imagination. Alana Valentine is a playwright who tells the story from another angle: she set herself the task to reveal the thinking of the Australian public over the 37 years since the event.

Alana began her talk by showing the *Lateline* video clip 'Letters to Lindy: the untold chapter of the Chamberlain story plays out on stage' (29 August 2016), to illustrate how the letters were treated as a stage presentation. As well as excerpts from the play, Alana and Jeanette Cronin, who played the role of Lindy, gave interviews revealing the variety of feelings that emerged in the letters.

The genesis of Alana's research was an email newsletter from the NLA advising of the arrival of the fifth instalment of Lindy's letters. Her interest was piqued, but it was not until a few years later when she received a Harold White Fellowship that she was able to plunge herself into examining the contents of those boxes of letters. Being a practitioner of the 'verbatim' style of theatre, that is, taking authentic interviews that she conducted and applying dramatic techniques to create theatre, was an advantage. She then structured a selection of the letters around a central monologue based on the real words of Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton, gathered via personal interviews. Later, when putting together a volume of the letters as a book, different letters and a different creative approach were required.

She found the amount of material overwhelming but accessible: the 20,000 letters from Australia and overseas had been organised into folders, arranged alphabetically and numbered, a precis on a post-it note summarizing the contents of each one. Among the collection were poems, requests to return to New Zealand, strange theories about the baby's disappearance, the raving of lunatics, SCREAMING letters: 5% were very vitriolic – criticising her sundress, her divorce; damning her as a murderess. Alana found patterns in the type of people who wrote to Lindy. However the majority were supportive: about two thirds were apologies. Loving and candid letters were written by children. People wanted to cheer her up. The letters are full of hope – for her survival of the miscarriage of justice in the harrowing years of trial and imprisonment. Lindy 'cherished every scrap of memory of Azaria' and 'treated it like the most precious works of scholarship ... her grieving process.'

One of the letters came from Gayle Hannah, received in 1991, 'The poem I should have written to Lindy'. Empathising with Lindy's experience, she recounts her fear and dread when a python attempted to take her not quite two-year-old child. Contacting writers was sometimes difficult when the letters were written so long ago and people had moved from their given addresses. But Gayle was one of the writers that Alana was able to contact when seeking copyright permission.

Another writer was journalist Malcolm Brown, who broke the story of Lindy's divorce. While very sympathetic to Lindy, he found it difficult to tread the line between journalist and friend. Many letters came from people who lived in the outback and had experience of dingoes. Every year, Lindy received a hand drawn and coloured Christmas card from Elizabeth Hollander.



© Isabella Moore

A very moving poem titled 'Lullaby (for Azaria)', was written by Gloria Child, who died two weeks before the play opened. It was set to music and included in the play – a beautiful letting go of pain and hurt.

During the course of her research at the NLA, Alana met Lindy and found her 'generous, open, engaged and with a sense of humour.' The play was first performed in Wollongong by the Merrigong Theatre Company in 2016; Lindy attended and was quite moved. It was also performed in Canberra and in Sydney.

Alana considers the letters' role in the play as twofold: an important part of Lindy's grieving process and an opportunity for 'the country' to apologise to Lindy. She summed up the play as 'a testament to the kindness of people'.

A national tour of *Letters to Lindy* will take place between July and September 2018, taking in Newcastle, regional NSW and Victoria and the Northern Territory. The NLA will publish the book *Dear Lindy* in November 2017. More details on www.alanavalentine.com

Report by Kris Clarke

General donations since May 2017

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

Marie Breen	Elaine Cohen
Vicky Cullen	Margaret Duckworth
Kate Grenville	Hanne Marks
Judith Newton	Christabel Poll
Lucille Seale	Anne Stanley
Marjorie Tate	Afroula Thomas
Helen Tuckey	

Donations of material expand our collection:

Charlotte Guest	Rosa Melino
Marion Sawyer	
Finch Publishing	Spinifex Press

A warm welcome to our new members

Janet Ann Keller	Amelia Kerr
Penelope Lancaster	

WEL celebrates 45 years

Independent, not for profit, non-party political and feminist, Women's Electoral Lobby is celebrating 45 years of activism at a Sydney Mayoral Reception in August. Helen L'Orange, current National Convenor for WEL Australia, was there when it all started in NSW in May 1972. She has renewed her activism and is part of a WEL NSW Executive team building for future generations of feminist activists. How did it all start and what is WEL doing now?

