

# Australian Church Women National Conference



22-26 September 1997

John XXIII College, Australian National University  
Canberra ACT



Theme: Jesus Christ - The Way Ahead

## MINUTES

**AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN - NATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**22-26 SEPTEMBER 1997**  
**JOHN XXII COLLEGE, AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**  
**CANBERRA ACT**

**"JESUS CHRIST - THE WAY AHEAD"**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1997**

**CONFERENCE SESSION 1**

The session commenced with the singing of the theme song '**Jesus Christ the light for my path**' written for the Conference by Major Lynette Green, the Australian voting delegate to Asian Church Women's Conference. (Appendix 1)

**Welcome** In declaring open the 1997 National Conference, National President, Evonne Sullivan, welcomed Delegates, Observers and Visitors. A special welcome was extended to Rev Iluminada Domingo, ACWC Executive Secretary; National Life Members Olive Ackland, Ruth Burmester, Marjorie Verco and Dorothy Wright; Judy Harvey, President, Church Women United, Aotearoa/New Zealand and Margaret Cook, Treasurer, CWU, Aotearoa /New Zealand.

**Devotions** Lt. Col. Beth Webb (National Executive) led with a hymn (Appendix 1) and prayer.

**Greetings** Received as per attached list, were read by Jean Thomson, National Secretary, and Jan Abrahamffy, National Assistant Secretary. (Appendix 2)

**Appreciation** Thanks were expressed by National President to Captain Maree Hambleton of Queensland who designed the art work for the Conference and produced the Conference Banner.

**Apologies** Jenny Jarvis, National Executive  
Alice Springs Branch  
Darwin Branch  
Beth Finlay (NSW)  
Val Van de Wiel (Incoming National Executive)

**Remembrances as printed in the Working papers:**

Deaconess Mary Andrews; Dr Juliet Backhouse; Mrs Jean Buesnel; Mrs Betty Crouch; Miss Phyllis Davis; Mrs Verna Glastonbury; Mrs Helen Ireland; Mrs Bettie Saint; Mrs Lila Williams; and in addition , Mrs Jessie Dennys; Mrs Irene Dingell, Mrs Mary Earner.

Deidre Hunter (Tasmania) reported that Rachel Cox, a National Life Member of ACW, passed away just before the 1995 Conference but members attending the Conference did not hear of her death until after the Conference. Her name to be added to "In Remembrance" .

Honours In addition to those already notified in the Working Papers. Jean Thomson (National Secretary) reported that on Saturday, 20 September, 1997, Evonne Sullivan (National President) was made an Archdiocesan Honorary Life Member of CWL of the Archdiocese of Canberra/Goulburn, at the Archdiocesan Annual General Meeting.

Working Arrangements

National President introduced Cathy Belos of John XXIII College who welcomed us and spoke of 'housekeeping' arrangements made for participants. Appreciation was extended to Eileen Holley for stepping in as Official Hostess in place of Jenny Jarvis.

Book on South Australian history will be on sale during Conference.

Wellspring Ecumenical Book shop will conduct a bookstall for the convenience of participants on Thursday

Crested items are for sale, also cards, and a range of knick knacks.

There was some discussion about the cost and value of group photos. National Executive had decided not to have full group photo because of high cost. Tomorrow when three new National Life Members are admitted, National President suggested that all 7 National Life members assemble under the Conference Banner for photographs. There would be opportunities during Conference for Unit and denominational photos.

Coach Marshals Jan Abrahamffy (National Executive), and Dorothy McMaster (National Executive) were introduced. They would be responsible for the transport of Conference participants to and from various venues during Conference. First trip would be to St Andrew's Church Forrest for ecumenical service tomorrow. Please assemble outside College at 9.30am, and travel on same coach each way.

Roll Call A total number of 35 voting Delegates present, to whom Blue voting cards were issued.

Honorary Scribe

Joan Smith was introduced and Delegates/Observers were reminded to give their names and designation clearly when speaking.

Presentation of Working Papers

Two Notices of Motion have been received from Tasmania.  
Additional Alterations and amendments - As per list included in folders

Procedural Arrangements

National President drew attention to Procedural Arrangements on Page 9 of Working papers. By a show of cards members accepted these arrangements.

