



Frances Taylor (nee Harvie)
(1925 - 2021)

Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) was a Women's Land Army farm worker in South Australia during WWII

Introduction to Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) 128 words

Frances Roberta Harvie was born on 15th January 1925 and died on 28th March 2021, aged 96-years. She was a young girl living in suburban Adelaide with her family in the 1940's and at the age of 18-years she answered the call to join the Australian Women's Land Army (AWLA), signing up in January 1944.

Harvie would have assumed a role within her household that was expected of women during that time, she'd contribute to household chores such as cooking, cleaning and possibly looking after younger siblings or undertake unskilled work outside of the home.

After her service in the AWLA she met and married David Taylor and at the time of her death in 2021, she was survived by her 4 children, 10 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) service to Australian Women's Land Army during WWII 625 words

The Australian Women's Land Army was formed in 1942 in response to the shortage of rural workers during World War II due to the deployment of men to the armed forces. Women in each state of Australia were called upon to join the informal 'land armies' to fill the labour shortage. Recruits were allocated to various types of farm work and also manual labour in canneries and packinghouses, candidates were required to be British subjects or immigrants from Allied nations and to be between 18 and 50 years of age. Land Army women worked 48-hour weeks and were either paid the industry award rate, or else 30 shillings (equivalent to 35 cents) a week with board and keep.

Women were keen to join the armed services, but the Australian Women's Land Army had less appeal. In an attempt to boost recruitment, government produced colourful posters showing peaceful rural scenes.

These promotional campaigns had little impact and the Women's Land Army remained the 'poor relation' of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force and the Australian Women's Army Service. Most recruits to the Australian Women's Land Army were unfamiliar with the rigours of farm life and manual work.

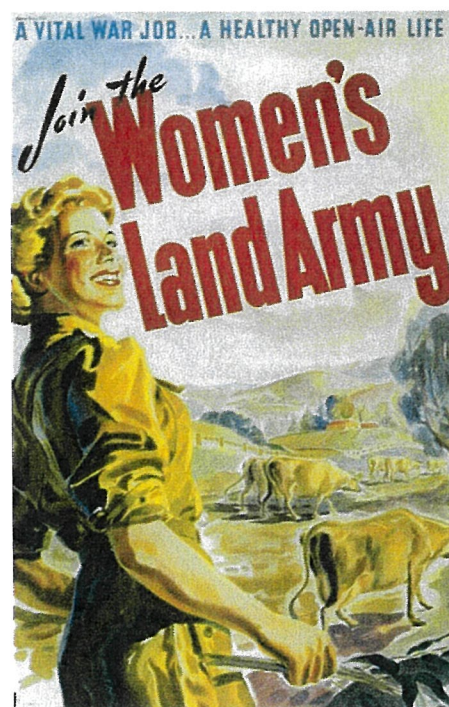



Figure 1
Land Army Recruitment Poster, 1943

Book No. 26112



AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S LAND ARMY.
State SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Issued to
Surname HARVIE
Christian Name Frances Roberta
Land Army No. 46 R Identity Card No. 42670

Metal Badge No.
Enrolled at Adelaide on Dec. 1942.
For (personal) DUNEEDY
Home Address 5th Northgate Street
Unley Park
Next of Kin Mrs. Charlotte R. Harvie
Address 5th Northgate Street
Unley Park

Signature of Member
Signature of Issuing Officer A. F. [illegible] Date 21/1/44
Notes - This Service Record Book must be surrendered to AWLA Headquarters on discharge.
The address of A.W.L.A. Headquarters is c/o Deputy Director-General of Miss Power in your Capital City.

ANY PERSON FINDING THIS SERVICE RECORD BOOK IS REQUESTED TO SEND IT WITHOUT DELAY TO AWLA HEADQUARTERS, c/o DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF MISS POWER IN ANY CAPITAL CITY.

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In Figure 2, this document is of her AWLA Service Record Book which details her name, address and next of kin at the time of recruitment.