It was an initiative in Carlton, Victoria in February 1972. Beatrice Faust called a meeting of 10 feminists to discuss an article by Gloria Steinem for the first edition of *Ms* magazine: *How women see candidates for the White House*. The first public meeting was advertised for April and plans made for a survey of Federal election candidates on their attitudes to equal pay, equal opportunity, child care, abortion and family planning.

Beatrice was an academic and advocate for abortion law reform. Beatrice flew to Sydney to persuade feminists to plant the seeds in NSW. She approached Julia Freebury to convene a meeting held unofficially under the auspices of the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA). It was held at Julia's home in May 1972.

There were five ALRA members: Julia, Helen McCarthy, Wendy McCarthy and Joan Evatt with Victoria Green from Canberra and a teacher, June Surtees; a sociologist, Elizabeth Fell; a postgraduate student, Anne Summers; a journalist, Caroline Graham; Faith Bandler from the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; Mavis Robertson from Sydney Women's Liberation; Helen L'Orange, a local Councillor and Helen Berrill, a Federal election candidate. The idea was to lobby all election candidates. A survey questionnaire was already under development in Melbourne.

Caroline Graham was nominated as NSW Convenor and Wendy and June as Deputy Convenors. The first meeting was called on 17 June 1972, held at Women's Liberation House in Alberta Street, Sydney.

Good media coverage saw the idea of WEL flourish. By March 1973, there were groups in all states and territories. Many women joined in response to stories about the survey. Germaine Greer's visit to Australia promoting *The Female Eunuch* helped publicise women's issues and a new feminist analysis of society.

There were the usual communication and logistical problems associated with rapid growth and strongly held opinions, but the details of the Federal election questionnaire were finally agreed and a training session for interviewers was held in August 1972.

Media coverage was critical and WEL members worked with the Media Women's Action Group to raise the full range of priority women's issues. Articles, letters to the editor and talk-back radio formed part of the repertoire.

The results of the questionnaire were big news and the *National Times* published a form guide on the five main topics, revealing political party positions. The election in December 1972 saw the McMahon Government defeated by Gough Whitlam's ALP.

The issues identified by founding WEL members included abortion, family planning and sexual health, general discrimination against women, discrimination in employment, equal pay, child care, women's rights and

equality, education and women in politics and government. By the time of the 1975 national conference, the order of priority voted on by participants saw "all women's issues" accorded highest priority with women in politics lowest. Violence against women was added in the 1980s.

National conferences were essential to achieving organisational unity and maintaining political momentum and local activism. The seventeenth national conference was held in Sydney in 2004. Since then, there have been National Coordinating Committee meetings and teleconferences, reflecting the general shift since the expansion of digital technology and social media.



Helen L'Orange and Jozefa Sobski

This century, as the most active and well-resourced WEL group, NSW has coordinated or initiated national political activity as some state groups have dissolved. WEL Australia continues to lobby Ministers, Opposition figures and other Members of Parliament. Lobbying tools and tactics have altered radically since those early days. There are also many specialist women's organisations and WEL works to support their policy priorities and campaigns or collaborates in coalitions and alliances.

Think WEL before you vote has been an election campaign slogan for many years as has *Women Count*, *Women Vote* (2007). The questionnaire or party policy analysis through a feminist lens has become a campaign tool for numerous organisations. WEL issued a *Thinking Voter's Guide* for the 2004 Federal election which analysed party policies and ranked them according to their potential to advance women's equality. For the 2007 Federal election, it produced recommendations on living standard equity, paid maternity leave, industrial relations, child care, welfare to work: impact on sole parents, single women retirement income, housing, health, indigenous women's health and climate change. By the 2013 Election there were new issues for lobbying. These included violence against women, income management, sole parents and the Newstart payment and job security. But some perennial issues with a slightly different emphasis also featured, including paid parental leave, retirement income and superannuation, pay equity and children's services.

