



Karrakatta Club Inc.

Established 1894

A member of the International Association of Lyceum Clubs

Oldest Women's Club in Australia





KARRAKATTA CLUB
Founded 1894

*A Member of the International
Association of Lyceum Clubs*

CONTACT

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SECRETARY

Mr Stephen McCarthy

RECEPTION HOURS

Monday - Friday
9am to 4pm

WEBSITE

www.karrakattaclub.com.au



The Karrakatta Club is Australia's longest established women's Club, having celebrated its centenary in 1994.

Overlooking the Swan River and situated in the heart of the central business district in a heritage listed building, the Karrakatta Club is home to both city and country members.

Comfortable, attractively decorated dining and entertaining areas and quality accommodation are found in the classic art deco building.



THE KARRAKATTA CLUB

A Brief History

When the Karrakatta club was formed, in 1894, Perth was a very different place from the city we know today. It was incredibly isolated. The overland Telegraph was still not finished, and the Trans-Australian railway was still years away. There was little education – mostly poorly resourced Primary Schools, and certainly few opportunities for the education of girls. Health care was also primitive. There were eight hospitals in the whole of W.A. The Colonial Hospital in Perth was the largest, but it only employed its first trained nurses as Matron in 1910.

But this was a period of change. After years as a colony, ruled by a Governor and Executive Council, W.A had just become self-governing in 1891. The gold rushes, from 1893 onwards, were bringing a huge increase in population, and the Victorian Age had come to an end.

The Karrakatta Club owes its existence to a Miss Best, who had organised a reading group known as the St. George's Reading Circle. There were twelve members, who had been meeting once a month for about six years, to share and discuss a selection of books. This group was visited by an American, Dr Emily Ryder, who was most impressed. She persuaded them to form a club on the same lines as the Education Clubs for Women in America.

Dr Ryder said, "A women's club will encourage women to think things out, and come to a conclusion; to defend their opinions, and have the courage to hold them." The aim of the new club was to bring into one body the women of the community for 'mutual improvement and social intercourse'. The founders intended no barriers, economic or otherwise to preclude anyone from joining.

There were some very interesting women in these first years. Miss Best and Miss Nisbet were heads of a private girl's school. An outstanding member was Madeleine Onslow, the first President, who had been raised in musical and artistic circles in Italy, and who had a passion to assist other women to realise 'the highest that was in them'. Robert Jull was another influential member, as was Mrs. J Cowan, later became Edith Cowan, who became our first female parliamentary representative. Photos of the early group and the names of the founding members are in the foyer.

The aims of the club were to be earned through the formation of four departments. There were Hygiene, chaired by Mrs Walter James; Artistic – Lady Forrest; Literary – Miss Nisbet, and Legal and Political – Miss Best. The latter was the suggestion of Dr Ryder, who said that as the women of the club would soon have the vote, it would be most useful.

Hygiene, as a department is perhaps a surprise, until we remember the limited access to health care in the state. The influx of gold diggers had led to an outbreak of typhoid, and the members organised a petition of 1000 signatures to draw attention to poor sanitation.

Other areas of interest at the time were the guardianship of children, payment of teachers, laws concerning divorce, assault (especially on children) and kindergarten, of course the debate on Federation, and votes for women were of real importance. By 1899 the reputation of the Club was such that Mr Cyril Jackson, Director of Education, appealed to the Club to help combat 'sore eyes' in school children.

The Club also advocated a women inspector of Aborigines, and for a woman to be appointed to the Children's Court. Never before had a permanently organised body of women take on such subjects.

The Karrakatta Club has been a member of the International Federation of Lyceum Clubs since 1920. These are usually attached to Universities. As there clearly wouldn't be a large volume of women graduates from U.W.A for many years, the Karrakatta Club became the home of Lyceum in WA.

Our Lyceum activities provide us with weekly speakers. In any month Week 1 is Literary, Week 2 – General, Week 3 – Artistic and Week 4 is Travel. They provide a stimulating and informative programme throughout the years. Other speakers are engaged for occasional Friday lunches, and musical and other entertainments take place on one Thursday afternoon each month. We have a Book Club, Bridge and Mahjong groups, and an Art Focus group that meets at the Art Gallery. Other special events are scattered through the year.

As for our Premises – the first Club rooms were two small shops at 158 St George's Terrace next to Toy and Gibson's – 2 rooms for 2 years:

1898 - J and G Mutual Chambers on the corner of Barrack Street and St George's Terrace.