If any State/Territory Unit has any business to add to the Agenda (if time permits), written copy has to be in the hand of National Secretary by 9pm tonight.

#### Selection of Reference Committee

It was proposed by the National Executive that Shirley Birch (SA) (**Convenor**); Olive Ackland (Vic) and Ruth Burmester (ACT) constitute the Reference Committee. **Confirmed by Conference**

**Scrutineers** Shirley Wells (NSW) and Margery Scurlock (WA) were appointed Official Scrutineers. **Confirmed by Conference**

#### Minutes of National Conference 1995

Amendments as per list on Page 11 of Working Papers plus in Addenda - apologies to two organisations whose reports were not included.

#### Additional amendments:

Page 6 of Minutes - Mothers Union in Australia line 3 should read "indicated that nine of the seventeen **Provincial** Presidents of Mothers' Union...."  
Page 5 - L. Green was Representative of National Executive not Victoria.

#### Minutes of National Conference held in Victoria in 1995.

It was moved by Barbara Lacy (Victoria), seconded by Janet Watts (WA) That the Conference confirm the 1995 Minutes including alterations and amendments.

**Motion carried**

#### Business Arising

**Item 1:** Observer of **Household of God** January 1996. Eunice Reidy attended Conference and in July 1996 Evonne Sullivan attended **2nd National Forum** of National Council of Churches in Australia.

National President feels the relationship with NCCA is fragile. The attendance of ACW Observers at both **Household of God**, and the **National Forum** was a move in the right direction. The provision of a NCCA Report in the working papers and the attendance here of Ronis Chapman (Network on Women and Gender Relationships) was heartening. Evonne expressed her pleasure at the warm greetings received from the new NCCA President Archbishop John Battersby.

**Item 2.:** (95/13) National Executive elected not to take up recommendation to appoint a National Convenor for Social Issues. Jean reported that all correspondence was received at the one address, and expertise of members of National Executive was utilised to address various issues as they arose. Beth Webb and Jean Thomson made a submission to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Violence in the Media.

**Item 3 :** (95/16) **National Life Members Roll** is now up to date thanks to Jenny Jarvis (National Executive).

**Item 4:** 95/18) **National Bursary Book**. Now known as **The Honour Roll** has also been brought up to date over the last two years, thanks again to Jenny Jarvis. All additional entries have been appreciated.

**Item 5:** (95/22) Letters had been written to Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, regarding the campaign to ban landmines and a reply had been received. Letters tabled. - Both items of correspondence had been circulated to State/Territory Units.



**Item 6: (95/29) First National Ecumenical Aboriginal Christian Women's' Conference.** December 1995. Beth Webb (National Executive) reported. Jenny Jarvis (National Executive) and Beth attended on behalf of ACW. A report was published in ACW News. The first four days Aboriginal Women from all over Australia met on their own. A time of grieving. On fifth day others joined. Beth stated it was hard not to feel guilt for what has happened to aboriginal women. On the last day discussions were pulled together and people were looking ahead.

Unfortunately information has not been disseminated - no report has been made; no minutes of conference; no recognition of funding by ACW towards cost of the conference. Good things came out of the conference for Aboriginal Women but it is regretted that there has been no reporting.

Marie Majoor (Catholic Women's League, Australia) has been in touch with people concerned and is still hoping for information to come forward.

Eunice Reidy (previous National President ) pointed out that aboriginal culture is so different to ours - time wise.

Edith Ridge (National Archivist) was a member of Conference and told that a video was made of the Conference but may have been lost when the owner's house was burnt down.

Joan Tong (NSW) stated that a video costing \$55 was held by NSW Unit. Available for loan to other units.

**Item 7: (95/30) Disbursement of Disaster Fund.** \$1600 was contributed towards the purchase of a new bus for the use of Malmaluan Training College in Rabaul PNG. A letter of thanks was received and a photograph of the new bus. Thanks of the National Executive to Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive) for help given.

**Item 8 : (95/41)** A letter of support and encouragement to **Pacific Council of Churches** had been written in 1995 but ACW has, as yet, received no acknowledgment.

