

# Wattle Day Appeal

1910 –

## Details

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The Wattle Day Appeal was an annual fundraising event, used to raise funds for children's institutions and other charitable organisations. The annual Wattle Day Appeal began in 1910, with Wattle Day events held in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Over the next few years, Wattle Day events were also held in Queensland and Tasmania. The purpose of Wattle Day was to celebrate Australia, mark the coming of spring and to raise funds.

In Victoria, from 1915 to 1921, Wattle Day was run by the Commonwealth Button Fund. When the Fund was wound up in January 1921, the event became the business of the Children's Welfare Association of Victoria. The Children's Welfare Association used Wattle Day to raise funds for its member institutions, and the annual event resulted in increased publicity opportunities in the press about Victorian institutions, where images of children featured prominently.

In other states, the focus was on fundraising for a range of social welfare organisations. This included children's Homes but unlike in Victoria, they were not the only recipients. Organisations such as hospitals, charities and welfare organisations also received funds from the Wattle Day Appeal.

Wattle Day was generally held in August or September, when the wattle was flowering. The Victorian Year Book described the activities of the Wattle Day event in 1924: "ladies attired in white costumes sell sprigs of wattle blossom in the streets and elsewhere, and the amounts obtained are allotted to charities for children". Wattle Day workers also sold buttons, jams and produce, and put on displays and demonstrations of the work of various institutions.

From 1958, Wattle Day was held in the annual Child Care Week. Wattle Day for fundraising ceased by the mid 1970s. In 1992, 1 September was officially proclaimed National Wattle Day by the Governor-General of Australia, and some fundraising efforts were revived in the mid 1990s, particularly by the Red Cross.

## Gallery

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FOUNDLING HOSPITAL GIFT COT.



### Foundling Hospital Gift Cot

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 25 August 1923, p.27. The image shows staff and children from The Foundling Hospital and Infants' Home. The original caption reads: 'Of the displays made by charitable institutions sharing in the Wattle Day collection yesterday, none made greater appeal to the sympathies of the public than that of the Foundling Hospital and Infants' Home, East Melbourne and Beaconsfield, of which Mrs. Montague Cohen is president. Sister Sutherland is seen in charge of a gift cot in Collins street, near the Equitable Building corner. The twins in the cot were the centre of much interest throughout the day.'

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### Wattle Day

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Friday 19 August 1938, p.3. The image shows the a staff member with fundraising buttons. The original caption reads: ' Wattle Day will be celebrated today. A staff was busy yesterday checking some of the 70,000 buttons which will be on sale in the city. Proceeds from the buttons will be shared among 60 children's institutions'.

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### Wattle Day Twins

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 31 August 1929, p.17. The image shows babies from the Arms of Jesus Babies' Home. The original caption reads: Twins, from the Arms of Jesus Baby Home, East Melbourne, attracted attention in their cot outside the Elizabeth street postal hall during the Wattle Day Appeal yesterday [altered from original caption].

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### Wattle Day for the Children

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 18 August 1928, p.15. The two pictures show images from the Wattle Day parade. The original caption reads: 'A generous response was made to street appeals in the city yesterday in connection with Wattle Day, in aid of children's institutions. Two pictures which tell their own story. The little boy on the right was soon unable to lift his box'.

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### Wattle Day for Children's Charities

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 2 August 1924. The image shows the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne and a baby in a cot. The original caption reads: '...the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne (Dr. Lees) is shown making friends with one of the babies at the open-air creche established in the Cathedral grounds.'

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### Wattle Day in the City

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 26 August 1933, p.21. The image shows a baby and adults collecting money for Wattle Day. The original caption reads: Child, from the Presbyterian Home, accepts a contribution on behalf of the babies [altered from original caption].

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### Wattle Day

**Description:** This is a copy of an illustrated article published in *The Argus* on Saturday 24 August 1935, p.30. The image shows babies and adults on Wattle Day. The original caption reads: 'Babies from the Church of England Home made a compelling appeal for Wattle Day contributions outside the Elizabeth street post-office yesterday.'

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## More info

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## Related Entries

## Related Organisations

- [Children's Welfare Association of Victoria \(1912 - 2003\)](#)

From 1921, the Children's Welfare Association organised the Wattle Day Appeal, to raise funds for child welfare organisations.

Date: 1921 - ?

- [Australian Red Cross \(1914 - current\)](#)

## Resources

- [Wattle Day for Children's Charities](#), The Argus, 2 August 1924

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