

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0104

Cato, Nancy

(1917 - 2000)

Nationality	Australian
Born	11 March, 1917, Adelaide South Australia Australia
Died	3 July, 2000, Noosa Queensland Australia
Occupation	Author, Environmentalist, Journalist, Poet

Summary

Nancy Cato was an acclaimed author. She published several historical novels and biographies and two volumes of poetry. Cato was also a strong campaigner for environmental conservation.

Details

Schooled at the Presbyterian Ladies College, in Adelaide, South Australia, Nancy Cato began her professional writing career as a cadet journalist on the *Adelaide News* at age 18. Later an art critic for the same newspaper, she also became a freelance writer. In 1950 she edited the *Jindyworobak Anthology*.

Actively involved in the Fellowship of Australian Writers and the Australian Society of Authors during the 1950s and 1960s, Cato's books include *Green grows the vine*, *Brown sugar* and *All the rivers run*, which was made into a TV mini-series. She published other prose works in addition to two volumes of poetry, and contributed to Australian literary magazines. A major work was *Mister Maloga*, the story of Daniel Mathews and his Maloga Mission to Aboriginal people on the Murray River in Victoria.

Cato married Eldred Norman, and travelled extensively overseas with him; the pair had one daughter and two sons.

Nancy Cato strove for ultimate skill as a writer, and for protection of the Australian environment, particularly in the face of developers on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. She was awarded the Alice Award by the Society of Women Writers in 1988; the Advance Australia award for environmental campaigning; an Honorary Doctor of Letters, University of Queensland; and was a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

Events

1935 - 1941

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Newspaper Article

Prize-winning author dies, 2000

All the tributes flow for Noosa's literary icon, 2000

Lifelong affair with the river, 2000

Author brought authentic voice to literature, 2000

Murray novel brought fame, fortune, 2000

Author shared pioneer spirit, 2000

Site Exhibition

The Women's Pages: Australian Women and Journalism since 1850, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cal/cal-home.html>

Archival resources

The University of Adelaide, Barr Smith Library Rare Books & Special Collections

[\[Collection of unpublished letters and poems\] : \[also manuscript and signed\] : published copy of her novel\] / \[Northwest by south\]](#)

[Mister Maloga Daniel Matthews and his mission, Murray River, 1864-1902 \[1976?\]](#).

Special Collections, Academy Library, UNSW@ADFA

[Nancy Cato manuscript collection 1967-1992](#)

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Nancy Cato, 1939-1995 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Literary papers 1969-1981 \[manuscript\]](#)

Fryer Library, The University of Queensland

[Nancy Cato Papers](#)

[Gwen Harwood Papers](#)

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection

[Florence James - papers, 1890-1993](#)

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

[Nancy Cato interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection \[sound recording\]](#)

State Library of New South Wales

[Dale Spender - papers, 1972-1995](#)

Author Details

Clare Land

Created 22 June 2001

Last modified 29 October 2018