Portraits in science

Ann Moyal has produced a fine volume in the NLA oral history series

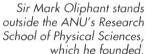
he National Library of Australia has been recording oral histories since the late 1950s. It has published two previous volumes, *Self Portraits* and *Artists' Portraits*, of writers and artists respectively, based on interviews conducted over a twenty-five year period by Hazel de Berg.

In 1992 the Library invited Ann Moyal to add to these books by interviewing some of Australia's leading scientists, so recognising, as Warren Horton says in his Foreword, 'the singular contribution which scientific endeavour has made to the national life and which has brought international recognition to Australia.'

The book is a compilation of interviews with a dozen scientists who have been high achievers in their various scientific disciplines, nine men and three women. A 1972 interview with Harry Messel and a 1967 interview which forms the introduction to Sir Mark Oliphant's chapter are from Hazel

de Berg, edited by Ann Moyal; the remaining interviews are all by Ann Moyal. The scientists' own informal stories about their lives and their work give a fascinating insight into the processes of science and into the ways in which gifted people, whatever their origins, forge ahead to make their mark in their chosen fields and on society.

This is a book that can be heartily recommended as informative, inspirational and 'a jolly good read'. *Portraits in Science* is available from the NLA Shop and Commonwealth Government Bookshops at \$23.95 rrp. (ISBN 0 642 10616 9)







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