

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE6169

## Black, Hope

(1919 - 2018)

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**Born** 1 January, 1919

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**Died** 25 January, 2018, Victoria Australia

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**Occupation** Curator, Mentor, Museum assistant, Scientist, Teacher

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### Summary

In 1946 Jessie Hope Black became the first woman to be appointed a curator at the National Museum of Victoria.

### Details

Hope's career began in 1937 when she was appointed a museum assistant at the National Museum of Victoria. In 1946 she was promoted to Curator of Molluscs after completing a science degree part-time at the University of Melbourne. Hope was the first woman to be appointed a curatorial position at the Museum.

During her curatorship, Hope was part of the Museum's team which surveyed the Snowy River Gorge in 1947 and Port Phillip Bay from 1957-1963. She was also a member of the first group of women to travel to Antarctica as part of an Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE) to Macquarie Island in 1959, and again in 1960.

In 1965 Hope was forced to resign from her position as curator as a result of the prohibition on employment of married women in the Victorian public service.

Hope trained as a science teacher and spent thirteen years teaching in Victorian high schools.

Hope co-authored the text *Marine Molluscs of Victoria* with C. J. Gabriel in 1962 and was also a consulting malacologist to the National Science Foundation of the Philadelphia academy of Natural Sciences. She was also a distinguished member of the Malacological Society of Australasia.

In addition to her paid employment, Hope is also renowned for her involvement with the blind and disabled. Hope planned and supervised a biology course for blind children at the Museum and was subsequently made a Life Governor of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. She also established a volunteer program at the museum, a program which is still utilised extensively at the museum today. Hope was also an active advocate for services for the disabled, particularly in terms of independent housing.

Hope passed away in January 2018 at the age of 98.

### Archival resources

**John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection**  
[28581 Typed Reference Letters for Donald Vernon 1945; 1987](#)

### Author Details

Alannah Croom

**Created** 13 February 2018

**Last modified** 13 February 2018