

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person

**Entry ID:** AWE4780

## Curphey, Judith

(1929 - )

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**Born** 17 September, 1929, Melbourne Victoria Australia

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**Occupation** Artistic director, Music teacher, Musician

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### Summary

Judith Curphey OAM is the founder and Artistic Director of the Australian Girls Choir. Judith enjoyed a successful career as a classroom music teacher before starting the Choir upon her retirement in 1984.

Judith wanted to challenge the accepted convention that boys sing 'better' than girls, and create a female choir with a uniquely Australian sound and high artistic standards, a group of girls and young women which could dance as well as sing, and was renowned for its quality of presentation. At the age of 90, she was still playing an integral role with repertoire selection, performance direction and staff mentoring.

The Choir has grown from just 150 choristers in Melbourne, to now over 3,500 choristers in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. Since its formation it has toured to destinations all over the world, and has performed for dignitaries including President Barack Obama, Queen Elizabeth II, The Honourable Julia Gillard AC and Pope Benedict XVI.

In 2011, Judith Curphey continues in the role as Artistic Director.

## Events

### **1929 - 1929**

Born in Melbourne, Victoria

### **1935 - 1935**

Moved with Family to Perth, Western Australia

### **1938 - 1938**

Schooled as a boarder at Loreto Convent, Perth, Western Australia (Now John XXIII College)

### **1943 - 1943**

at Presbyterian Ladies College, Perth, Western Australia

### **1948 - 1948**

Retruns to Melbourne, enters Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and completes Performers' Diploma

### **1953 - 1953**

Marries Rex Curphey, moves to London. Works as a piano accompanist at a ballet school.

### **1955 - 1955**

Son Simon Curphey is born

### **1956 - 1956**

Returns to Melbourne

### **1957 - 1957**

Daughter Jane Curphey is born

### **1963 - 1965**

Commences career as classroom music teacher at The MacRobertson Girls' High School

### **1966 - 1974**

Moves to Kew High School as a music teacher, becomes Head of Music

### **1975 - 1983**

Moves to Ringwood High School (now Ringwood Secondary College) as Director of Music

### **1984 -**

Founder and Artistic Director of the Australian Girls Choir (AGC). Auditions girls around schools in Melbourne and selects 150 girls who attended the first rehearsal on 7 March 1984 at Burwood State College (now Deakin University).

### **2004 - 2004**

Awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for services to music, particularly through the Australian Girls Choir.

## Published resources

### **Resource**

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### **Author Details**

Nikki Henningham

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