

CONSTITUTION
of
THE CANBERRA MOTHERCRAFT
SOCIETY



As adopted by
Special Meeting
held on
Friday, May 10,
1935.

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OF
THE CANBERRA MOTHERCRAFT SOCIETY.

Name

1. The name of the Society shall be the Canberra Mothercraft Society.

Membership

2. Any resident of the Federal Capital Territory over the age of 17 years shall be eligible for membership.

3. The membership of the Society shall consist of:—

- (a) Members,
- (b) Life members.

4. The council may elect to be a life member of the Society any person who in the opinion of the council has rendered distinguished and valuable service to the cause of mothercraft or who gives to the funds of the Society the sum of £10.

5. Every member shall pay an annual subscription of two shillings and sixpence (2/6), such subscription to be due and payable to the Treasurer at the commencement of each financial year but any qualified person may become a member at any time upon payment as subscription for the then current financial year of a sum, not exceeding 2/6, equal to 3d. for each month or part thereof between the date of joining and the end of the current financial year.

Objects

6. The objects of the Society are:—

(a) To uphold the sacredness of the body and the duty of health; to emphasise the responsibilities of parenthood and the duty of every mother to fit herself for the perfect fulfilment of natural motherhood, both before and after child-birth, and specially to advocate and promote breast-feeding of infants.

(b) To acquire accurate information and knowledge affecting the health of women and children and to disseminate knowledge through the agency of its members, nurses and others, and by the use of such agencies as periodical meetings, demonstrations, lectures, correspondence, newspaper articles, pamphlets, books and otherwise.

(c) To train specially and to employ qualified nurses, whose duty it shall be to give sound, reliable instructions, advice and assistance to any member of the community desiring such services on matters affecting the health and welfare of women, especially during pregnancy and while nursing infants, and on matters affecting the health and welfare of their children and also to endeavour to educate and help parents and others in a practical way in domestic hygiene in general; all this being done with a view to conserving the health and strength of the rising generation, and rendering both mother and offspring hardy and healthy and resistive to disease.

(d) To co-operate, if and when deemed advisable, with any present or future organisations which are working for any of the foregoing and cognate objects.

(e) To do all such other lawful things as the Society may consider incidental to and necessary for the promotion of the welfare of women and children.

Definitions

7. In this Constitution, words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine, and words in the singular number include the plural.

"Society" means the Canberra Mothercraft Society.

"Council" means the Council of The Canberra Mothercraft Society.

"Member" means a financial member of the Canberra Mothercraft Society.

"Financial year" means the financial year of the Commonwealth Government, commencing on July 1 and ending on June 30 next following.

Headquarters

8. The Headquarters of the Society shall be at the Baby Health Centre, Jardine Street, Kingston, or at such other place as may be determined by the Council from time to time and notified for public information.

The Council

9. The affairs of the Society shall be managed and directed by a Council.

10. The Council shall consist of a Patron, such number of Vice-Patrons (not exceeding three) as may be determined by the Society in General Meeting; the officers of the Society, and ten elected councillors and two nominated councillors, one to be nominated by the Director-General of Health, who shall be the Honorary Medical Officer of the Society, and one to be nominated by the Medical Advisory Committee.

11. The officers of the Society are the president, two vice-presidents, an honorary secretary, an honorary treasurer and the honorary medical officer.

Election of Officers and Councillors

12. Except in the case of an election to fill an extraordinary vacancy, the election of officers of the Society, and of councillors to be elected by the members, shall take place at the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

13. Officers and councillors shall hold office, subject to this Constitution, from the date of election until the date of the next Annual General Meeting.

14. Nominations for all offices and the elected members of the Council shall be in writing and shall be in the hands of the Secretary of the Society seven (7) days before the date of the meeting. Each nomination shall be accompanied by the consent in writing of the nominee.

15. The first election of officers under this Constitution shall be held on May 10, 1935, and such election shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution as if it were conducted at an Annual General Meeting.