Members were strictly disciplined in their personal presentation, giving detailed rules for the wearing of both street clothes, and working uniforms. This was outlined in their service record book as can be seen from this excerpt

Figure 2
AWLA Service Record Book

Hat - This must always be worn, and at a smart angle to suit the wearer. Care must be taken that there is no exaggeration in turning the brim and that the hat is not worn at the back of the head.

Harvie worked at various rural properties in South Australia as part of the Australian Women's Land Army, including appointments in Lucindale in May 1943 – June 1944, Morphett Vale in July – August 1944, Plympton in September 1944, Frances in October 1944 – October 1945 and Lucindale in October – December 1945. Her service offered opportunities to defy some established social conventions of the time.

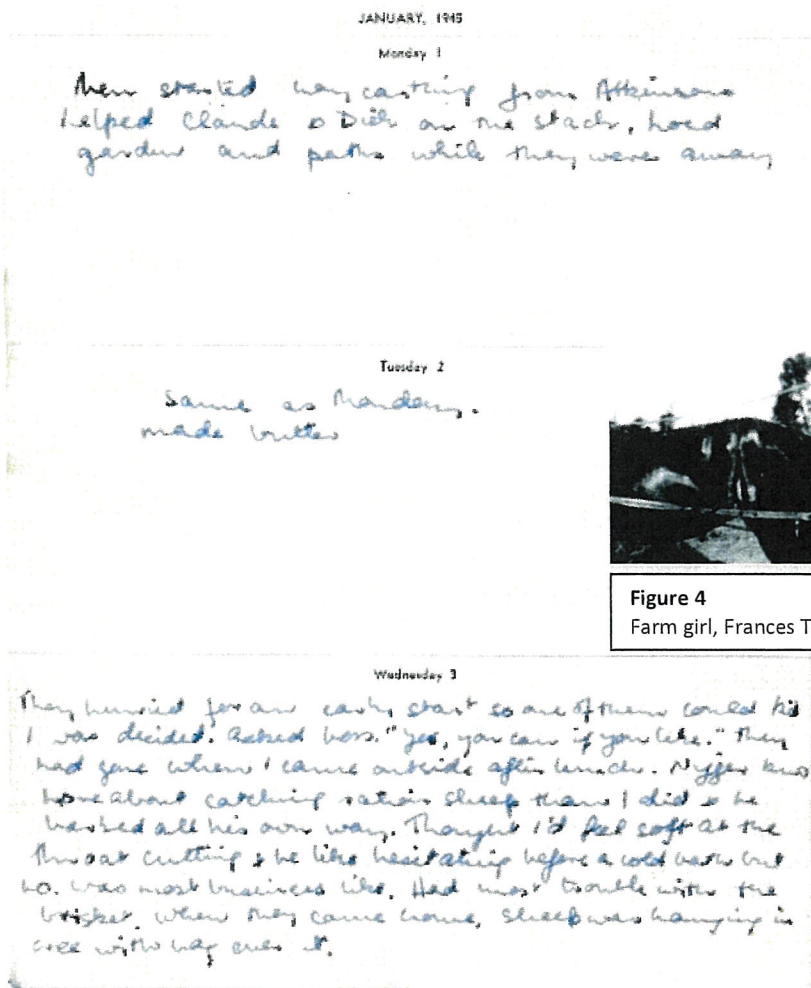


Figure 3
Diary Page of Frances Taylor, 1946



Figure 4
Farm girl, Frances Taylor, ca. 1943

The diary excerpts talk about daily life on a rural property with early starts, hoeing the garden and paths, making butter, catching sheep to slaughter. Despite the long hours, very physical labour, and poor wages many former Land Army members have described their time with this force as enjoyable. It gave urban women an opportunity to experience rural life.

Frances Taylor's final diary entry records her sadness at leaving the family and friends she had worked with,

Tuesday 18 December 1945. I really was sorry to leave this time. They all took me to Naracoorte to catch the train, and I didn't want to go a bit. You can't hold back Time though I often wish you could on many occasions. Salva gave me another packet of cigarettes with "no fichettaio foto" pathetically written on the top and "gubai" on the bottom, Ray took our photos. and teased me much about his feeling 'de trop' and I would have time just to go and say a proper goodbye. Very sad. Goodbye Southeast. Will I ever see you again- The end of the second phase of my life-?

