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**\*\* INFORMATION PAGE \*\***

ALL A.C.W. MONIES -- Affiliation Fees, Fellowship Of The Least Coin, Newsette Subscriptions, Offertories for Special Days and Donations to be sent to the TREASURER:

Mrs Helen Richardson  
33 Lynwood Avenue,  
DEE WHY, 2099.  
(Tel: 9971 0278).

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- ⇒ For safety reasons **DO NOT** include the word "Treasurer" when addressing envelopes.
- ⇒ **ALL CHEQUES** to be made payable to "Australian Church Women NSW Unit Inc." and **NOT** to any individual person.

FEES from AFFILIATED GROUPS are due 1st March each year as follows:

Denominational Groups:	\$25.00 per annum
A.C.W. Local Branches:	\$15.00 per annum
Organisations eg WCTU, The Girls' Brigade:	\$15.00 per annum

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' FEES due 1st March : \$10.00 per annum  
(includes subscription to Newsette)



# NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN - NSW UNIT INC

A C W seeks:

- ⇒ to unite Australian churchwomen in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
- ⇒ to provide opportunities for Christian women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together.

Mission Statement

*Australian Church Women believe that there is one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one God, Three-In-One. We believe that Scripture teaches that salvation is only through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only Son.*

PRESIDENT: Mrs Jean Porteous Tel: 9727.2580

NUMBER 99

MAY 2004

**NEWSETTE** is the journal of the NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women and is published four times a year in February, May, August and November. Annual Subscription is \$5.00.

CONTRIBUTIONS to Newsette are requested from readers and should be sent to the EDITOR:

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1/14 Forest Grove,  
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(Tel: 9869.2559)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Dear Friends,

When you receive this copy of Newsette, for the NSW State Unit another year will have closed. As we look back on the past year we can truly thank God for His guiding and keeping us, both individually and as a group.

It is good to look back and remind ourselves, as the Psalmist did, that "Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom." (Psalm 145:3,4)

As this is my last letter to you as your President, I would like to thank you all for support through prayer, encouragement and practical assistance. I have enjoyed the past two years of service.

Just as it is good to reflect on God's goodness and leading in the past, so it is wonderful to know that He will be there for us in the future, because He has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

On May 17<sup>th</sup> Major Lyn Middleton of the Salvation Army will be inducted

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as President for the next two years. We wish her a wonderful term, and a strong awareness of God's presence with her.

And now, "may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you."

Yours sincerely,

*Jean Porteous*

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW UNIT

ANNUAL SERVICE OF DEDICATION  
and

INSTALLATION of PRESIDENT  
for 2004-2006

MAJOR LYN MIDDLETON

on MONDAY, MAY 17 at 10.30 am

at THE SALVATION ARMY DULWICH HILL  
(54 Dulwich Street)

(Bus 426 (Dulwich Hill) or 428 (Canterbury) from  
Circular Quay via Castlereagh Street & Railway Square  
or Bus 445 (Canterbury) from Petersham Station)

Followed by fellowship over Light Lunch

#### **CORRECTION From Last Newsette:**

In February Newsette an item mentioned *Book Aid (Australia)* requesting good quality Christian Books and Bibles being urgently needed for Christian workers, Bookshops and Libraries overseas. Unfortunately, the telephone contact number given was incorrect. This should have been **9599.5371 or Fax 9590.3268**, if you have unwanted Christian literature you would like to donate, you can phone to be put in touch with a local collector. Books donated which are not needed overseas are sold at BookAid, 11 Watkin Street, Rockdale, to cover shipping and other costs.

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#### **AN INTERESTING INTERLUDE:**

Our incoming President Lyn reports on a recent experience:

During January and February it was a joy and privilege for my husband Ken and me to respond to the invitation to oversight the work of the Salvation Army in the countries of *Moldova, Ukraine and Romania*. We were situated in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova, a very small country about half the size of Tasmania but with a population of four and a half million people, 80% of whom live below the poverty level. Being the middle of the European winter we found the daily temperatures of -8 to -10 degrees Celsius rather bracing and the challenge of walking through snow and ice an art that needed perfecting!

The Salvation Army's work began in these countries just ten years ago, so we found ourselves working with people young in the faith and very young in years of service in the ministry. Although this presented many challenges it was most stimulating and encouraging as we so often felt as though we were working with the early church. One never tired of listening to the stories of newfound faith in Christ and personal journeys in trust and prayer.

