

# Helen Ruth Burmester OAM

**Born** 1917 Strathfield NSW

**Education** Secondary education completed at Sydney Girls' High School  
Secretarial and accountancy studies

**Family** 1948 Ruth travelled to London to marry Cliff Burmester who was there on a three year transfer with the National Library.  
1951 they made their home in Turner  
3 Sons  
6 Grandchildren  
5 Great-grandchildren



Ruth is an Elder of St Columba's Uniting Church, Braddon and at various times has been President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Day and Evening Groups and has served on the Parish Council.

It was largely due to Ruth's enthusiastic ecumenical spirit that Canberra Church Women was formed in 1964. In following years she served three years as President, Vice President for three years, Honorary Secretary for eight years, Treasurer for eight years and a four year term as FLC Convener. During this period Ruth was instrumental in the change of name to ACT Unit of Australian Church Women. As a delegate she attended many National Conferences and appreciated the friendship and fellowship of these occasions. In recognition of her outstanding service Ruth was made a Life Member of the ACT Unit in 1988 and in 1989 granted National Life Membership of ACW.

In 1982 Ruth was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for which the citation emphasised community service with special mention of her work with the Girrahween Lodge Aged Care Units.

Over the years, Ruth has been described by members of the ACT Unit as the "Fount of All Knowledge" and the "Dispenser of Wise Advice".

National Life Member 1989

Territory Unit Life Member 1988

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Betty Jean Farrell

Born 6 October 1928 Alexandra Victoria

Education Rubicon, Victoria.

Family Betty married Trevor King 1949  
4 Children



Trevor died suddenly in 1971. In 1973 Betty married Michael Farrell, a widower with five young adult and teenage children. Support of the expanding, widespread family has been a feature of Betty's busy life. Michael died in 2008.

As a young wife and mother, Betty was active in her local Presbyterian Church and the community, particularly in the establishment of a local Preschool. Later, in Munro she was instrumental in forming a Mothers' Club at the local Primary School. Moving to the ACT in 1974, Betty became a parishioner of St James' Uniting Church, was active in pastoral work, and held office in the Fellowship for many years. She played an active role in ecumenical activities within the Woden Valley region of Canberra.

In 1985, Betty was appointed as a St James' delegate to ACW-ACT Unit and has served twice as both a Vice President and President and in 2008-09 as WKS Convener. During 1995-1997 she held office as National Vice President. In recognition of her outstanding contribution to the ACT Unit, Betty was conferred with Life Membership in 1998.

Territory Life Member 1998

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Catherine May Goudie

Born            9 April 1917            North Sydney NSW  
Died            29 October 2005        Aranda ACT  
Education      Intermediate High School  
                    Business College Course  
Family          Married Eric Roy Goudie 1949  
                    1 Son  
                    2 Grandchildren



In the Methodist Church May was mainly involved with Girls Comradeship at her local church and Grand Council, becoming Treasurer of both groups. After moving to Canberra, May became a delegate of the Reid Ladies' Fellowship on the World Day of Prayer Committee. She was Contact Secretary of the Canberra Presbytery of the Uniting Church in Australia till 1988.

May was a foundation member of Australian Church Women (ACT Unit). She was Secretary–Treasurer 1964-69 and again, 1970–73, and was awarded Life Membership in 1986.

May had a lifelong interest in Girl Guides.

In Canberra she worked with the Barnardos' Helpers Guild.

As a delegate for the Reid Ladies' Fellowship to the National Council of Women of the ACT Inc., she was bestowed with Life Membership.

In her lifetime she was the only female Life Member of the Rolls Royce Club.

May served her Lord faithfully and well in all the fields of activities she undertook.

Territory Life Member 1986

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Jessie Frazer Horton OAM

Born	1925	Stirling Scotland
Died	2005	Adelaide SA
Education	Sydney Girls High School	
Family	Husband, John Horton 4 Sons 6 Grandchildren	



Jessie's Christian education began in the Presbyterian Church. Areas of her service included Sunday School, Youth Group, Methodist Overseas Mission, Aboriginal Work, Somerville Homes with Isolated Children, President of Evening Fellowship, Parish Council and representative to State Mission Fellowship of the Uniting Church in South Australia.