1900 – Queens Hall, William Street

1911 – Commercial Union Building, St George's Terrace

1923 – 186 St George's Terrace, was the first building purchased by the Club

1986 – 4 Sherwood Court

Pictures of 186 St George's Terrace are in the Club History 1894-1994

The Lawson building was erected in 1937 as part of a job creation exercise during the depression. It was renovated in 1984.

The move from 186 St George's Terrace to the Lawson Building in Sherwood Court took long and laborious negotiation, but was accomplished in 1986. Furniture from the old building found a home here and some of the wrought iron balustrade from 186 has been incorporated into the handrail at the entrance. The sale of the rest of the balustrade provided cash which purchased the ornate sideboard which is in the Dining Room upstairs.

It was hoped that this building, being newer and recently renovated, would be maintenance free – but this wasn't the case. There were plumbing headaches for quite a while.

In conclusion, a quote from Lady Onslow, from her annual report in 1896.

"I am not aware of the existence of any club in the Colonies which contains within it so much potential for expansion, so much room for healthy growth, as does this little one of ours. Since no Club should ever see the risk of degenerating into a mere society or clique the only qualification for members is not money or position, but good character and earnest of purpose."

DINING AND ENTERTAINING

The Karrakatta Club's Dining Room enjoys high reputation. It caters for both Club and private entertaining. The Club is fully licensed and offers a wide selection of refreshments.

Morning, afternoon teas and drinks are available from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday and Lunch is available Monday to Friday from 12noon to 2pm. Members are welcome to invite guests to join them.

The bar carries a range of drinks from wine, champagne, mixers and soft drinks. A range of take-away foods can also be purchased including biscuits, cakes, pies and main meals.

The Club is not open for evening meals, although regular evening functions are held.



ACCOMODATION

Tasteful accommodation is available for Members, affiliated Members and their guests.

Services and facilities include:

- Sitting room with television
- Pantry kitchen with self-service breakfast
- Library
- Wi-fi connection
- Tuesday Lyceums with a variety of guest speakers and topics; including Literary, General, Artistic and Travel.
- Special luncheons and dinners with guest speakers
- Special activities such as bridge, mahjong, and visits to Art Galleries.





HOUSE TARRIFS

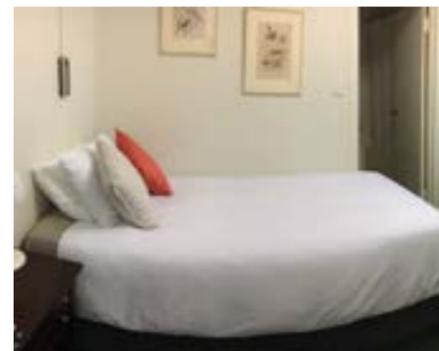
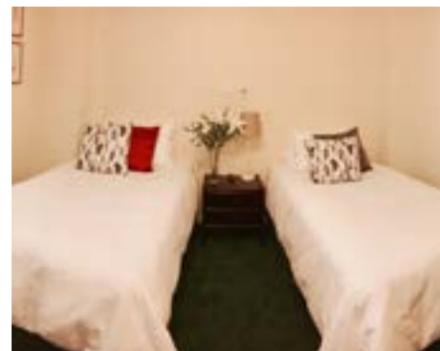
Charges per night

AFFILIATED MEMBERS

Double Room with Ensuite \$165.00 per night
Single Room with Ensuite \$132.00 per night

A \$11.00 affiliation fee applies per person
Tarrif includes a light self-service breakfast from the guest pantry.

All charges include 10% GST



HOUSE INFORMATION

- Tailored trousers and jackets are acceptable for ladies. Gentlemen are required to wear a jacket at all times. A tie is optional but preferred.
- Sportswear and running shoes are not acceptable except for house guests entering and leaving the Club.
- WiFi is available in the Library for members and guests. The code is available from Reception and in compendiums located in the bedrooms.
- Rooms must be vacated by 11.00am unless prior arrangements are made with the Office. Residents may stay for a period of up to two weeks at a time.
- Guests arriving after 5.00pm on weekdays or during weekends must make prior arrangements with the office.
- A key card will be issued to all residents and must be returned on departure.
- Guests staying at the club are welcome to use their mobile phone discreetly throughout their stay.