

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: AWE0543

National Council of Women of Tasmania

(1899 -)

Born	20 May, 1899
-------------	--------------

Occupation	Voluntary organisation
-------------------	------------------------

Summary

The National Council of Women of Tasmania was founded in 1899, in response to an invitation from the Countess of Aberdeen (then president of the International Council of Women) for Tasmania to be represented at the International Council of Women Congress in London that year. Its inaugural meeting, on the 20 May 1899 was organised by Mrs J. S. Dodds, wife of the Tasmanian Administrator. The initial committee also included Emily Dobson (wife of former Premier Henry Dobson), who was active in a large number of women's groups, and who was later vice-president (1900-1903) and then president (1904-1934) of the Council.

It is a non-party, non-sectarian, umbrella organisation for a large and diverse number of affiliated Tasmanian women's groups. It functions as a political lobby group, attempting to influence local, state and federal government. It provided a major focus for, predominantly middle-class, women's activism until at least the 1940s. The Council has supported a wide range of social reform activities, particularly those related to education and to women's, children's and family welfare.

Its aims are:

- 'To provide a strong network and a means for affiliated groups to support each other, and
- To work together on matters of mutual interest or concern, as well as links with the wider community;
- To promote the best interests of women and their families and people in general;
- To confer and provide a two-way flow of information on issues related to the welfare of the family, the state and the Commonwealth;
- To work in every way for the application of equity, social justice (the Golden Rule) and improvements in quality of life in a sustainable environment, for everyone.'

Details

33 women's groups were present at the first meeting of the council, including the Queen's Fund, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Dorcas Society, Girls' Industrial School, Magdalen Home, Ladies' Christian Association, Ragged Schools, Southern Tasmanian Ministering Children's League, Women's Sanitary Association, Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Young Women's Institute, Young Women's Christian Association, anchorage Refuge Home, Nursing Association, Night School, anchor club, Convalescent Home, Blind Society (Women's Committee), Art society, Hamilton Literary Association and the Chalmers Literary Association.

25 groups initially affiliated.

[Source: Gladys S Dodson (ed.), History of the National Council of Women of Tasmania Inc, National Council of Women of Tasmania, Hobart, 1999]

Groups affiliated with the National Council of Women of Tasmania currently include:

Professional Groups:

- Australian Federation of University Women, Inc., Tasmania – Sth. Branch
- Australian Nursing Federation. Inc. Tasmania
- Business & Professional Women's Club of Hobart
- Dietitians Association of Australia-Tasmanian Branch
- Home Economics Institute of Australia, Tasmania
- Soroptimist International of Hobart
- Working Womens' Centre, Tasmania
- Zonta International – Glenorchy and Upper Derwent

Religious groups:

- Baha'i Council for Advancement of Women – Tasmania;
- Catholic Women's League, Tasmania and most of its branches ;
- Churches of Christ Christian Women's Fellowship
- Salvation Army
- Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Uniting Church Fellowship – Tasmania Derwent Presbytery
- Women's International Zionist Organisation -Tasmania

Welfare and Service Groups:

- Caroline House, Inc.
- Child Health Association, Inc. – Sth. Tasmania
- Council of Auxiliaries of Royal Hobart Hospital
- Council on the Ageing, Tasmania Inc (Reciprocal)
- Ethnic Communities Council, Inc. Tasmania, (Reciprocal)
- Hobart District Nursing Service
- Hobart Women's Health Centre
- Holyoake, Inc.
- National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect – Tas. Inc.
- Nursing Mother's Association
- Pregnancy Support Service
- TasCOSS (Reciprocal)
- Tasdec Centre for Global Learning
- Task Force Action for Migrant Women
- Tasmanian Council of the Ageing – reciprocal affiliation)
- Women's Christian Temperance Union[a founding organisation, affiliated continuously since 1899]
- Women's Action Alliance – Tasmania
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Tasmania

The National Council of Women of Tasmania has 20 standing committees flowing from the International Council of Women Standing committees, dealing with sub-categories of these issues, for example, Ageing, Agriculture, Arts Letters and Music, Child and Family, Economics, Environment and Habitat, Laws and Status of Women, International Relations and Peace. Social Welfare, Women and Employment. The delegates from the affiliated organisations work at state, national and international levels with the conveners of the standing committees.

Published resources

Book

History of the National Council of Women of Tasmania Inc., Dobson, Gladys S (ed.), 1999

Conference Paper

Leading ladies : women and film censorship in early twentieth century Tasmania, Petrow, Stefan, 1993

A few viragos on a stump : the womanhood suffrage campaign in Tasmania 1880-1920, Pearce, Vicki, 1985

Thesis

The public role of women in Tasmania, 1803-1914, Alexander, Alison, 1989

Mrs Henry Dobson : Victorian 'do - gooder' or sincere social reformer : an analysis of her charitable and public welfare work in the 1890's, Taylor, Annette Rosalie, 1972

Resource Section

Emily Dobson (1842-1934), Rimon, Wendy,

http://www.women.tas.gov.au/significantwomen/search/emily_dobson.html

National Council of Women, Rimon, Wendy,

<http://www.women.tas.gov.au/significantwomen/search/ncw.htm>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Archives Office of Tasmania

[Correspondence, minutes and associated papers of the National Council of Women of Tasmania](#)

[Correspondence and associated papers of the National Council of Women of Tasmania](#)

[Minutes, Correspondence and associated papers of the National Council of Women of Tasmania](#)

[Administrative folders](#)

[Minutes, correspondence, subject files and associated papers](#)

Mollie Campbell-Smith

[Mollie Campbell-Smith Collection](#)

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Jocelyne Scutt, 1982-2010 \[manuscript\]](#)

Author Details

Jane Carey

Created 11 September 2003

Last modified 29 October 2018