Entry type: Organisation
Entry ID: AWE0999

The Melbourne Jewish Women’s Guild

(1896 -)

Born	18960101
Occupation	Philanthropic organisation

Summary

The Melbourne Jewish Women’s Guild was formed in June 1896 at a meeting held in the Melbourne Town Hall. It initial objectives were personal service amongst poor, especially hospital visits, in order to bring relief to the sick and afflicted, without any regard to creed, race or colour. The philosophy adopted was that ‘All are creatures of the same God.’ Its foundation president was Mrs N. Bennett. By 1897 the Guild had 132 financial members. They held fundraising events, and distributed goods and money among Melbourne’s poor, but they discouraged ‘pauperism and idleness’. The Guild became one of the foundation affiliates of the National Council of Women of Victoria in 1902. Dr Constance Ellis, one of Melbourne’s first women doctors, was an active member and as the Guild’s representative to the National Council of Women of Victoria from 1902.

Details

Extended notes:
As of 1987, the Guild’s constitution listed the following aims:
1a. To visit the sick and poor, either in their own homes or in public institutions.
1b. To maintain among the members a sewing circle for the purpose of making garments for the poor.
1c. To grant relief to the poor, either in money or in kind, as in each case the Board of Management may decide.
It retains its commitment to provide relief without any ‘distinction as to creed’. While membership is open to all faiths, only Jewish women are eligible to hold office.

Activities of the Guild were report in the *Jewish Herald* (which later became the *Australian Jewish Herald*.

Published resources

Book
From Vision to Reality: Histories of the affiliates of the National Council of Women of Victoria, 1987

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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