

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: PR00639

Hitchcock, Annie

(1842 - 1917)

Born 1 January, 1842

Died 27 February, 1917, Geelong Victoria Australia

Occupation Church worker, Community worker, Philanthropist

Summary

Annie Hitchcock, daughter of Wesleyan John Lowe, and wife and mother of Geelong businessmen and philanthropists George and Howard Hitchcock respectively, was a prominent, successful, and influential philanthropist and community worker in her own right. She was Victoria's foremost Methodist fundraiser, and led the Geelong and Western District Ladies' Benevolent Association for forty one years, a period when it became the leading organisation of its kind in regional Victoria.

Details

Annie Lowe, daughter of prominent Wesleyan John Lowe, married Geelong businessman George Hitchcock, a founding member of the Geelong drapers firm Bright and Hitchcock, in 1859 at the age of 17. She shared his commitment to civil service, and the belief of their fellow parishioners at the Yarra St Methodist Church, that society could best be changed through hard work, success in business, philanthropy and high personal standards. Described as a woman who was 'dominant, strongwilled, very efficient and with powers of initiative and leadership' Annie became Victoria's foremost Methodist collector for philanthropic and church objects. In 1891, she single-handedly raised £1683 for the new parsonage. She helped found the Geelong Branch of Christian Endeavour in 1890, and set up Junior Endeavour through the Sunday School. Annie was active in the Geelong and Western District Benevolent Society, becoming a committee member in 1868, and Vice President, and then President from 1875 to 1916. During this time the Association became the leading organisation of its type in regional Victoria, establishing the Austin, Haimes and Upton Homes, and the Yarra Street Mission School.

Annie founded the Geelong branch of the Ministering Children's League in 1890, and with her son Howard – a leading benefactor on whom she was a profound influence- bought a cottage for the League, at Queenscliff, in 1895.

She was also interested in the YMCA, the Geelong Musical Society, the Geelong Horticultural Society, the Western District Agricultural Society and two women's social clubs, as well as the Geelong Art Gallery and the Geelong Protestant Orphanage.

Published resources

Book

Hitchcock Geelong's Visionary, Houghton, Norman, 2002

Resource Section

Hitchcock, George Michelmore (1831-1912), Gunson, Neil, 2006,
<http://www.adb.online.edu.au/biogs/A040450b.htm>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Geelong Heritage Centre

Geelong & Western District Ladies Benevolent Association

Author Details

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Created 21 August 2009

Last modified 21 November 2018