

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** IMP0112

## Millis, Nancy Fannie

(1922 - 2012)

---

**Nationality** Australian

---

**Born** 10 April, 1922, Melbourne Victoria Australia

---

**Died** 29 September, 2012, Melbourne Victoria Australia

---

**Occupation** Microbiologist

---

### Summary

Nancy Millis was Professor of Microbiology at the University of Melbourne 1982-1991. She received a Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1945, a Master of Agricultural Science in 1948 and a Doctorate in Science (Hon) in 1993, all from the University of Melbourne. She was awarded a Boots Research Scholarship in the UK and used it to study at the University of Bristol where she received a PhD in 1952.

She returned to work as a demonstrator in the Department of Microbiology at the University of Melbourne in 1952 and was originally appointed as a lecturer in that department in 1956 following the award of a Fulbright travel grant in 1954.

Nancy Millis was one of the pioneers of the study of fermentation technology in Australia. When she returned from Bristol in 1951 she had hoped to put her expertise to good effect; she had hoped to work for Carlton United Brewery, but at that time they did not employ women in their laboratories.

Millis was appointed MBE – Member of The Order of the British Empire (Civil) – 31 December 1976 for her work in biological sciences and education. She was also appointed AC – Companion of the Order of Australia – 11 June 1990.

### Details

Professor Millis was a microbiologist of international repute who made enormous contributions in agriculture, environmental protection, medicine and engineering. Nancy Millis she was also a leader in environmental management. As a researcher she was aware early of the importance of clean water and developed techniques to treat industrial wastewater.

Millis was Chair of the Victorian Government's Water Strategy Committee advising on the supply and use of water for the Melbourne area. She was the Chairman of the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Quality and Treatment from 1995 until it ended in 2008. In 1977, she became a Member of the British Empire (MBE) and in 1990 was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC).

### Events

#### 2003 - 2003

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

## Published resources

### Resource Section

Nancy Millis - pioneer of fermentation technology, 1997,  
[http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/other/asf\\_scientists.htm#nancy](http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/other/asf_scientists.htm#nancy)

Interview with Professor Nancy Millis [conducted by Ms Sally Morrison on 21 February 2001],  
<http://www.science.org.au/scientists/nm.htm>

Millis, Nancy Fannie (1922 - ), Biographical Entry, 2002,  
<http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/biogs/P001521b.htm>

### Book Section

Nancy Millis: Microbiology 'Boots and All', Morrison, Sally, 1993

### Resource

Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,  
<http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Site Exhibition

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

### Edited Book

Who's Who in Australia, 1988, Cadman, Kerith A, 1988

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Ragbir Singh Bhathal, 1949-2006 \(bulk 1996-1999\) \[manuscript\]](#)

### Author Details

Austehc

**Created** 20 October 1993

**Last modified** 12 September 2017