Jessie was nominated and elected to the National Australian Church Women position of Trustee for the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust in 1993. She held the position of Treasurer to the Trust for eight years, until 2001.

Jess (as she was known) was a woman of deep Christian faith which was expressed in a lifetime of service, both in the Church and community. An example of this includes three years service from 1943 to 1946, as a Coder in the Women's Royal Australian Navy. She held executive positions on National Council of Women in the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and South Australia, and was also International Secretary and Vice President. She was a member of the State Advisory Committee for Leprosy Mission for fifteen years and was awarded Life Membership for her service. She was a member of WRANS Sub Section Naval Association of Australia.

Jess was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her Community Work.

South Australian State Unit ACW Inc.

# Deirdre Hunter

Born	13 August 1944
Died	25 November 2006 Launceston Tasmania
Education	Adelaide, Year 10 Diploma of Theology 2001
Family	Husband, Neville 1 Son, Mark 1 Daughter, Diane 2 Grandchildren



Upon the move from the North West to the township of Exeter in the north of Tasmania Deirdre became very involved in the Anglican Church of All Saints. She felt a very strong call and from her position as a parishioner in 1991 she graduated through the theological roles of her church until in September 2000 she was ordained as a priest. Her Diploma of Theology from the Australian College of Theology in 2001 marked her as majoring in Christian Studies.

Shortly after joining the Launceston Branch of ACW as a representative of the Anglican Church, Deirdre became President. She held this position for two years. Her interest spread to the meetings of the State Unit where she attended as an active and inspirational member, later being elected to the position of President for two years.

She was invited to act as Chaplain to the Launceston Branch, a position that both delighted her and embraced all members in the warm and loving manner which was Deirdre's character.

Deirdre worked for and organised a number of ongoing events that will continue to assist support for both church and community. She conducted evening Bible Study in private homes and organized a Christmas service in which children participated. She supervised a "Kids Club" for many years, and for almost ten years she taught R.E. to five classes at two schools some miles apart in the region. Each Easter she invited local artists and schools to produce various scenes to be displayed in a great number of places in the community. She held positions in some seven organizations in and around the area of Exeter where she lived.

Recognition of her community and Church contribution came when she was placed on the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women.

Tasmanian State Unit ACW

# Betty Marjorie Laurie

Born            16 May 1924            Kew Victoria  
Died            January 2005  
Family         Betty married Godfrey Laurie  
                    2 Sons



Betty was baptized in the Presbyterian Church, Malvern, Victoria. Growing up in Croydon her life was centred on the local church and choir. At 17 she was confirmed and so began her Christian pilgrimage. After working in two office jobs, Betty served in the Australian Women's Land Army from 1942 to 1945 then returned to office work. In 1952 she began a three year course at Rolland House Presbyterian Training College to become a Deaconess and was commissioned at Croydon Presbyterian Church in 1955.

After their marriage at the Presbyterian Church, Croydon, Victoria in January 1956 Betty and Godfrey established their home in Yarralumla, ACT as Godfrey was working at the Bureau of Statistics in Canberra.

As members of the Church of St Andrew, Forrest ACT, Betty and Godfrey served their Lord and Master as a team in many capacities. Betty was the first President of Yarralumla Evening Guild and in 1981 was made its first life member. In 1998 she was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia, NSW in appreciation of valued service to Christ and His Church as a member of St Andrew's Presbyterian Women's Association Canberra.

Always interested in ecumenical affairs, Betty found great satisfaction in belonging to ACW, representing St Andrew's as a delegate. She became Special Days Convener of the ACT Unit and National Executive Special Days Convener in 1995-97.

Territory Life Member 1999

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Aileen Mortensen

Born 23 September 1931 Bundaberg Queensland

Education Bundaberg till Year 10  
Brisbane till Year 12  
Teachers' Training College

Family Aileen married William Allan Mortensen 1954  
3 Sons  
7 Grandchildren



Aileen taught Home Economics and Science at High School level. She was also involved in coaching school sport teams, and in musicals, as well as co-ordinating Religious Education in Schools.

Aileen was very involved in the Church of Christ. She was a Deacon, Secretary, Sunday School Superintendent and church organist. She became State President of Women's Ministries in the Church and represented the Church of Christ at the National Council of Women.

