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**** INFORMATION PAGE ****

ALL A.C.W. MONIES -- Affiliation Fees, Fellowship Of The Least Coin, Subscriptions for ACWC News, Offertories for Special Days, Payments or Donations, should be sent to the **TREASURER:** Mrs Marie Majoor,
521 Mowbray Road,
LANE COVE 2066,
(Tel: 9428.2384).

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 YWCA,
WCTU, Girls' Brigade : \$15.00 per annum

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

NEWSETTE is the official journal of the NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women, which 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:**

Mrs Beryl McLaughlin,
2/15 Morwick Street,
STRATHFIELD 2135,
(Tel: 9744.8609).

Changes of Address or subscriptions should be sent to the **NEWSETTE MANAGER:**

Mrs Nola Dickson,
1/14 Forest Grove,
EPPING 2121.
(Tel: 9869.2559)

PLEASE NOTE: ALL CHEQUES to be made payable to **AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW UNIT** and **NOT** to any individual person.



NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -- NSW UNIT

ACW 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 Janet Harrison Tel: 9744.8626

NUMBER 90

Print Post Approved
PP 226253-0005

FEBRUARY 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

My Dear Friends,
We were all shocked and deeply saddened by the horrifying bushfires and the dreadful devastation at Christmas time in New South Wales. Most of us know of relatives or friends who live in the path of fires. For some they came quietly and did their damage, while for others it was the anxious watching and waiting as the fires ran their course, fanned by fierce winds and high temperatures. Many, thankfully, were spared the loss of home, others lost some or all of their home and possessions, but most of all we give thanks that nobody lost their lives.

What a relief when rain fell on some of the worst-hit areas. The prayers for rain - answered, but we need to pray that this will continue. The value of the wonderful work done by firefighters, police, the many, many volunteers, and all who helped care for those in need, cannot be estimated.

I received a circular letter following the fires from a friend who has lived

for many years in one of the worst hit areas; she wrote that waiting for the fires to reach them, she was reading from Isaiah 52, and that Verse 12 "jumped out at me...." "For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard" (RSV).

My friend went on: "We did not rush about, we organised ourselves quietly for days before the fire arrived; we did not take flight in fright and we were very aware of the fact that God and his angels were round about us taking great care of us and we thank and praise Him for taking such good care of us...." The trust and obedience of these folk in the face of fire touched me deeply.

We must continue in prayer for all those affected and involved, and do what we can to help.

Sincerely and with love, *Jan Harrison*

PROFILE OF PRESIDENT-ELECT:

At a recent Council Meeting President Jan interviewed *Mrs Jean Porteous* who has been nominated by the Churches of Christ as our State President for the forthcoming two years.

Jean said she grew up in a Christian home and as a child learned to put God first. She worked as a cashier in Sydney before training as a nurse at Western Suburbs Hospital - a hospital which had a strong Nurses' Christian Fellowship. Although her aspirations were towards midwifery, a vacancy in a leprosy hospital in India was offered and she took up the challenge. Leprosy is a curable disease if given early treatment - true when Jean took up the job and even truer today, as multi-drug therapy renders it inactive in 3-5 years and only 1 year for non-infectious leprosy. People in clinics/hospitals run by Christian missions heard the gospel - felt peace and asked questions about the beliefs of those who ministered to them. Jean said she had many happy memories of her time in India, and she currently serves on the National Council of The Leprosy Mission.

Jean is a Past President of the Churches of Christ Women's Conference and is actively involved with her husband Henry in her local Church of Christ at Carramar. She is on the Board of the United Protestant Association Homes at Fairfield, and represents the Church of Christ on the Executive of Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She works part-time with the maternity section of Macarthur Private Hospital. She is above all a woman of prayer and commitment.

