**Entry type:** Person
**Entry ID:** AWE2035

# Walker, Virginia Clare

(1938 - 2021)

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| **Born** | 19380227, Waverley New South Wales Australia |
| **Died** | 20210725, Sydney New South Wales Australia |
| **Occupation** | Activist, Administrator |

## Summary

Virginia Walker had a life long passion for social justice and worked through many organisations to achieve it. As an Australia Party candidate she contested the elections for the House of Representatives seat of Phillip in 1972 and 1974 and for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly seat of Waverley in 1973. She joined the Australian Labor Party in 1976 and stood unsuccessfully for the Woollahra Municipal Council in 1980 and 1983. In May 2000 she was awarded the McKell Inaugural Award for services to the ALP and in 2014 a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM).

## Details

Virginia Walker was born in Sydney and educated at Ascham, Sydney, and New England Girls School, Armidale, NSW. After some years of work she became a mature age student at East Sydney Technical College and the Universities of NSW and Sydney, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1980 and a Diploma in Criminology 1985.

Virginia worked at clerical jobs in Sydney 1955-60, London 1960-63, and Sydney 1963-72, before moving into administration in the NSW Public Service, working with the Department of Housing, the Parole Board and the Department of Corrective Services. She was appointed in 1982 to the Board of the Langton Centre, a drug and alcohol treatment and education body, and later became treasurer and vice-president.

She was active in abortion reform, penal reform, and the environment movement from her return to Australia in 1963. She was a member of the Women’s Electoral Lobby from its foundation in 1972 until 1976, a member of the NSW Council for Civil Liberties and a member of the Australia Cuba Friendship Society 1984-91.

Since her retirement in 1998 Virginia Walker volunteered as a teacher’s aide at Forest Lodge Public School, and at the University of NSW Alumni Association. She was a co-founder of, and volunteer worker for, the Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation which raised millions of dollars to support asylum seekers waiting for determination of their claims for asylum. Members also assisted asylum seekers at court and in detention centres.

## Published resources

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

**Site Exhibition**
Putting Skirts on the Sacred Benches: Women Candidates for the New South Wales Parliament, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2006,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/pssb/home.html

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