

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE4423

Weeks, Clara

(1852 - 1937)

Born	1 January, 1852, England
Died	12 April, 1937, Victoria Australia
Occupation	Suffragist, Teacher, Women's rights activist

Summary

Clara Weeks was born in England in 1852 and came to Victoria with her family at the age of six. Described as a 'born teacher', she began her career at sixteen, working in many rural and urban schools. She retired in 1913 as the Infant Mistress at Carlton Primary School, one of the highest positions then attainable for women, at one of Melbourne's largest government schools.

Weeks' professional experience radicalised her, particularly when it came to fighting for equal pay for women. Salary and superannuation scheme for men assumed they needed to care for dependents whereas no such assumption was made for women. However, as Weeks observed, 'hardly any women she knew ... not one ... did not have a dependant'.

Weeks was active in many women's organizations and worked alongside Vida Goldstein on the Victorian Women's Suffrage Executive Committee.

Weeks died in 1937 having influenced hundreds of teachers, thousands of pupils and thousands more women with her advocacy for their rights.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section

C M Weeks of Mooroolbark, Towns, Deborah,
<http://wiki.prov.vic.gov.au/index.php/Weeks>

Site Exhibition

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

Author Details

Nikki Henningham

Created 4 January 2010
Last modified 17 March 2019