

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE4881

## Woodroofe, Gwendolyn Marion

(1918 - 2012)

---

**Born** 7 March, 1918, Adelaide South Australia

---

**Died** 11 September, 2012, Canberra Australian Capital Territory

---

**Occupation** Community worker, Virologist

---

### Summary

Dr Gwen Woodroofe undertook research at the John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University, working on myxomatosis and arboviruses. She also organised the sale of UNICEF Christmas cards in Canberra for many years.

### Details

Gwen Woodroofe was born in Adelaide on 7 March 1918 to Florence and William Woodroofe. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Botany from the University of Adelaide in 1940. She was then awarded a Master of Science degree in Bacteriology from the University of Adelaide and joined the John Curtin School of Medical Research in 1951, working as a research assistant with Professor Frank Fenner on myxomatosis. She co-authored several articles with Fenner and was appointed a Research Fellow in December 1958. She was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1962 by the Australian National University. She was promoted to Fellow in 1963 and then worked with Dr Ian Marshall on arboviruses including the Ross River virus and the Murray Valley encephalitis virus. She retired as a Fellow in 1978.

Following her retirement, she became involved in UNICEF and organised its sales of Christmas cards in Canberra for many years. She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1997 for service to women through the ACT Association of the Australian Federation of University Women and UNICEF-ACT.

Her sister Kathleen also pursued an academic career as an historian, becoming an Associate Professor of History at the University of New South Wales. She was the author of *From Charity to Social Work in England and the United States* (1962). After Kathleen's death, Gwen made an endowment to the University to establish a postgraduate scholarship in her sister's memory and by the University matching her donation, two scholarships were established: the Kathleen Woodroofe Postgraduate Scholarship in the Humanities or Social Sciences and the Gwendolyn Woodroofe Postgraduate Scholarship in the Sciences, both first awarded in 2002.

Gwen died on 11 September 2012 in Canberra.

## Published resources

### **Book**

Annual Report, 1951-1978

### **Newspaper Article**

Death notice, 2012

### **Resource Section**

Dr Gwen Woodroofe,

<http://jcsmr.anu.edu.au/about-us/honour-roll/dr-gwen-woodroofe>

### **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>

### **Resource**

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### **Author Details**

Maggie Shapley

**Created** 5 February 2013

**Last modified** 20 February 2013