



National Council of Women of NSW

1896 — 2016

*Celebrating 120 years of women's achievements and
contributions to society*

***NCW NSW
RECOGNITION AWARDS
2016***

Profiles of Awardees

Awards presented by

*at the
Foundation Day Luncheon
with
Guest Speaker: Dr Lisa Murray
Historian, Sydney City Council*

*Strangers' Dining Room, Parliament House, Sydney
8 August 2016*

FOREWORD

At this year's Foundation Day Luncheon, we celebrate 120 years of promoting the advancement of women. It was on 26 June 1896 that Margaret Windeyer called a meeting at Sydney Town Hall to discuss forming a National Council of Women in New South Wales (NCW NSW). As a result, the first General Meeting of NCW NSW was held on 26 August 1896, with Viscountess Hampden, wife of the Governor, accepting the position of President. She served in that position until 1899.

Eleven societies affiliated with NCW NSW in the first year, some with names unusual for today, eg. *Working and Factory Girls' Club*; *Ministering Children's Fresh Air League*. Another, *Sydney University Women's Association*, may not be very different from the organisation affiliated with us today — Australian Federation of Graduate Women.

The work of the first Council was in advocacy for equal pay for equal work, the inclusion of 'domestic arts' in the school curriculum, and libraries and kindergartens for the young.

The six women we honour today with Recognition Awards share the common goal of working to advance the status of women and children. They display the diversity of their dedication to that goal and provide an example of the many different ways a goal can be reached. Each of them exhibits the strong characteristics of our founding leaders and I have great pleasure in introducing them to you today.

The Council congratulates them and thanks their nominators for bringing them before us for well-deserved recognition of their contributions.

Nola Barkl

President

PATRICIA BANISTER

Patricia lives in Rutherford New South Wales, on the New England Highway about 40 km from Newcastle. She was educated at St Joseph's College, Lochinvar and has maintained her connection with the College through the Ex-Students Association.

Patricia and her husband, Adrian, have four children, ten grandchildren and two great grandchildren and are active members of St Paul's Parish, Rutherford. She has been involved in Social Justice, Ecumenism and Inter-Faith groups in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. From 1988-2010, Patricia was a member and chairperson of the Ecumenical Group, Church Women of the Hunter.

Throughout the 1990s, Patricia was also a member and chairperson on the Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan Pastoral Council. Additionally, within that time she served on the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (1990-1992).

The Caritas National Committee gained her support from 1993-2000, taking on the role of a Diocesan Director from 1993 to 1997 and again in 2016.

In 1994, Patricia was part of the Australian Catholic Bishops' monitoring delegation to the South African General Election and spent two days in Soweto and one day in Johannesburg.

Her involvement with Catholic Women's League Australia dates back to 1988 and she is presently the NSW State International secretary and State Liaison Officer. She was a member and Chair of the National Council for Australian Catholic Women, an advisory council for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, for six years and is the Convener for the Council for Australian Catholic Women in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Patricia's interests include reading, music and travelling as well as the many and varied activities of her grandchildren.

*Nominated by
Moya Potts AM, President
Catholic Women's League Australia—NSW Inc.*

MARGARET MARY BURKE

Margaret Burke was born in Inglewood, Queensland in 1937. She was the third youngest of nine children. Her family had several moves and finally settled in Brisbane. After school she worked in a Chartered Accountant's office progressing from the switch to secretary of the partner in Bankruptcy.

Margaret joined the Legion of Mary in 1952, visiting the lonely as well as children in hospital. She was also a member of her Parish Youth Club. Marrying in 1960, Margaret raised five boys and one girl and, while her children were at school, she worked on Tuckshop and was a member of the Parents' Club, acting as Publicity Officer at one stage. With her children's sporting activities, life was busy supporting Rugby, Netball and Little Athletics. As full as her life was, Margaret helped to look after four boys when their mother died, supervising their homework and giving them their evening meal. This arrangement continued over a five year period. It was a full household but her own boys enjoyed the bigger boys' company. When her youngest was old enough, Margaret supervised exams at the local TAFE for eight years.

