

# Rachel Selina REYNOLDS, nee Pinkerton

(Mrs W H Reynolds)

[1838 – 1928]

1st President DFKA

Life member DFKA



**Figure 1 Rachel Selina Reynolds nee Pinkerton**

Rachel Selina Reynolds was a key pioneering figure in Dunedin's free kindergarten movement and an activist for women and children. In later life her crusade for the free kindergarten cause extended globally in a series of travels in Britain, Europe and America. Interviewed in 1908 by a local journalist, she is quoted as saying that where ever she went she strenuously preached free kindergarten. "I said. "Don't expect results in one year, or in two years but keep working away, and in twelve or fifteen years the progress made will astonish you."

'Free Kindergartens' The dark side of London'. *Otago Daily Times*, 30 December 1908, 26

<b>Timeline – some key dates and events</b>	
1838	Birth – Adelaide Australia, the eldest of six children of Eleanor and William Pickerton
1855	Family arrive in Dunedin
1856 October 18 years of age	Marries William Hunter Reynolds, a 34-year-old merchant and member of Otago's Provincial Council. The couple have 9 children
1864 - 1871	Involved with Learmonth Dalrymple in a year campaign to establish girls' secondary college in Dunedin – the first public secondary school in the colony
1871 - 1877	Worked with Dalrymple in a second campaign – this time for the right of women to enter university. Partially granted in 1871.
1863 – onwards	Prominent member of St Andrews Church – Rev Rutherford Waddell
1874	Member and later leader of the Ladies Association of the church formed to handle the collection for the poor raised by congregation contribution
1879	Involved in short-term campaign committee to establish a crèche in the city.
1883	Responsible for Sixpenny Clothing Club – a broad based six monthly collections across the three churches.
1885 (May)	Visit of Mrs Leavitt WCTU of America. Reynolds involved in establishment of Dunedin branch of WCTU
1885 (September)	Establishment of 'Friendly Aid Association.
1887 - 1889	Supports Waddell in campaign against sweated labour conditions in Dunedin
1889 May	Attends meeting with the object of forming a public kindergarten. Appointed to Committee to consider the practicability of establishing a Kindergarten in Dunedin.
1889-90	First President Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association
1891	Supports extension of franchise for women
1892 (April)	Appointed vice president of Women's Franchise League Dunedin
1893 (September)	Signs the Women's Suffrage bill and supports its progress into law.
1899	Death of husband, William Reynolds.
1900 (January)	Steps down as president in order to travel to England.
1902-6	President Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association
1906 February	DFKA Farewell event prior to leaving to travel to Europe. See 'Mrs W.H. Reynolds and her works', <i>Otago Witness</i> , 14 February 1906, 49.

1912 October	Kindergarten Conference, Dunedin - Presents paper titled "The Montessori System of Education"
1913 (Sept 12)	Attends opening of Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten
1914 - 1920	Extended travels to Europe. Accompanied by three daughters.
1928, (21 August)	Rachel Reynolds dies.



Figure 2 Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten opened 1913. NZFKU Kindergarten Buildings Album, Ruahine Kindergarten Association Archives.

**PARTICULARS REQUIRED BY THE BOARD OF TRADE.**

Steamer	Sailing	Class	Port of Destination			
Passenger's Full Name and Address	Age	Occupation	Married or Single	* Country of Last Permanent Residence	Country of Intended Future Permanent Residence	
Rachel Selina Reynolds 49 Lees Street Dunedin New Zealand	80 1/2			United Kingdom - New Zealand	New Zealand	
In London 90 High Commission Ave. New Zealand 413 - The Strand						
<small>By Permanent Residence is to be understood residence for a year or more.</small>						
<small>When completed to be returned to the H.C. for N.Z., 415 Strand, London, W.C. 2</small>						
Nationality	Signature of Passenger					
British	R. S. Reynolds					
<small>* State whether England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, a British Colony or a Foreign Country.</small>						
BP1 B727904						

Images reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, London, England. [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
Digitised by [www.1837online.com](http://www.1837online.com)

Figure 3 Rachel Reynolds' personally handwritten passenger card for travel from UK to NZ in 1919. Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960. 1919.

## **PUBLICATIONS & SUBMISSIONS:**

Rachel Reynolds - author

- Reynolds, R., Submission to the "Report of the Education Committee, 1913, Appendices to the House of Representatives", 1913, I-13A, 287.
- Reynolds, R., "Advantages of the Kindergarten". Paper presented as a special meeting of the Dunedin Branch of the Educational Institute, 16 November 1895. HL, Bliss Pamphlets JLQ – R, 1918.
- Reynolds, R., *Pioneering in Australia and New Zealand: Incidents in the Life of the Late Mrs. W.H. Reynolds, Dunedin, N.Z. as recounted by herself.* Dunedin: *Otago Daily Times*, 1929.
- Reynolds, R., *In Many Moods*, HL, Hoc: Bliss Pamphlets YOB Rev. i, (n.d).
- Reynolds, R., *Stepping Stones in Life's Great Crossing.* HL, Hoc: Bliss Pamphlets. PAB R, 1928.

### **Newspaper articles & letters by or about Rachel Reynolds**

- 'Educational Institute', *Otago Daily Times*, 18 November, 1895, 4
- 'Mrs W.H. Reynolds and her works', *Otago Witness*, 14 February 1906, 49
- 'Free Kindergartens The dark side of London'. *Otago Daily Times*, 30 December 1908, 26
- 'The importance of kindergartens', Letter from R.S. Reynolds to *Otago Daily Times*, *Otago Daily Times*, 27 May 1911, 9
- 'The R.S. Reynolds Kindergarten', *Evening Star*, 3 May 1912. (Account of the formalities at the laying of the foundation stone)
- 'Kindergarten conference', *Otago Daily Times*, 1 November 1912, 7 (account of Reynolds' paper, 'The Montessori method of education')
- '25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting', *Otago Daily Times*, 29 May 1914, 2 (includes Reynolds' apologies and farewell message on the occasion of the DFKA's 25<sup>th</sup> semi jubilee)
- The late Mrs Reynolds', *Otago Daily Times*, 24 August 1928, 2

### **Publications: Secondary sources**

- Bethell, K. (2008) 'Not [just] for a name that we plead: Fashioning the ideological origins of early kindergarten in Dunedin and Wellington, New Zealand, 1870-1913. A thesis submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington

in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education. Victoria University of Wellington. (Chapter 5)

Bethell, K., (2011) *'Rachel Reynolds' Re-presenting Dunedin's kindergarten pioneers: Some new stories*. Invited Occasional Paper, Dunedin: Otago University College of Education and Dunedin Kindergarten Association.

(Online version - [www.otago.ac.nz/education/news/Bethel\\_final\\_2011.pdf](http://www.otago.ac.nz/education/news/Bethel_final_2011.pdf))

Page, D., "Reynolds, Rachel Selina, ' , from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 14-Jan-2014  
URL.: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/2r17/Reynolds-rachel-selina>

Varcoe, P., "The First President, Mrs Rachel Reynolds", in *N.Z.F.K.T.A.* 1961. Palmerston North Teachers' College Library, 372.218

LINK: Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten, Dunedin Kindergarten Association