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

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.... To **ENCOURAGE** and **RE-ASSURE**....

God will never lead you
where His grace cannot keep you.



NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN - NSW UNIT

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.

PRESIDENT: Mrs Lucelle King Tel: (046) 47.2226

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

A new year has begun, a fresh page in the book of life just waiting to be filled. How will you cover these pages in 1995? I guess there will be a few blots and blemishes on the way but our wonderful God is ready with His spiritual eraser of forgiveness, as He says in 1 John 1:9. However, let us avoid these blots whenever possible, by His power and strength and by being obedient to His word.

My attendance at the Tenth Assembly of Asian Church Women's Conference in Taiwan was a great experience. I learnt a lot and was blessed immensely. I also met and got to know many sisters in Christ who were previously just names to me. The Bible Studies were extremely well presented, especially showing the plight of women in Third World countries. The studies focused on (1) Numbers 27:1-11, The daughters of Zelophehad having the courage to challenge tribal laws and claim their inheritance; (2) Mark 5:21-43, The woman with the issue and Jairus' daughter - Jesus raised women's integrity, rights, personhood and faith; (3) Matthew 25:1-13, The Parable of the ten virgins - women in partnership with women - the five prepared should have helped the five unprepared - we should have the right 'oil' to share; (4)

John 8:1-11, The woman taken in adultery - she found forgiveness and 'worth-ship' - given a spiritual desire.

There were 6 from Australia at the Assembly with 6 from New Zealand, plus some 150 from 17 countries - Cambodia and Vietnam being represented for the first time. I thank God that through ACW National, He allowed me to be involved in such an exciting experience.

The Billy Graham Global Mission is coming to Australia on March 16-18 and I pray that many from within ACW will become involved and be used by God to reach out, through this occasion, to others for Him.

May God bless us all in 1995, as we serve Him wherever He has placed us.

Lucelle King.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness, but thanksgiving for their lives, that we record the passing of three women who had been associated with ACW in NSW over a period of many years:

October 1994: Olwen Lean, Bellingen - served on State Executive and NSW Unit Council for many years. She was a foundation member of LaneCove/Longueville Branch in 1968 and more recently a foundation member of the Bellingen Branch. Olwen was also a Life Vice President of the Anglican Mothers' Union and a member of State Council of World Day of Prayer.

January 1995: Win Dougherty - Life Member, served on State Executive and NSW Unit Council. A Memorial Service will be held on Sunday, March 5, in the Clanwilliam Street Uniting Church, Willoughby - in the afternoon, exact time not known.

January 1995: Sister Lenore Sharry, Melbourne, following a period of illness.

CONGRATULATIONS To Mollie Gilchrist, NSW Council Member and representative of Hunters Hill/Gladesville Branch on the presentation recently of her '50-Years Membership' Certificate from the Anglican Mothers' Union.

BRANCH BANNERS

As we would like to have Branch Banners brought to the Dedication Service on May 15 at Central Baptist Church, would branches ensure that their banner is equipped with a carrying pole so they can be carried into the Service and placed near the front of the church.

WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:

Our loving Christmas greetings were sent to all recent W.K. Scholars - Nighat Pulzar (Pakistan), Doreen Tan (Malaysia), Malai Mahamananeerat (Thailand), Ana Taumoepeau (Tonga) and Rachel Sobana Kanly (India).

Doreen Tie Tan (1990 Scholar) and her husband Philip sent their love and best wishes for Christmas; Doreen is well and had been very involved in organising a Children's Choir with a church choir to present a cantata "Love Is The Reason."

Malai (1992 Scholar) wrote and wished us all a happy Christmas and all good wishes for 1995 - she is finding her present study very hard and values our prayers. Margaret Napier, an ACW member from W.A. was able to visit Malai in Bangkok, and was given a comprehensive tour of St. Louis Hospital. (see Report on Page 4).