Over a number of years, Margaret organised a group of ladies to visit a local Nursing Home. She has delivered Meals on Wheels with her neighbour for 15 years and has been a member of a Probus Club for 18 years, being the original Guest Speaker Officer, then Secretary and now Social Activities Officer.

In 2001, Margaret joined the Denistone Branch of the Catholic Women's League where she has served as Treasurer and is currently President. Apart from helping her Branch with functions and supporting its activities, she is a Eucharistic Minister in her own Parish.

As a member of council of CWL Archdiocese of Sydney, Margaret has been Vice-President for the past year. She also holds the role of International Secretary for World Union of Catholic Women's Organisation, Archdiocese of Sydney and is liaison officer for Diocesan members.

Margaret enjoys travel and while her husband was alive had many overseas trips. Her trips away these days are with Probus. With 14 grandchildren ranging in age from 2 to 22, Margaret continues to be active.

*Nominated by
Helen Cook, President
Catholic Women's League Archdiocese of Sydney*

BARBARA EDNEY

Barbara has been a member of her local Quota Club, at Campbelltown, since 1984 and has held every position in that club, serving as President for two terms, and hosting conferences for the former 35th District of Quota International. As Governor, she visited all clubs educating them in protocol, meeting procedure, conflict resolution and all matters concerned with the requirements of fundraising and legal requirements of incorporation. She then went on to serve two years as the Foundation Director of Region 14, working tirelessly to ensure all Quota Clubs in this new region have been included in training sessions. The Region goes from Sydney, west to Broken Hill, and south to include the ACT and Victoria, as well as Adelaide.

She has taken volunteer groups of Quotarians to Fiji and The Philippines, where training was conducted for women in refuges and the like, to give them motivation to work within teams of women to improve their status in their local communities. In organizing these missions, Barbara encouraged other members to participate and use their skills to help others less fortunate. She also worked with the Quota Club in Ba, Fiji, to provide materials and goods for a project 'Dress a Girl' - a project aimed at providing young girls with a nice outfit for attending special functions or going for job interviews.

In Barbara's work, as a teacher at TAFE, she works with young adults doing Vocational Courses to improve their chances of further study or work opportunities. She has received awards at TAFE for Innovation in Teaching and Designing VET Courses and has now been appointed Chief Judge for the 2016 National Worldskills competitions for students in their final years at school, ensuring these young people develop confidence and skills to improve their standing in society as they enter tertiary education.

Recently Barbara has been assisting her daughter (a cancer survivor) to establish her own business, so she can focus on her future ambitions whilst supporting her teenage children. Barbara has achieved great success for Quota International through the Region Motto of "Service and Friendship", many of her colleagues showing appreciation of her efforts by supporting projects she has initiated both here in Australia and in other countries.

Barbara is always available to provide professional training for young and senior members of the community, whether it is for educational skills, tourist information, or matters pertaining to welfare and general wellbeing. As a teacher, she is outstanding in her achievements with young people who are seeking guidance to go further with their careers.

***Nominated by June Young OAM
Individual Member***

LORRAINE ADA PERRY

Lorraine has been a Justice of the Peace for many years, and worked at the National Bank of Australia in the stamping and registration department. Lorraine was responsible for providing and witnessing the various documents needed for each States regulations in this field. She received notoriety in the Daily Telegraph as the most senior (at 70 years) NAB employee still working and training younger members in this field. Now retired from that position, Lorraine continues her activity with the NSW Justices Association, working as a volunteer JP at Liverpool Court, Liverpool Library and Carnes Hill Shopping Centre. On these occasions she is always available to advise members of the community on the necessary requirements for many and varied witness requirements.

