Entry type: Organisation
Entry ID: AWE1014

Women’s Equal Franchise Association

(1894 - 1905)

Born	18940101, Brisbane Queensland Australia
Died	19051231, Brisbane Queensland Australia
Occupation	Women's suffrage organisation

Summary

The Women’s Equal Franchise Association (WEFA) of Queensland was formed in February 1894, marking a timely revitalisation of the woman suffrage movement in that state. Its first president was Mrs Eleanor Trundle, and it represented women who were Labor in their politics. From the outset, the association linked its struggle for votes for women with the campaign against plural voting in Queensland. Once both these aims were achieved, in January 1905, the association held a ‘celebration social’ and disbanded itself.

Details

Almost immediately upon being formed in 1894, the Queensland Women’s Equal Franchise Association splintered. The women of the Queensland Woman’s Suffrage League (WSL), headed by Leontine Cooper, were concerned that the WEFA’s links to Labor politics, and the campaign against plural voting, would hinder progress towards achieving woman suffrage in Queensland. Attempts to reconcile the two factions in the month that followed the split were unsuccessful. Therefore, less than two months after its formation, the WEFA held new elections for office bearers. On this occasion, Eleanor Trundle was defeated and Emma Miller, a remarkable Queensland Labor woman, took her place, remaining President of the association for the eleven years of the campaign. Eleanor Trundle moved her energies across to the Queensland Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Despite the political wrangling that broke out on various occasions between the WEFA and the WSL (with the WCTU remaining firmly apolitical) these three organisations enjoyed fragile moments of cooperation for most of the campaign.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book
Woman suffrage in Australia : a gift or a struggle?, Oldfield, Audrey, 1992

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