



FACT SHEET

Week beginning 3 September 2007

Social History

Simply the Best – Reflections on women in the records



On Thursday 11 October 2007, Tony Ryan gave a 45 minute presentation to a national conference at the University of South Australia; the theme of the conference was an exploration of the collective memory of women in national and international collections.

The conference was opened by the Honourable Bob Hawke AC, who was in Adelaide on the occasion of the official opening of The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library, within the

University of South Australia. Three of our Archive Researchers and College Fellows – Mr Jim Dwyer, Dr Tony McGuire and Dr Robin Ryan – were also at the presentation.

Tony Ryan's presentation featured extracts from the extensive collection of oral history interviews he has recorded for the College and the National Library of Australia in Canberra since 1994. Women featured included Dr Jean Blackburn, Miss Bessie Mitchell, Mrs Joan Brewer, Dr Shirley Randell, Sister Deirdre Jordan and Mrs Allison Densley – excerpts ranging from early memories, through early teaching days, and reflections on their careers in education. By way of introduction,

Tony's presentation also featured a short history of our College and included two extracts from the 1995 A W Jones Oration given by Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue on the topic *Towards a New Understanding of Indigenous Australians*.

Other papers over this two-day conference were on Women and Health, Women and Education, Women and Politics, Women and Research, and Women and Social Justice. The keynote speaker was Lena Tornqvist who spoke on her work in the Astrid Lindgren Archives in the National Library of Sweden.

This presentation by Tony Ryan provided an excellent opportunity to showcase just some of the richness of records held in the College Archive, and to publicise this collection of text, audio and other records to other researchers into the history of education in Australia.