Rachel Sobana Kanly (1993 Scholar) also sent Christmas and New Year greetings. She is very busy looking after Brian, now 1½ years old - her 'little naughty one.' Her husband is expected home from Kuwait very soon. Rachel is now working back at the Catherine Booth Hospital and will give us more details later regarding her activities.

Deaconess Barkat Dass (1978 Scholar, Pakistan) wrote recently to Deaconess Shirley Harris "Thank you for praying for Brenton Carey Hostel. I am happy to say that the Lord has answered our prayers. We have a good staff team working in the Hostel. Recently we held an Open Day and the girls presented songs and dramas to parents and other guests. Afterwards the guests were able to buy handicrafts and refreshments which were made by the girls. There has been such a change of attitude among the girls for which we thank God. Their exam results have also improved and a number received high marks. I still have to spend a lot of time in the hostel but now this is less of a burden and more of a pleasure." (Barkat is responsible for all the women's work in the Diocese of Karachi, as well as for the hostel - Editor).

Please continue to pray for our Scholars in their different situations.

Mina Whybourne (WKS Convener)

1995 SCHOLARS:

Two W.K. Scholarships have been offered for 1995 as follows:

(1) Mrs Captain Lily Politini of the Salvation Army, Fiji,

to attend the Woman's Christian Temperance Union World Convention in Melbourne in May, with a view to returning to Fiji to run educational programs on alcoholism.

(2) Miss Rachell Rolland, sponsored by the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union, to attend a Women's Leadership Development Course at the Training In Mission & Leadership Centre, Rabaul PNG (10 months course) to return to Vanuatu to work as a PWMU worker on one of the outer islands.

VISIT TO ST. LOUIS HOSPITAL, BANGKOK:

En route to Laos on a promotional trip for ACWC, I was in Bangkok, Thailand for a few days, so contacted Malai, who with her boyfriend, took me out for a Thai dinner, and also to see her at St. Louis Hospital. On arrival I was warmly greeted by one of the Catholic sisters and taken on a very comprehensive tour of the hospital's facilities.

I have been under the impression that medical care in most of the Asian countries would leave a lot to be desired, but this is certainly not so at St. Louis, which is a private hospital with 250 beds run by the Catholic Church; about 80% of the staff are Buddhists.

I saw several private rooms with bathrooms attached. Some also had an adjacent room where families could stay, with a table & chairs, lounge, refrigerator and cooking facilities. There were other single and double wards and some with 5-8 beds. Beds are available free if people cannot afford to pay.

I was impressed to learn that the hospital does heart transplants. I visited the heart-bypass ward, saw several people on kidney dialysis machines, met a couple of new mothers plus children. On the grounds they have a beautiful chapel, an aged people's home and a small orphanage as sometimes children are not wanted by their mothers, or are left outside the hospital. The Hospital will celebrate its Centenary in 1998 and plans to open a Hospice Care building to celebrate this.

It was very special to meet Malai and visit the hospital where she works. She is obviously well thought-of and is doing some lecturing to junior nurses. The Sisters consider the time she spent in Australia to have been very valuable to Malai and to the hospital, and said they will have to find another person to put forward for the Scholarship next time!

(Report from Margaret Napier in ACW National News)

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:

As I write this report I am surrounded by boxes as I'm right in the middle of moving house. No need to go into details, as so many of you have been through this on many occasions - but after 20 years, being a 'hoarder' and moving into a retirement unit (a matchbox!), I leave it to your imagination to picture the sorting out I've had to do. Can you guess my feelings, when unexpectedly, 75 copies of the FLC 1993 Report were left on my doorstep? The New Year will certainly be a new beginning, and I thank the Lord for His wonderful provision and love.

Since World Community Day last October, I have sent out 180 receipts and letters - the response as always has shown how committed to praying and giving our ladies in NSW are. An amount of \$10,000 has been received for FLC from NSW in 1994, and offerings are still coming in. An encouragement has been the response from some of the Girls' Brigade companies, and I would ask you to remember our young people and their leaders in your prayers. Comments from all who took part in Community Day Services have been more than favourable, and wonderful times of worship and fellowship have been reported.