ANNUAL SERVICE OF DEDICATION
and
INSTALLATION OF MRS JEAN PORTEOUS
AS PRESIDENT FOR 2002-2004
at 10.30 am
at **AUBURN CHURCH OF CHRIST**
(90a Auburn Road Auburn)
on **MONDAY, 20th MAY, 2002**
Followed by light luncheon

INDIGENOUS & REFUGEE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS COURT

This was a very special event, which was hosted by ANCORW (Australian National Committee On Refugee Women), the UNSW Centre for Refugee Research, the Asian Women's Human Rights Council and the Aboriginal Research & Resource Centre, University of NSW, at Markets Campus UTS on 4th December. It provided a space for indigenous and refugee women to share their stories, their experiences of discrimination and oppression, their hopes and their fears, through personal testimony, film, song, poetry and ceremony.

It was incredibly moving. Hundreds of women of all ages, races and beliefs shared the pain and the strength of those who have survived human rights abuses and now strive for a better future. From the first words of Welcome to Country by the Elders from Redfern and Sydney and the candle lighting in memory of their dead, an amazing sense of energy and strength permeated the huge gathering.

The notion of racism as the root cause of discrimination and oppression was addressed and developed. Those present were challenged to comprehend its origin and causes and to explore new ways that could lead to the removal of oppression and gender discrimination. The lived experiences of women from Bosnia, Sierra Leone (arguably the most brutal country in the world), Bougainville, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Iraq, and from Australian Indigenous Communities brought reactions of anger, despair, depression and anxiety. May their courage and strength inspire many others to confront issues of common concern and seek new directions for action to produce a better future for all women.

Cela Cooper, Social Issues Convener

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FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:

For the information of any new readers of Newsette - this FLC Badge is a representation of: "Many pairs of hands, folded in prayer, reach out to touch the whole earth."



The FLC Prayer: "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."

FLC Circle of Prayer - a booklet of meditations and prayers for use in the presentation of least coin offerings is prepared by women of different countries and is available from me at the address below, as are FLC Money Boxes, Bookmarks, Prayer Cards and FLC Teaspoons.

It is very pleasing to be able to report that a cheque for \$12,696.50 was sent to our National Treasurer at the end of November. What a lot of least coins this represents!! - coins offered by people from almost every part of NSW, which will be sent with the offerings from the other States and Territories to be used as "gifts of love" for ministries of mercy on every continent and for experience which creates Christian community among those of different national, racial, cultural, economic and denominational backgrounds. Set aside whenever prayer is offered, the least coins are tangible tokens of our prayers and concern.

Never before has the need for prayer been so great, and we can rejoice that as a result of our prayers (offered with our least coins) many, many people have experienced "peace, justice, reconciliation, forgiveness and new life." Let us all continue to pray - especially remembering *Esther Byu*, the FLC International Secretary.

May I remind you that applications for grants must be completed and returned to me by 31st March 2002. Application Forms, with guidelines, are available from me at 125/3 Homelands Avenue, Carlingford 2118 or phone me on (02) 9872.1719.

Thank you again for all your support,
Shirley Wells, FLC Convener

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WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:

It is always a great delight to hear from our Scholars of past years....

Doreen Tie Chin Bing (Tan), 1990 Scholar, wrote from Kuching, Sabah, Malaysia - she was on vacation from the Special School where she still teaches - members will remember that we helped Doreen set up a Toy Library to help parents to become involved in the school activities with and for their disabled children. She and Philip have two children, Heather (3) and Jordan Philip (1) and send all good wishes to ACW.

Rachel Sobana Kanly, 1991 Scholar from Nagercoil, India, is now living in Oman with her husband and two children. One of the parishioners from St Philip's Church, Caringbah, returned to Nagercoil for Christmas and called at Rachel's home and was able to speak to her father and aunt. Rachel is well and happy and we look forward to hearing from her.

Malai Mahamaneerat, 1992 Scholar from Bangkok, Thailand sent best wishes for a blessed and peaceful Christmas and for 2002 - she has a new address but did not say whether she has left the Hospital.