Lorraine joined Quota International of Liverpool in 1975 and has served in many positions including President three times and endless years as Secretary. She also served as Secretary to District Governors in District 35 of Quota and, as a delegate and advisor at many Conferences, Lorraine was available to advise and educate other delegates on Parliamentary Rules. Her service to others also extends to continually knitting items for the New Born and Premature Babies Unit at Liverpool Hospital. It would be impossible to number the items Lorraine has made for this project.

With an amazing sense of humour, Lorraine has been called on to be the Master of Ceremonies on many occasions for different Quota Functions and for a number of Charities including The Eggtober Foundation and The Shepherd Centre. She comperes fashion parades and volunteers for The Cancer Council; The Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal; Melanoma Foundation; Bunnings BBQs. As her daughter has ridden in a number of Black Dog Rides, Lorraine supports this charity both by fundraising and also with publicity.

Being a dressmaker, Lorraine has made many wedding outfits over the years for relatives and friends. Her skills at knitting, crochet and sewing have been shared with many as she produces items for trading tables and charities. Her other passion is gardening. Liverpool Council awarded Lorraine a Liverpool Heritage Award (Order of Liverpool), for her outstanding service to the local community through Quota and the JP Association.

Lorraine advances the status of women, in everything she does, always available to educate others with her professional knowledge in legal matters or simply by supporting them to reach their goals in life.

***Nominated by June Young OAM, President
Quota International of Liverpool Inc.***

MERLE KAY THOMPSON

Merle has been a member of Australian Federation of Graduate Women NSW for nearly 50 years, joining in Newcastle as a young graduate and later serving on the committee of the Blue Mountains Branch. In the 15+ years since her retirement at state level, Merle has served as Registrar, Newsletter Editor and for a term as Education Convener, when she produced a report on actions to support indigenous students in all NSW universities. In recent years, she has been serving at federal level as Registrar and Honorary Business Manager and participating at international level in Istanbul and Fiji and soon in Cape Town, at all times furthering AFGW's mission. AFGW is the national voice of graduate women working for the advancement and wellbeing of women and girls through education. Merle's efforts to advance the status of women have focused on providing administrative support to organisations which directly assist women or advocate for them.

Her achievements are all the more remarkable knowing that in 1946, when she contracted polio as a toddler, she was not expected to survive, let alone walk. She was nursed at home against common practice following Sister Kenny's regime and went on to graduate in Psychology and Social Theory. Merle worked in vocational guidance as senior counsellor in a special programme to help unemployed youth and, as executive officer to the Equity sub-Committee of the Board of Vocational Education and Training. Later, she was policy officer within the Department of Education focusing on equity issues.

However, late effects of polio—increasing fatigue and decreasing mobility—led to early retirement which gave Merle extra time to devote to her voluntary activities.

Important among these is with Polio NSW (formerly Post-Polio Network NSW Inc) a self-funded organisation which aims to provide information and support to polio survivors, their families and carers. Of the full members of the organisation, people who contracted polio generally in its paralytic form, two-thirds are women. Of the remaining male members, the majority have female wives and/or carers.

Merle's contributions have included:

- Major contributor to the Management Committee for 21 years;
- Produced two major research reports to assess the medical and living situations and needs of polio survivors and to provide qualitative and quantitative data to inform advocacy;
- Personal participation in meetings with government and departmental officers regarding the needs of polio survivors;
- Speaking and teaching engagements to inform, for example, community and service organisations on the late effects of polio;
- Participation in training sessions for medical personnel on the late effects of polio;
- Preparation of resources for members such as medical alert card;
- Writing submissions for funding;
- Writing submissions and responses to government enquiries on, eg disability parking, assistive technologies;
- Writing the submission and being one of two persons in successful negotiations for the establishment of a specialised assessment clinic.

All of the above have resulted in the provision of information, resources and more recently the clinic which supports polio survivors with their daily lives.

