

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1133

## Kirk, Maria (Marie) Elizabeth

(1855 - 1928)

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**Born** 9 December, 1855, London United Kingdom

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**Died** 14 January, 1928, Malvern Victoria Australia

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**Occupation** Welfare worker, Women's rights activist

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### Summary

Marie Kirk was a leading figure in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union both in Victoria and nationally and helped to establish the Victorian Union in 1887. She held numerous executive positions in the organisation. She was also a strong supporter of women's rights, a member of the Victorian Women's Franchise League, and helped to establish the National Council of Women of Victoria in 1902. She supported equal pay, raising the age of consent for girls, and also took a keen interest in the welfare of women prisoners and in the kindergarten movement.

### Details

Kirk (nee Sutton) was born in London in 1855 and married Frank Kirk (an ironmonger and later bootmaker) in 1878. Reared as a Quaker, she worked as a missionary in London's 'slums' and became active in the British Women's Temperance Association. In 1886 she represented this group at a meeting held in Toronto to organise the World Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She moved to Victoria that same year.

### Events

#### 2001 - 2001

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

### Published resources

#### Book Section

Temperate Feminists: Marie Kirk and the WCTU, Hyslop, Anthea, 1985

#### Newsletter

The White Ribbon Signal: Official Organ of the Woman's Temperance Union of Victoria, 1891-1931

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

1891 Women's Suffrage Petition, Parliament of Victoria

#### Edited Book

200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988

Archival resources

**The University of Melbourne Archives**

[Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria](#)

**Public Record Office Victoria, Victorian Archives Centre**

[Women's Suffrage Petition 1891](#)

**Author Details**

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