

Margaret Ann Triffitt

RSWA Librarian

5th March 1944 – 4th November 2019

Margaret Ann Triffitt who had been the Royal Society of Western Australia's Librarian for 25 years, passed away on 4 November 2019, aged 75. She was born in England in 1944 and her family migrated to Australia in the 1950s as '10 pound poms', settling in Hobart. Her father was involved in the Intelligence Services, which may explain her ability in research and information gathering. From 1961 to 1965 she attended the University of Tasmania where she could combine her love of reading working in the University Library while she studied. She met her husband Gary, an electrical engineer, at the Judo Club and they travelled around Australia for his work, eventually settling in Perth. Margaret was appointed as Librarian for the Western Australian Museum, her dream job, in August 1987 after working in a similar position for the State Energy Commission.

The Royal Society Library has been housed in the Western Australian Museum since April 1960, so Margaret was also responsible for cataloguing and maintaining the collection in addition to administering the exchange of the Royal Society journal with institutions around the world. Many of these exchange titles are not held elsewhere in the state.

Margaret arrived at the Museum when libraries were just starting to adjust to the digital age. She steadily computerized services throughout the 1990s and, through her efforts, subject lists of the Royal Society holdings were published in 2001 in volume 84 of the journal. Margaret was a great believer in making these valuable collections more widely accessible so, with the help of some funding from the Royal Society, was able to publish the combined Library catalogues on the internet in 2003. Throughout her tenure, she worked tirelessly on the Royal Society Council and was dedicated to making improvements to Library services particularly as access to digital resources became increasingly available; however, she was never too busy to assist students.

Margaret retired in December 2012 after which her love of history and learning prompted her to act as a guide at Peninsula Farm (Tranby House), and organize speakers for the University of the Third Age. She will always be remembered for her wisdom, knowledge and dedication.

Wendy Crawford
Western Australian Museum

