



*Veteris non inscius aevi*

ROYAL  
AUSTRALIAN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

There are few studies of elite women in Australian history. The Royal Australian Historical Society hopes this volume of brief biographies will add to our understanding of the different and changing roles filled by these women over more than two hundred years. The vice-regal consorts, a group of elite hard working women (and men), have been largely ignored until now. All were unpaid and each played an important part in our State's history.

Some years ago the Royal Australian Historical Society learned that Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley, then vice-regal consort of New South Wales, had a deep interest in her predecessors and was keen for their stories to be researched and published. The Society was pleased to take on this project and bring it to fruition.

The project would not have been possible without the ongoing commitment and dedication of the three volunteer editors who had overall responsibility for its carriage from the beginning. The Royal Australian Historical Society is deeply indebted to each of them.

Dr Christine Wright (then vice-president of the Society) had the crucial role in getting the project off the ground. She called for expressions of interest, appointed the authors, assembled and checked their first drafts, liaised with them and with Government House.

Associate Professor Carol Liston (then president of the Society) and historian Joy Hughes were then engaged in the next phase. They undertook the second round of editing, drawing on the former's comprehensive knowledge of nineteenth century social history and the latter's knowledge of the vice-regal residences. Joy Hughes also carried out the picture research and copy editing. In addition, the three editors contributed a number of the biographical entries.

The other 22 contributing authors, who willingly gave up their time to research and write the biographical entries, deserve a special mention. Without them there would be no publication. The members of former vice-regal families who took part in the Vice-Regal Consorts Oral History Project; Ann Toy (former Senior Curator of Government House) and Roslyn Burge (Vice-Regal Consorts Oral History Project) were integral to the project. Colonel Michael Miller, RFD, Official Secretary to the Governor of New South Wales provided invaluable support.

The Society gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution from Government House, Sydney, and the generous donation of Mrs Caroline Wilkinson which have enabled the production of this book.

**Christine Yeats**  
**President**  
**Royal Australian Historical Society**