In analysing this primary source of information, it gives an insight into the valued experience Harvie had during her time in the AWLA, with the deep connections she made with the land-owners as well as building valuable work skills she would have otherwise never been able to achieve.

Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) – life after WWII

165 words

It appears from this letter of recommendation that Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) applied to work at the Adelaide Hospital after completing her service in the Australian Women's Land Army during WWII.

Although it is unclear of the role Harvie was seeking to undertake, it is evident from the letter that the State Superintendent of the AWLA was impressed by her diligent recruit with a personal conversation with the Matron at the Hospital. It has a personal tone throughout which possibly reflects an admiration and respect she had for Frances, wishing her 'very kind regards'.

Harvie met and married her husband David Taylor, they had 4 children together and became grandparents to 10 and great-grandparents to 6 during their long life together. Frances survived her husband by 12-months, passing away in March 2021.

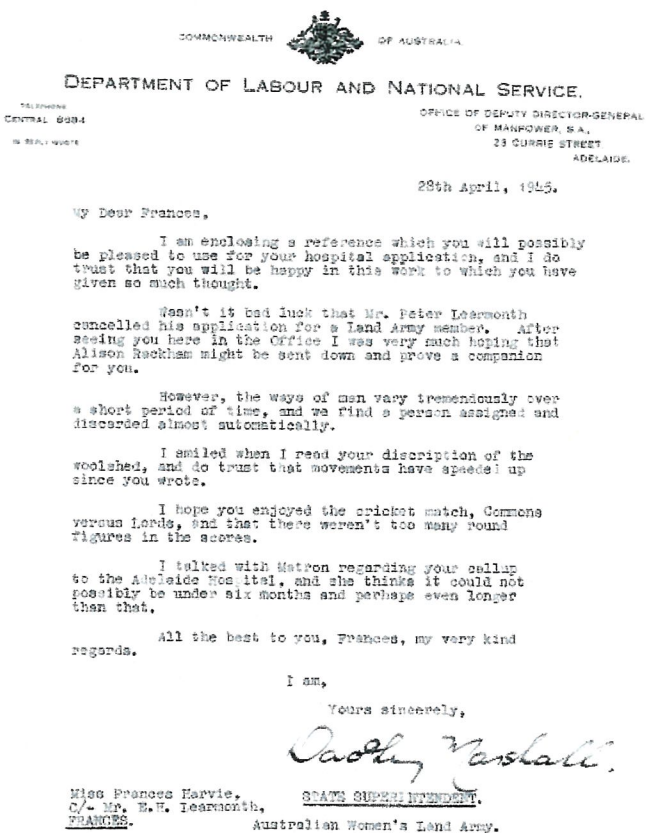


Figure 5

A letter dated 28 April 1945, from Dorothy Marshall, State Superintendent, AWLA as a recommendation for Frances to work at the Adelaide Hospital after her time in the Women's Land Army.

Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) – characteristics of the ANZAC spirit 630 words

The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) spirit was initiated during World War I (WWI) when soldiers from both countries formed part of the allied expedition that set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula. On those beaches in the early hours before dawn began as the exemplar for mateship and perseverance that would be known for generations to come as the 'ANZAC Spirit'.

Australia's domestic effort during WWII involved much more than active efforts of those involved on the frontline as part of the Australian Defence Forces. War brought major disruption to agriculture and food supplies in Europe, Britain, and Australia and along with concerns Australia had with experiencing a concurrent drought at the time a post-war famine was of significant concern. In the face of this the AWLA was born – providing an essential contribution to food production across Australia during the war.

In October 1942 the Minister for Labour and National Service, recommended improving the status of the AWLA and in January 1943 Cabinet endorsed the status of the Australian Women's Land Army as an "official fourth service". The organisation was to be formally constituted under the National Security Regulations, however a final draft of these regulations, was not completed until 1945, and was not acted upon before the end of the war and the demobilisation of the AWLA. As a result, members of the AWLA were not accorded the same benefits as members of the other women's services who served as part of the Australian Defence Forces.