Nighat Gulzar, 1994 Scholar, writes from Philadelphia USA where she and her husband are living at present - possibly indefinitely because of the troublesome times in Pakistan particularly for Christians. She and Asif send best wishes for good health and happiness to all ACW members.

Rachel McManus, 1997 Scholar, is living at Port Macquarie and sent some lovely photographs of baby Ivy May; she had a gall operation during 2001 and hasn't been very well. She sends all good wishes and asks for our continued prayers.

There is no immediate news of *Celestial Lusi*, 2001 Scholar, but we understand she was to return to the Solomon Islands having completed her Diploma of Theology in Papua New Guinea and will continue her ministry within the Women's Fellowship of her church.

Mina Whybourne, WKS Convener

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NATIONAL COMMITTEE:

In a little over 12 months time, in September 2003, the responsibility of forming the National Committee will move to New South Wales, so we need to be on the lookout for people to fill the various positions of President, Secretary, Minute Secretary, Treasurer, Conveners for the Fellowship of the Least Coin and Winifred Kiek Scholarship, and Editor of the National News. Over the coming months, be prayerful whether you feel you may be able to undertake any of these responsibilities.

6.

NSW ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:

The Annual General Meeting of the NSW Ecumenical Council was held at the Salvation Army Citadel in Chatswood on Saturday 27th October. I was in excellent company with Isabel Hewitt, Helen Richardson and Marie Majoor - a bit of a worry, I had better get this report right!

The meeting opened with the singing, a capella (unaccompanied), of a familiar hymn tune to unfamiliar words. Unfortunately someone struck the correct note on the piano at the start of each verse, which most successfully allowed us to hear how abominably flat we were - every time! Devotions were led by the Executive Secretary, *Rev Ray Williamson*, his thoughts prefaced by the adverse reaction to the sky-written sign "Jesus loves you more than you can ever know" pointing to a lack of freedom to speak the message of Jesus in these days.

All committees presented their reports. Each made some reference to the terrible happenings of 11th September; another way of dealing with the situation other than the current retaliation would be good. In anticipation that you would not wish for a blow by blow description of all these reports, I will refer to what I thought to be the major points.

A House Of Welcome has been purchased in Canley Vale for the use of displaced persons and refugees. The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta was thanked for their generous financial assistance and all churches are asked to continue supporting the maintenance of this project.

The Ecumenism Working Group would like more enthusiasm and less indifference from clergy to entice their congregations into more participation.

Faith And Order Committee suggested a need for a change in attitude of other denominations - a focus on mission together and more people in pews interchange, to help bring churches together in unity.

Christmas Bowl Monies for the year would go to the Middle East Council of Churches, so that Palestinians, the most disadvantaged displaced people in the world after 35 years of military occupation, can receive a'd.

National Council of Churches Commission for Christian World Service reduced allocation of income and NSW Council had a \$6,572 deficit.

There was a familiar cry of needing more young people in all walks of the church and involved in the ecumenical council meetings. Our brains were strained once more with three questions regarding the reports, viz

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the personal challenge received, the issues to which council should give priority, and the way these priorities could be reflected in day to day operations. Marie Majoor excelled herself with her input in our group.

Election of officers completed, all Council members were dedicated to God in prayer. Whether rightly or wrongly, I felt a sense of negativity in some reports, even a weariness in well-doing. Several expressed the difficulty in obtaining volunteers to help to meet demand, money is always an issue, so that the closing worship service, reminding us of the greatness of God - to see his face - to know Christ's love and that the Spirit of God is moving among us, was timely. God is, and was and forever will be!

The next meeting on 11th May 2002 will be at Bathurst - not quite a suburb of Sydney to be reached in a fraction of an hour - do you want me to go? To Bathurst that is!

Nola Dickson, ACW Ecumenical Council Representative

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF NSW:

At the recent Australia Day Luncheon "Celebrating Being An Australian" more than 200, mostly women, shared a delicious meal in Parliament House Dining Room and a most interesting program. *Mrs Jillian Skinner MP* was the Parliamentary Hostess and the Guest Speaker was *Ambassador Eileen Malloy*, USA Consul General in Australia, who spoke of experiences representing her country in different places, including Tasakistan and Poland.

