



## **Voi Williams**

Born in Geelong

### **Passionate about the arts and the community**

Voi grew up on the family farm which produced fine merino wool. She attended the tiny one-teacher She Oaks State School prior to secondary education at Morongo Girls School in Geelong.

As a country girl Voi developed an early passion for the Australian bush with particular interest in European settlement, native birds and orchids. With two others Voi co-founded the Geelong Field Naturalists Club in 1961, was a member of the Geelong Historical Society and is a member of the Royal Society of Victoria.

After marriage John and Voi travelled to England and there spent happy years working, travelling and immersing themselves in classical music and opera.

Following moving to Ballarat she worked at the Ballarat Base Hospital Pathology Department then spent 22 years at St John of God Hospital.

In 1974 with a partner Voi leased her first race horse. Involvement in the racing industry led to her becoming the first female committee member in the long history of the Ballarat Turf Club.

In 1995 Voi was asked by Italian organist Sergio de Pieri, for help in staging a ten-day festival showcasing the nineteenth century pipe organs which remain in the historic churches of the Central Highlands Goldfields region. She has been honorary treasurer of the festival since its inception.

Voi's interest in history led to membership of the board of Sovereign Hill and over the years she has been involved in many community fund raising projects including the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Kelaston Home for the Blind (as the Home was then named) and the Eureka Centre Building Appeal.

In 2006 she was awarded an OAM for services to the arts and to the Ballarat community.

In her own words *"Make the most of your every opportunity"*.