We have 35 corps (churches) and a number of outposts in this division of our Eastern Europe Command. Despite the difficulty of ministering in buildings borrowed or rented just for Sunday services, each centre pulsated with evangelical zeal. It was thrilling to be present and participate. The congregations are enthusiastic and very open to the Gospel. There is a fine expression of youth at the meetings assisting the worship with guitars, percussion etc. and very tuneful singing. The youth conduct a Youth Service every Saturday evening in the capital of Moldova for the primary purpose of evangelistic outreach to other young people. The meeting is vibrant with singing, testimony, social activity and preaching and attracts over a hundred young people each week.

There is also an exciting expression of social work developing within this Division, which includes a Medical Clinic in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. The clinic treats 1000 patients each month as well as operating a mobile clinic to remote areas each week-end. Several humanitarian projects operate, such as the provision of wood and coal for cooking and heating to the Gypsy population, known as the 'Roma' project, which is supervised from Geneva and is funded by compensatory monies from World War 2. While there we were able to meet with some of the Geneva team and submit proposals for an extension of this work in the area of medicine, hygiene and food.

Another interesting project was the distribution of financial assistance to

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victims of Chernobyl. This project was administered from our office in Kiev, Ukraine. Twelve corps run a daily feeding program from canteens, feeding a total of 35,000 persons per year as well as distributing dry food. Humanitarian work also extends to the prisons, and the very active League of Mercy workers are involved in local communities in various social ministries including the administration of child sponsorship.

During the six weeks we were working with these people we were inspired by their passion to realise their full potential in service. We give praise and thanks to God for the growth and development we were able to witness as we worked alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ.

*(Major) Lyn Middleton*

#### **FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:**

Once again in the name of the Lord we say thank you to those who regularly contribute to the Fellowship of the Least Coin. It never ceases to amaze me the generosity of those whose lives the Lord has touched for mission. For most of us who share in the prayer and participation of giving of our Least Coins, we may never have been called for actual physical overseas mission, but God has placed on our hearts His mission to pray for and encourage those whose lives are physically touching His people in far off places.

As we have so recently celebrated and remembered the sacrifice our Lord gave on that Easter time so long ago, we remember the commission He gave His disciples (and us) to go and reach and teach all nations. The giving of our coins and prayer will reach and help teach the nations of His love and sacrifice. Our giving during February and March amounted to \$559.20. Someone has written: *"What you are is God's gift to you; what you become is your gift to God."*

God bless you and use you and your gifts in His name.

*Nancy McLaren, FLC Convener*

The Prayer of The Fellowship of the Least Coin, which is used around the world: *"O Loving Creator, we present ourselves in your divine presence to thank you for all the bountiful gifts of life. We are especially grateful for the Fellowship of the Least Coin which binds us together in love and forgiveness around the globe. Free us from all doubts and prejudices, we pray. Inspire us to live in solidarity with humankind that we may know the joy of giving and receiving. Dear God, accept the least coin 'token of love.' Make us mindful of the miracles of these coins. Let us honour your creation with love, as shown through the life and resurrection of your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen."*

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#### **WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:**

News was received from *Rachel McManus* (1997 Scholar). She has finished one year (three to go) of her University course, a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) in Indigenous Studies, all by correspondence. She also works three days a week with clerical work. Her daughter, Ivy May, is doing well and they live with Rachel's parents.

News also from *Nighat Gulzar* (1994 Scholar) - she sends greetings, remembers ACW in her prayers and hopes to visit Australia again sometime. She and her husband are still living and working in Philadelphia and all is well.

Mina Whybourne, past WKS Convener who still keeps in touch with many of the scholars, had word from *Doreen Tan* (1990 Scholar) from Kuching in Borneo. Doreen is now Principal of the Handicapped Children's School, for which ACW members will remember we assisted her to develop and stock the Toy Library, through which she hoped to encourage parents to share in the work of the school and not hide away, feeling that to have a handicapped child was a disgrace and shame. Doreen's own children, Heather and Brian are both now at school.

In correspondence from the National WKS Convener, Joan Tong, we are asked for continued prayer for progress of plans for our new scholar for this year, *Mereani Dinacika Raque* from Fiji as the WKS Trustees work out the best way and place for her to do the course with "Project Respect" which is a women's human rights organisation that addresses violence against women in the sex industry. In the February Newsette it was reported that she would do this in Melbourne but the latest news is that she would prefer to do it in the Philippines, where they deal with women who have been trafficked. The new WKS leaflet with Mereani's photo is very attractive and copies will be available at the Dedication/Installation Service on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

"Thinking of You" cards have been sent to our three 2003 Australian scholars. One of them, *Susan Liersch* (Wagga) has sent an excellent report to National on her course, the Certificate of Counselling & Family Therapy (Christian), and she is continuing with this. She also adds her appreciation for ACW support through finance, prayer, letters, meeting ACT Unit members, and understanding the work of ACW more.

