

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2767

Adams, Glenda Emilie

(1939 - 2007)

Born	19391230, Ryde New South Wales Australia
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Died	20070711, East Redfern New South Wales
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Occupation	Author, Novelist, Teacher
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Summary

Glenda Adams was a Sydney-born and educated novelist and short-story writer. She studied journalism at Columbia University in New York, where she subsequently taught creative writing. During the 1980s she was writer-in-residence at a number of Australian universities before returning to Australia in 1990 to teach creative writing at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her MA writing program there became the model for successful postgraduate writing programs across Australia. Her novels *Dancing on Coral* (1987) and *Longleg* (1990) won a number of major Australian literary prizes. She died in Sydney in 2007.

Details

Glenda Emilie Adams was born at Ryde, NSW, daughter of Elvie and Leonard Felton. Educated at Fort Street Primary School and Sydney Girl's High, she became the first B.A. Honours graduate from the University of Sydney's newly-established Department of Indonesian and Malayan Studies in 1962. After two years travelling in Indonesia as a graduate student on a small scholarship, she returned to the University of Sydney to teach Indonesian. In 1964 she studied journalism at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, New York, graduating with a Masters degree in 1965. She subsequently worked as an Associate Director of the Teachers and Writers Collaborative, New York, a non profit organization that sent writers into New York City public schools to work with teachers to help improve children's writing skills through creative work. She also became a news writer on the radio desk at Associated Press, New York, Press Officer at the United Nations, a freelance writer and editor in Brussels and New York, and from 1976 taught part-time fiction writing workshops at Columbia University, New York City, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY and at Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

Glenda married Californian political scientist, Gordon Adams, in 1967. They subsequently divorced. Her first short story collection, *Lies and Stories*, was published in 1976 and her first novel, *Games of the Strong*, in 1982. In the 1980s she made periodic visits to Australia during which she was writer-in-residence at the University of Adelaide (1980), the University of Western Australia (1980), Macquarie University, Sydney, (1981 and 1988) and the University of Western Sydney (1988). She returned to live in Sydney in 1990 to teach fiction writing full time at the University of Technology, Sydney, where her MA writing program became the model for successful postgraduate writing programs across Australia. She established the first Australian Association of Writing Programs conference in 1996 and was a member of the Australian Society of Authors and the Australian Writers Guild. Her publications include short stories, novels and plays, and she has also written for television.

Glenda Adams received a number of Australia Council Grants and a Literature Board Fellowship in 1994. She won the Miles Franklin Award and a NSW State Premier's Award in 1987 for her novel *Dancing on Coral*, and the Age Book of the Year Award and the National Book Council Award for fiction for her 1990 novel *Longleg*. In 1998 her first play, *The Monkey Trap*, was commissioned and performed in Sydney at the Griffin Theatre.

Adams retired as Associate Professor at the UTS in 2003 to devote herself to writing. She died in Sydney on 11 July 2007 and is survived by her daughter Caitlin.

Published resources

Resource

[Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009](#)

Archival resources

Academy Library, UNSW Canberra

[Glenda Adams manuscript collection 1965-1998](#)

[Carmel Bird manuscript collection 1983-1997.](#)

National Library of Australia, Pictures Collection

[Portraits of Glenda Adams, 1990 \[picture\] / Alec Bolton](#)

Australian National University Archives

[Glenda Adams, author of 'Dancing on Coral ', guest speaker at literary luncheon](#)

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Glenda Adams, 1982-1999](#)

[Papers of Drusilla Modjeska, 1959-2006 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Rosemary Dobson, 1923-2004 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Peter Porter, circa 1947-2010 \[manuscript\]](#)

National Library of Australia

[\[Biographical cuttings on Glenda Adams, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection

[5775 Brisbane Writers Centre Records 1995-2000](#)

ACT Heritage Library

[HMSS 0131 Word Festival Canberra Records](#)

Author Details

Ann-Mari Jordens

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