Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE3969

Swanton, Mary Hynes

(1861 - 1940)

Born	18610622, West Melbourne Victoria Australia
Died	19401125, Sydney New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Tailoress, Trade unionist, Women's rights activist

Summary

Mary Swanton was an staunch labour activist who was particularly concerned about the conditions endured by working women. Born in Melbourne, she moved to Perth, Western Australia, in 1889 where she worked as a tailoress. She was a member of the Australian Native's Association, a strong supporter of women's suffrage and a founding member (secretary) of the Perth branch of the Australian Women's Association.

In 1900 she became the foundation president of the Perth Tailoresses' Union until its amalgamation with the Tailors' Union in 1905. She was elected to the presidency of the combined union in 1910. Swanton was also a foundation member of the Karrakatta Club, and a friend and associate of reformist women such as Katharine Susannah Prichard.

A lifelong commitment to the cause of labour did not limit her criticism of the movement when it ignored women's working conditions.

Published resources

Resource Section
Swanton, Mary Hynes (1861-1941), Grahame, Emma, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A120166b.htm

Edited Book
Women in Australia : an annotated guide to records, Daniels, Kay, Murnane, Mary, Picot, Anne and National Research Program (Australia), 1977

Journal Article
In the thick of every battle for the cause of Labor' : the voluntary work of the Labor women's organisations in Western Australia, 1900-1970, Oliver, Bobbie, 2001

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection
Mary Hynes Swanton - papers, 1896-1940

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