A feature of this Luncheon is the presentation of NCW's Australia Day Awards to young women of achievement undertaking tertiary studies or research in the senior years of their education. Nine very worthy young women, some of whom had experienced severe difficulties, were presented with awards for 2002 by *Mrs Alice Spigelman*, the wife of the Deputy Governor of NSW, representing NCW's Patron, the Governor of NSW, *Professor Marie Bashir AC*, who sent a greeting.

Australian Church Women NSW Unit sponsored one of these awards, the impetus being the outstanding quality and achievements of *Fiona Collins*, the recipient in 1996, whose OZINDO Project and Around-Australia cycling marathon was so successful. The recipient of our sponsorship this time is *Joanne Lee Cohen*, who after business studies and secretarial course, and experience in Interior Design & Decoration, is now undertaking a Bachelor of Nursing Degree at the University of Western Sydney. We look forward to hearing of her progress during the year.

(Reported by Beryl McLaughlin, Newsette Editor)

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WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION:

ALCOHOL SAVES LIVES???

News reports keep claiming that alcohol helps prevent heart attacks and stroke. The New England Journal of Medicine published a 12-year research study on 22,000 healthy male physicians aged 40 to 84.

All up, nearly 700 strokes occurred. Figures indicated that those on as little as one alcoholic drink per week fared best. Same benefit remained with up to one drink per day, compared to non-drinkers. BUT, in excess of this, it is well-known to increase heart, liver, kidney and brain disease.

The element in red wine which is cited as helping to prevent strokes and heart attacks is "resveratrol" and it has been demonstrated that there is a much higher quantity of this in red grape juice, so that the desired benefit may thus be obtained without the use of alcohol.

TEENAGE SMOKING:

Peer pressure is a major reason why teenagers, especially girls, take up smoking - be 'cool' like the other 13-year olds.

But parental mimicking is also a major reason - mum and dad set the example. If they fog away, why shouldn't I?

But other doctors believe that the desire to be slim heads the list. Most know that ex-smokers increase weight by 10 per cent, so believe the converse should hold - blame the match-stick magazine models whom most teenage kids idolise in most respects, including body shape.

*(From an article by Dr James Wright in The Northern District Times)
Beryl McLaughlin, WCTU State Secretary*

THE WORD OF GOD IN MINISTRY TO DRUG ADDICTS:

The American Bible Society is working with a ministry to drug addicts and alcoholics from the Spanish-speaking community based near Miami, called Mercy Ministries, which is an interdenominational organisation, with some 30 drug addicts and alcoholics on the program.

Danilo Maqueira, General Secretary of Mercy Ministries was himself saved from drug and alcohol abuse by God, after living rough on the streets addicted to cocaine and other drugs. Ten years ago his life was changed when Christ saved him; and he has not touched drugs or alcohol since - he says the Bible is his most important support because it illustrates the heart of God.

Mercy Ministries treat Bible teaching as an essential part of the program

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for addicts. According to Danilo, drug and alcohol addictions are incurable diseases. Only divine intervention can perform a miracle in the lives of those who live under the influence of these substances. The American Bible Society supports Mercy Ministries through the free distribution of scriptures in Spanish.

(From Bible-A-Month 'Partners')

TOUGH TIMES DON'T LAST - BUT TOUGH PEOPLE DO:

This is the motto for *Karni Liddell* - a beautiful, delicate young girl full of vitality and so open and honest in total acceptance of her situation. The first child of her parents, she was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Specialists advised the parents to make her comfortable and let go - she will never walk.

