

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: AWE0724

Australian Red Cross Victoria

(1914 -)

Born 21 August, 1914, Victoria Australia

Occupation Humanitarian organisation, Voluntary organisation

Summary

The Victorian Division of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society was formed on August 21, 1914. Lady Margaret Stanley, the wife of the Governor of Victoria, was the first president. The wife of the Governor has continued to preside and women have maintained an active role in all aspects of the Australian Red Cross. They have continuously taken leadership roles in branches, units and regional committees, as well as in council and senior management.

Details

From its formation in 1914, women have played an important role in the operation of the Victorian Division of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society. Initially, the Australian Branch operated as an administrative body, while the Victorian Division guided fundraising operations. In the first instance, the bulk of the effort was focused upon helping to establish local Red Cross societies and branches. These societies would then focus on raising subscriptions and making goods for hospitals that were caring for soldiers. They also helped to find houses that were then used as convalescent homes. Without the effort of women volunteers, these activities would not have achieved the success that they did.

The breadth of activities undertaken by volunteers became more extensive as the Society grew. Peacetime required a different focus and women's branches and divisions provided the lifeblood for the society in the early twentieth century. Committees were formed to manage or oversee major projects. These committees (some later became auxiliaries) concerned themselves, among other things) with the medical or physical welfare of returned service men, the establishment of rest homes, and the problem of rehabilitation. They have continued to take an interest in matters relating to social welfare and public affairs in general. Liaison with other organizations has been a feature in recent years – in particular with the Australian Defence Department regarding Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) and the St John Ambulance Association for training and education in first aid and related areas. As ever, the society, also responds to global humanitarian concerns.

Currently the Victorian Division is administered by a Divisional Council through the Executive Council. Advisory Committees, representative Committees, and activities continue in line with the Australian Red Cross Mission and the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Mission:

– to be a leading humanitarian organization in Australia, improving the lives of vulnerable people through services delivered and promotion of humanitarian laws and values; and

Fundamental Principles:

– Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity, Universality

Services provided by the Australian Red Cross, Victoria in 2003-2004 include: the Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme, Community Programs, Emergency Services, First Aid, Fundraising, International Humanitarian Law, Retail (Been Around Before Shops), Tracing and Refugee Services, Youth and Multicultural Affairs.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

The University of Melbourne Archives

Executive Office Correspondence

Press Clippings

Publications

Rockingham Echo Newsletters

Minutes: Divisional Councils

Minutes: Divisional Council Advisory Committee

Minutes: Divisional Council Executive Committee

Minutes: Divisional Council Finance Committee / Audit & Risk Committee

Minutes: Divisional Council Annual General Meetings

Minutes of Various Victorian Division Committees

Junior Red Cross (Vic) Index Cards

Member's Service Awards

Voluntary Aid Detachments (VAD) Personnel Registers

Victorian Division Regional Directory

Australian Red Cross Victoria Archives

The Archive & Heritage Collection of the Australian Red Cross

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