Looking back, past WKS scholars have increased their skills in a variety of ministry areas. Let us pray they will each continue to serve God in the way that He calls.

*Judith Cayzer, WKS Convener*

### DOCTOR TO BATTLE RAVAGES OF WAR:

*Mina Whybourne*, mentioned on previous page, shares some news of her daughter, *Dr Anne Whybourne*, who is a pediatrician. Anne has worked in the African country of Tanzania, and more recently with malnourished Aboriginal children in Darwin, North Australia, but has now gone to work as a doctor in Sierra Leone in West Africa, under the French aid organisation *Medecins Sans Frontier (MSF)*, after joining her partner, Darwin social worker *Dan Baschiera* in France, where he has been doing preparatory training. They will be stationed in the town of *Kailahan*, close to the border of Liberia and Guinea.

Dr Whybourne said that Sierra Leone has been scarred by years of civil war until a year and a half ago when a peace treaty was signed. It is now being flooded with Liberian refugees. Sierra Leone is well known for its recent massacres and the practice of amputating the limbs of children. One in three children die before the age of five.

In the small hospital, Dr Whybourne's roles will include midwifery and running in-patient and out-patient clinics. She says "I realise it won't be a dream holiday - it will be very challenging and distressing at times. People will be badly malnourished and unwell with little medical support." She feels that her work with sick and malnourished Aboriginal children will have helped prepare her to work with refugees. At least ten Northern Territory doctors, nurses and health workers have worked with MSF.

*(Extract from the Northern Territory News)*

### SPECIAL DAYS:

Following World Community Day last October, for which the Special Projects to receive support from the offertories were the Presbyterian Ladies' College East Timor Kindergartens and the Cross Roads Community in Western Australia, the following letters have been received by the National Treasurer, Nola Dickson:

From P.L.C. Sydney:

*"Thank you very much indeed for the cheque for \$2,076 for the College's East Timor Kindergartens which the Australian Church Women adopted as its special project.*

*These funds will be of enormous assistance with the equipment and teaching needs of the children in East Timor and to the running costs of the Kindergartens.*

*We would ask that you keep in your prayers the little children in East Timor and the P.L.C. students who are working on this project.*

*Yours sincerely, Dr William T McKeith, Principal"*

From Cross Roads Community:

*"I am writing to thank you for your generous donation of \$2076 and for accepting Cross Roads Community as a Special Project for the World Community Day offering. We really appreciate this.*

*Your support is greatly appreciated and will contribute to the establishment of a much-needed rehabilitation farm and the continuation of our city based services where we assist our clients and their families in rebuilding mechanisms leading to happy, productive lives after drug addiction, finding harmony in living the balance of body, mind and spirit. Our prayers are with you.*

*Yours in Christ's love, Father Paul Baczynski"*

For 2004 Community Day offertories next October, the National Executive has accepted two applications as our special projects. These are *Kairos Prison Ministry*, and *Urban Seed Women's Program* which does street work in the heart of Melbourne. More details of these ministries will be given in future issues of *Newsette*.

### NSW ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:

From the Council's Newsletter: *"It is not surprising that Christians in the Middle East when asked to choose the theme for the 2004 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity would choose a gospel passage such as John 14:23-31 A longing for peace is constantly expressed in their prayers. This passage was chosen by the Christian Churches in the city of Aleppo in Syria. They chose it because of the desire for peace in their fragile situation in the turbulent area of the Middle East."* It is an invitation to pray for and be recommitted to the quest for Christian Unity.

A fund-raising dinner was held on 29<sup>th</sup> April. The speakers were Archbishops *Peter Carnley* (Anglican) and *John Battersby* (Roman Catholic), discussing *"The Unity We Seek - Have We Stopped Looking?"*

The Council's Refugee Program is continuing to grow and expand. More people within churches and community groups are becoming more aware. Last Christmas there was an extraordinary response - at least double that of the previous year - of gifts, money for phone cards and clothing for Asylum Seekers and Refugees. *Sr Lorraine Phelan* thanks all donors.

The Gowrie (30km south of Tamworth) Uniting and Roman Catholic churches have established an Ecumenical Community Church rather than close their doors. This would seem a sensible alternative to closing down in a rural area where clergy cease to visit and a handful of people attend separate services.

