

Entry type: Organisation

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Young Women's Christian Association of Adelaide

Summary

The Adelaide branch of the Young Women's Christian Association was founded in 1879 by Mary Colton and operated from the Pirie Street Wesleyan Methodist Church from 1880. In 1884 it became an inter-denominational body affiliated with its English parent. Its initial purpose was to promote the religious conversion and moral protection of young women who were working in the city. To this end, members often visited factories and distributed flowers and 'improving literature'. When the first permanent headquarters opened in Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide, in 1900, the YWCA's focus expanded to include physical recreation and social and educational activities. Under the leadership of Rosetta Birks, who became President in 1902, the YWCA launched the re-formed Traveller's Aid Society and later included an employment department and hostel accommodation. New branches were formed outside Adelaide and members were encouraged to form community-based clubs. In more recent years the YWCA has been active in the public sphere on issues concerning women.

Published resources

Book Section

Two Englishwomen, Miss Emma Robarts and Lady Kinnaird, laid the foundations of the world's largest international women's movement in 1855. In 1877 they named it the Young Women's Christian Association. The South Australian story of the YWCA is told by Lola Bray., Bray, Lola, 1986

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia

[Young Women's Christian Association of Adelaide : SUMMARY RECORD](#)

The University of Melbourne Archives

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