

The Foundation of the Camden Red Cross, 1914

A group of Camden women formed a local branch of the Red Cross within days of the British Empire declaring war on Germany on August 4, 1914. It was one of the first branches of the Red Cross formed in Australia.

The Mayoress, Mrs R Young, called a public meeting at the Camden School of Arts on **Friday August 14, 1914** to form a local Red Cross branch. In her press notice she stated that she *'hoped that all women interested in the making of clothes for our soldiers would attend the meeting'*. All her expectations were exceeded when 51 women turned up to volunteer their time and effort to help the war effort. The local press listed the names of all women who attended the meeting and gave a full and detailed report of the proceedings.



All the women at the Camden meeting were enthusiastic to get started. They formed a local branch of the Red Cross and elected a committee. They agreed to hold weekly Tuesday sewing workshops at the School of Arts where they would cut out material and sew together items for hospital and soldiers' bags for military hospitals. A program of fundraising activities started with a concert in early September 1914, and First Aid classes were organized by the Red Cross every Wednesday at the School of Arts.

So began a strong and proud effort by local women to support the Red Cross.

Members of the Camden Branch of the Red Cross at a street stall in Argyle Street, Camden.