The Australian
Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0048

Stone, Emma Constance

(1856 - 1902)

Born	18561204, Hobart Town Tasmania Australia
Died	19021229, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Occupation	Feminist, Medical practitioner

Summary

In February 1890, Dr Constance Stone became the first woman to be registered with the Medical Board of Victoria, paving the way for medical women in Melbourne, Australia, Working mainly with women and children in free clinics, she gave low-income women the opportunity to be treated in private, free from the embarrassment of examination in front of male medical students. She founded the Victorian Medical Women's Society and was a member of a number of women's organisations, including the Victorian Women's Franchise League. Her major achievement was the foundation of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital.

Details

Constance Stone was not permitted to enrol in the Melbourne Medical School because in the early 1880s, women were excluded from medical studies because the subject matter was deemed inappropriate for co-ed classes. Consequently, in 1884 she travelled to North America , where she was educated at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, USA and the University of Trinity College, Toronto, Canada (MD, ChM 1888) thus ensuring that she could be registered in Australia. She also studied at the New Hospital for Women, London, qualifying as a licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1889. The first woman to register with the Medical Board of Victoria 1890, she practised one day a week at the free dispensary attached to Dr Singleton's mission in Collingwood. She founded the Queen Victoria Hospital, where she was assisted by her sister Dr Clara Stone (one of the first women to enter the Melbourne Medical School) and her cousin, Dr Emily Mary Page Stone. She was Foundation member (1895) of the Victorian Medical Women's Society.

Stone was one of the few early female medical practitioners to marry and have children. Her daughter, Bronwen, also became a doctor.

Published resources

Resource Section
Stone, Emma Constance (1856-1912), Russell, Penny, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A120115b.htm

Resource
Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,
http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book
Nation builders : great lives and stories from St Kilda General Cemetery, Eidelson, Meyer, 2001

The Complete Book of Great Australian Women: Thirty-six women who changed the course of Australia, De Vries, Susanna, 2003

Edited Book
200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988,
https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20071105022623/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/78644/20071105-1315/www.200australianwo

Archival resources

State Library of Victoria
Letter : to Miss Evans, 1926 Sep. 16. [manuscript].

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Constance Stone, first woman physician in Australia, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection
[Collection of pamphlets containing souvenir concert programmes and Australian biographies.]

Author Details
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