*Nola Dickson, ACW Representative to NSW Ecumenical Council.*

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#### UPDATE ON 'RISE UP & SHINE' IN WOLLONGONG:

In February Newsette an account was given of the Combined Churches Prayer And Praise Night last October in the WIN Entertainment Centre attended by more than 5000 people representing at least 90 churches, with 80 members of the clergy taking part - an adult combined choir of 100, a children's choir of 120, and a Salvation Army Band. This event raised \$16,000 for the Lord Mayor's Light & Hope Schizophrenia Awareness Appeal.

We would all have been aware of 'Clean Up Australia' Day held on Sunday March 7, but following the Prayer & Praise Night, hundreds of Christians of all denominations braved unpredictable weather conditions to take part in 'Clean Up Australia' - but they did this on **Saturday**, March 6, thus avoiding a clash with Sunday Services. Regardless of the rain, they served their city by collecting more than nine tonnes of rubbish - truly churches uniting and putting faith into action.

*Cela Cooper, Social Issues Convener*

#### BAPTIST WOMEN IN ACTION:

*Baptist Women Seeking To Make A Difference* - News from Baptist Women's Missionary Union (BWMU).

*The Call Came From Africa.* "We are about to enter into work amongst the Yoo people in Mozambique" wrote *Heather Crone*, "and we really need a teacher for the children for a minimum of 6 months. Please pray for someone to be available."

*BWMU Prayed.* We thought of a young lady with an inclination to teach missionaries' children. Kristy was approached and responded as a volunteer, and because the program is for missionaries' children BWMU is able to make a sizeable financial contribution to her going, in February 2004. Windsor Baptist Church will miss her but commend her to the Lord's keeping power.

*The Call Came From Cambodia.* Missionary *Fiona* needed help with her Children's Program as the source of financial support had dried up. She thought of the BWMU Birthday Band, which provides money for spiritual, physical, educational and social uplift of children up to 12 years old. We were able to send a contribution. Birthday Band is financed by people giving a monetary gift to Jesus, on their own birthday, via BWMU.

*Come... And Help Us!* At present we are financing through the *Edna Hale Trust Fund*, which honours of the memory of a notable missionary, three young women doing theological training in Assam at Shalom College.

*Contributed by Beryl Kirkwood, Baptist Delegate to ACW Council*

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#### CHISHOLM COTTAGE REPORT:

In Newsette several years ago the work of *Catholic Women's League* in Parramatta Diocese in establishing and maintaining *Chisholm Cottage* for the use and benefit of families whose children were patients at Westmead Children's Hospital, and others in similar need, was described.

At the end of 2003, those involved reported that it was now eight years since they purchased the property at Westmead and opened for business in March 1996. In that time there have been many changes - new apartment for the caretaker, new bathrooms, lounge room and laundry, and landscaped garden at the rear. Quite a substantial amount of money has been spent and they are now in the position where they can comfortably meet their loan commitment, due to the dedicated work of the volunteers and committee. A new caretaker *Thecla Gunesekeera* moved in last June and she is a great help and very much appreciated.

*Chisholm Cottage* provides help to many people, far and wide, and is a ministry of which all those involved may be very proud.

*(From CWL Parramatta Newsletter 'The Branch')*

#### MEETING GOD INSIDE:

A Prison Fellowship Volunteer Tells A Story of God's Grace At Work.

*Andrew's* story began in Sierra Leone where he lived with his mother, twin brother and sister. His twin and his mother were killed by one of the warring groups and he and his sister were sent to separate compounds. He managed to escape to South Africa and from there to Sydney, Australia.

I met Andrew in July 2000 when doing the rounds of Silverwater Maximum Security Gaol with the Chaplain. He had been trying to locate his sister, *Augustina*, through the Red Cross with no success. I tried several refugee and displaced persons sites via the Internet, to no avail. The turmoil and disruption in Sierra Leone is so great it is virtually an impossible task.