### **Inward Correspondence**

A letter was received from Heather Reid (NSW Unit) too late for the last meeting of the National Executive Re **United Nations Convention on the Rights Of Child**. The letter was read to the Conference. A call for Submissions was advertised in newspapers earlier this year, (closing date in October). National President proposed that this letter be held over to General Business when it can be discussed, Incoming National Executive may wish to prepare a submission. **Agreed**

National Secretary read a letter from Rathie Selvaratnam (Mothers Union of Victoria) urging support for Aboriginal Reconciliation. National President spoke of this being a sensitive issue and inquired if it had been discussed by Victorian Unit. The answer was in the negative.. **Agreed** that letter be held over to General Business for discussion if time permits.

Deidre Hunter (Tas Unit ) tabled a copy of Mia Mia Magazine containing the article on Aboriginal Reconciliation

Motion moved Janet Watts (WA Unit) seconded Dorothy Ferrier (Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust) that -

**Incoming correspondence be received and outgoing correspondence endorsed.** **Motion carried**

## Unit Reports

Motion moved Olga Scott (National Executive) seconded Averil Jell (Queensland) that  
**-Unit Reports be taken as read.** **Motion carried**

In speaking to the reports:

**Jean Hambley (ACT Unit)** spoke of the visit from Deaconess Burkat Dass to the Unit, members were saddened to hear of her death, so soon after she returned home.

**Peg Blake (NSW Unit)** -In May NSW Unit was represented at the Reconciliation Conference in Melbourne, and NSW sent a representative to NAIDOC Week in July when an ecumenical luncheon was held.

A question put to her - can we have clarification of eligibility for affiliation of ACW. Motion on this issue will be submitted.

**Northern Territory** reports read by Jan Abrahamffy (National Executive) National President visited **Northern Territory** in July 1996 and was overjoyed to formally establish a Branch of ACW in Darwin. Subsequently National Vice President Betty Farrell visited Alice Springs and was able to encourage ladies there. Pleasure in having Branches in both Darwin and Alice Springs. Alice Springs recently held a Fellowship Day Service and luncheon with attendance of just over 30. Planning to have a morning tea with Elizabeth Appelby, wife of Bishop of Northern Territory, and Co-Convenor of the Darwin Branch of ACW when she visits Alice Springs. It is the realisation of a long held dream for Evonne to see establishment of Branches in Northern Territory.

**Averil Jell (Qld Unit)**: pleased to have two ladies from Mackay and Rockhampton, as visitors to the Conference. Congratulated National Executive on correspondence, it is important to keep all Units informed. Asked for prayers for Anne Green (Qld) and husband on Thursday, as Wal undergoes serious surgery.

**Lois Harris (SA Unit)**: - disappointed not to have NT represented. Multi cultural fellowship is good. Enjoyed having National President present for 60th Anniversary of their Unit. History book of SA Unit will be on sale. Encouraging progress on land mine issue. Looking to future with hope that ACW will become relevant to younger generation.

**Narelle Digney (Tas Unit)** : Highlight over last two year to learn more about different denominations. Suggested card be sent to Anne Green (Queensland) telling her we are thinking of her and husband and trust good results.

**Barbara Lacy (Vic Unit)** : spoke of the Vic Executive worshipping as a group at one another's churches. Recently received legacy to Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust

Margaret Watson (Treasurer) has presented a budget for next 9 years. Looking at whole structure of ACW.

National President had the privilege of attending Victorian ACW Unit AGM recently, and enjoyed this very much.

**Janet Watts (WA Unit)** complimented National Executive on professional work done.

National President asked how many State Units have branches. **Answer - 4.**

**Judy Harvey** for the **New Zealand Observers** commented favourably on reports heard. Their Church Women's United Group is different - smaller. The National body is based in Christchurch. Each member has a maximum of 8 years (2 four year terms) and can take a number of responsibilities during that time. They have branches in Auckland, Hamilton, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill. Run similar programs to ACW.

Appreciate very much meeting interdenominationally.

## **National Archivist Report**

Edith Ridge (National Archivist) assured members that archives are safe even though they are not growing very much. Stressed need to keep records safe because once lost they are lost for ever. Anything relevant to National Records is welcomed. Edith is willing to help anyone who needs information from the past. National President said that Edith had on occasion researched the Archives to obtain necessary information for National Executive, and for this Evonne expressed appreciation.