WEL Australia is still a federation of state organisations. It is still independent, having rarely relied on government funding. The volunteer efforts of its generous members and supporters and some substantial bequests have sustained it for 45 years. Fund-raising is important because maintaining a profile costs and now requires a website, Facebook and twitter account.

(For a detailed history of WEL in Australia see Marian Sawyer, *Making Women Count*, 2008 and various collected papers and reports. The Library has a comprehensive collection of national and state WEL Newsletters, and some archival material.)

Jozefa Sobski, Convenor of WEL NSW Executive 2006-2012 and 2014-20016

Continued from page 3

Writing Women: Valuing the voices of women.' The sessions will explore women's writing, not only in fiction but across other genres, including memoir, life writing and non-fiction.

At this year's Luncheon, the keynote speaker is Deborah Cheetham AO, Yorta Yorta woman, soprano, composer and educator and a leader and pioneer in the Australian arts landscape for more than 25 years. The Soiree is moderated by Renata Kaldor AO, with panellists Madeline Gleeson, Dr Claire Higgins and Kathy Bail. The symposium on Saturday comprises four sessions beginning with a keynote address by Bernadette Breddon who has written a recent biography of Helen Garner, *A writing life*.

Panel discussions - 'Women Writing Real Women' and 'Women Writing Fictional Women' - follow and the day ends with a reading from Alana Valentine's play, *Letters to Lindy*. Members may have heard Alana speak at the Library's recent Lunch Hour Talk.

The inclusion of play reading is a nod to one of the first traditions instituted by the founders of the Women's Club - the establishment of a speaking group in 1901, to give women the ability and confidence to speak in public.

The Festival launches two books each year. This year, the launches are for Claire Higgins' book, *Asylum by Boat: Origins of Australia's Refugee Policy* (New South Books, 2017) and Kate Middleton's third poetry collection, *Passages* (Giramondo, 2017). Kate Middleton was named Sydney's inaugural City Poet in 2011.

The full program of events can be seen at www.rswwf.com.au.

The Festival Director, Dr Michaels, is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Newcastle. She is currently working on a political biography of Millicent Preston Stanley, the writer elected as the first female member of the NSW Legislative Assembly in 1925. Dr Michaels is hoping that its publication will coincide with the centenary of the *Women's Legal Status Act 1918* which allowed women to stand for election. Although women had the vote, they were not recognised as 'persons' and could not stand for public office, practise law or serve on juries.

The Library looks forward to a flourishing relationship with the Festival.

Jessica Stewart



Rose Scott 1913 by May Moore gelatin silver photograph

Collection: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra Purchased 2012

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

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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

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS: Westpac Bank is no longer accepting manual vouchers for credit card payments. Therefore, payments will no longer be issued the yellow credit card receipt. Credit card payments can still be made in the usual way and will be processed electronically. Please contact Jean Burns at the library if you have any questions.

- Enclosed is my cheque/money order for \$.....
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 - the Library's Capital Investment Fund.

Signature:.....

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Please forward the completed form to:

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Note: Please advise the Library if your contact details have changed.

Visit us:

523–525 Harris Street (cnr William Henry Street), Ultimo
Please use the intercom for admittance
Level access is 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 the Goods Line walk or via Harris Street
- ▶ Bus 501 (Railway Square to Ryde/West Ryde) at Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre stop
- ▶ Bus 389 (Maritime Museum to North Bondi) at Harris and Allan Streets stop
- ▶ Light rail from Central Station or Dulwich Hill to Exhibition stop
- ▶ There is limited two hour street meter parking available

Postal Address:

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Sydney, NSW 2001

Telephone:

(02) 9571 5359

Email:

info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au

Visit our website:

www.nationalwomenslibrary.org.au

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