

## **Resume of Val French, AM, MLitStd, BA**

### **CAREER**

#### **Professional**

By profession a teacher and journalist, became lecturer, then senior lecturer, Journalism, Queensland Institute of Technology (now Queensland University of Technology) 1970-1987. Co-designed the print journalism course, and designed the electronic journalism course and taught both while fighting to ensure women journalists were given equal professional recognition in the workplace.

Part-time lecturer in Communication at QIT in 1968-69 together with Tutor, Art of Discourse at University of Queensland, English Department 1968-9.

Worked in and with the media since.

From 1948-52 and 1960-1968 taught senior pupils English and History and debating.

#### **Voluntary membership and positions**

President, Older People Speak Out President, 1993-2006

Especially involved in action research on all needs and issues of the 50-plus, future planning for seniors, road safety, began OPSO Media Awards to encourage reporting on ageing issues and positive ageing from 1994 until today.

Chair, Queensland Ministerial Advisory Council for Older Persons, 2000-5

Member, Police Ministerial Task Force on Crime Against Seniors 2004-6 Ministerial Road Safety Committee 2000-6

Member of the Transport Ministerial Advisory Committee 2000-2006

First chairman, then member and surveyor, Retirement Village Accreditation Committee,

Retirement Village Assoc and then Aged Care Queensland (approx. 9 years)

Vice Chair International Year for Older Persons Committee 1998-9

During 1990s:

Chairperson Nursing Home Appeals Committee

Chairperson Commonwealth Older Australians' Advisory Council, Queensland section

Chairperson Commonwealth Consumer Forum of the Aged, Queensland section

Member of the HACC Ministerial Advisory Committee

Member of Women's Health Advisory Committee

Member Rural Health Advisory Committee

Co-founder and Foundation President of Queensland Council of Carers

Co-founder National Carers Association (now named Carers Queensland)

During 1980s:

Vice-president of Queensland Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill

Vice-president Queensland Mental Health Association

Member of National Association of Mental Health

Vice-president Women's Radio Queensland (1970s-80s)

During 1960s:

Foundation president Self-Help Group, a rehabilitation association in Queensland – included establishing and teaching at a school for prisoners of Brisbane Prison.

During 1950s-60s:

Secretary, then President, Queensland Debating Union and foundation President of the Portia Club, developing schools competitions and debating training, especially for girls and women, both previously excluded from debating.

**Awards:** Member of the Order of Australia, Commonwealth Senior Achiever of the Year, Centenary Medal, Finalist Australian of the Year.

## RESEARCH CAREER

VAL FRENCH, AM, MLitStd, BA, President of Older People Speak Out (OPSO)

Research profile

Profession: Journalist. Designed and taught the Journalism print, radio and television course at QIT/QUT where I successfully campaigned to have women journalists recognised at all levels in the media. Made a series of teaching videos, and for 10 years ran the news and current affairs daily for 4EB with her students as the journalists and presenters, as part of their training.

Worked in newspapers, radio and television. Taught the art of persuasion, argument, narrative and exposition at the University of Queensland. Researched print readability in business, newspapers and magazines.

## VOLUNTARY WORK

2005: **Participated in and compiled** OPSO action research on community needs, especially of the over 50s, from 2000 to 2005.

2004: Led the OPSO team across Queensland on **State-Government-commissioned action research on the Community Vision for 2020**.

1993-2005: As Queensland Chair of the Older Australians Advisory Council initiated concept **and** marketing and organising strategies of **State and National Media Awards** to dispel media stereotypes of older people. OPSO marketed the concept to State and Commonwealth Governments, and to sponsors and has conducted these since 1994.

2000-2005: With Bill Benson **developed marketing strategy** for OPSO's production of RACQ's Years Ahead program statewide.

2005: Developed '**Speakouts**' as a community-friendly form of focus group, one of OPSO's research tools.

1995-2000: With Alan Hales researched community and consumer attitudes and needs for retirement villages for marketing and advertising agencies, developers and governments.

1995-2005: Retirement villages **Accreditation Surveyor**, also helping to design accreditation; researching needs and issues relating to rental village residents.

2000: **Researched** needs in rental villages and lobbied for their accreditation.

2000-2005: Researched state and national needs of **grandparents bringing up grandchildren**. Is one of a group continuing a public awareness campaign on this issue.

2000-5: **Chairperson of Ministerial Advisory Council of Older Persons** ... participated in on-going research on social isolation, housing, transport, information needs of non-English speaking people, grandparent issues, cinema marketing to the 50-plus, mature age unemployment and pre-retirement planning

2002-3: Assisted Alan Hales in his **Older and Wiser**, a mature age unemployment research project, for the Department of Employment through OPSO.

2004-5 Researching causes and solutions of crime against seniors as a member of the Minister for Police's Senior Task Force, and also assisted in writing and marketing their crime prevention booklet.

1998-2005: **Member of the Ministerial Advisory Committees on Transport and Road Safety**, and the **Pedestrian Road Safety Committee**, researching needs and solutions. In 2005 presented paper on youth and road safety.

1997-8: Designed media and organisations' packages to sell the concept of the **International Year of Older Persons**. **OPSO** presented these to media and community groups statewide and helped set up local organising committees.

1990 to 2005: Researched and wrote! produced booklets and videos on working effectively with the media.

1996: Wrote and published **Fun for the Frail and Frisky**.

1994-7: Chaired **Nursing Homes Appeals Committee**, leading teams re-assessing nursing homes appeals against defunding.

1995: Researched, scripted and produced media training video, Think **Big Think Clever** delivered statewide.

1992-2000: Researched **needs of older people as member of following State**

**Government committees:** Home and Community Care, Rural Health, Women's Health, Aged Care Assessment Teams; and Commonwealth Advisory Committees: Consumer Forum for the Aged, Council of Older Persons (both as Queensland Chair) and Hostel and Nursing Home Committee.

1989- 1992: Researched needs of carers of disabled and elderly with Kay Thomas, and co-founded the **Council of Carers** (first President) and initiated the establishment of the **National Carers Association**.

1984-2000: As volunteer media marketing officer for the Australian Mental Health Association **initiated the concept of Mental Health Week and the I in 5 campaign** that is still used; developed the media part of the campaign that led to mental illness being recognised as a disability. Researched and produced three videos to educate the public on mental illness. Researched causes of stress in rural women, producing video and kit.

196S-70: **Ran a successful campaign to have the old Boggo Rd Prison replaced** and training and education made available to prisoners to assist in rehabilitation.

1950-1987: Introduced debating into Queensland girls schools, began the Portia Club and the co-establishment of Women's Radio, ran a series of projects to assist women who wished to move into the workforce.