Trustees

16. There shall be three trustees who shall be elected at the same time and in the same manner as officers of the Society, save as is hereinbefore provided. One trustee shall be appointed by the Director-General of Health. In the event of the trustees not being elected at any Annual General Meeting, the previously elected or appointed trustees shall continue to act. In the event of the resignation, death or removal from office of any trustee, the remaining trustees shall continue to act.

Medical Advisory Committee

17. There shall be a Medical Advisory Committee of the Society consisting of one medical practitioner nominated by the Director-General of Health, the Honorary Medical Officer of the Society and any medical practitioners appointed thereto by the Council. When the members of the Medical Advisory Committee do not exceed three, two members shall form a quorum, but otherwise three members shall form a quorum. Meetings of the committee shall be called by notice for a purpose specified therein.

Duties of Council

18. The Council shall meet at least once each month for the purpose of transacting the business of the Society. The Council may by resolution make rules governing its procedure.

19. The Council shall determine the policy of the Society conformably with the above objects; appoint nurses subject to the approval of the Medical Advisory Committee and on such conditions as the Council may think fit; receive, allocate and administer all legacies that may be bequeathed to the Society and all donations; keep the objects, methods and results of the Society's work before the public by promoting or providing for lectures, contributions to the press, the issue of literature and other means; shall present at each Annual General Meeting, a report detailing the proceedings of the Society since the previous General Meeting, and generally carry out such duties as by this Constitution are imposed on the Council.

20. The Council may

(a) Appoint from its number an assistant-Honorary Secretary to assist the Secretary from time to time as the Council may direct.

(b) Appoint from time to time such special or sub-committees from among its officers and councillors and/or members of the Society as it may deem necessary for the discharge of specific duties assigned by the Council.

21. In the event of the place of any officer or councillor becoming vacant through death, resignation or failure to attend meetings, the Council may elect a member of the Society to the vacant place.

22. Notwithstanding any vacancy, the powers of the Council shall be exercised by a quorum which shall consist of one-third of the members of the Council plus one.

23. No irregularity, informality or illegality in the election nomination or appointment of any member of the Council shall render illegal or invalid any act, deed, matter or thing done or executed or suffered to be done or executed by such member of the Council or officer in pursuance of such election, nomination or appointment; but any such election, nomination or appointment may by resolution of the Council be declared good or bad, and if determined bad shall be invalid accordingly and the vacancy shall be filled as provided under this Constitution for the filling of an extraordinary vacancy.

Duties of the Officers

24. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Society and shall preside at all meetings at which he is present.

25. The Vice-Presidents shall assist the President at all meetings of the Council and in the absence of the President a Vice-President shall be nominated to preside.

26. The Honorary Secretary shall:—

(a) Conduct all correspondence on behalf of the Society and generally act according to the direction of the Council;

(b) attend all General Meetings of the Society and of the Council and keep minutes of the same in a book kept for the purpose;

(c) receive all reports from sub-committees of the Council;

(d) prepare the Annual Report of the Society for submission to the Council;

(e) keep a list of all members of the Society, health centres and sub-centres;

(f) keep copies of all correspondence;

(g) give due notice of all General Meetings of the Society and of the Council;

(h) shall be ex-officio member of all sub-committees;

(i) and generally carry out such duties as are in this Constitution specifically required to be performed by the Secretary.

27. The Honorary Treasurer shall:—

(a) Receive and take charge of all moneys paid to the Council other than moneys vested in the trustees, and shall pay all such moneys to the credit of the account of the Council with such bank as the Council may from time to time decide within forty-eight hours of receipt of such moneys;

(b) keep a correct account of all moneys received and expended;

(c) prepare cheques for payment of such accounts and salaries as are authorised and passed for payment by the Council;

(d) shall prepare a monthly statement of receipts and expenditure for the Council and shall prepare a report and audited balance-sheet to be submitted to the Annual General Meeting of members, and to the Director-General of Health after it has been approved by the Council.