Still available are: Circle of Prayer Volume 12, FLC Prayer Cards, Offering Boxes and Teaspoons.

May God richly bless you all, as we commence a new year of service together. Please take note of my new address: Unit 125, Hayfield Village, 3 Homelands Ave, Carlingford 2118. Telephone 872.1719.

Shirley Wells (FLC Convener)

ACWC ANNUAL SERVICE:

This Service, which was publicised in November Newsette, was our first holding of the ACWC Annual Service in company with our sisters in many Asian countries who have shared it for many years.

Although only 27 attended, at St. Patrick's Church in the city, it was agreed that this first attempt had been very worthwhile. The excellent address by Marie McCann gave a clear insight into the plight of many of the Asian women, as discovered in her travels. It was agreed that we should persevere with holding this Service and seek to extend its influence, especially to women of Asian origin.

ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE TENTH ASSEMBLY:

It was an enriching experience to be with 127 participants from 17 Asian countries and Australia and New Zealand, last November in Taiwan.

Fellowship and solidarity were created through this Assembly. It was affirmed that partnership in a changing world could only be affected with Christ. ACWC is committed to being in solidarity with the church, the community of the people of God, and to serving all people, with special care for the disadvantaged, the lonely, the elderly, the differently-abled, the orphans and such others.

The Assembly acknowledged each individual's need for forgiveness and reconciliation with each other through active personal commitment to a change in one's self. Commitment was also expressed to promoting family values, believing that the family is God-ordained; also to take decisive action which will lead to the healing process of preserving God's creation.

(Condensed from Report by Joan Tong, ACWC Council Member)

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN (NSW):

Visitors from Japan: In October, NCW NSW was host to a group of Japanese women and two men, from Kanazawa. The Women Pioneers' Room was hired for the occasion, the guests being welcomed with a short background of the Women Pioneers' Society. Some Japanese artifacts were displayed. NCW President, Joan Elliston told of the work of National Council of Women, and Marie Pitts (Convener for Education) gave information on the Seminars on Violence, as there had been a request from the group for information re domestic violence. Major Margaret Sanz spoke on youth homelessness and aged care, and slides were shown about recycling programs. A pleasant afternoon tea was then enjoyed with our Japanese guests.

NCW Woman Of The Year Award: Last August, at the Foundation Day Luncheon in Parliament House, this award was presented (for the first time) to Past President Edith May Cox; the inscription read "for commitment to women and family and related achievements in education and community service. The other nominees (including Deaconess Mary Andrews) received certificates, as just to be nominated is regarded as an honour.

(Condensed from NCW News)

(Editor's Note: It is with great sadness that we record the sudden death of Edith Cox, just after New Year 1995)

HELP CENTRE - ASIAN WOMEN'S SHELTER in TOKYO:

In pain and sorrow, many women knock on the door of HELP. Based on the belief that 'Only God's love can heal them' the HELP staff and volunteers keep busy providing assistance for those in need. Women come from all over the world: Thailand, The Philippines, Latin America, China, Korea, as well as Japan. Regardless of nationality, the burden that women must bear is the same in many countries. Some who come to HELP are pregnant, many bring children with them. The following are some of the reasons that non-Japanese women who have come to HELP this year (1994) have given for coming:

1. Their parents or children in their home country are ill and they need help to get home quickly;
2. They are pregnant or in ill-health and cannot afford the expensive medical costs in Japan, so wish to go home to get treatment;
3. They want to go home to make preparations to marry the man with whom they have been living (either Japanese or someone of their own nationality);
4. They have been living with a Japanese man, but have no prospects for the future with him, so want to go home.

Among the 71 non-Japanese women who have stayed at HELP this year was a Colombian woman, who escaped the day after she arrived in Japan, after learning that she would be working as a prostitute instead of the modelling work she had been invited to Japan to do. Another was a Filipina, expecting a baby, the child of an American serviceman who disappeared as soon as he learned that she was pregnant; told to have an abortion or put the child up for adoption, she came to HELP determined to have her baby and bring it up on her own. Yet another, a Japanese woman, had separated from her baby's father because of his violence; her premature baby had to be hospitalised for two months.

