

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Organisation

**Entry ID:** AWE2108

## Seven Writers

(1980 - 1998)

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**Born** 1 January, 1980, Australian Capital Territory

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**Died** 31 December, 1998

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**Occupation** Writers Group

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### Summary

Seven Writers was a group of Canberra-based women writers who met regularly to debate and critique one another's work.

*This entry was sponsored by a generous donation from Christine Foley.*

### Details

Beginning with three members in 1980, the group grew to include seven female Canberra-based writers by 1984. They were founding member Dorothy Johnston (1948- ), Margaret Barbalet (1949- ), Sara Dowse (1938- ), Suzanne Edgar (1939- ), Marian Eldridge (1936-1997), Marion Halligan (1940- ) and Dorothy Horsfield (1948- ).

Members' published works include short stories, novels, children's literature, non-fiction, articles and reviews, and in diverse ways their writing vividly portrays life 'beneath the surface of Canberra'.

Collectively the group authored *Canberra Tales* in 1988, later republished as *The Division of Love* in 1996, an anthology of short stories about life in Canberra. This was considered a landmark publication for Canberra fiction and received an ACT Bicentennial Award.

Seven Writers raised the profile of Canberra-based authors, and in 1995 a photographic portrait of the group appeared in the National Library of Australia exhibition, *Beyond the Picket Fence*.

After the death of Marian Eldridge in 1997, the group did not meet again for one year. Sara Dowse relocated to Canada in 1998. She returned to Australia in 2004. The members are still friends but no longer meet formally to critique one another's work.

### Published resources

#### Book

The Division of Love: Stories, Barbalet, Margaret et al, 1995

The Fog Garden: A Novel, Halligan, Marion, 2001

Counting Backwards and other stories, Edgar, Suzanne, 1991

West Block: the hidden world of Canberra's mandarins, Dowse, Sara, 1983

Silver City, Dowse, Sara, 1984

Schemetime, Dowse, Sara, 1990

Sapphires, Dowse, Sara, 1994

Digging, Dowse, Sara, 1996

Dream Run, Horsfield, Dorothy, 1992

Venom, Horsfield, Dorothy, 2005

The House at Number 10, Johnston, Dorothy, 2005

The Worry Box, Halligan, Marion, 1993

The Apricot Colonel, Halligan, Marion, 2006

Cockles of the Heart, Halligan, Marion, 1996

Collected Stories, Halligan, Marion, 1997

Eat My Words, Halligan, Marion, 1990

The Golden Dress, Halligan, Marion, 1998

The Hanged Man in the Garden, Halligan, Marion, 1989

The Living Hothouse, Halligan, Marion, 1988

Lovers' Knots: a hundred-year novel, Halligan, Marion, 1993

Out of the Picture, Halligan, Marion, 1996

Self Possession, Halligan, Marion, 1987

Spidercup, Halligan, Marion, 1990

The Taste of Memory, Halligan, Marion, 2004

Wishbone, Halligan, Marion, 1995

Maralinga, my love, Johnston, Dorothy, 1988

One for the Master, Johnston, Dorothy, 1997

Ruth, Johnston, Dorothy, 1986

The Trojan Dog, Johnston, Dorothy, 2000

Tunnel Vision, Johnston, Dorothy, 1984

Springfield, Eldridge, Marian, 1992

Blood in the Rain, Barbalet, Margaret, 1986

Far from a Low Gutter Girl: the forgotten world of state wards, South Australia, 1887-1940, Barbalet, Margaret, 1983

Steel Beach, Barbalet, Margaret, 1988

Lady, Baby, Gypsy, Queen, Barbalet, Margaret, 1992

The Presence of Angels, Barbalet, Margaret, 2001

**Resource**

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

**Site Exhibition**

From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg>

## Archival resources

### **National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection**

Records of the Seven Writers group, between 1986 and approximately 2000

Papers of Sara Dowse, 1958-2007 [manuscript]

Papers of Marian Eldridge, 1942-1997 [manuscript]

Papers of Margaret Barbalet, 1974-1993 [manuscript]

Papers of Marion Halligan, circa 1970-circa 2003 [manuscript]

Maralinga cycle, 1988 [manuscript]

### **Author Details**

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## Digital resources



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