



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY  
Ms Leanne Castley MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

## **Submission Cover sheet**

**Inquiry into memorialisation through  
public commemoration**

Submission number: 010

Date authorised for publication: 08 March 2022

**From:**   
**To:** [LA Committee - EGEE](#)  
**Subject:** Statue Submission  
**Date:** Monday, 21 February 2022 6:35:57 AM

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Good morning,

I write in support of the proposal to add a statue of Rosemary Dobson to the existing group of statues in Garema Place, the so-called 'Poet's Corner'.

I must immediately declare an interest here: I am Rosemary Dobson's son. I have hesitated to make this submission, as it might seem incorrect to write in support of my own mother.

However on reflection I've decided to proceed. My mother was a quiet practitioner of a quiet art form. Quiet people and quiet art forms deserve all possible support and recognition.

My mother was very much an internationalist, and many of her poems were inspired by other places around the world. But in the end she was an Australian poet, and she had a special attachment to Canberra and the Canberra region, where we settled as a family in 1971, following my father's appointment to the position of Director of Publishing at the National Library.

For my mother it was a very happy move.

Within months of our arrival she wrote a poem titled 'Canberra Morning'. This poem has been printed on a signboard in a small park in Deakin, 'Rosemary Dobson Park', as it's called. The park is situated just a few hundred metres from the bus stop that gave rise to the poem.

Canberra also comes very much into a series of twelve poems that she wrote in memory of fellow-poet and close friend David Campbell. She titled these poems collectively *The Continuance of Poetry*. They were incidentally printed as a book by my father Alec Bolton, who was an artisan printer in his spare time.

My mother gave much support to the arts in Canberra, not only to poetry but also to the visual arts, which she loved as much as she loved poetry. Though she was not particularly comfortable in public roles, she would often launch a book, or open an art exhibition, or speak about poetry, whether at a university or a primary school, and she always thought deeply about what she would say, no less at the primary school than the university. She also gave practical and moral support to younger writers and artists in Canberra, mindful of the obstacles they faced.

I will end this submission by quoting two lines, from different poems by my mother, that speak to me of her close identity with Canberra and the Canberra region. One is her fanciful transcription of the call of a currawong:

*You can't change the weather.*

And the other:

*The wind sharpens the distant Brindabellas.*

Kindly send me a brief confirmation that this submission has been received.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Bolton

 New Zealand.