

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: AWE1006

Women's Place Women's Space Steering Committee

(1989 -)

Born 19890101, Brisbane Queensland Australia

Occupation Lobby group

Summary

The 'Women's Place Women's Space' steering committee was formed in 1989 with the aim of securing a building and funding to resource a women's centre in Brisbane; a building that would provide 'a space for women by women for women, in Brisbane'. An ex-director of the University of Queensland Health Service, Dr Janet Irwin, is credited with initiating the concept, which received the public support of 173 women's organizations, representing 200,000 women throughout Queensland. The then Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Sally Anne Atkinson, gave the proposal her strong support

Details

After the World Expo stage in Brisbane in 1988 was over, prominent Queensland feminists argued that the women of Queensland, whose millions of hours of unpaid labour had made the event such a success, should be offered a 'permanent thank you present'; an 'indestructible well done' in the form of a 'Women's space'. Initially, the concept built upon ideas that had been floated in the 1970s about the need for a National Women's Research Centre, along the lines of the model offered by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). The proposed 'Stockmen's Hall of Fame' was also a source of inspiration, with supporters arguing that 'women are equally (more) important than stockmen with their 'Hall of Fame'.

The steering committee decided upon the concept of a multipurpose centre, of which a 'Hall of Fame' that focused on the achievements of women in the public and private sector, would be just one section. As well as the 'Hall of Fame', which was not to get 'bogged down by an emphasis on inequalities and injustices', but was to illustrate 'the active role that women from a multiplicity of backgrounds have played or are playing in Australian society', the space would include a gallery area, an auditorium, meeting rooms, a board room and a library. It was envisaged that revenue could be raised by leasing other areas to suitable tenants, such as health professionals, child minding facilities and counseling services.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection

[5519 Soroptimist International, South Queensland Region, Records 1966-2012](#)

[4094 Women's Place. Women's Space Steering Committee Plans June 1992](#)

[OM79-02/11 Womens' Community Aid Association Records](#)

[4497 Women's Place Records](#)

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