***Nominated by Dr Jane Baker and 'Tricia Blombery
Individual Members NCW NSW***

JUDITH TOWNSEND

Judith's activism in the advancement of women began in her late teens when an aunt, a highly qualified and experienced Librarian, was forced to resign her job simply because she married. Qualifying as a Registered General Nurse and Midwife in the early sixties, Judith took up Midwifery as her specialty. to educate and encourage pregnant and laboring women who had no support. This became a lifelong passion.

Later, she determined the key to women's advancement was education and obtained a wide range of education learning which she used with great effect throughout her career, first teaching in hospitals and later at the University of Western Sydney for 20 years.

Early in her nursing career, she became involved with the royal Australian Nursing Federation and the Royal College of Nursing NSW, one a Union, the other an Educational Institution. In the 1970s and 80s nursing was all female and conditions and pay were poor. Judith served on the Boards of both these organisations for many years fighting for the advancement of individuals, groups and the nursing profession as a whole both from the inside and outside. She lobbied politicians for better education and protested in Canberra where she learned to use a megaphone effectively.

During her stay in Canberra, Judith became a foundation member of the Women's Electoral Lobby and has continued to volunteer in most elections, lobbying politicians on women's issues. She also volunteered in Women's Refuges and safe houses over some 10 years to enable women to escape violence and obtain the resources to rebuild their lives. Over her 20 years at UWS Judith sat on the Faculty Governance Board, the University's Board of Trustees as a staff representative and advocate. She also sat on many internal University Committees. This enabled Judith to ensure that all staff and students, but particularly female staff and students, received equal treatment and academic consideration on largely male committees.

Independently of her academic and professional roles, Judith headed several influential women's groups. With three others she founded Women in Leadership Group. This was a group where women in the University could gather to discuss issues, problems, concerns, including bullying, lack of advancement. Leadership skills could be learned, assertiveness in interviews rehearsed, and personal development explored. The group involved over 200 women and lasted for 12 years with Judith as co-Chair/President and Lead Educator. It was based on trust and collegiality.

Another major contribution at this time was through a grant from the NSW Department for Women for the development and implementation of a program called "Community Springboard" to increase the effective participation of women in their communities. It comprised six modules including personal development, effective communications, interpersonal processes, group dynamics, committees and mentors. This program ran for six years across 10 suburbs in Sydney and reached nearly 400 women, many of whom went on to gain qualifications and advancement at work.

In retirement areas of interest and involvement include:

Quota International Sydney, Secretary; NCW NSW, Quota delegate; Australian Museum, public guide and volunteer assistant to the Coordinator; VIEW Club, Publicity Officer, education of women.

***Nominated by Anne Dean, President
Quota International Sydney Inc.***

SELECTION CRITERIA

FOR A RECOGNITION AWARD

PRESENTED ON FOUNDATION DAY

- The nominee should be a person who has worked to advance the status of women and **who has not previously received official recognition.**
- The work of the nominee would most likely be marked by dedication and/or persistence.
- The nominee does not herself have to be a member of National Council of Women of NSW but her nominator must be a member of an Affiliated Organisation or an Individual Member of NCW NSW.
- Details in a written statement should explain:
 - How the nominee's efforts have advanced the status of women;
 - What achievements were gained;
 - Methods and/or activities used in the process of obtaining results

Assessment of entries is made entirely on the supporting statement accompanying the nomination.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Established in June, 1896, the objects of the Council are to bring together, by means of association, voluntary bodies, societies or associations of women and of women and men:

- To promote sympathy of thought and purpose among women of New South Wales
- To uphold the social, civil and moral values and religious freedom of the community
- To promote the interests and advancement of women and to secure their recognition in the community
- To promote such conditions of life as will assure to every family and child an opportunity for full and free development, and to uphold the family as the basic unit of society
- To form a link with National Councils of Women in other countries through the National Council of Women of Australia Inc. and the International Council of Women.

CONGRATULATIONS

*To all recipients of
Recognition Awards*

in 2016

the year to celebrate

120 years

for

*National Council of Women
of New South Wales*

