

Reeva Brice

“Following opportunities and constantly learning”

Reeva has been a member of the Campbelltown Council’s Ageing Well Advisory Committee from 2016 – 2023, she is a member of the Council of the Ageing (COTA SA) Policy Council and represents them on high level organisations, she has a monthly Yoga podcast with Triple AAA, Vision Australia and is a yoga Instructor with Campbelltown U3A.

Phases of her life

Reeva was born in Norwood and grew up in Croydon Park, at that time a semi-rural area, with her parents, four older brothers and another nine years younger. Her mother was from a farming background and her father was a carpenter by trade. He built their first home in the early forties, became a builder and a few years later rebuilt the home in the early fifties. The home was on 3-4 acres and Reeva describes it as a ‘micro mini farm’ as they had a cow, fowls, ducks, rabbits, fruit trees of almost every kind, 16 almond trees (as children they loved knocking the almonds down with sticks) and grew their own vegetables. One of Reeva’s tasks before school was to separate the milk and cream. As it was a semi-rural environment with very few homes nearby Reeva had no other playmates other than her brothers until she was close to five years old. When her brothers were at school and she was bored Reeva would often chase the rooster around. She never caught him as he twisted and turned and was too fast for her but she claimed a few feathers from his tail. Her mother was concerned that she would always be a tomboy but she needn’t have worried.

Reeva’s schooling was at the Croydon school right through to Croydon Technical where she chose Commercial studies. One of her electives was dressmaking and from then on Reeva made most of her own clothes and later for her own children. Having put aside the idea of being a fashion designer she started work at Bennett and Fisher as a stenographer then moved to the Griffin Press as secretary to the Sales Manager. Following her marriage, she worked with her husband in his dry-cleaning business and attended many workshops and conferences.

Reeva has always been interested in sports and physical activities. At school she played softball and basketball and played tennis at home as they had a lawn court. At seventeen she started learning ballroom dancing, Latin American, Rock N Roll and many other dances and today if she is out somewhere and the music is there, she will be up dancing. Later in life Reeva became a competitive squash player with the Campbelltown Squash Club and also learned water and snow skiing.

Reeva believes that each phase of her life has reflected new beginnings and freedom of choice. Phase two of her life saw the continuation of her love for learning when Reeva attended her first WEA course, Social Psychology. She was then about 17 and continued throughout the years to attend many more including business studies, cooking, computer skills, and wine

courses. In November 1986 she became a Tutor with the WEA starting with Foot Reflexology and then massage, aromatherapy, hand reflexology and facial and head acupuncture. Today she still teaches at the WEA in Foot and Hand Reflexology and Facial and Head Acupuncture.

In the 1970s Reeva decided to do Matriculation as there were Mature Adult classes available on a part-time basis and she successfully finished with enough points to continue to university but decided it was time for a break.

Reeva attended her first yoga class in 1967 and knew within 18 months that she would like to be a teacher. She was encouraged by another teacher to train through the SA Institute of Yoga Teachers (SAIYT) receiving her Certificate in the early 1970s then a Diploma a few years later. In 1983 she gained a Certificate of Competence in Yoga Physiatrics (Physical Therapy) from The British School of Yoga. Her first Yoga classes were with the YMCA at Modbury and she gradually gained more classes. Reeva was an inaugural member of the SAIYT and served on the committee for many years. In the early 1980s she was awarded a scholarship which she used to study Yoga in England, Switzerland, France and the Netherlands.

Phase three of her life began in the early 1980s when Reeva began studies in Shiatsu, massage and complementary therapies once again gaining Certificates and Diplomas and then started her own clinics. In 1993 she established a training college in Remedial Massage and Complementary Therapies which also included a clinical practice. In addition to developing and teaching the learning programs, she served on many professional associations including as President of the South Australian Massage Therapists Association (SAMTA) 1998–2002, Director and representative for SAMTA on the Federation of Natural and Traditional Therapists Ltd 1998–2002 and Executive and Board Member of the Northern Adelaide Business Enterprise Centre 1998–2004. The only woman member for two years.

One of her regrets is that when she was offered a university place in a Health Science degree in the early 1990s, she was not able to take it up.

Phase four of her life began when Reeva retired from the college although she continued teaching yoga and practicing remedial massage. This was when she turned to volunteering and became a volunteer with the SA Council of The Ageing (COTA SA) undertaking site checks and assessments for the Strength for Life fitness program from 2008-2019. In 2014 she was appointed to the COTA Policy Council and from 2017 has been their representative on the Australian Gas Infrastructure SA Reference Group. In this phase of her life and for the last 17 years she has been an influencer of modern ageing through COTA SA's The Plug-In. Reeva is a life member of COTA and has been awarded the Premier's Certificate for outstanding Volunteer service. During this time, she was also a volunteer for SA University for cognitive studies and Adelaide University for Dementia and Alzheimer's.

Reeva has also conducted many workshops for organisations such as the MS Society, the Vietnam Veterans Association, Parkinson's SA, the Brain Injury Network and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Involvement with these organisations has provided her with sound knowledge and understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.

Connections to Campbelltown

Reeva moved into the Campbelltown Council area in 1963 when she married. Reeva has a daughter and two sons, six grandchildren and one great granddaughter. Her children attended Stradbroke and Morialta High schools and married local people. She has watched Campbelltown

grow and develop over the years and gradually has become a more active member of the community.

For a short time, Reeva was a member of the Council's Social Host program, accompanying participants in the Council's Home Support Program to various activities. From 2016-2023, she has been a member of the Council's Ageing Well Advisory Committee providing strategic advice to the Council focusing on housing, physical environment, participation, health, wellbeing and services to support all older people to age well in Campbelltown.

Health and Wellbeing

Reeva has always had a love of singing and for several years sang as a member of the Sing Australia Choir and recently has become member of the ACH Sing for Joy Choir. She is currently teaching yoga with Campbelltown U3A and believes that keeping active must involve the mind as well as the body and socialising is very important, having communication with other people.

Reeva would tell her younger self to have much more confidence in herself and believe in her own abilities. She still remembers how shy she was when she first started working and how she needed to draw on those inner reserves of confidence.

“There are no such words as I can't, because you CAN”

