

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6190

Palmer, Aileen Yvonne

(1915 - 1988)

Born 6 April, 1915, London Middlesex England

Died 21 December, 1988, Ballarat Victoria Australia

Occupation Communist, Defence worker, Poet, Political activist, Translator, Writer

Details

Aileen Yvonne Palmer was educated at the Presbyterian Ladies' College and the University of Melbourne, where she graduated in 1935 with first class honours in French and literature. She had also studied German, Spanish and Russian.

Aileen was involved with the Melbourne University Labor Club and the Victorian Writers' League and she joined the Communist Party of Australia in April 1934.

Whilst in Spain with her family in 1936, Aileen was caught up in the July uprising in Barcelona which marked the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. After briefly returning to London, she joined the first British medical unit to travel to Spain and worked with the International Brigades until 1938. During World War II Yvonne drove ambulances for the Auxiliary Ambulance Service at Stepney, before leaving to work at Australia House in 1943.

Despite much ambivalence to return to Australia, Aileen did so in 1945, after receiving a cable from her sister which informed her that their mother had suffered a stroke. Despite finding it difficult to settle in Melbourne, she continued to remain politically active and to write and publish articles.

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Aileen Palmer, 1935-1979 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Aileen and Helen Palmer \[19--\] \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Aileen Palmer, 1937-1966 \[manuscript\]](#)

National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra

[Aileen Yvonne PALMER](#)

Author Details

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