



## AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW STATE UNIT

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING held at 222 Pitt Street, Sydney on Monday 18 March 2002 at 10.30 a.m.

WELCOME: President Jan Harrison welcomed especially Padma Ebenezer currently in Australia helping care for her grandson; Frances Howard, Val Neilson, and Virginia Fitzpatrick new representatives.

DEVOTIONS: Marie Majoor shared thoughts on Australian Church Women and Ecumenism based on John 15:5-8 - *I am the vine and you are the branches . . .* and Psalm 122 - *Let us go to the house of the Lord . . . Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.* Marie reflected that ACW had helped her find joy in faith, and through faith to find peace. Jan led in prayer.

PRESENT: 45 members as recorded.

APOLOGIES: 15 as recorded.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES of 18 February 2002: The Minutes were confirmed on the motion of Norma Dumbrell and Lily Hanlon with the name correction from Heather Badgery to Heather Reid at the bottom of page 2. Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING:

1. INSTALLATION & DEDICATION SERVICE at Auburn Church of Christ, 90A Auburn Road, Auburn, 10.30 am 20 May 2002. Jean Porteous distributed invitations. Organisation for the service and catering is proceeding. Church is 10 minute walk from Auburn station, limited parking available.
2. STATE CONFERENCE - Sydney Congress Hall Function Centre, Elizabeth Street, Sydney, Monday 16 September 2002 - \$25 per person all inclusive. Robyn Claydon has indicated that she is available as Speaker for the occasion. Flyers will be available for distribution at Installation Day.
3. CITY OF SYDNEY BRANCH. There is a need for a couple of people to liaise with Edith Ridge for October World Community Day.
4. STATE & NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONS - some had been taken at last meeting for their denomination and those who had not received them were asked to get theirs. The NSW Constitution is to be given to new members.
5. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE 2003 - Representatives have been nominated for Presbyterians, but other denominations need to appoint a member and an alternate to the committee - Anglican and Uniting Church need alternate only.

REPORTS:

TREASURER: Marie Majoor presented the statement of receipts and payments for two months ended 28/2/02 showing a balance of \$5757.81. Marie moved, seconded Bev Elliott that the report be received. Moved Marie and seconded Edith Ridge that payments be ratified. Carried

MEMBERSHIP & PASTORAL CARE: Heather Badgery reported that Olive Edmondstone is suffering from shingles, but early medication has been helpful. Cella Cooper is to undergo surgery for hip replacement and was wished well.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN: Shirley Wells distributed a sheet setting out the allocation of grants for projects in 2002. Three Australian requests were met: to train four health care workers from East Timor in Cairns; GFS National & International Conferences Anglican Diocese of Nth Queensland; Embracing People with Intellectual Disabilities, Morley, Western Australia. Shirley led a short devotional from Circle of Prayer - The Voice of Africa - a modern day story with parallels to the story of the baby Moses - set in Nairobi.

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WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP: Mina Whybourne spoke of the Scholar for 2002 who is Lai Mui Ching, known as April from Hong Kong. April has an MA in Social Studies and wants to study theology and promote the role of women by equipping them to take a greater role in the church.

Janet Watts, National Convener has sent a letter from Rev Mary Au in Hong Kong. She had also heard from Doreen Tie Tan, Sarawak who said "my 6 months stay in Australia in 1990 has not only been one of the most rewarding in my career life, but also in my christian life. I always look back with thanksgiving". Catherine Byong-Ok Min was ordained 25 April 2001, the first woman Anglican priest in Korea, sends greetings to all.

Mina had spoken on the phone with Rachel McManus who was very grateful for the "love gift" we had sent her. She said she valued our prayers - would like to resume studies to become a primary school teacher.

Australia is next in turn for a scholar - a woman 25-40 for study in 2003 - applications close end of May and need to be forwarded to Perth before that time.

NEWSETTE: Copy for the next issue will be needed by April Council at latest.

SOCIAL ISSUES: Cela Cooper had received a reply to her letter to the Minister for Immigration. The reply was a standard response which did not directly address the letter sent and came from Gary Hardgrave, Minister for Citizenship & Multicultural Affairs. A recent article in the Sydney Morning Herald expressed grave concern about asylum seeker delays, calling for more staff. Denominations are presenting material to government, and we must keep up concern for people less fortunate than ourselves.

A letter from National had sought a response on children in detention but the time frame had precluded an informed reply. However, denominations are involved in making submissions. National were pleased that NSW had written on the matter of refugees.

Racism Conference held at the Sydney Opera House had been overbooked and Cela was not able to attend. There was little in the press regarding it.

