

# Janet Durden

## *Have a try, you might surprise yourself*

Janet is the designer of the Links Wall Hanging; funded by the City of Campbelltown, in the Campbelltown Library, to celebrate the Centenary of Federation in 2001. Janet's design incorporates many features unique to the area, its history and its future. Janet drew on her memories of growing up and living in the Campbelltown area in addition to the stories of her early pioneering families.

Janet has always lived in the Campbelltown area. Both sides of the family lived in Campbelltown and she grew up in South Payneham. Janet's grandparents owned Laver's Grocery Store on the Glynde corner and the Halliday and Rowney sides of the family were close by.

Janet attended the Wellington Road School and Norwood High School. Janet's father had been an engineer with country radio stations and later a teacher/trainer for civil aviation. He encouraged her and her sister to always try everything that interested them. This became a major influence in her life and while Janet developed her interest in sewing and crafts, she also developed expertise in other crafts including quilting and machine knitting.

Janet recalls that growing up in the Eastern Suburbs in the 1950s was an adventure. Everyone had a bike and on weekends and summer holidays she roamed the outskirts of the suburbs from Waterfall Gully to the Torrens, from the swing bridge at Darley Road to the Gilberton Swimming Pool.

Janet and her husband Jim Durden began married life at Payneham before moving into their Hectorville home, remaining close to family, and for Jim, the family engineering business nearby in Glynde. Jim was elected and served with the Campbelltown Council in the capacity of Councillor, Alderman and Deputy Mayor.

Work on the Links Wall Hanging commenced in September 2000 and it was completed in 2008. The 2.5m x 1.85m hanging is displayed in the foyer of the Campbelltown Public Library. The wall hanging features a range of different materials and techniques and Janet's design and leadership skills in bringing it all together were outstanding. Volunteers were provided with a kit of required materials and background fabric, each working on a section following Janet's working sketches.

The magic that could be worked with just a needle and thread was astounding but the interesting times were when beads, buttons, plumber's hardware, oven-baked clay and anything else we could source were used.

Janet feels privileged to have worked with a group of talented ladies who helped to achieve a result beyond all expectations. Janet continues to complete many different craft activities, believing that there is a direct relationship between keeping the mind and body active. Sewing remains her main interest, with her extended family keeping her busy, or filling her time making bags for different charities.

## **"Never say 'I can't do it'."**

Celebrating International Women's Day with the 'Women of Campbelltown' project – inspiring stories of local women, their achievements and contributions to the Community.

To see the full stories visit: [www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/iwd](http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/iwd)

*Thank you to the women who participated and volunteer interviewers Di Booker and Katrina Spencer.*