Removal or Suspension

28. (i) The place of an officer or member of the Council other than a nominated councillor shall become vacant—

(a) if without leave of the Council he absent himself from three consecutive meetings of the Council;

(E) if he ceases to be resident of the Federal Capital Territory;

(c) if requested in writing by all the remaining members of the Council to vacate his office;

(d) if the place is declared vacant by a resolution carried by a majority of members present at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.

(ii) A vacancy created in accordance with sub-clauses (c) and (d) shall be an extraordinary vacancy and may be filled only at a Special General Meeting of the Society.

29. Should it appear at any time that any officer of the Society is not discharging a duty imposed by this Constitution, the Council by a vote of a two-thirds majority of those present at the meeting may suspend such officer at a meeting of the Council of which due notice has been served of the special business to be transacted provided that seven days notice is given to the officer concerned and he is given an opportunity to be heard in defence by the said meeting.

Finance and Property

30. (a) The Council shall establish such banking accounts in the branch at Canberra of such bank as the Council may from time to time decide, as shall be necessary for the conduct of the business of the Society and all revenues of the Society shall be paid into the appropriate banking account.

(b) All payments by the Council, except petty cash, shall be made by cheque.

(c) Any two of the following officers shall be empowered to sign cheques and endorse documents for and on behalf of the Society: The President, the Secretary and the Treasurer.

(d) Financial statements shall be prepared monthly by the Treasurer for presentation to the Council.

(e) The Council shall instruct the Treasurer to prepare annually a balance-sheet and statement of accounts, each of which shall be duly audited by the Society's auditors and all such reports shall be embodied in the annual report of the Society.

31. All property of the Society and all moneys paid or donated to the Society for specific purposes shall be vested in the trustees for the general purposes of the Society or the specific purpose for which they are paid or donated as the case may be. The trustees shall have power to invest any moneys held by them for the Society.

32. Two auditors shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in each year and at least once a year and at other times as provided in this Constitution or when directed by the Council they shall audit the books accounts and vouchers of the Society and shall certify whether in their opinion the

Treasurer's statement and report is properly drawn up and exhibits a true and correct view of the state of affairs of the Society according to the best of their information and the explanations given to them and as shown by the books of the Society.

32. Any action or suit by or against the Society may be instituted by or against the Secretary on behalf of the members of the Society.

Indemnity

34. Every member of the Council and every officer for the time being of the Society or a Branch (including the Trustees and Auditors) shall be indemnified out of the funds of the Society against all losses and expenses incurred in the discharge of his duty, except such as shall happen through his own wilful act or default, and shall be chargeable only for so much money or property as he shall himself actually receive for, or in the discharge of, the business of the Society, and shall be answerable only for his own acts, neglects or defaults, and not for those of any other person, nor for the insufficiency of any security for money invested or of title to any estate or property acquired, nor for any loss or damage which may happen in the discharge of his duty, unless the same shall happen through his own wilful neglect or default.

General Meetings

35. (a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than July of each year and fourteen days' notice of the day, time and place of the meeting shall be given in writing and sent to each member, provided that in the year 1935 the Annual General Meeting shall be held on May 10.

(b) The ordinary business to be transacted at the Annual General Meeting shall be the consideration and adoption of the Annual Report and Balance Sheet duly audited, provided that the accounts submitted to the Annual General Meeting of the year 1935 shall be made up to April 30, 1935; the adoption of a resolution transmitting the report and balance-sheet to the Director-General of Health; the election of officers, councillors, trustees and auditors, and such other business as may properly be brought forward in accordance with the Constitution.

36. (a) A Special General Meeting may be called by:—

- (1) The Council;
- (2) A Requisition signed by at least twenty-five members of the Society; or
- (3) The Administrator as provided by Section 41 of this Constitution.

(b) Any such requisition shall state the business for which the meeting is to be called and shall be addressed to the Secretary.

(c) On receipt of such requisition the Secretary shall give 14 days' notice to all members.