Discussion followed, Edith answered a number of questions from the floor.

Jean Thomson (National Secretary) urged everyone to talk with elderly members about times past and glean their memories - make tapes of their conversations.

Helen Lloyd (National Treasurer) asked how soon should articles go into Archives. Edith stated - as soon as you have finished with the material.

Lucelle King (Australian Baptist Women) understood Unit Secretaries should keep own records for 7 years.

Queensland Unit has Attendance Books which go back to 1947.

National President reminded members of the incident we heard of earlier when material was lost in a house fire.

Edith Ridge (National Archivist) stated that she understood that Polystyrene boxes will not burn. If a 'toilet' insecticidal block is included it will deter insects.

Reappointment of the National Archivist. Edith agreed to undertake another term as National Archivist. National President thanked her for her interest and dedication to duty. Delegates unanimously agreed that Edith Ridge be reappointed as National Archivist..

## **CONFERENCE SESSION 2 - Monday 22 September at 7.00 pm**

### **Motion 1**

The New South Wales Unit moved :

***That the name of the National body - Australia Church Women - be changed to - Church Women United (Australia).***

The motion was formally moved by Peg Blake (NSW Unit)

Rationale - We don't always worship in the same way, but we all serve the one Lord. We need to be seen to be United in our service to the Lord Jesus Christ. The same initials do belong to some other bodies and it would take some time to be known.

The motion was seconded by Marie Majoor (Catholic Women's League, Australia) who reserved the right to speak.

Rev. Lee Edwards (UC Adult Fellowship) in supporting the motion, spoke on being committed to history. We will be much more part of the world with the change in name, and allied to the nation.

Janet Watts (WA Unit) supported the motion. The "United" says something.

Anne Murray (SA Unit ) speaking against the motion, said she feels history is Australian Church Women. Name changes are expensive.

Deidre Hunter (Tasmania Unit) spoke against the motion because ACW does not quote denominations, which points that it is united. Australia is something we are proud of.

Averil Jell (Qld Unit ) against the motion said Australian Church Women says exactly what we are. As ACW we are already united. The cost of new badges, which have just been purchased, would incur great cost.

Jean Hambley (ACT Unit) against the motion: ACW is already an all inclusive name. Cost of badges, stationery is expensive. ACW is very well known. Why change just for change sake.

Dorothy Ferrier (Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust) Australian Church Women is mentioned seven times in the Deed of Trust, and we have been informed by our Honorary Solicitor that it is ill advised to keep changing the Deed of Trust.

Marie Majoor (CWLA) - who had reserved the right to speak. Part of history is that the organisation was Inter-Church. ACW is not well known. Many women have not heard of it. It doesn't describe what we are. People know the word 'United'. Agrees it would take time to make change and it is down the track. Think about the word "United" - meaning that we are part of an organisation under that name.

Peg Blake ( NSW Unit) - mover of Motion, exercised her right of reply. Appreciates points of view of Units who have spoken against the Motion. Would like to think the suggestion of a name change stays in the pipeline.

**The motion was put to the vote. In favour 8. Against 24. Motion lost**

**Presentation by Victorian Unit -**

**Discussion Paper on Future of Australian Church Women (Appendix 3)**

Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) presented the paper and asked that all of us think about ways in which we can increase the scope and influence of Australian Church Women on the life of the churches in Australia. She asked that we exchange constructive ideas in the hope that they may be of assistance to other Units.

Comments from Participants -

Heather Reid (NSW Unit, Observer): Girls Brigade became affiliated two years ago. Could be leaders for future. Girls Brigade participates in Fellowship of Least Coin. How many Units have contacted their local Girls Brigade?

Betty Farrell (National Executive): ACT has contacted Girls Brigade in the past with no response, but obviously need to follow up again.

Aileen Mortensen (Queensland Unit): Tried to make contact with Girls Brigade. They were not interested at that time in Queensland.

Judy Harvey (NZ Observer): Suggested putting information on Internet. Although we may know little about this, children will happily use E mail. Vital to tap into Internet - use modern technology which the young people know.

Lois Harris (SA Unit) spoke of working with other ecumenical groups in their State.

Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive ) Queensland Unit have observer status with Queensland Churches Together.

Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ): spoke of people being committed to ACW for 5 to 15

years. Younger women do not commit for long periods, therefore we need to get young women from other church groups, and let them know of projects or 'causes' that they can be committed to for short term.

Anne Murray (SA Unit): Causes such as Chaplaincy in Schools involve some parents who come to the morning teas. People in local churches have been invited this year to hear talks on Domestic Violence. Just a trickle came and were interested in the topic and the cause and appreciated that older women were concerned.

Margaret Greenslade (SA Unit): Lynette spoke about younger people becoming involved: need to get a specific cause that they can become involved in, - that they can own. Community Concern Morning teas achieve this. Sometimes after grants have been given to groups not necessarily Christian it can turn them towards Christianity.

Evonne Sullivan (National President) was impressed with amount of work the South Australian Unit had done:- including organising 'Community Concern' morning teas, Unit Executive each year had contacted a host church in a particular area, and nominated a worthwhile project. Teas are always chaired by executive of ACW.

Betty Farrell (National Executive): As President of ACT Unit went to a 'Round Table' conference chaired by Senator Margaret Reid. One of the subjects discussed was that of Post Natal Depression - ACW is concerned for young mothers suffering this.

Averil Jell (Queensland Unit): Need for more promotion.. We own ACW, each individual member - we are it. If we can get the message across that it is ACW which promotes FLC and WKS Scholarship, then we are ahead. Individual groups cannot do projects on their own but as an ecumenical body together can achieve much. Promotion is important.

Lucelle King (Australian Baptist Women): Much depends on the area in which you live. In her outer urban region of Sydney no-one knew of ACW. Took time to make a breakthrough in one area but she had no joy in another area.

National President: Promotion is the number one priority. Jenny Jarvis (WKS National Convenor) recently moved to Griffith, NSW, where nothing is known of ACW and according to Jenny 'they don't want to know about it'. Evonne asked for input from Units who have branches.

Shirley Books (Tasmanian Unit): Tasmania is a small area. We wrote to King Island and asked would they like to become involved in Special Days and got a good response. Members from Launceston visit them. Suggested we should write to groups and encourage them to become involved.

Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit ) Asked who Tasmania unit wrote to.

Shirley Brooks (Tasmania Unit): - Any church - find a contact and write to them. These are not really branches because they only support Special Days Services and meet two or three times a year to organise such services

Marie Majoor (CWLA): In NSW we have found that when one church organises an event, they invite all other churches in the immediate area and so get to know what each group is working for. NSW Unit of ACW Council meetings attract some people who come long distances to attend. Many churches are not affiliates of ACW but send money for Fellowship of Least Coin. This is sowing seeds. Suggested having Trading Tables at events and give money back to own community.

Maureen Clark (SA Unit): Southern branch of ACW has been in existence for over 25 years - Branch met monthly. Had morning teas, Fellowship Day, used to have children's fashion day but this has become out of favour, film mornings for Schools Chaplain. Contact churches not involved in branch who are in area.



Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive) Queensland has three country branches - Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay and several other areas. Branches receive minutes from State Unit and National body. Other areas receive Special Days Orders of Service plus World Day of Prayer. The Queensland Unit Convenor of FLC travelled to Maryborough and received a cheque for \$100 which was collected over last five years.

Edith Ridge (National Archivist): As NSW Unit Special Days Convenor stated that 35 bundles of Fellowship Day Orders of Service and 43 for World Community Day are sent out. Some groups are meeting with President, Secretary, Treasurer and this works well but others very unstructured. Need someone who is committed to ACW. A group consisting of office bearers of different denominations is a way to make it work. Information in magazines is a secret weapon. Edith has a great advantage for her husband is the scribe for 'Insights' (the NSW Synod of the Uniting Church monthly free magazine) and Edith uses her influence to make sure information about ACW goes in.

Joan Tong (NSW Unit) Spoke of need to disseminate information to denominations and ACWC Service contact groups of different cultures with a task force to follow up personally. Have a publicity person to send notices to radio stations, giving a contact number, use free columns in newspapers.

Shirley Brooks (Tas Unit). Suggested making personal contact with a person who might be interested in FLC, and would be interested in collecting money for FLC. Ask her, then make follow-up contact.

