

Adelaide. The new address means that items for the Newsletter will come directly to me and not to my old office, thank you. I must apologise for the lateness of this Newsletter, over the last couple of months I have hardly been home for one reason or another and on the top of a very busy time my Mother-in-law was Promoted to Glory, which meant another trip away up to Whyalla, so thank you for your understanding.

I pray that you will all have a wonderful Christmas and that the joy and wonder of that first Christmas will be yours in a new and fresh way. God bless you all.

**WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM POOR AS I AM?
IF I WERE A SHEPHERD I WOULD BRING A LAMB
IF I WERE A WISE MAN I WOULD DO MY PART
YET WHAT I CAN I GIVE HIM
GIVE MY HEART**



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMAN **ACW NEWS**

“We aim:- to unite Christian women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PO Box 527 Prospect East S.A. 5082
(All Newsletter correspondence to this address please)
October - December 2000

FROM OUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT

“Jesus our Living Hope” Was it only yesterday that we were anticipating the dawning of January 1 2000? It seems to be a fact that the older I get, the quicker the years move. What a year it has been! January 1st came and went without any catastrophic event occurring and the year has moved on with its joys and struggles. For me, there was the birth of another beautiful granddaughter, and the wonderful experience of the World Convention of Churches of Christ, where we celebrated with representatives from 31 countries, the joy of our faith and marveled at the awesomeness of our God. As a nation we celebrated “the greatest Olympic Games yet”, and the equally as wonderful Paralympics, and we delighted in the way these events united people from all around the globe. I am sure each one of us had some cause for celebration this year.

As we come to Christmas 2000, we are reminded of the greatest reason of all to celebrate--- the birth of Jesus. Although it happened so long ago, no event has impacted the world to the same extent since. A humble stable, a lonely place! It is here that, to a young woman, is born a baby boy. The Christ, the Son of God who would turn earthly values upside down, and who

would show that it is not about where you are born, or what possessions you have, or where you live that makes you important. Rather it is simply an act of God who declares, "I love you with a love that knows no boundaries, just as you are, yet with a strong desire to help you become all I know you to be." For God, there was, even then, over the cradle, the shadow of a cross.

As you celebrate Christmas this year, I wish for you the joy symbolised by the baby Jesus: but I also remind us all that HOPE was born that first Christmas. A hope that nothing has been able to quench in 2000 years. As one of your gifts this Christmas, will you, with me, commit yourself to being bearers of that hope to all who touch your life.

I wish for you all the abiding peace of God, which will enable you to live "above" the circumstances of life, and find joy in your living.

MARJ DREDGE (President)

ASIAN CHURCH WOMENS CONFERENCE

ANNUAL SERVICE 2000
(NSW UNIT AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN)

Sunday November 5 saw the culmination of the planning and preparation for this year's annual service in which we celebrate the partnership of AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN with the ASIAN CHURCH WOMENS CONFERENCE. This year the venue was the Salvation Army Sydney Korean Corps in Belmore.

Some 125 people gathered for A Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. Participating in the program were members of council and representatives from the participating churches. Items were

presented by the Salvation Army Sydney Korean Corps – two items, one by their Home League Timbrels who presented a wonderful display with choreography, also Lisa and Andrew Kim who played praise choruses on the Flute and Clarinet; also the Salvation Army Bankstown Band who not only accompanied the singing but also presented two items. Two wonderful choirs were present, the Women's Christian Temperance Union Korean Singing Group, who sang 4 very beautiful Korean songs and the All Nations Choir from the Belmore Church of Christ who sang two full choir numbers and their leader Deborah Tin sang a solo. Well known hymns of the Christian church were sung by the congregation in English, Chinese and Korean: "TO GOD BE THE GLORY", "WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS", and "HOW GREAT THOU ART".

Mrs Jan Harrison, President of the NSW Council chaired the programme, introduced by Major Joan Tong the ACWC Convenor.

A happy time of fellowship concluded the afternoon – the proverbial cup of tea.

REPORT OF ACWC VISIT TO BANGLADESH

GENERAL

There is a population of 13.4 million people in Bangladesh in an area of 54,000 square miles. Upon arrival in Dhaka near midnight on 5/10/00, I was unprepared for the mass of humanity at the airport and in the streets. I quickly found the ACWC sign and met up with Andrew (NCCA-B) who was to be our guide/protector for the duration. As the driver was putting the luggage into the car, a poor boy with one leg appealed to me for money – had I followed my heart I would have been swamped by the needy milling around us. About the traffic on the way to the YWCA – the bicycles and motorized rickshaws are obliged to give way to

the cars etc. The drivers keep their hand on the horns until the rickshaw drivers move out of their way. All this happens at breakneck speed!

The accommodation at the "Y" was basic, clean and comfortable, and we greatly needed the mosquito nets on our beds. The food was similar to Indian, and tasty. I imagine it was a feast compared to what our neighbours may have been eating. The cook did everything to please us. Bananas were plentiful, and we found out the apples were imported.

