Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE4785

Rudduck, Loma Butterworth

(1914 - 2005)

Born	19140808, Hay New South Wales Australia
Died	20050909, Bendigo Victoria Australia
Occupation	Community activist, Historian, Liaison officer, Radio Broadcaster

Summary

From the time she arrived in Canberra in 1943 as a young wife and mother, Loma Rudduck became actively involved in several community organisations particularly those supporting women and children in the young and growing city. She was one of the founders and later president of the Canberra Pre-School Society and represented it on the National Council of Women. Later she was federal executive officer of the Australian Pre-School Association. For 14 years she recorded a weekly talk on women's issues, 'Canberra Roundup', broadcast on ABC National radio. After the death of her husband in 1964 she worked at information centres, established by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in the new towns of Woden, Weston Creek and Belconnen, and as a liaison officer between the NCDC and the National Council of Women. She was a president of the Canberra Embroiderers' Guild and took a prominent part in an Australia-wide project to produce an embroidery for the opening of the new Parliament House in 1988. Loma recorded the history of several organisations with which she was associated. She was a founder of the Canberra and District Historical Society and was honoured with life membership.

Details

Loma Amos was born on 8 August 1914 in Hay, New South Wales, but travelled with her mother to Fiji, where both her parents were working as missionaries, soon after her birth. She was educated by correspondence and, when it was time for her to start high school, the family left Fiji and Loma was enrolled at the Methodist Ladies College, Melbourne. Afterwards, Loma trained as a pre-school teacher. On 2 September 1939 she married architect and town planner, Grenfell Rudduck, at Queen's College Chapel, University of Melbourne, in a ceremony conducted by her father, a Methodist minister.

Moving to Canberra in 1943 with her husband and the first of her four children, Loma joined other women in forming the Canberra Nursery Kindergarten Society (later the Canberra Pre-School Society). She was on the Society's Council from its inception and served as president in 1946-1947 and 1948-1949. She represented the Society on the National Council of Women and from 1945 to 1950 was a member of the Department of the Interior's Pre-School Advisory Committee.

In 1954 Loma was invited to contribute a weekly 'Canberra Roundup' to be broadcast on ABC National radio as part of the women's session. She continued presenting this weekly segment for the next fourteen years, even while the family was living in Pakistan where her husband was a United Nations adviser.

Encouraged by a Reid neighbour, Lu Rees, founder of the Children's Book Council in the ACT, Loma Rudduck became honorary secretary of the Council and was president 1960-1961. She was a member of the Canberra Public Library Advisory Committee in 1961-1962.

In 1964 after the sudden death of her husband, an Associate Commissioner of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC), the NCDC Commissioner, (Sir) John Overall offered her the role of liaison officer between the NCDC and the National Council of Women. Employed in the NCDC's public relations section she ran an information centre, set up in a temporary structure in the bare paddocks rapidly being transformed into the new towns of Woden, Weston Creek and Belconnen, advising and helping new residents.

After five years in this position, Loma was asked to become Executive Officer of the recently formed Australian Pre-School Association. She held this position in pre-school administration, a satisfying return to her pre-school profession, from 1970 to 1975.

The inaugural meeting at which the Embroiderers' Guild of the ACT was formed was held in Loma Rudduck's Reid home. She was the Guild's newsletter editor in 1979-1981, president in 1982-1983 and was prominent in moves by the Guild in an Australia-wide project to make and present a major piece of embroidery to the new Parliament House in 1988. She wrote the Guild's history in 1992.

Loma was instrumental in Canberra acquiring a floral emblem. After complaining to the then Minister for the Interior, Michael Hodgman, about the Territory's lack of a floral emblem, she was appointed to a committee to recommend one. The committee unanimously chose the Royal Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gloriosa*).

Loma Rudduck was also a significant historian. In 1953 she and her husband helped W.P. Bluett establish the Canberra and District Historical Society; she remained an active member of the Society and was made a life member in 1992. She campaigned to save Glebe House (demolished in 1954) and Blundell's Cottage, which remains as a historical link with Canberra's past. She documented the history of several projects in which she was involved. These histories included: *The Mothering Years* (with Helen Crisp), a history of the Canberra Mothercraft Society, the forerunner of the Canberra Pre-School Society; a history of the Embroiderers' Guild of the ACT, *And So to Sew*; and a manuscript history of the Canberra Pre-School Society 1943-60, held in the ACT Heritage Library. She also completed several books of family history and books of advice for families of pre-school children.

In the 1980s Loma Rudduck moved to the family's holiday home at Long Beach on the South Coast of New South Wales. She died in Bendigo in 2005 aged 91 while visiting family. A street in the Canberra suburb of Forde is named in her honour.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book
And So to Sew: A History of Embroidery in the Australian Capital Territory, Rudduck, Loma, 1992

Newsletter
Canberra & District Historical Society, 2005

Federation of Australian Historical Societies Inc. Newsletter, 2006

Book Section
The Society begins..., Clarke, Patricia, 2003

Resource Section
Rudduck, Grenfell (1914-1964), Morison, Ian W, 2002,
http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rudduck-grenfell-11583/text20677

Journal Article
A short story about a long time ago, Rudduck, Loma, 1989

Site Exhibition
From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg

Archival resources

ACT Heritage Library
Rudduck, Loma, 'Canberra Pre-School Society; A Record - 1943-60', Canberra, 1960, 23 p.

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Loma Rudduck, 1944-1968 [manuscript]

Author Details
Patricia Clarke

Created 21 June 2012
Last modified 24 April 2018