

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE0531

## Oke, Marjorie (Marj) Elizabeth

(1911 - 2003)

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**Born** 18 December, 1911, Richmond Victoria Australia

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**Died** 14 August, 2003, Melbourne Victoria Australia

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**Occupation** Community worker, Political candidate

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### 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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