

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE0326

Henslowe, Dorothea Isabel

(1896 - 1994)

Born 1 January, 1896, Launceston Tasmania Australia

Died 31 December, 1994

Occupation Community worker, Teacher

Summary

After leaving school Dorothea Henslowe worked as a teacher and governess. During World War I she was a Voluntary Aid at Hornsey Hospital at Evandale after which she returned to teaching. After both her parents died in 1935, Henslowe travelled to Canada and then settled in Battery Point, Hobart. She worked in an honorary capacity for the Australian Board of Mission, a missionary organisation of the Anglican Church that works largely in Asia, the Pacific and with Aboriginal communities, for over 30 years.

Details

"Dorothea Isabel Henslowe lived in the Scottsdale area, Tasmania until she was three, when her family moved to a farm at Ulverstone. She was educated by a governess until leaving home to complete her schooling at the Church of England Girls' Grammar School in Launceston. After leaving school she worked as a teacher and governess, including at Launceston's Frederick Street School.

"From 1919 to 1920 she was a Voluntary Aid at Hornsey Hospital at Evandale, but subsequently returned to teaching. In 1925 she went to live with her family in Hamilton, where her father had been appointed Anglican rector, and she spent the next ten years there helping in the parish and giving aid to the needy.

"After both her parents died in 1935, Dorothea travelled to Canada and then settled in Battery Point, Hobart. She worked for the Australian Board of Mission, a missionary organisation of the Anglican Church that works largely in Asia, the Pacific and with Aboriginal communities. She worked in an honorary capacity for this organisation for more than 30 years. She was first appointed secretary to the Women's Auxiliary of the Board in 1937, serving in the position until 1943. She was then appointed as the honorary state secretary for Tasmania and established the organisation's state office. In this role she became the first woman to address the Synod of the Anglican Church in Tasmania. She retired as honorary state secretary in 1954, but continued to serve on the organisation's board and as its representative to the Anglican Synod. She was federal president of the organisations for six years, and federal president of the Women's Auxiliary from 1964 to 1967. She also served as a voluntary worker on the Diocesan Children's Homes Committee, which oversaw the management of Children's Homes operated by the Tasmanian Diocese of the Anglican Church, including five years as its honorary secretary and later three as its president. She was an initiator of the Canterbury Tea Rooms, which raised funds for both the Australian Board of Mission and the Diocesan Children's Homes between 1949 and 1959.

"Dorothea Henslowe was active in the Battery Point community. She was vice-president of the Battery Point Progress Association, and was president for 11 years of a committee which purchased a former Methodist Church in the 1960's to prevent its demolition and replacement by a service station. The Church became the Battery Point Community Centre. She ran a playgroup for underprivileged children and a boys club and suggested the establishment of a Senior Citizen's Club there. In 1987 the Community Centre was renamed Henslowe Park in recognition of her role in its establishment.

"She had a wide interest in the history of Tasmania, particularly its buildings. In 1971, Dorothea and a friend had the idea of taking tourists for guided tours of Battery Point. These were established the same year. She took many of the walks herself and also trained other guides to lead them. The walks raised funds for the restoration of St George's Anglican Church at Battery Point and for the National Trust. In 1978 she published a book, *Our Heritage of Anglican Churches in Tasmania*, a history of Anglican church buildings in the state.

"Dorothea Henslowe received a number of awards in recognition for her community and tourism work, including a British Empire Medal in 1979. She became a life member of the National Trust in 1986, and was Hobart City Council's Citizen of the Year in 1992. The same year she won the Tasmanian Visitor Corporation Award, an award created especially for her.

She also travelled extensively within Australia and overseas, including a trip to Central Australia to observe the work of the Australian Board of Mission. She published two books as a result of trips to Papua New Guinea, *Papuan Post* in 1947 and *Papua Calls* in 1954. During several trips to the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States she visited family members. In 1966 her sister Muriel Cranswick travelled with her to the Holy Lands, and together again in 1972, when Dorothea made a return visit to Papua New Guinea. Dorothea Henslowe died in 1994. Her ashes are at St Peter's Anglican Church at Hamilton, Tasmania.

Published resources

Book

St George's Church: A Guide to the Church together with a Short History compiled from Church Records 1824 to 1972, Henslowe, Dorothea L, [s.n.]] 1972]

Papuan Post: Being Letters from New Guinea, Henslowe, Dorothea I, [s.n. 1949]

Papua Calls, Henslowe, Dorothea I

Our heritage of Anglican churches in Tasmania, Henslowe, Dorothea I. and Hurburgh, Isa, 1978

Site Exhibition

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia

[Yarn spinners \[sound recording\]](#)

Archives Office of Tasmania

[Records of Australian Board of Missions - Tasmanian Branch](#)

Author Details

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Created 15 March 2002

Last modified 29 October 2018