

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE0371

## Giles, Patricia Jessie (Pat)

(1928 - 2017)

---

**Born** 16 November, 1928, Minlaton South Australia Australia

---

**Died** 9 August, 2017

---

**Occupation** Nurse, Political activist, Politician

---

### Summary

Pat Giles commenced her working life as a nurse. After completing a Bachelor of Arts as a mature age student, she was an Organiser with the Hospital Employees Union of Western Australia from 1974 until 1981. In that year Giles was elected as an Australian Labor Party (ALP) Senator for Western Australia, and held the position for twelve years. During this time she was directly involved in the United Nations Decade for Women meetings, leading the government delegation to Nairobi in 1985.

Giles was a founding member and inaugural convenor of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) WA in 1973 and was the first woman on the executive of the West Australian Trades and Labour Council. She was a member, later Chairperson, of the first Australian Council of Trade Unions Women's Committee. In 2004 Giles completed her third and final term as President of the International Alliance of Women. In 2010, she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.

### Events

#### 1983 - 1985

Junior Vice-President of the ALP

#### 1974 - 1981

Organiser of the Hospital Employees' Union WA

#### 1953 - 1953

Married Keith Giles (FFARCS, FFAARCS) (diss. 1976), they had four daughters

#### 1950 - 1950

Obtained Certificate in General Nursing

#### 1951 - 1951

Obtained Certificate in Midwifery

#### 1974 - 1974

Graduated with a BA from the University of Western Australia

#### 1976 - 1979

Member of the Administrative Committee for the ALP (WA)

#### 1981 - 1981

Western Australian delegate to the ALP National Conference

#### 1979 - 1979

First woman to argue an important general issue before the WA State Industrial Commission (Maternity Leave which was granted to women in private employment, January 1980)

#### 1975 - 1975

First woman elected to the executive of the WA Trades & Labour Council

**1975 - 1980**

Service industries representative on the WA Trades & Labour Council

**1974 - 1974**

First woman to chair a committee on Discrimination in Employment & Occupation

**1978 - 1978**

Member of the first ACTU Women's Committee

**1979 - 1981**

ACTU representative member of the first tripartite committee on women's employment in Australia (sub-committee of the National Labour Consultative Committee on Women's Employment)

**1971 - 1974**

Vice-president of the WA Council of State School Organizations

**1971 - 1981**

Executive member of the Health Education Council of WA

**1978 - 1981**

Member of the Review Committee for the WA Legal Aid Commission

**1973 -**

Inaugural convenor and member of WEL Perth

**1975 - 1981**

Member of the Homeless Persons Advisory Committee in WA

**2004 - 2004**

Speaker at the 19th Mary Owen Dinner

**1952 - 1952**

Obtained Certificate in Infant Welfare

**1995 - 1996**

Chaired the World Health Organisations's Global Commission on Women's Health

**1981 - 1993**

Senator (ALP) for Western Australia

**1986 - 1986**

Temporary Chairman of Committees

**1979 - 1981**

Member of the Community Advisory Committee in Industrial Relations for the University of WA

## Published resources

### **Book Section**

Giles, Pat, Grahame, Emma, 1998

[Patricia Jessie Giles - biography and key parliamentary speech], 1994

### **Edited Book**

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

Who's Who of Australian Women, Lofthouse, Andrea, 1982

### **Journal Article**

One thing led to another : a life of activism in support of women's rights, an interview with Pat Giles., Skene, Judy., 1999

Interviews with famous feminists., 1997

[Patricia Jessie Giles - awarded Honorary Degree by Murdoch University. Career details], 1996

Irene Greenwood; a hero of the feminist movement 1899-1992., Giles, Patricia, 1999

### **Sound recording**

[Interview with Pat Giles and Wendy Fatin], Speed, Sally., 1982

[Interview with Patricia Giles, politician], Reid, Stuart, 1953-, 1988

### **Conference Paper**

Irene Greenwood: 1899(sic)-1992, a hero of the feminist movement, Giles, Patricia, 1997

### **Resource**

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### **Site Exhibition**

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

## Archival resources

### **State Library of Western Australia**

[Pat Giles papers 1974-1986 \[manuscript\]](#)

### **Author Details**

Anne Heywood

**Created** 17 April 2002

**Last modified** 8 August 2019