The Australian
Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0647

Dunkley, Louisa Margaret

(1866 - 1927)

Born	18660528, Richmond Victoria Australia
Died	19270310, Longueville New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Trade unionist

Summary

Louisa Dunkley co-founded the Victorian Women’s Post and Telegraph Association in 1900. A campaigner for equal pay for women, she joined the Postmaster-General’s Department in 1882. By 1890 Dunkley had passed the proficiency tests and transferred to the Chief Telegraph Office as a telegraphist. In the 1890s she helped to establish a committee of women telegraphists and postmistresses to present a case for equal pay, with their male colleagues in the Post and Telegraph Department of Victoria. They received increases in salary, though not equality with men telegraphists. Because the male union discourages female members the Victorian Women’s Post and Telegraph Association was established in 1900 with Dunkley as vice-president. She represented the association at the telegraphists’ conference in October 1900 at Sydney, where she met her future husband, Edward Charles Kraegen, secretary of the New South Wales and Commonwealth Post and Telegraph associations from 1885 to 1904.

Events

1890 - 1890
Became interested in unionism from her experience of unfair conditions in pay and status of women workers in the Victorian public service. With colleagues presented a case for equal pay. They received an increase in salary, though not equality with men.

1900 - 1900
Elected a delegate to attend all-colonies telegraphists conference held in Sydney. Her advocacy of equal pay and status under new Commonwealth conditions was endorsed.

1984 - 1984
Federal electorate seat of Dunkley was created.

1903 - 1903
Following her marriage to Edward Charles Kraegen, they had two children, she resigned from the Postmaster-General's Department.

1882 - 1882
Joined the Postmaster-General's Department as a junior assistant.

1900 - 1900
One of the founders of the Victorian Women's Post and Telegraph Association.

1890 - 1890
Passed proficiency test and transferred to the Chief Telegraph Office as a telegraphist.

1888 - 1888
Studied telegraphy and qualified as an operator.

1900 - 1904
Vice-President of the Victorian Women's Post and Telegraph Association

1888 - 1890
Worked in Melbourne metropolitan post and telegraph offices.

Published resources

Resource Section
Dunkley, Louisa, Elford, Ross G, 2002,
http://www.atua.org.au/biogs/ALE1110b.htm

Dunkley, Louisa Margaret (1866 - 1927), Baker, John S, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A080395b.htm

List of Electoral Divisions Named After Women, Australian Electoral Commission,
https://www.aec.gov.au/redistributions/division-names/women.html

Journal Article
Pioneers of our industrial : The women telegraphists of Melbourne and their union, 1895 - 1920, Baker, John S, 1978

Book
Communicators and their first trade unions : a history of the telegraphist and postal clerk unions of Australia, Baker, John S. (John Simms), 1980

Book Section
Women in the Victorian Post Office, McCuskey, Claire, c1982

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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