ASIAN CHURCH WOMENS CONFERENCE: Lisa Jackson presented the request for Australian postcards to be given out at the October Assembly in Seoul, Korea. Cards to be addressed to "Dear ACWC member/sister/friend" with a personal greeting and your address if you wish. They should be passed to Lisa by August Council Meeting.

SPECIAL DAYS: Irene Carder reported that order forms for Fellowship Day in July are coming in. Packing will be 27 May 2002. The theme for Fellowship Day is *Rejoice in the Lord*, and for World Community Day *Be still and know that I am God*.

FUNCTIONS: Helen Richardson circulated a board for attendance at Installation Service.

Moved Mina Whybourne, seconded Noelene Roose that the reports be received.



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SISTER LORRAINE PHELAN, Co-ordinator of Refugee Programs with the NSW Ecumenical Council gave some background on the current situation with regard to refugees/asylum seekers - people who have chosen to flee their country of birth for fear of torture or death. She pointed out that our faith tradition begins with refugees - Jesus born in a stable, and then the flight into Egypt to escape Herod. Where would our faith be without the protection given to Mary and Joseph?

There are no UN offices in Afghanistan or Iraq and it may take 3-4 years to be determined as refugees overseas - many just can't wait that long. Refugees do not have choice as to where they go. They do not know about detention centres in this country. Women are the most vulnerable and many suffer the shame of rape as an act of war. Their children don't know what it is like to be free. Some children never recover from their time in detention. The male is often the dominant partner. Sometimes bridging visas are given to children but not to women, so the children have mother in one place, father in another and the children are farmed out. Depression is a huge problem and medical help sometimes very slow in coming. Isolation is a big problem to women - and there are currently 963 women and children in Australian detention centres.

People on protection visas often find form-filling hard to understand - there is a need for all forms to be in the language of the person filling them in. In detention centres boredom is a problem through the lack of activities. There is no schooling except for two hours per day for children over 12 years.

There is a fear of distressing families back home. No other country has mandatory detention and there is a need for a humane level of treatment.

Education and discussion are important in informing the community as to what is really happening. The Refugee Council is a good resource. Phone cards are always valuable - local as well as overseas ones such as Global Gossip and Phone Away. Women at Villawood can use material, cotton, elastic, etc.

There are four stages of detention. Visiting can be arranged, but it is not for everybody. The security processes can be daunting for some.

We had asked that Sr Lorraine focus particularly on women and children and she did that. However, she stressed that we should not forget the men.

Jan Harrison closed the meeting with prayer, praying especially for Jean as incoming President, and for Olive and Cela. She also prayed for refugees and asylum seekers and how we might best help them. Sr Lorraine Phelan gave a blessing.

NEXT MEETING: Monday 15 April 2002 - Morning Tea - Anglican  
Chairs - Baptist

Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN (NSW STATE UNIT)**

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS  
for two months ended 28.02.2002**

CR BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD 1.01.02			6139.75
ADD RECEIPTS FOR TWO MONTHS			
Donations		5.00	
Affiliation		40.00	
Associate Members		40.00	
Stock		104.00	
Newsette		170.00	
FLC		934.26	
Winifred Kiek S'ship		0.00	
Fellowship Day Service		0.00	
World Community Day		0.00	
ACWC Partners		19.75	
Glebe Board - Interest		<u>44.58</u>	<u>1357.59</u>
Bank Interest			7497.34
DEDUCT - PAYMENTS FOR TWO MONTHS			
Newsette - Postage	87.03		
Printing	<u>75.40</u>	162.43	
F'ship Least Coin - Call A/c		1500.00	
NSW Ccl for Childrens Films & TV		27.50	
Jean Arnot Memorial Luncheon—President		45.00	
Government Charges		<u>4.60</u>	<u>1739.53</u>
			<u>5757.81</u>
Love Offering for Rachael McArthur	\$72.60		
CHEQUES FOR RATIFICATION/PAYMENT			
NSW Ccl for Childrens films & TV		27.50	
Beryl McLaughlin—Postage Newsette	87.03		
UCA—NSW Synod—Printing Newsette	<u>75.40</u>	162.43	
UC Investments Services—Tsfr from FLC to Call A/c		1500.00	
Jean Arnot Memorial Luncheon—President	45.00		
Conta entries	<u>180.00</u>	225.00	
Rachael McArthur—Love Offering		72.60	
Jan Harrison—Photocopying	36.00		
Stationery	<u>5.25</u>	41.25	
WCTU—President's Luncheon		25.00	
Isobel Hewitt—Stationery		35.54	