**Entry type:** Person
**Entry ID:** AWE0481

# Feltham, Juanita Cecila

(1923 - 2007)

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| **Born** | 19230101, Hobart Tasmania Australia |
| **Died** | 20070321, Caloundra Queensland Australia |
| **Occupation** | Designer, Servicewoman |

## Summary

After the death of Colonel Kathleen Best, an appeal was launched to erect memorial gates at the Women's Royal Australian Army Corp (WRAAC) School at Georges Heights. Members and ex-members of the Corps were encouraged to submit designs and ideas. Sergeant Juanita Feltham's design was selected. [1]

Juanita Feltham had joined the WRAAC to combine her wartime skills and experience with her post-war training in fine arts. Janette Bomford states in *Soldiers of the Queen* that Feltham had a successful army career producing training aids, posters, book illustrations, and terrain model making. [2]

Feltham's design for the gates feature 47 gumleaf-shaped spikes that denote each year of Colonel Best's life and her Australian nationality. The gate on the left represents her nursing career and the one on the right her contribution to the army, especially the WRAAC. The central cruciform design symbolises Christianity and her Royal Red Cross.

The memorial gates and commemoration plaque on the left pillar were made by apprentices at the Balcombe Army School and the stone-work carried out by the 17th Construction Squadron of the Royal Australian Engineers. The ceramic tiles on the right pillar were made by Klytie Pate and feature formation signs of all Australian commands. Prominence is given to the waratah, the emblem of New South Wales, and Colonel Best's home state. [3]

Feltham became responsible for the graphics section of the newly formed Australian Army Audio-visual Unit, which had not had a female member until 1970 when two WRAAC members were appointed to the staff. [4]

On 13 June 1964 Warrant Officer 2 Juanita Cecila Feltham was appointed to the Order of the British Empire (Military).

[1] *Soldiers of the Queen* by Janette Bomford p. 47
[2] ibid p. 26
[3] ibid p. 47
[4] ibid p. 73

## Published resources

**Book**
Soldiers of the Queen : women in the Australian Army, Bomford, Janette, 2001

**Resource**
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

## Archival resources

**National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra**
[Seven slides from the opening of the Kathleen Best Memorial Gates, Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) School, Mosman, NSW, 6 November 1959]

Kathleen Best Memorial (Gates) and portrait

**National Archives of Australia, Various Locations**
Speech by Colonel Sybil H Irving (honorary Colonel of the Corps) made at the opening of the Kathleen Best Memorial Gates, Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) School, Mosman, NSW, 6 November 1959

**National Archives of Australia, Melbourne Office**
Kathleen Best Memorial Gates

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