EXPOSURE

We visited the Baptist Sangha School for Blind Girls, and enjoyed the company of their principal, Manju Samaddar during our meeting and Consultation. The girls sang, "We shall overcome" at our closing liturgy; needless to say it was very moving.

The Director of the Christian Council of Development, Bangladesh, thanked us for our visit and said our presence was so important. He said, "go, listen and cry." Mr. Isaac Baroi of the CCDB took us to an air-conditioned sari shop where some of us purchased beautiful saris whilst sipping tea in comfort. Isaac then took us to the factory (an open ended shed) where children wove the fabric for the saris. There was a little girl of about eight near us, and we were told she worked from dawn to dusk for \$5.00 per MONTH. We felt like taking the saris back. No childhood, education or development for this child.

We were pleased to welcome the President of the National Council of Churches - Bangladesh (NCC-B), Mr. Susanta Adhikari, and Secretary, Mr. Subodh Adhikari to our Consultation and liturgies. Speakers included Rev. Martin Adhikari of World Vision; Ms. Towhida Khondaker who spoke on the social and legal aspects of Violence; and Mr. James Das, a teacher, who answered the question, "Why is the Church silent."

He spoke of the lack of Christian people with higher education. Some people go to America to study and do not return to Bangladesh. "We have buildings, churches, hospitals, but no trained Christian people, only Muslims. We need educators and trainers to help our people to be leaders and move out of our poverty," he said.

Other presenters included our own Nancy Lin, Iuminada Domingo, Rebecca Choi Yin, Somsri Chaiyasate and Barbara Lacy. A copy of the Consultation Statement is printed for your interest after this report.

I must comment on the difference our visit made to the Christian women of Bangladesh. At first they were quiet, timid and withdrawn. At the closing liturgy, James Das said to me, "Look at our women." They were smiling, singing and dancing with us. What a privilege to share our Faith and support our sisters in Asia.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I know this report is fairly long but I felt that you would want to read all of it so that you can pray more intelligently for this area.

ACWC 'VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN' CONSULTATION BANGLADESH, OCTOBER, 2000

At the start of the new millennium, we, Christian women and men of the 17 member countries meeting at Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 12-14 October, 2000, for the Consultation on 'Violence Against Women' organized by Asian Church Women's Conference (A.C.W.C.), strongly express our concern at the continuing violence especially against women and children. We denounce all forms of violence against people.

Our churches, as communities of faith, carry pastoral responsibilities for the abused and the abusers. All people have

the fundamental right to safety. All people have the right to be valued for themselves and their gifts.

Based on the Christian teaching, the Church should provide pre-marital counselling; continuing family counselling, and provide education in family values and parenting skills. The Church should provide professional assistance to both victims and perpetrators of violence with compassion and sensitivity.

NEWS FROM A FORMER WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLAR

This is a précis of a letter received by Margaret Knauerhase from Nighat Gulzar who was a former Winifred Kiek Scholar who came from Pakistan.

However, at the moment, she is in the U.S.A. and is working as a computer database accountant. She is impressed not only by the size of the U.S.A. but even more by the fact that everybody is free and there are no restrictions of speech. She attends the churches there. She remembers her visit to Australia and would like to come again as she really loved it here. She sends greetings to the S.A. Unit of Australian Church Women.

Her present address is:-

P.O. Box no.5722,
Philadelphia,
PA 19120,
U.S.A.

We thank Margaret for passing this letter on to us and I would also like to acknowledge the fact that in our last Newsletter the poem that was included called 'Carve From Your Day' was actually written by Margaret, so we thank her very much.

VICTORIAN UNIT

In our last Newsletter we congratulated Rathie Selvaratnam on being made a Life Member of Mothers' Union. Since then I have received a letter from Rathie with an article from the Mothers' Union Newsletter about her award which gives a run down of the great work that she has done over the years. Maybe some of you will be aware of all she has done, but for those who don't know, I will attempt to glean some points out of the article.

It was her branch of MU which nominated her in recognition of her 54 year membership in three countries and six different Dioceses. A member of ACWC since 1962, being President from 1966-1970. On World Day of Prayer Committees since 1940 being the first Chairman of the International Committee of WDP in 1967-68, as well as various positions with ACW since 1977.

She has travelled to many countries all around the world in many different areas of ministry as well as here in Australia. She has managed to include in this bringing up three children and now, in retirement with her husband Father John, enjoys seven grandchildren. We thank God for her life and for the many people she has been able to contact for The Lord.

Also in our last Newsletter we congratulated Lt.Col. Isabel Macintyre on becoming a Life Member. News has come through that on the 27th November Isabel was Promoted to Glory. We thank God for her life and Ministry and we pray for her family at this time.

FROM THE EDITOR

You may have notice a different address at the beginning of the Newsletter, this is because I have had a change of Appointment and I am now the Corps Officer of the Nailsworth Corps here in