Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE3101

Child, Joan

(1921 - 2013)

Born	19210803, Yackandandah Victoria Australia
Died	20130223, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Occupation	Parliamentarian

Summary

Joan Child was the first female member of the Australian Labor Party to be elected to the federal Parliament in the House of Representatives as Member for the seat of Henty in 1974. She lost her seat in the 1975 general election, but regained it in 1980. She became the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1986, holding the position until she resigned in 1989. She remained the only female speaker of the house until October 2012, when Anna Burke was appointed to the position.

Joan Child retired from parliament in 1990 when the seat of Henty was abolished in an electoral redistribution. She was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia in June 1990.

She died on 23 February 2013 at the age of 91. In a statement from Prime Minister Julia Gillard, on the occasion of her death, Joan Child was remembered as a pioneer and an inspiration. ‘As a confirmed true believer, Joan never forgot who had put her into politics or why. She was a powerful voice for the needs and rights of women, especially working women and women doing it tough.’

Events

2001 - 2001
Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Article
First federal woman speaker Joan Child dies, 2013,
http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/first-federal-woman-speaker-joan-child-dies-20130225-2f071.html

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

National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra
Papers of Hon Joan Child

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