Vida Goldstein

• Vida Jane Goldstein (13th April 1869-15th August 1949) was a Victorian women’s rights spokesman, famous for starting the women’s voting rights monster petition.

• Miss Goldstein joined the small group of suffragettes at the age of 21 and soon became a great spokeswoman.

• Goldstein was educated at the Presbyterian Ladies College and was religiously influence by an Australian Church and a Christian scientist.

• She had three sisters, Lina, Elsie and Aileen and one brother, Sewlyn.

• Her father, Jacob Robert Yannasch Goldstein, and her mother, Isabella Née Hawkins originated from Ireland, Poland and Scotland where they ran a general store. When they moved to Melbourne in 1877 Jacob became a contract draughtsman while Isabella stayed unemployed.

• Over the years Vida acquired many occupations. She was an anti-conscriptionist, feminist, newspaper editor, pacifist, school administrator, women’s activist, but most famously, a women’s suffragist. However, the only workplaces she ever serviced at were the Women’s Sphere Newspaper Company and the Women’s Votes Newspaper Company.

• She was heavily involved in many organisations. The National Council of Women (Melbourne), Victorian Women’s Public Servants Association (Melbourne), Women’s Writers Club (Melbourne), National Anti-Sweating League (Victoria), United Council for Women’s Suffrage (Melbourne), Women’s Federal Political Association (Victoria), Peace Alliance (Victoria), Women’s Peace Army (Victoria), and Women’s Rural Industries Co Ltd (Victoria).

• Miss Goldstein was involved in many events including the Harvester Judgement (1907), Queen Victoria Hospital Appeal (Victoria), Women’s Suffrage Petition (Victoria, 1890), Women’s Suffrage Petition (Monster Petition, 1891).

• She has left a legacy, the Goldstein Federal Electorate in Melbourne.