This gave them "fire in the belly" to prove the doctors wrong. They exercised her, strapped her standing up into a home-made wheelbarrow, had her on a trampoline at 3, swimming at 4, riding at 5. She walked at 3 and won her first blue ribbon for swimming at 8. Two painful, traumatic reconstructions for dislocated knees tested her courage and determination, and realisation of what sacrifices her parents had made kept her positive. She is the Paralympic Bronze Medalist from both Atlanta and Sydney Games in 100m swimming, and aims to compete in Athens in 2004. "Playing small doesn't serve the world" - a line from Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech, and watching swimmers with disabilities inspire this warm, courageous girl as she tries to show people that accidents and disability don't discriminate - they choose beautiful people every single day. Her parents should feel justly proud of her and themselves.

(From Catholic Women's League Magazine "The Flame")

TALKING BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

The overseas work of Christian Blind Mission International has from time been reported in Newsette, but readers may not be aware of its Audio Library, which aims to demonstrate the love of Christ by serving people with print disabilities in Australia through production and distribution of quality talking books and magazines. This is a *FREE* borrowing service for the blind or those with vision impairment or print disability. The service includes Bible Study Material, Devotionals, Christian newspapers & magazines, also a range of fiction. For details, contact the CBMI Audio Library, 1245 Burke Rd Kew Vic 3101. Phone: (03) 9817.3455.

10.

IN DEFENCE OF GLOBALISATION:

Dr Keith Suter is a commentator on Radio 2GB and spokesman in NSW for the United Nations. He is the author of a new book "In Defence of Globalisation"

Dr Suter writes: "There are three types of "globalisation" under way at present: economic (driven by transnational corporations); popular (which is the role of non-governmental organisations or "people power"); and public order (where governments work together to solve common problems.

When people criticise 'globalisation' they are usually referring to economic globalisation; they overlook the other two - more positive - forms of globalisation. In essence, the world is moving from an era when national boundaries were very important to one where they are not. To me 'globalisation' refers to the declining power of national governments, which is more than just economics - it is how the world is being ordered - an entire era is passing away. The transnationals, rather than national governments, set the pace of economic change. The anti-globalisation demonstrators are right to identify the problems that some corporations create, such as the exploitation of labour (including child labour), manipulating national taxation regimes to avoid paying tax, and environmental destruction. But it is worth noting that the corporations are responding to consumer demand; they may stimulate it but they did not create it - people exercise their free will.

While many people in developing countries do have appalling lives in factories, no country has yet found a smooth way to move from an agricultural society to an industrial one. The British suffered from the industrial revolution in the 19th century; now it is the turn of many Asian countries.

A second form of globalisation is "people power" movements (non-government organisations or civil society organisations). These are a way for ordinary people to work together for a better world. Examples include Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Oxfam Community Aid Abroad..

There are no national solutions to transnational problems - pollution, diseases, and changes in weather patterns are all examples of a country's inability to solve its problems on its own. There are many beneficial aspects to globalisation - the challenge is to find ways to make it benefit more people, and create a just world order."

(Condensed from Oxfam 'Horizons')

Something to ponder...

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, we would have something like the following:

- 57 Asians
- 21 Europeans
- 14 from the Western Hemisphere, both north and south
- 8 Africans
- 52 would be female
- 48 would be male
- 70 would be non-white
- 30 would be white
- 70 would be non-Christian
- 30 would be Christian
- 89 would be heterosexual
- 11 would be homosexual
- 6 people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth and all 6 would be from the U.S.
- 80 would live in sub-standard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 1 would be near death
- 1 would be near birth
- 1 (yes only 1) would have university education
- 1 would own a computer

When one considers our world from such a compressed perspective, the need for acceptance, understanding and education becomes glaringly apparent.

Something else to ponder...

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness... you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation... you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

If you can attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death... you are more blessed than three billion people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep... you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish somewhere... you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy

If your parents are still alive and still married... you are very rare, even in Australia.

If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who can not read at all.

Someone once said: What goes around comes around. Work as if you don't need the money. Love as if you've never been hurt. Dance as if no-one's watching. Sing as if no-one's listening. Live life as if it's Heaven on Earth.

(From "Sydney's Child")