

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Resource  
**Entry ID:** AWH003607

## Mem Fox interviewed by Rob Linn for the Mortlock Library collection [sound recording]

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**Repository** National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

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**Reference** [ORAL TRC 5575](#)

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**Date Range** 2-Dec-05 - 21-May-06

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**Access** Access open for research, personal copies and public use.

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**Finding Aid** Timed summary (4 p.) and corrected transcript (typescript, 76 leaves)

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### Details

4 sound files (ca. 177 min.)??Mem Fox talks about her memories of her parents; their decision to go to Rhodesia; the family's arrival at Hope Fountain Mission near Bulawayo, Rhodesia and her memory of the place; her early childhood friends being native Africans; her father training teachers for primary school roles; her education; understanding racism and being opposed to it; the Hope Fountain Mission in physical and social terms; being encouraged to read and to pursue literature; memorising poetry and her discoveries about words and language; the development of attitudes in childhood and of how lives are shaped; the BBC broadcasts and family discussions about what was heard; inspirational teachers; the reasons behind her leaving Africa to attend the Rose Bruford College in the UK; her love of acting and performance of plays at school; her reluctance to attend university; working as a volunteer worker at the World Council of Churches' Conference Centre at Celingny, near Geneva; the nature of the work and those she met from a diversity of backgrounds; teaching at Rose Bruford and the strict regime there.??Fox speaks about the classes she attended and the many pressures faced by students; meeting Malcolm Fox, her future husband at Rose Bruford; their marriage in Rhodesia; both attending the University in Butare, Rwanda; finding life in Rwanda very difficult; leaving after 6 months, via England, for Australia on a government-assisted passage; the welcome at Sydney airport on 4 January, 1970; the birth of their daughter, Chloe (1971); the circumstances that surrounded their return to South Australia; the discovery of a melanoma and the effects on her and her family's life; why she and Malcolm returned to university study and how their careers evolved; being urged to gain further tertiary qualifications and her studies at Flinders University; writing a children's book; the journey of rejection by publishers; how Omnibus books came to publish 'Possum Magic'; the book's attraction to children and her pleasure in writing it.

### Author Details

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**Created** 20 February 2018

**Last modified** 20 February 2018