(https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/homefront/land_army). Unfortunately, recognition of the significant contributions of the AWLA during WWII were not recognised at the time and for a

long time after and these women were not attributed the same veteran benefits as their military serving female counterparts.

Although Frances Harvie was not deemed to be part of the Australian Defence Force through her commitment to the AWLA during WWII, she displayed the attributes of the ANZAC spirit of characteristics of perseverance and mateship as a dedicated worker and companion. She received correspondence from Dorothy Marshall, AWLA Superintendent commending her for upholding 'the traditions of the Land Army ideals' highlighting her commitment to the role and perseverance for undertaking long days of manual labour in adverse conditions. The deep connections she made with land-owners as well as other workers is evident in the primary resources available from the time – these support her identifying with the ANZAC spirit and upholding the characteristics of mateship and perseverance (<https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/4138#idx39942>). The AWLS had to fight for acknowledgement for its wartime contributions to Australia, and it was not until 1981 that they were granted acceptance to march on ANZAC Day.

It seems the efforts of the AWLA were largely overlooked until finally in 2012, Prime Minister Julia Gillard invited women from the AWLA to attend a dinner at Parliament House in Canberra, where she gave a speech, certificates, and brooches to acknowledge and thank these women for their contribution to their country. In her speech Ms Gillard said,

You went to take up work of the men who had left for the front. Some of them were your fathers, brothers, or even sons. Now, I know a thing or two about working in a traditionally male domain. But the life I've been privileged to lead is only possible because women of courage like you were there first; in the tough years, the desperate years, when the nation faced its ultimate test. A new generation will learn of the remarkable things you did and the remarkable women you are. So today, on behalf of all Australians, I thank you for your generosity and your service. The Australian Women's Land Army has achieved a lasting place of honour in the history of our nation. May it be celebrated – truly celebrated – for many years to come.

Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) - Research Process 289 words

I started my research by looking at the less obvious aspects of World War II and those who contributed to Australia in roles other than serving as part of the frontline defence of our country. Clearly wartime had significant impacts on everyone involved, but the impact on those left at home are often not as well documented when the focus is on soldiers who are losing their lives in battle.

In researching this topic, I found limited resources to support the efforts and contributions of the members of the AWLA in contrast to the significant acknowledgement bestowed upon combative war efforts. Therefore, I spent a lot of time looking through different websites about various defence force veterans and their wartime experiences before I remembered previously learning about the Australian Women's Land Army and their significant contributions during wartime.

I initially focussed my research using the Virtual Australian War Memorial website, but once I chose the Australian Women's Land Army there was not any resources available on this site, so I needed to further my investigation. Upon looking at a few other sites, especially the State Library South Australia, Digital Collections I found a South Australian woman on which to focus my research, who lived in Unley Park (not too far from Mitcham Girls High School) and utilised various primary resources to support my research.

I was fascinated by the story of Frances Taylor (nee Harvie) and found the copies of photographs, her service record book, and letters to add a sense of connectedness and authenticity to the research process. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any information about her prior to her joining the AWLA and limited information beyond the disbandment of the association at the conclusion of WWII.

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Frances Roberta (nee Harvie) TAYLOR, my tributes, <https://www.couriermail.com.au/tributes/notice/death-tributes/frances-roberta-nee-harvie-taylor/5676179/> viewed 27th March 2022

Images

Figure 1 – AWLA Recruitment Poster

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/ARTV01062>, Reproduced courtesy of Australian War Memorial

Figure 2 - Service Record Book

<https://www.samemory.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1461&c=4442>

Figure 3 – Diary Page of Frances Taylor

<https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/4114>

Figure 4 – Farm girl Frances Taylor, ca. 1943

<https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/4253>

Figure 5 – A letter of recommendation

<https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/4139?keywords=frances%20taylor&type=all&highlights=eylwjjoibGF5bG9yLCIsIjEiOiJmcmFuY2VzIiwNYl6InRheWxvcilsljYiOiJmcmFuY2VzJiMzOTtziwiNyl6ImZyYW5jZXMslIn0=&lsk=b45723d270164b94fe7c80cb016c4ca6>