She has always been interested in the Arts and in all types of Hand Crafts.

Aileen joined the Queensland Unit of Australian Church Women around 1995 as a delegate from the Church of Christ. She was Unit Secretary in 1997, National President from 1997-99, Queensland Unit President 2003-05 and FLC Convener 2006-07.

Aileen resigned from the Unit in early 2008 because of health reasons and to look after her very ill husband.

Aileen will always be remembered for her beautiful hand work in preparing presentation gifts and especially for her dedication to Australian Church Women.

Queensland Unit ACW

# Mollie Ongley

Born            8 December 1914    Queanbeyan NSW  
Died            6 December 2005  
Family         Mollie was married October 1940  
                  1 Son (deceased)  
                  1 Daughter (deceased)



Mollie and her family joined the Ainslie Church of Christ when it opened in 1954. They were interested as a family group and Mollie's particular interests were the Christian Women's Fellowship and the Life Boys Brigade. Mollie served at executive level of the Fellowship group a number of times.

In 1980, Mollie and Nan Munro were appointed official representatives for the Ainslie Women's Fellowship to ACW and continued in this capacity until Nan's death in 1993. Their precise reports of ACT Unit General Meetings and special functions were greatly appreciated. They enjoyed being representatives because they were able to meet many women from the various churches and were particularly appreciative of World Day of Prayer Services.

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Elizabeth (Bettie) Saint

Born	1906	Rutherglen Scotland
Died	1997	Canberra ACT
Education	Manchester UK Gladesville in Sydney to age 14	
Family	Bettie married George Albert Saint 1940 Gladesville Presbyterian Church	



In 1920 Bettie began work in the Dressmaking Department of Farmer's Store in Sydney. After marriage her husband, George, was an Electrical Engineer at the Canberra Power House and they lived in Kingston ACT. George died in 1966.

There were no children, but the latter part of Bettie's life was filled with nieces, nephews and their offspring as well as friends. Bettie said that she began life as her father's daughter; at school was her brother's and sister's young sister; was in the same workroom as her sister; became George's wife. On his death she became the person God created her to be.

Bettie was a Sunday School teacher at Gladesville Presbyterian Church prior to marriage, then at The Presbyterian Church of St Andrew, Forrest, till George's death. She then moved to Narrabundah, close to St Aidan's Uniting Church. Her leadership in the Women's Fellowship / Dorcas Group, praise and prayer, in prayer chain, visitation, phone support and Greenhills Conference Centre Auxiliary was significant as she encouraged others to use their lives and gifts for God. She was an active member of the Canberra City Ladies' Probus Club.

Bettie was always known for her warm generosity, constantly engaged intelligence and practical wisdom. In 1984 she moved to Morling Lodge Retirement Village and died in the nursing home there.

In recognition of almost 30 years of dedicated service Bettie was awarded Life Membership of the ACT Unit in March 1999.

Territory Life Member 1999

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Evonne Rita Sullivan AM

Born	31 January 1923	Bathurst NSW
Died	23 April 2011	
Education	Blackfriars Correspondence School Sydney Bathurst High School	
Family	1943 Evonne married Staff Sergeant Patrick Sullivan, Second AIF 2 Daughters 3 sons 12 grandchildren	



Evonne has long been involved as an executive member of Catholic Women's League at branch, regional, archdiocesan and national levels. During ten years residence in Darwin, NT and while on the Catholic Women's League Executive, she promoted enthusiastically the concept of ecumenism by participating in the preparation and presentation of the Special Days Services hosted by the various churchwomen's embryo organisations in the Territory.

Shortly after returning to Canberra in 1974 Evonne was appointed the Catholic Women's League delegate to the ACT Unit of Australian Church Women. She has served terms as Unit Honorary Secretary, Vice President and President and accepted the position of National President in 1995-1997, the first occasion on which the National Executive was located in Canberra.

Evonne was Vice President of the Board of Directors of YWCA in Darwin 1970-1974.

In 1981 she was recognized as a Member of the Order of Australia for community service in NT and ACT.

Other Honours conferred include

1991: Honorary Life Vice President of National Council of Women Australia

1995: Life Member ACT Unit Australian Church Women

Life Member National Council of Women ACT Inc

1997: Archdiocesan Honorary Life Member Catholic Women's League Archdiocese of Canberra / Goulburn.

