Reference number: MS 348

Guide to the Papers of Jennifer Rankin

Australian Defence Force Academy Library

Contact information:

Special Collections
Academy Library
UNSW@ADFA
CRICOS Provider Code: 00100G
Australian Defence Force Academy
Canberra ACT 2600
Phone: +61 2 6268 6270
Fax: +61 2 6247 2324
Email: specialcollections@adfa.edu.au

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Summary

Creator: Rankin, Jennifer, 1941-1979
Title: Papers of Jennifer Rankin
Date range: 1951-1988
Reference number: MS 348
Extent: 1 m (7 boxes)
Repository: Australian Defence Force Academy Library
Abstract: The papers document Rankin's short writing period from 1969 to her death in 1979, including her poetry, plays, short stories and screenplay, together with several unpublished works.

Scope and Content

This collection includes correspondence, notebooks and manuscript and typescript drafts, newspaper clippings and childhood material. The correspondence reflects Rankin's friendships with distinguished literary figures both in Australia and overseas.

Organization

This collection has been rearranged into ten artificial series to describe and preserve context and relationships.

Biographical Note

Jennifer Rankin was born Jennifer Mary Haynes in Chatswood, Sydney, on 28th November 1941, and brought up in Willoughby. She attended Ravenswood Methodist School for Girls, at Gordon, excelling in English and French. She was president of the Debating Society, one of four House Prefects, and dux of the school in 1958. She graduated in Arts from the University of Sydney in 1962, majoring in English and Psychology, and in 1968 she received a Diploma of Education from the University of New England. She lived and worked in many parts of Australia and England, and worked in mainly in social sciences and education.

Rankin was a poet and dramatist. Her earliest poems date from 1969, and by 1973 her first piece of poetry was published in *New poetry*. Her poetry
was published in anthologies and magazines in Australia, England and the United States, and played on radio stations. In 1975 she was invited to read her poetry at the Sydney Opera House reading “Comprehending the heavens”, one of a series of four poetry readings in the Music Room of the Opera House, organised under the auspices of the Poetry Society of Australia. In 1976, she read her poetry during Writers' Week at the Adelaide Festival of Arts, and at a reading of Australian Contemporary Poets at the Centenary Celebrations, New South Wales Art Gallery. In mid 1978 she participated in a public discussion with Les Murray and Robert Gray on the Meaning of Poetry, and in October, she toured Tasmania for the Writers' Union. She edited a selection of poetry for “Some contemporary English poetry,” published in Aspect : art and literature magazine, volume 3/4, 1978.

Rankin also wrote at least eight plays for stage and radio. In 1973 she wrote her first untitled play, which was shortlisted for the Newcastle Playwrights Conference. Her plays were produced both on stage and radio during her lifetime in Australia and England.

In 1978 Rankin was awarded a six-month Senior Literary Fellowship from the Literature Board of the Australia Council. Her publications include Art workshop (1974), joint author, Ritual (1976), Earth hold(1978), illustrated by John Olsen, The mud hut (1979), published in Canada and Jennifer Rankin : collected poems (1990), edited by Judith Rodriguez were both published posthumously.

Jennifer Rankin died on December 8, 1979 and was buried in Sydney.

**Administrative Information**

**Access**
The collection is available for research.

**Restrictions on Use**
No copying is permitted without the permission of the copyright owners.

**Preferred Citation**
[Manuscript Item], Papers of Jennifer Rankin, Australian Defence Force Academy Library, MS 348, Series [Number], Folder [Number].

**Provenance**
The collection was acquired by the Library from Rankin's second husband David Rankin in 1998.
Additional Information

Related Material
Further material relating to Jennifer Rankin is located in the papers of Robert Gray, at MS 16, Academy Library, Australian Defence Force Academy.

Series List and Descriptions

Series 1 Correspondence, 1967-1981

This small series comprises correspondence between Rankin and her friends, literary associates and publishers. It documents Rankin’s friendships with distinguished literary figures both in Australia and overseas. The bulk of the correspondence consists of letters written to Rankin in 1979, and generally concerns her writing and publishing activities during this period.

Folder 1-2
Correspondence, 1970-1980

Including Margaret Atwood, Anne Brooksbank and Bob Ellis, Olwyn Hughes, Ted Hughes, Robyn Loquet, Frank Moorhouse, Chris Wallace-Crabbe and Galway Kinnell together with photocopies of his poetry

Folder 3
Correspondence with literary journals, theatres and radio stations, 1974-1981

Including The Age, American poetry review, John Patrick of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Aspect, Association of Community Theatres, Island Press, Radio 5MMM fm, The Tasmanian review and Tom Shapcott

Folder 4
Personal correspondence from family and friends, 1967-1980

Series 2 Notebooks and Diary, [1970s]

This small series comprises one typescript diary entry and two undated notebooks containing notes on Buddhism; research and interview notes
and writing ideas, notes and drafts; newspaper clippings and 'daily life' lists, arrangements and appointments.

Folder 1
Notebooks and diary entry, [1970s]

**Series 3 Poetry, [1970s]**

This series includes manuscript and typescript drafts of published and unpublished poems. Correspondence relating to these works is included in **Series 1** and ideas and drafts are included in the notebooks in **Series 2**.