Andrew knew no one in Sydney and had not had a single visit for the six months he had been in gaol. I expected to find an extremely depressed inmate - in a strange country, no friends, unable to locate his only surviving family. Instead I found a man full of joy. He told me that he had started reading the Good News Bible in gaol and had come to know the Lord. On my next visit we discussed the Bible; we did not have one with us as I am not allowed to take anything into the visit area. Andrew absolutely amazed me. His knowledge of the Bible was incredible. He had only been reading it for six months, by himself. He had only gone to school until 11 years of age. I would ask him about scripture from any

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part of the Bible and he would give me the most in-depth answers I had ever heard. When I asked how he did this he said the Holy Spirit revealed to him what God was saying as he read it. He went on to say that it was like Jesus was in his cell with him, as real as I was to him, and that he had a very close and personal relationship with God the Father. He gives thanks for the day he was sent to gaol and came to know the Lord. I went to minister to Andrew and ended up having him minister to me. We became close friends and he was able to get to know all the members of my family, whom he constantly prays for.

When this account was written, Andrew was to finish his sentence in October 2003 and as he was not an Australian citizen, would be deported immediately to South Africa from whence he came to Australia. On his arrival there he would be sent back to Sierra Leone. There he will try to find his sister and then return to South Africa to find work. After all this, he was still full of joy and thankful for his time in prison that allowed him to find the Lord, and was really looking forward to being free again and worshipping with fellow Christians.

I am thankful to our Lord for bringing Andrew into my life and so, touching me in a very real way. I do not know what lies ahead for him and cannot help feeling anxious but Andrew is fully trusting God and I know that anyone who comes into contact with him will be mightily blessed.

*(From Prison Fellowship Newsletter 'Unbound')*

#### **ATHENS 2004:**

At the 2004 Athens Olympics, the Greek Bible Society will be a strong competitor for the attention of the thousands of visitors who will pour into the Games cities.

Much of the Society's effort is going into a major multi-media Bible exhibition in the city of Voles, which will host the Olympic football competition. 35,000 copies of a special 'Olympics Edition' of the New Testament have been printed in Greek, English, French, German, Spanish and Russian and 100,000 packs containing Gospels of John and children's material will be distributed.

At the same time, work is already under way aimed at bringing God's Word to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. A six-man Chinese delegation visited Bible Society NSW to review the experience of the huge program of outreach during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. They also visited Canberra, meeting the Prime Minister, John Howard and the former NSW Olympics Minister, Bruce Baird.

*(From Bible Society Newsletter 'Bibles@Work')*

#### **MORE Bibles@Work -- IN NEWCASTLE:**

A world-first exhibition will be headlining a month-long Bible Society blitz of Newcastle in May. Renowned Central Coast photographer *Ken Duncan* will be exhibiting a range of exclusive shots of Mel Gibson's film 'The Passion of Christ' at the Newcastle Library as part of 'Bibles@Newcastle.May', a month crammed with exciting events.

At Newcastle University on May 1 a Conference will include speakers *Phil Pringle* from Christian City Church, *Gordon Moyes* from Wesley Mission, *Ross Clifford* from Baptist Union, *Bishop Graeme Rutherford* (Anglican) and *Bishop Michael Malone* (Roman Catholic).

Accompanying Ken Duncan's photographic exhibition at the Newcastle Library will be a number of famous Bibles, including the *Gutenberg Bible* which dates back to the world's first printing press, the *Tyndale Bible*, the second translation of the English Bible, an original *King James Version* from 1611, and *Governor Lachlan Macquarie's* very own personal Bible. Newcastle will also see a huge *Youth Night* which it is hoped 1000 young people will attend; *Business Men's Breakfast*; *Women's Breakfast*; *Financial Seminars*; *Hymnfest* at Newcastle Anglican Cathedral. Bible Society NSW staff will be speaking at a wide range of Newcastle churches during May.

#### **MAN'S LIFE DEVOTED TO MAKING AMENDS:**

A former Cambodian soldier now devotes his life to removing the land mines that he once planted. *Aki Ra* was conscripted to the Khmer Rouge forces at age nine. To save his countrymen from injury and death, he is attempting to clear the thousands of land mines that he planted during the 1970's. Aki's parents were killed during the genocide of Pol Pot's reign.

The task he has undertaken is fraught with danger. Having laid mines for more than a decade, Aki can only recall where they were laid in a few areas. It is estimated that some 10 million land mines are strewn over 1300 square miles of Cambodia and each one can remain active for 75 to 100 years. It is estimated that 60,000 people have been killed by land mines since 1979, more than half being children.

Aki has built a museum to teach people about the danger of land mines and many he clears end up there. He uses money from donations to the museum to care for young victims, pay for their schooling, and buy prosthetic limbs. While international humanitarian agencies are also working to clear the land, the process will take many decades. Cambodians are discouraged from clearing the land themselves, because of the rate of casualties.

*(From Anglican Diocese of Newcastle Newsletter 'Encounter')*