

THE QUINTESSENTIAL CAREER WOMAN: DULCIE PENFOLD

Dulcie Penfold, who was a contemporary of Sir Harold White and C. A. Burmester and who helped build the National Library's overseas collections died in June, aged 94 years. At her retirement in 1977, she was one of most senior executive women in the Australian Public Service, holding the position of Director, Resources Organisation and Development Branch. Marie Sexton remembers a colleague who achieved much and laughed often.

Born in 1917, educated in Sydney, Dulcie Penfold was the only child of a noted Australian scientific researcher and museum administrator, Arthur de Ramon Penfold. Dulcie traveled with her parents to Europe and the United States in 1939 when Arthur was awarded a grant by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to study science museums.

Her first library experience was at the State Library of New South Wales where she moved to the extension division and public libraries in Sydney. She joined the National Library in 1949. Dulcie had a unique distinction in being posted to both London and New York in the National Library's then-liaison offices.

In the period between these overseas postings, she was responsible for public library services in the ACT and introduced a mobile library which was much appreciated in the outer suburbs and surrounding country areas.



She was actively involved in the negotiation and acquisition of many large collections and, based on her American experience, set up a number of 'blanket orders' for the supply of books from suppliers in many countries for the library's collections. She established the Indonesian Acquisition

Program with George Miller posted in Jakarta, as the first Acquisition Officer, to supply books, serials and newspapers to both the National and other Australian libraries from our near neighbour.

Her high intellectual and writing skills, her liveliness and enthusiasm for life and libraries made her a valued colleague. Setting high standards and outspoken in her opinions, her distinctive laugh echoed throughout the library. Dulcie was awarded an MBE in 1976 for her services to the National Library. She continued living in Canberra and maintained her lively mind and high standards in appearance, having her hair done weekly. She never married and was the quintessential career woman.

Marie Sexton

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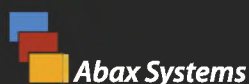
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