Folder 1
Manuscript, typescript and carbon typescript drafts with ms annotations of early and unpublished poems, 1973-1974

Folder 2
Typescript and carbon typescript drafts with ms annotations of poems published in *Ritual shift*; review, 1973-1976

Folder 3

Folder 4
Photocopy typescript drafts of “Two poems ” entitled “From the mud hut ” 31 p. and “This is how it happens ” 3 p.

Folder 5
Spiral bound photocopy typescript draft of “From the mud hut ” 31 p. and photocopy typescript draft with ms annotations of “This is how it happens ” 3 p.

**Series 4 Dramas, 1973-1976**

This series comprises notes and manuscript and typescript drafts relating to Rankin's plays, radio plays and one screenplay including, “Bees”, *Razorback Mountain journey*, “The campaign”, “I heard the door close”, “Night spaces”, “Being myself” and “The darling's been done”, and an untitled play. Correspondence relating to this series is included in **Series 1**.
Folder 1
Annotated photocopy typescript draft of “Bees” 62 p., 1974-1976

Folder 2
Typescript draft of “Bees” 53 p., together with typescript notes from Simon Hopkinson, Director, Melbourne Theatre Company on the workshop performance, 29 April - 11 May, 1974

Folder 3
Photocopy typescript draft of “Bees” 53 p., together with typescript notes from Simon Hopkinson, Director, Melbourne Theatre Company on the workshop performance, 29 April - 11 May, 1974

Folder 4
Notes, manuscript, typescript, carbon typescript and photocopy typescript drafts of “The campaign”, 79 p.

Folder 5
Manuscript and annotated typescript drafts of “Night spaces”

Folder 6
Simon Hopkinson's Reader's report, manuscript (2) and annotated typescript drafts of “Surfaces”

Folder 7
Manuscript, typescript and carbon typescript drafts of plays, 1974-1976

Including “Being myself”, manuscript draft with typescript notes; radio play entitled “I heard the door close”, annotated typescript drafts (2); “The darling's been done”, 15 p.; Razorback Mountain journey, carbon typescript, 9 p. with 4 typescript poems;

Folder 8
Manuscript, carbon and photocopy typescript drafts of sketches

Including D.J. sketch, “The silent cop”, and Public Service

Folder 9
Notes, manuscript, annotated typescript, carbon and photocopy typescript drafts of titled and untitled sketches

Folder 10
Manuscript drafts

Including one untitled radio play and one untitled stage play

Folder 11
Manuscript, annotated typescript and carbon typescript drafts, 1976

Including an untitled screenplay and a screenplay adapted from an idea by Gillian Burnett

Folder 12
Ideas and incomplete manuscript drafts of plays, [1970s]

Series 5 Short Stories, 1969-c. 1974

This series comprises drafts of various short stories, including several for children including “Alice is a friendly dog”, “Fruit in season”, “Mr Wilton and the dahlia”, “To heavy to stand”, “Two wallabies, one possum and a lord mayor”, and “We have Aunt Olga”, and “Weak please, with a touch of lemon”.

Folder 1
Manuscript and annotated typescript drafts of short stories, 1969-c. 1973

Including “Alice is a friendly dog”, “Fruit in season”, “Mr Wilton and the dahlia”, “Two wallabies, one possum and a lord mayor”, and “Weak please, with a touch of lemon”

Folder 2
Annotated typescript and carbon typescript drafts of “Too heavy to stand” (4) and Reader’s report from Gillian Burnett, 1973

Folder 3
Annotated typescript and carbon typescript drafts of “We have Aunt Olga” (4), 1971-1974

Series 6 Other Prose, c. 1970-1979

This small series comprises miscellaneous notes and typescript drafts of two interviews by Rankin with Ted Hughes and Christina Stead.
Folder 1
Annotated typescript drafts of two interviews, 1970-1976

Including Christina Stead and Ted Hughes

Folder 2
Miscellaneous notes and unfinished articles on various subjects, 1979


This small series of biographical material relating to Rankin includes interview transcripts by Judith Rodriguez for her book entitled *Jennifer Rankin: collected poems*.

Folder 1

Series 8 Miscellaneous Material, 1951-1988

This small series comprises personal items relating to Rankin includes school reports, artwork and poems by her son Thomas and clippings.

Folder 1
Includes school literature book, school reports and artwork and poems by her son Thomas, 1951-1974

Folder 2
Newspaper and magazine clippings; *Earth hold* book launch invitation, 1960-1979

Folder 3
Computer typescript printout of “The odyssey of David Rankin”, by Kevin Childs; manuscript poem by Sabine Burmister entitled “Swagman”
**Series 9 Audio Visual, c. 1976-1979**

This small series comprises two audio cassette tapes, one by Rankin and her husband David concerning Ted Hughes and one of music by Ava Jacobs for Jenny.

**Box-folder 1**

Two audio cassette tapes, c. 1976-1979

Including one tape containing “Comments on and recollections of Ted Hughes” and one tape by Ava Jacobs entitled “Inward song” and “Outward song” for Jenny Rankin

**Series 10 Photographs, c. 1970s**

This small series comprises photographs of Rankin.

**Box-folder 1**

One colour photograph, 4 b/w photographs and 1 b/w proof sheet of Jennifer Rankin, c. 1970s

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**Box List**

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