(d) Upon the default of the Secretary to call such a meeting within three days after receipt of such requisition, the

members signing the requisition may by advertisement in a newspaper published in the Federal Capital Territory themselves call a meeting and such meeting shall have full power to act as if convened in the usual way.

(e) No business other than that stated in the requisition shall be considered at a Special General Meeting.

37. At all General Meetings of the Society, the rules of debate shall conform with those in force for the time being in the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth Parliament.

38. At all General Meetings, the voting shall be by show of hands excepting in the case of an election for office or place provided for by this Constitution, provided that the meeting may resolve that the voting on any question shall be by ballot. At least two scrutineers shall be elected by show of hands by the members present at the meeting. A ballot shall be conclusive on the declaration of the result thereof by the chairman.

39. If the President or Vice-Presidents be absent from any meeting of the Society or Council five minutes after the time duly appointed for the commencement of such meeting, the members present at the meeting may elect one of their members to preside at the meeting, and such person shall continue to act notwithstanding the later attendance at the meeting of the President or Vice-Presidents. In the event of an equality of votes on any question before a meeting of the Society or Council the member presiding at the meeting shall in addition to his deliberative vote have a casting vote.

40. (a) If in the case of any election, the number of candidates nominated is not greater than the number of candidates required to be elected, the member presiding at the meeting at which the election is held, shall declare the candidates nominated duly elected.

(b) If in any election the number of candidates is greater than the number required to be elected, the candidates to be elected shall be determined by a ballot to be taken in accordance with the preferential system of voting prescribed by the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918-29 with respect to Senate elections.

Each member present at the meeting shall receive a ballot paper on which the names of all candidates shall appear in alphabetical order according to their surnames. Before a ballot paper is delivered to a member it shall be initialed by the Secretary or member appointed to act in place of the Secretary.

Each member shall vote for not less than twice the number of candidates required to be elected plus one by placing the figure 1 opposite the name of the candidate for whom he votes as his first preference and by placing serial numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and so on against the names of the other candidates according to his preference. Instructions to vote generally to the above effect shall appear on each ballot paper.

On voting, each member shall place his ballot paper in a box provided for the purpose and such box shall be delivered to the scrutineers who shall conduct the counting in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act referring to Senate elections.

Appointment of Administrator

41. (a) Where the places of officers and/or councillors of the Society have become vacant by extraordinary vacancy or it appears by reason of vacancies among the officers and/or councillors of the Society that the business and affairs of the Society may not be properly carried on, the Director-General of Health may on receipt of an application in writing signed by not less than 25 members and stating the circumstances then existing, appoint an administrator who shall conduct and manage the affairs and business of the Society for a period not exceeding one calendar month from the date of such appointment until the election at a Special General Meeting of officers and councillors to fill the places then vacant.

(b) The administrator shall have and exercise full powers vested in or duties required by this Constitution to be exercised by each and all of the officers and the Council generally, and in particular he shall convene a Special General Meeting for the purpose of electing new officers and/or councillors or for any other purpose and he shall receive all nominations for such election.

(c) He shall be indemnified against all losses and expenses incurred in the discharge of such duties and subject to the same conditions in every respect as are provided for officers of the Society in Section 34 of this Constitution.

(d) If for any cause, the Director-General of Health declines to make an appointment of administrator within 14 days of the receipt of the abovementioned application the retiring officers or members of the Council shall continue to perform all the duties pertaining to their office until successors are declared to be duly elected.

Amendment of Constitution

42. This Constitution may be amended by a General Meeting of the Society at which a majority of two-thirds of those present at the meeting vote in favour of the amendment. Notice of any proposed amendment must be sent to the Secretary at least fourteen days prior to the date of such General Meeting. Upon receipt of such notice, the Secretary shall immediately advise members of the Council and notify the calling of the meeting and its objects by advertisement in a newspaper circulating in the Federal Capital Territory.

43. Each member shall be entitled to receive one copy of this Constitution on joining the Society. Additional copies may be had by members on payment of one shilling a copy.