

Vale Barbara Abbott 1943–2007



Barbara Abbott, a respected ALIA member for almost forty years, died tragically in a road accident in Tasmania on Friday, 27 April 2007. Her husband Denis, who had a considerable library career and is a life member of ALIA, was seriously injured in the crash.

Barbara was a committed reference librarian who is remembered by colleagues as an approachable, friendly person who would always go out of her way to help others.

She loved Australian plants, bushwalking and craftwork including quilting and cross-stitch embroidery.

After completing a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Tasmania in 1965, Barbara worked in the Hobart Lending Library at the State Library of Tasmania. Here she developed a passion for reference librarianship and met her husband Denis. In 1966, she was granted a Sir John Morris Memorial Trust Fund Scholarship to study for a post graduate diploma in librarianship at the University of NSW. She studied under John Metcalfe and Wilma Radford, leading lights of Australian librarianship.

Barbara's first job in 1966 was being in charge of the Bibliographical Centre at the State Library of Tasmania. She became readers' adviser and deputy librarian at the Hobart Lending Library, later becoming deputy reference librarian at the State Reference Library (1968–1971).

In the 1970s Barbara worked as a reference librarian in Canada, with responsibility for the inter-library loans office at York University, Toronto. She later returned to a similar position in the Tasmanian State Reference Library in Hobart. After maternity leave, Barbara became readers' adviser at the then Derwent Regional Library in Glenorchy.

In 1983, Barbara became the librarian at the Tasmanian Department of Environment (later the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and the Environment), retiring in 2004.

Barbara's funeral was attended by more than 300 mourners, reflecting Barbara and Denis' wide work connections, interests and activities, but more importantly the high regard for someone who was considered to be gentle and unassuming.

A long-standing colleague from the Department of Primary Industries, Water and the Environment says of Barbara: 'I valued her knowledge, opinions, meticulous work and her comradeship. In many ways she was the calm, reliable and steady centre that underpinned the library. The level of respect and appreciation we at DPIWE felt for her has been evident by the number of people contacting the library to express their dismay, and the generosity they've shown will enable us to remember her by means of a living memorial.' This is the memorial native garden for Barbara, as a display garden, part of the Tasmanian Bushland Garden near Buckland on the east coast of Tasmania.

Barbara is survived by her husband Denis, sons James and Farley, daughter-in-law Annie and granddaughter Molly.

Jane Jeppson

Vale Mary-Jane Gleeson

Mary-Jane Gleeson died in Sydney in August after a short illness. Qualified in psychology and adult education, Mary-Jane nevertheless made a significant contribution to the LIS profession. As the employer's representative for the State Library of NSW, her leadership, commitment and hard work guided the landmark Pay Equity Case through the NSW Industrial Relations Commission in 2001–2002. The case led to the new Industrial award for Librarian-related classifications and continues to influence other Australian female-dominated professions today. We salute Mary-Jane's commitment to her work on behalf of the profession which achieved much and which leaves an important legacy to our present and future members.

Marie Murphy

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