

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE4073

## Birks, Rosetta Jane

(1856 - 1911)

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**Born** 12 March, 1856, Adelaide South Australia

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**Died** 3 October, 1911, College Park South Australia

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**Occupation** Welfare worker

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### Summary

Rosetta Birks was a member of the South Australian Women's Suffrage League and the Social Purity Society in Adelaide. She was president of the YWCA.

### Details

Rosetta Jane was the daughter of William Kyffin Thomas, founder of Flinders Street Baptist Church in Adelaide, and his wife Mary. Rose was a dedicated member of the Flinders Church. In 1879 she married her sister's widower, Charles Birks, and became stepmother to his children.

Rose Birks was a member of the Social Purity Society Adelaide ladies' branch committee and, from 1888, was treasurer of the South Australian Women's Suffrage League, working with Mary Lee and Mary Colton. Following the enfranchisement of South Australian women she joined the Woman's League committee. She was appointed to the Adelaide Hospital board in 1896, and later the Queen Victoria Maternity Home board. She was co-founder and vice-president of the National Council of Women in South Australia.

In 1902, Rose Birks became president of the YWCA. She attended a meeting of the world committee in London in 1906, and attended international conferences in Paris and Berlin, establishing connections between Australian branches of the YWCA and their European and North American counterparts. In 1911 she launched the local YWCA's Travellers' Aid Society, offering protection to unescorted young female travellers and attempting to direct them toward Christian influences.

### Published resources

#### Resource Section

Birks, Rosetta Jane (1856-1911), Woods, Martin, 2006, <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/AS10040b.htm>

#### Edited Book

Australian Dictionary of Evangelical Biography, Dickey, Brian, 1994

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Author Details

Barbara Lemon

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