Pro-Indigenous activist, Helen Baillie, opened her house in Punt Road as a hostel to Aboriginal people from the 1930s until the late 1950s.

A 'Christian Communist', according to her ASIO file, Helen acknowledged Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants of our land and argued that settler Australians had a duty towards them. She travelled widely to learn more about Aboriginal matters. In 1932, she formed the Victorian Aboriginal Fellowship Group, an association for Christians interested in Aboriginal welfare. She was a life member of the Australian Aboriginals' League, formed in 1936 to secure equal rights for Aboriginal people and she liaised with the Association for the Protection of Native Races in Sydney and the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society in London. An associate recalled that Helen was 'driven by a feeling of guilt that her ancestors had taken the land'. After 1951, Helen became a member of additional activist groups including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Council for Aboriginal Rights.

Elder Jim Berg was a boarder at Helen Baillie's home during the 1950s. He described Baillie as 'a giver'… she gave what she had to everybody who came looking for assistance, she gave them a roof over their head or money.

Elder Henry (Banjo) Clarke also lived at Helen Baillie's home. He came with his family from Framlingham Aboriginal mission, near Warrnambool, during the depression to look for work. When Helen Baillie died in 1970, Banjo Clarke asked for a memorial to be built to remember all the good she had done. He recalled her impression of Baillie:

She could be strict with the blackfellahs living with her too. She would remind everyone of their Aboriginal principles and duties to each other, and once, when one of the blackfellahs was in hospital, she made all the blackfellahs that was staying with her go and sit on the lawn outside the hospital, the Aboriginal way, so that the sick person could feel their spirit. … Miss Baillie did more than anyone I knew of at that time for Aboriginal people, never stopping to think about herself. And yet she has been so much forgotten.

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