



Australian Church Women Inc.

ABN 68 539 329 715



NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS LETTER



Dear ACW members

It gives me great pleasure to be able to greet you and wish you a very meaningful season of nativity.

Thank you all for the work and worship you have been involved in during this year of 2016. Some of this I have been fortunate to see at first hand. It never ceases to amaze me what women can do. In line with our two year theme *Women Empowering Change* you have been empowering change in your chosen patch throughout Australia.

Easter was early this year and I was able to be part of a combined churches witness walk in my area. National Vice President Loyola was also in attendance. This is always a moving occasion as we go through the Stations of the Cross.

During the year I have been able to attend some Saturday Women's Breakfast meetings with guest speakers. It is great to be introduced to projects that are ongoing in various churches. It does involve a good deal of work on behalf of the host church, but worthwhile nonetheless. There have also been some "O" birthdays to be enjoyed.



In May I made a quick trip to England and from there to Portugal (where I served for 4 ½ years) for the opening of a day centre for the elderly and a church. This had been on the go since 1986 so I was invited to go to make sure it happened! It was opened, but could not be used for this event because the water was not connected!!

We had a busy week travelling in Western Australia in July. The Unit had arranged for a group to conduct Fellowship Day in Bunbury, Mandurah and Perth

where they celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Unit and the 60th anniversary of Fellowship of the Least Coin. It was a great time even though it was a bit like a roadshow and the women who supported had to hear the sermon three times.

The 6th August it was my privilege to attend and speak at the memorial/thanksgiving service on your behalf for the life of Mrs Margaret Knauerhase who died aged 102. She is credited with 43

published works including poems, songs and music. She was the daughter of Winifred Kiek and the author of the book *Winifred* so has had a very long connection with Australian Church Women.

An exciting personal trip to the United States in September was for the wedding of my second son. It was a very meaningful and spiritual occasion as well as rejoicing with the guests on the happiness of Jerome and Heather. I have a lovely daughter-in-law so we enjoyed time before the wedding in getting to know each other better. They married on the top deck of a cruise ship on the Hudson River. For the ceremony the ship was docked, but when the reception commenced we went on a dinner cruise and of course we had to circle the Statue of Liberty all floodlit. It was a lovely occasion.



During third school term the Year 9 Schoolgirls Essay Writing Competition was again held. The three schools from last year, Aranmore Catholic College Perth, Torrens Valley Christian School Adelaide, and Moreton Bay College, Brisbane again made it possible for their girls to enter. Congratulations to Elisabeth Anderson and Jemimah Hulme both from Torrens Valley who won both prizes. I am hoping that we can get some more schools interested next year. I think we need to knock on doors early in the year so that the teachers can be forewarned and prepared for the third term activity.

In November I again went to South Australia to join with them in their AGM followed by the 80th birthday celebrations of the Unit and its predecessors. Their theme was "We are the Fragrance of Christ". Their preparation had been carefully made and it was a joy to see and hear of their very active year. Presentations of cheques to various groups represented many, many hours of fundraising and travelling around the State. Congratulations to South Australia on a very fruitful year.

Our own national AGM was held the day after I arrived home and it was great to hear voices of our ACW members from around Australia.

One of the reasons I stayed with ACW when I joined in the 1970's was because of the fellowship of Christian women from a variety of denominations without actually being conscious from which denomination they come because that is not the important thing – the fellowship is very important.

As we come to the end of 2016 my prayer for you is that you will find the God of Love, Joy and Peace amidst all the tinsel and wrapping paper of life this Christmas.

Lynette

