



Australian
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REMEMBERING THE VALIANT DR CLAIRE CLARK, 1939 – 2019

WRITTEN BY DR CLAIRE CLARK SCHOLAR - TESS HARWOOD

Spirit, Belief and Fight

Claire Clark was a woman who liked to excel in the unexpected. To name just a few of her achievements and successes, in her 20s she travelled around West Africa by herself. In her lifetime she met Robert Mugabe and General MacArthur, flew in a Military Transport plane to Christmas Island and, in 1990, travelled around China, despite having to use a wheelchair due to Multiple Sclerosis.

Dr Claire Clark was born in Townsville and graduated from the University of Queensland with a Bachelor of Arts, Hons in 1962. In 1964, she received her Masters qualification after completing her thesis, *Problems of independent Africa: a study of the broad issues of state authority, tribalism and African unity, and immediate tasks in agriculture, industry, education and communications.*

In 1969, Claire is believed to have been the first woman with two children to obtain a doctorate in Australia. Her PhD thesis was on the foreign policies of the Afro-Asian states, and was completed at the University of Melbourne. Claire had four children in total, Tanya, Douglas, Russell and Nicola, who continued on her path of academic achievement.



“I am very proud that all four of my children studied at the ANU, all of whom have at least two ANU degrees,” said Claire

From 1962 to 1973, Claire worked as a lecturer of history and tutor at the University of Queensland, and at RMIT in Melbourne. In 1973, Claire entered the Australian Public Service working at the Parliamentary Library and joined the Office of National Assessments (ONA). From 1983 she was an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Communications, after which she worked for the Department of Territories, with responsibility for Cocos (Keeling) and Christmas Islands.

Claire worked for the ACT Government Service (ACT Public Service from 1994) from 1989 to 1996 and was a visiting

fellow with the ANU Public Policy Program from 1991 to 1999. She was president of the ACT Division of the Institute of Public Administration from 1987 to 1989 and was made a fellow of the Institute.

From 1991 to 1998, Claire became a Visiting Fellow at the ANU Public Policy Program (now Crawford School of Public Policy), where she taught courses in public policy to local and visiting public servants, including from Indonesia. She continued to dedicate her work on issues of both public policy and international relations; with the Crawford School honouring her efforts in both of these fields of scholarship. Claire was a keen attendee at the Australian Crawford Leadership Forum.

Claire was published in many journals during her lifetime and contributed to many books, including *Parliament and Bureaucracy*, edited by J Nethercote. She edited *Australian Foreign Policy: Towards a Reassessment* and persuaded Prime Minister Gough Whitlam to launch the book. During her time at ANU she also developed the booklet, *Creating a culture to encourage students with disabilities*, which included transcripts from students presenting at a day-long forum. Even after retirement, she retained a keen interest in current and foreign affairs.

Through the Dr Claire Clark Scholarship program, Claire’s remarkable legacy continues through the recipients of this scholarship. I was lucky enough to have met Claire last year along with other recipients. While our meeting was only short, I saw Claire’s fighting spirit, wit and humour. Hearing stories of her accomplishments are inspiring, and I hope that I can use my degree to follow in her footsteps. Claire’s ambition and achievements will continue to be a driving force in my life and career.

Tess Harwood