The HELP Centre was involved in the 10th International AIDS Conference, the first to be held in Asia. This Conference saw some hope in methods of preventing the transmission of the disease from mother to child at delivery; it stood out as the first to address in a positive manner the prevention of AIDS among women. It was attended by 12,463 researchers, HIV/AIDS patients and AIDS activists from 130 countries - 7,000 from Japan and 5,000 from other countries.

(Condensed from HELP Network News 'Women Together')

UNITED NATIONS - 50th ANNIVERSARY:

A song sung in 8 languages by Grade 4 students of Telopea Park School in ACT was the symbolic highlight of the launch in Australia of the 50th anniversary year of the UN by the Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade, Senator Gareth Evans. A varied program of speeches, presentations and music in the library of this bi-lingual school marked the beginning of the UN's half-century celebrations. For anybody who thought it a rather low-key launching, Senator Evans and other speakers made the cogent point that the children of this school - and every school-age child around the world - would be the inheritors of the United Nations.

Senator Evans also said "The important thing to recognise about the UN is that it's NOT all about high level diplomacy, or conflicts and crisis, or heads of state and foreign ministers rushing round looking important. It is more than anything about PEOPLE - meeting people's needs for security, for economic well-being, and for personal dignity and liberty.

Noting the political differences that hampered the UN during the Cold War, Senator Evans said that the UN had now entered a new era: "The UN has manifestly not been able in the last 5 years to meet the many new expectations that people have had of it - but this is not the time to lose faith in what it is capable of delivering. It is time to renew the faith, to stimulate a new generation of people round the world to share it, and to get on with the task of making the UN able to do all these tasks that are beyond the capacity of any country or group of countries or organisation in the world to achieve.

(Condensed from UN Association Magazine 'Unity')

GRANDPARENTS ... A BONUS:

Grandparents provide a significant amount of care for children in Australia today; 43% of all informal child-care is provided by grandmothers; 76% of all grandparents help out by minding their grandchildren. Next to mum, grandma is the most likely person to be caring for children, full-time or part-time. Many grandparents care for their grandchildren because they love their children and grandchildren and want to help in any way they can - they see the enormous financial pressure on families today which almost requires two wages to make ends meet. Also they look at the way the tax system

has changed; when they were bringing up their families, rebates were available and the cost of raising children was taken into account. Now the tax system is blind to family life - more than just blind - families actually pay a tax penalty if both parents are not working.

So, grandparents help out by minding their grandchildren, to allow both parents to work. When we boast about the increasing percentage of women in employment, we should remember the women whom the figures are hiding - the vast number of women who aren't counted, but who are still working - the grandmothers who, having worked very hard to bring up their own children, are now turning their hand to bringing up their children's children. Just when they thought they had earned a chance for a quieter life, they are once again babyproofing their houses, rediscovering playgroups and trying desperately to remember the tunes to all the nursery rhymes. Many grandparents take on this task because they see their children as having no choice and they want to help.

However, too many are doing it because their children give them no choice - in too many families, decisions are made about how empty grandma's life is now she has no children to care for, and this supposed problem is solved by handing over the grandchildren; or judgements are made about how much more valuable is the time of daughters and sons, compared to their own parents - therefore the grandparents should free their children from the restraints of full-time parenting to allow them to pursue more worthy and important activities. This rather begs the question, of course, of what is more important than doing a good job of being a parent, of nurturing our future.

Grandparents are a great resource, the best of all possible child carers, because they provide love as well as care. For single parent families they can provide critical support. Grandfathers especially can help fill the hole in a fatherless family.

But grandparents should not be abused. Our workforce and tax system should not be structured on the presumption of loving care given by so many grandparents. Parents should not be arrogant enough to assume that their time is more important than that of grandparents, nor that the job of parenting is not in itself an important and valuable role.

