

November 1983.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN N.S.W. STATE UNIT. HIGHLIGHTS OF GROWTH

40 to 45 years on!

The banner, designed in N.S.W., a symbol of outreaching to others, was taken to the Asian Church Women's Conference in Oct. 1978.

From 1938 the N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council carried out much activity in its operation and caring for students and country girls at Wybblena Hostel at Burwood, the name is still retained in the Y.W.C.A. building. This commencement was celebrated in Nov. 1978 at the 40th Anniversary of this organization, now known as Australian Church Women N.S.W. State Unit. At this celebration tea many reminisced and remembered those who had laid the foundations for this ecumenical activity. Barkat, the 1978 Winifred Kiek Scholar, was in attendance, and past Presidents sang the Doxology. Their names appeared on the full list of Presidents, in the printed "Highlights" of the organizations story, which used the ecumenical emblem, at that time.

In 1979 the International Year of the Child was observed at a Prayer Rally in Wesley Chapel, combined with the Annual Service. The Winifred Kiek Scholar was Eita from Papua New Guinea. In Sept. '79 the Sydney National Committee Meetings was a special time of sharing in Consultation with members from Church Women United U.S.A. and New Zealanders. A service in Scotts Church was followed by a reception where members served afternoon tea, and the meetings took place at Wahroonga.

The W.K. Scholar on a limited scholarship in 1980 was Mary from Hong Kong, who studied in New Zealand, and sent this photo with church friends. The other '80 scholar, Elen, after spending some time in Sydney, studied in Melbourne. In May '80 Marie McCann handed over the President's Bible to Glad West at Northside Baptist Church, Crows Nest, when a time of fellowship was enjoyed by the many who attended.

In June '80 5 from N.S.W. and others visited U.S.A. and the Ecumenical Assembly in Los Angeles at the invitation of Church Women United. In Nov/Dec 80 5 from N.S.W. were among the 9 delegates from Australia to attend the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Fellowship of the Least Coin in Manila, Phillipines. They were joined by Rathie Salvaratnam, a previous Asian Church Women's Conference President. Rathie toured Australia in 1981 as the first Winifred Kiek Visiting Fellowship Holder, to promote A.C.W. and F.L.C. The '81 W.K. Scholar was Maline from Sri Lanka. In March '81 tour organizer, Heather Stevens, took a group to visit New Zealand churches.

F.L.C. Silver Jubilee Celebrations were continued round the world in 1981, and N.S.W. produced a silver souvenir bookmark depicting the banner the Australians had taken to Manila, and sold many spoons with the F.L.C. emblem produced by South Australian Unit. The National banner, also designed in N.S.W. was on display in Wesley Chapel when many gathered for this special F.L.C. Celebration, Maline fittingly took part, and a decorated basket was used to receive a silver coin offering brought to this service. As this was also the Annual Service the Executive reaffirmed in the dedication the aims of A.C.W. with the support of Council Members, and following the service the United Nations Year of Disabled Persons was also observed.

For the Silver Jubilee the Asian Church Women's Conference produced a beautiful souvenir book, the cover depicting the praying hands and the lotus flower of Asia. The Vol. 8 Circle of Prayer meditations was printed, with the theme "Prayer-Partnership-Peace" and later the Asian Church Women's Conference celebrated its 25th Anniversary and the magazine has many subscribers. The National Committee Meetings were held in Hobart in August when delegates from N.S.W. attended. At the end of the year the Executive farewelled Maline.

The two 1982 scholars Sala and Miriam didn't visit Sydney. In February '82 Dr. Thelma Adair, President of Church Women United U.S.A. toured Australia and again visited Sydney and A.C.W. accorded her a Reception, at which she addressed those who gathered. May '82 and the Annual Service at Presbyterian Church Lakemba when Glad West handed over the reins and the President's Bible to Yvonne Davis, and the many who gathered enjoyed luncheon, and speeches followed.

September '82 a return visit by members of the Women's Committee of the N.Z. Council of Churches took place, and during their stay passing through Sydney were billeted locally, and accorded a Reception in the city. In Oct. '82 Marie McCann was an Australian representative to Bali Asian Church Women's 4 yearly Conference, and Dorothy McMahon led a Commission on Strategies and Resources for Peace. May '83 and Dorothy, now an ordained minister, was special speaker at the Annual Service held in Wesley Chapel. At the luncheon which followed Life Membership was bestowed on Doris Mitchell. During the last five years Mary Andrews and Marjorie Stanhope became Life Members now numbering eight, and a plaque is presented to them. Tribute was paid to several who had passed away.

At the May Service the Annual Newsletter, now No. 20 was distributed with reports of the year. This now depicts the N.S.W. Emblem which was adopted in 1980, the emblem also appears on "Newsette", the paper inaugurated in 1979, and published four times a year to subscribers, expanding the knowledge of the organization to almost 200 readers.

Where would the organization be without Branches to hold the two services each year? Now there are about 40 country and city centres holding the Fellowship Day Service in July and World Community Day Service in October. The orders of Service are supplied by the State Unit. The W.K.S., Catherine, is studying in Adelaide, and is listed on the full list of scholars since 1965.

She attended the National Committee Meetings in Melbourne in August '83 and shared with N.S.W. delegates. The new National President Lena Meadows heads the Executive situated in Brisbane. The delegates returned with silver spoons and badges depicting the new National emblem, similar to the one used by N.S.W. ^{Unit} with the map of Australia.

So the State Unit continues with its ecumenical activities in bringing the denominations into closer relationship with each other, and may God bless the work of Australian Church Women in the days ahead. AMEN.