Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0989

Powell, Sarah Jane

(1863 - 1955)

Born	18630812, Collector New South Wales Australia
Died	19550817, Box Hill Victoria Australia
Occupation	Community worker

Summary

Sarah Powell was State President of the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Mothers' Association for 25 years and was made Life President. She was decorated with the OBE in June 1943 for her services in this organisation. She founded the Croydon Branch and attended their annual meeting on her 92nd birthday five days before she died.

Details

Sarah Jane Powell the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Skewes (the Skewes are able to trace their ancestry back to John Wesley, the founder of Methodism) was born at Collector in New South Wales. The eldest of ten children she moved with her family to Warrenheip, near Ballarat in Victoria, where her father became the school master and preacher. Here she became a teacher with the Schools Board, an organist for the local church as well as teaching singing and piano. On December 29, 1886 she married Samuel James Powell and moved to Warrnambool. The parents of six children the Powell family moved to Melbourne in 1905.

Powell became president of the Coburg branch of the Australian Women's National League as well as being the branch delegate to the Council. During World War I, in which she was to lose a son and brother, Powell became involved with the care and welfare of soldiers invalided home from the battlefronts.

Following the war she became a foundation member of the Soldiers Mothers' Association (later called Sailors', Soldiers and Airmen's Mothers' Association – SS&AMA) in 1919. Powell became State President in 1921 and was made Life President in 1926. A member of the War Memorial Committee – later known as the Shrine of Remembrance, Powell represented the Mothers' Association on the committee of the Kings Memorial. She founded the Croydon Branch of the SS&AMA. When this Branch opened a Home for widows or those separated from their husbands, one of the flatettes was named in her honour.

In appreciation of her community work Sarah Powell was recognised by being presented with various awards including:
• The Order of Merit from the Returned Soldiers' League (later named Returned & Services League of Australia – RSL) for her devotion to the cause of the men who fought in the Great War in 1923.
• The Coronation Medal at the time of the coronation of King George VI in 1937.
• Appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire for social welfare work with the armed forces on June 2, 1943.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details
Edna M Lemke

Created 1 June 2004
Last modified 29 October 2018

Digital resources



Title: Mrs Sarah Powell
Type: Image
Date: 3 May, 2023



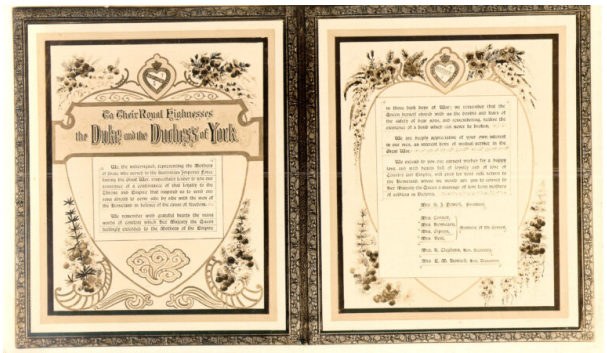
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