(Condensed from article in Daily Telegraph/Mirror)

FOCUS ON REFUGEES - ZAIRE, TANZANIA:

Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionaries have been directly involved in the happenings in Rwanda and the influx of so many refugees as we have seen depicted on our TV screens. Here are accounts from some of them:

"These days people have actually heard of Goma - 5 years ago they hadn't even heard of Zaire! Nowadays Goma means refugees and everyone knows about the million Rwandan refugees who crossed Rwanda's western border into Goma."

"How you hear it on the radio is nothing compared to what it is really like. Refugees lying on the road, on our roundabouts; all the churches in Goma are full. At our church it is incredible - they're inside, outside in the grounds, behind and next to our house. All around the surrounding houses there's just no more room."

"...experiences which have tested us more than anything else we have ever been through before. After the emotional exhaustion we had experienced previously as a result of simply being near the slaughter in Rwanda, we are now living in the middle of a refugee camp, here in our own house, with people suffering and dying around us. Trying to care for at least some of their needs has exhausted us in every way. Here are some of the things for which we have been trying to find time: co-ordinating meetings with the UN and more than 100 other Aid Agencies who have teams here; efforts to get information/goods from World Food Program; dealing with Zairean authorities about documents, impounded vehicles, etc; transporting to and from the hospital; looking after sick orphans; buying and distributing food and other items; answering questions and requests; arranging flights with MAF via radio; supervising digging of latrines; looking after visitors; obtaining money and accounting for it (in a country which has an inflation rate of 6000%); talking and arguing and running around for a host of other reasons..."

On the other side of Rwanda, just over its eastern border with Tanzania, is Murgwanza Hospital, where CMS doctor, nurse and other missionaries are serving, which was surrounded by some 200,000 refugees, and its wards stretched beyond capacity by those who were ill or had terrible wounds from gunshots, machetes or grenades. All the missionaries tell of the wonderful witness and efforts to help of Rwandan, Tanzanian and Zairean Christians.

(Condensed from CMS 'Update')

CLEAN WATER IN URBAN SETTLEMENT, PNG:

It is not only people in remote rural areas who suffer from lack of safe water and sanitation. For city dwellers, safe water is just as important and sanitation even more crucial, as crowded conditions mean disease spreads rapidly.

Such an area is the Saraga Settlement in Pt Moresby, PNG. It surrounds the city rubbish dump and has developed as people drifted to Pt Moresby seeking work. The Anglican section of the settlement comprises some 40 crowded dwellings, with an average of 15 people in each. Until recently, their entire water supply was a single tap and there were no toilets.

Today, thanks to support from Australian Board of Missions, Aust. Govt. agency AIDAB, and contributions from the local people, there is now a second tap for filling buckets of drinking water and washing small children, a washing facility with drainage for doing laundry, and two toilets. Another improvement was the construction of a large open-air meeting area, which is well used by the youth, Mothers' Union and Settlement Council.

(From ABM News-Sheet 'Partners')

A LEPROSY MISSION STORY for PRAISE:

In 1991 the Field Director described the appalling conditions at Mondjino, a leprosy settlement in north-east Chad in West Africa. There was no treatment or care and an atmosphere of hopelessness and despair. He told the leprosy sufferers he would try to help but couldn't promise anything. There were tremendous obstacles, but they were all eventually overcome. After difficult negotiations with French and Chad officials, a proposal was submitted to The Leprosy Mission and approved as an exciting new venture. It then seemed an impossible task to find committed Christians with the right medical training who spoke both French and Arabic and who wanted to live and work in Chad. BUT, Dr Johannes Schafer and his wife Susanne were willing to go, and had been learning Arabic for two just "just for an interest!" Then, a Dutch nurse who had worked in Sudan and learnt Arabic there, volunteered for Chad. All three had enough French to build on. They have since been joined by a physiotherapist.

A return visit this year showed a transformation - good care and treatment being given, wells the people had dug, mango trees planted, a chicken venture started - a new sense of dignity and hope.

(From The Leprosy Mission 'Update')