
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S MEMORIAL
PLAYING FIELDS TRUST INCORPORATED

SRG 255
Series List

The South Australian Women's Amateur Sports Council was formed by resolution of a meeting of representatives of women's amateur sports called by the National Fitness Council in May 1953 to discuss means of increasing numbers taking part in women's sport and the need for a coordinating body.

Miss May Mills became the first President of the S.A.W.A.S.C., and the National Fitness Council made available the services of its Assistant Director, Miss Helen Black, as organizing Secretary. Both women went on to play a prominent role in the activities of the South Australian Women's Amateur Sports Council and associated bodies.

Efforts to acquire a suitable site for a women's sports centre were successful when negotiations with the Tourist Bureau and a deputation to the Premier resulted in the Government granting a renewable 21 year lease, commencing 1 January 1954, of some 20 acres of the Shepherds Hill Reserve, on the corner of Ayliffe's and Shepherds Hill roads.

The new ground was named the South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields to commemorate the women who had served in World War II.

The first public appeal was launched in November 1954 following formation of an Advisory and Appeal Committee chaired by Brigadier T.C. Eastick.

The Advisory and Appeal Committee disbanded in September 1960, and a South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields Committee with Brigadier Eastick as Chairman was then appointed to develop the playing fields, administer the fund and advise the S.A. Women's Amateur Sports Council.

The Committee functioned until May 1967 when it disbanded to prepare the way for formation of a South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields Trust, recommended by the National Fitness Council as a widely used means of administering sports areas. Brigadier Eastick was Chairman. The new constitution, adopted on 14 August 1967, recognized the Memorial Playing Fields as a public war memorial to South Australian servicewomen in both World Wars.

The South Australian Women's Amateur Sports/Council appointed 2 members of the Trust and continued, in existence until wound up in 1973.

A further 8 acres were leased to the Trust by the Government from 24 September 1972, allowing for the development of a third oval. The work of 2 architects Mr Gordon Brown and Mr J.N.Loveday who had donated their services to the playing fields from their inception, was commemorated by tablets unveiled on 9 December 1979.

Miss Black's and Miss Mills' services are also commemorated in the form of the Helen Black Oval and the May Mills Pavillion. At April 1983, Miss Mills O.B.E., in her 94th year, was President of the South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields Trust.