

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0531

Oke, Marjorie (Marj) Elizabeth

(1911 - 2003)

Born 18 December, 1911, Richmond Victoria Australia

Died 14 August, 2003, Melbourne Victoria Australia

Occupation Community worker, Political candidate

Summary

Marj Oke's first job was as a teacher in a one-room school. Upon her marriage in 1942, as was the policy of the time, she was suspended from teaching. Working at the Australian Jam Company, she encountered very poor working conditions. This experience propelled her to join the Food Preservers' Union and become active in the Australian Labor Party. She stood as a candidate for the Australian Labor Party in the Legislative Assembly seat of St Kilda under her maiden name, Bennett, at the Victorian state election, which was held in 1943. In 1950, Oke became a founding and lifelong member of the Union of Australian Women. After returning to teaching in Moe, she campaigned for equal pay for women teachers, the abolition of the marriage bar and access to superannuation. Additionally, Oke formed a branch of the Aboriginal Advancement League and became, in 1992, a founding member of the Network for Older Women. On 10 June 1991 she was awarded an OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) for service to aged people, particularly women. Oke was included in the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in March 2002.

Events

2002 - 2002

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Journal Article

Marj Oke - Tribute to a foundation member, 2003

Newspaper Article

A life swimming hard for political equality, Owen, Mary R and Graham, Janet, 2003

Edited Book

A decade of Mary Owen dinners, Waterfield, Dorothy, 1995

Site Exhibition

Carrying on the Fight: Women Candidates in Victorian Parliamentary Elections, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cws/home.html>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

The University of Melbourne Archives

[Oke, Marjorie \(1911-2003\)](#)

Author Details

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