

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE3128

Laidler, Bertha May

(1912 - 1975)

Nationality	Australian
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Born	8 July, 1912, Richmond Victoria Australia
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Died	24 May, 1975, Carlton Victoria Australia
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Occupation	Political activist, Political candidate
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Summary

Bertha Laidler stood as a candidate for the Communist Party of Australia in the seat of Richmond in the Legislative Assembly at the Victorian state election, which was held in June 1943.

Details

Bertha Laidler, daughter of Thomas Percival (Percy) Laidler and Christiane Alicia nee Goss was born into a socialist family. They lived above Will Andrade's bookshop in Bourke Street, Melbourne. She attended the Queensberry Street State school, Carlton.

Educated in Communism and Socialism from an early age, Laidler attended Stotts Business College and later worked for the Victorian Public Service in the Motor Registration Branch. She travelled to London in 1931 where she joined the Communist Party of Great Britain. On her return to Australia in 1933 she was active in the Communist Party of Australia, and the Shop Assistants' Union of Victoria. She later worked for the Federated Ironworkers Association of Australia in Melbourne, Sydney and Newcastle before travelling to New Zealand with fellow communists Judah Waten and Noel Counihan.

She served with the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force from May 1945 until May 1946. She moved to Darwin in October 1946 and met her future husband, Joseph Walker.

She curtailed her involvement with the CPA after having children.

She was a founding member of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History.

Her publications include: *How to defeat conscription* and *Solidarity forever*.

Published resources

Resource Section

Walker, Bertha May (1912 - 1975), Hudson, David, 2006,
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A160556b.htm>

Site Exhibition

Carrying on the Fight: Women Candidates in Victorian Parliamentary Elections, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cws/home.html>

Book

Solidarity forever: a part story of the life and times of Percy Laidler - the first quarter of a century, Walker, Bertha, 1972

Booklet

How to defeat conscription: a story of the 1916 and 1917 campaigns, Walker, Bertha, 1968

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

State Library of Victoria

Papers, [manuscript].

Author Details

Rosemary Francis

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