

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: PR00637

Geelong and Western District Ladies Benevolent Association

(1855 -)

Born 23 June, 1855, Geelong Victoria Australia

Occupation Philanthropic organisation

Summary

The Geelong and Western District Ladies Benevolent Association is a non-sectarian philanthropic organisation, whose aims on formation were to provide emergency relief to the poor, in particular to women, and homes for 'aged helpless females'.

The demands on their services rose and fell with economic circumstances such as the collapse of the land boom. The advent of the aged pension, and later the extension of Government welfare, reduced the call on their services in the early – mid-twentieth century. The Association is still in existence, providing assistance during illness and other misfortunes.

Details

The Geelong and Western District Female Benevolent Association was formed on 23 June, 1855, with Miss Caroline Newcomb of Coryule as its inaugural President.

Money was raised through government grants, subscription fees, donations, including bequests, and fundraising, though not by public appeal. Subscribers referred cases to the committee for consideration. Homes were built through grants from the government and charitable trusts (Baxter Homes, in 1883), personal bequest (Haimes Memorial Houses, in 1895-6) and personal endowment. The homes endowed by Elizabeth Phillips Austin, erected in 1887, were, as Heritage Victoria notes, endowed by a woman, and owned and managed by a charitable institution run by women, for the benefit of women in reduced circumstances.

The Society ran a free kindergarten in Yarra Street for nearly 100 years, and Upton House in Queenscliff, to provide holidays for women.

Published resources

Resource

Victorian Heritage Database, Heritage Victoria,
<http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/vhd/heritagevic>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book

A History of Geelong and Corio Bay, Brownhill, W. R., 1955

Archival resources

Geelong Heritage Centre

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