

Living artistic legend Barbara Robertson immortalised in print

By **LISA BACHMAYER**

YANKALILLA – As the local community goes about its everyday business, the special stories and achievements of the local publican or the next-door neighbour are often overlooked.

Yankalilla writer Lorraine McLoughlin recognised something special in Carrickalinga artist Barbara Robertson.

Her self-published biography *Barbara Robertson: An Australian artist's life*, launched on Sunday, details the 87-year-old artist's life and work.

Lorraine became interested in Barbara's art and life story while organising her exhibition for the Leafy Sea Dragon Festival and decided she was worthy of a book.

"I was finding that this woman had done some incredible things in her lifetime that haven't been recorded," Lorraine said.

"People coming to the exhibition were wondering why they hadn't heard anything about this woman before and I knew there was something real to do there."

Barbara was first recognised as a portrait painter and social commentator in the 1940s and 1950s, going on to exhibit in London and the

Archibald and Sulman prizes.

Her strong opinions about the marginalisation of Aboriginal people and the mistreatment of animals come across in the accompanying DVD.

"She is a woman of great integrity and compassion ... and casts a spell on you with her gentle nature," Lorraine said.

"To talk to her is to know you are engaging with an outstanding person."

Lorraine said the book, which contains 30 photos of Barbara's childhood and 60 paintings, was a privilege to write.

"This woman deserves a place in Australian art history ... and my aim is to make people in the art world take notice of her," she said.

Lorraine's book is available at www.robertsonbiography.com and at local bookstores.



RECOGNISED ... Lorraine McLoughlin (right) hopes her new book will cement Carrickalinga artist Barbara Robertson's place in Australian art history.