2003: National Life Membership Australian Church Women

Having represented ACW, CWL and NCW at National Conferences, Forums and Consultations throughout Australia on numerous occasions, Evonne is grateful to those organisations for allowing her the privilege.

She regards her term as National President of Australian Church Women as the highlight of her many years of voluntary service.

National Life Member 2003

Territory Life Member 1995

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Stella Mary Taber

Born	15 February 1916	Bathurst NSW
Died	20 September 2004	
Education	Coolah in Central West of NSW High School at Bathurst Armidale Teachers' College BA in Asian Studies ANU (mature age student)	
Family	Stella married Wallace Neville Taber 1942	



Stella and Wallace worked together on their mixed farm just out of Canowindra until Wal's death in 1979. At Canowindra, Stella was very involved with her Anglican parish church and took a continuing interest in the whole of the Bathurst Diocese.

She moved to Canberra in 1979 and attended Holy Cross Anglican Church, Hackett, where she had a deep involvement with women in the church. In Mothers Union she held positions of Treasurer and President. When the Diocesan Executive was reformed in the late 1980's she became Secretary and Overseas and Outreach Co-ordinator. With a keen interest in other religions, she studied Hindi, Hebrew and Greek, and with a group of university friends, translated from Hebrew three books of the Old Testament.

Stella was welcomed to the ACT Unit of ACW in March, 1988 as a delegate from Holy Cross Mothers Union and on the same day was elected as WKS Convener. She represented the ACT Unit on many occasions, organised the Fellowship Day service at Holy Cross Hackett in 1989 and was on the committee to prepare World Community Day service in 1990.

Stella tendered her resignation for health reasons in January 1995. In March at the AGM, she was nominated for Life Membership – the citation being for hospitality shown, and ongoing friendship extended through consistent correspondence which contributed to her excellent work as WKS Convener.

At Canowindra, Stella played lawn bowls and became local president, then Central Western District President and Vice President of Country Women's Bowls Association. She was very involved in the Country Women's Association and became State International Officer.

She and her husband were dedicated to Meals on Wheels and always did the Christmas Day run.

The last 25 years in Canberra was a time of great learning and change with the making of many new friends who became an integral part of her latter years.

Territory Life Member 1995

Australian Capital Territory Unit ACW

# Lady Wilson (Leila)

Born 2 May 1925 Mount Lawley WA

Died 15 June 2012

Education Nedlands WA Primary School  
Bowral NSW & North Sydney Girls High Schools  
Hales Model Business College Sydney

Family Married Ron (Sir Ronald Wilson) in 1950  
Ron died 2005.  
5 Children  
18 Grandchildren and 2 Great-grandchildren



Leila worked for Australian Metropolitan Life Assurance in Sydney, and West Australian Farmers and Department of Industrial Development in Perth.

Baptised and Confirmed in the Anglican Church, Leila joined the Presbyterian Church in 1946 and then became a member of the Uniting Church in 1977 upon Union. She belonged to Presbyterian Fellowship Australia where she served a term as Secretary. She ran a Junior Girls Club at St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Nedlands, WA, and was a member of Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union and of Presbyterian Women of Australia. She taught in Sunday School in the early days of her marriage. Leila is a member of Uniting Church Adult Fellowship. She was active in her local church for many years but ill health now precludes active involvement.

Leila joined Australian Church Women in 1969 as Presbyterian representative. From 1977 Leila has represented the Uniting Church. In the State Unit she has been President twice, Vice President, and served two terms of seven years each as Treasurer. She has attended seven National Conferences and served on the National Executive in 1989-91 as Minute Secretary and in 2001-03 as Vice President.

Leila has been a very involved Mum and Grandma in school Mothers Clubs, Parents and Citizens Groups, canteens and libraries, and she served in the local association of Girl Guides. She was on the Board of YWCA for three years and was a representative for Ngala Family Resources Centre on the National Council of Women.

Members of the Western Australian Unit of ACW value Leila's practical wisdom and her wide knowledge of ACW. She was made a Life Member of the Western Australian Unit in 2000 and a National Life Member in 2005.

National Life Member 2005

State Life Member 2000

Western Australian State Unit ACW