National President. Regarding publicity - how many when returning to their own State will provide a report on this Conference for their church papers? She suggested that each Unit write one A4 page on the ACW Conference. - and send copies to local/state publications. Evonne stressed that 'Communication is the Key.' in promoting any organisation.

Lynette Green (ACWC Representative): Before coming to the Conference Victorian Unit did a media release to all church papers about the Conference, featuring Iluminada Domingo, which received some coverage.

National President thanked everyone who participated in the discussion, which had been informative and interesting. She suggested that members adapt some of the ideas to the needs of their own Units. Things that work in one area, may not work in another.

Evening devotions were led by the **Western Australian Unit**.

The closing time of 9pm had passed for the reception of any General Business not included in conference agenda.

## **TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER**

The National Conference Ecumenical Service was celebrated at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Forrest, at which the speaker was Mrs Janet Wood of Melbourne. It was a privilege to have Her Excellency, Lady Deane participating in the Service. The procession of State/Territory Unit banners into and from the Church was a colourful highlight of the service. The service was followed by Luncheon for 160 participants and guests in the adjacent Hall. A copy of the Order of Service is held by each State/Territory Unit.

### **CONFERENCE SESSION 3 Tuesday 23 September at 2. pm**

National President, Evonne Sullivan welcomed everyone to the Third Conference Session, especially Day Visitors present. Evonne referred to the very successful Ecumenical Service at St Andrew's this morning and thanked Betty Laurie (National Convenor for Special Days) for her work in arranging the service. Cassettes of the service will be available. Evonne welcomed 1997 Winifred Kiek Scholars, Ms Rachael McManus from Sydney and Capt. Joanne Harries from Tasmania.

**Conferring of National Life Memberships.** National President drew attention to the ACW Constitution:- Section 4.1.3 - Life Membership: and announced that it was her pleasant duty to confer National Life Membership on three outstanding members of Australian Church Women.

Jan Abrahamffy (National Executive) read the profile presented in Working Papers for

**Mrs Ailsa Skippen.** (Queensland Unit) National President presented the badge of National Life Membership to Ailsa thus bestowing National Life Membership. Ailsa replied - she has the honour of being the first Queenslander to receive this honour.

Jan read the profile for **Mrs Shirley Brooks** (Tasmanian Unit) and National President presented her with the badge of National Life Membership. In replying Shirley told us that the first ACW meeting she attended was as an observer, "because a friend needed transport".

Jan read the profile for **Mrs Vera Wilson** (Western Australian Unit) and National President presented the badge of National Life Membership to Vera. In her response Vera spoke of the beginnings of ACW in Western Australia.

National President pointed out that each State/Territory Unit now had one National Life Member which is the constitutionally allowable quota. Evonne congratulated the three recipients on being recognised for long and distinguished service to ACW..

### **Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust Presentation**

Dorothy Ferrier (Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust Chairman) in introducing the business of the Trust first listed the Trustees, saying how pleased she was that Trustees Margaret Greenslade, Jess Horton, and Barbara Grealy were present at the Conference, and explained that Trustee Norma Bishop had been unable to attend.

The Conference formally endorsed the appointment of Mrs Barbara Grealy OAM as a Trustee. Dorothy Ferrier (Chairman), and Jess Horton (Treasurer) were duly reappointed for a further term.

Dorothy Ferrier then introduced both 1997 scholars. It is a real privilege to have them present giving Conference participants a chance to meet a 'real, live WKS Scholar!'. Joanne and Rachael were special as they were the first Australians to receive Winifred Kiek Scholarships.

**Captain Joanne Harries (Tasmania)**, spoke of her aims. The mother of tiny twins, she depends on the Lord for her strength. Felt her call to ministry is to work with women in many different spheres - building people up. Receiving the 1997 scholarship enabled her to be trained further for her chosen occupation and study for a Bachelor of Theology in the area of Pastoral Care. Joanne thanked the members of ACW for their support of the Winifred Kiek Scholarship which has enabled her to do this study.

**Ms Rachael McManus of Sydney**, thanked the ACW for the blessing of the 1997 scholarship. She is an Aboriginal Youth Worker in Redfern, and spoke of working amongst her people there, mostly with young women. Her main focus is on building relationships; helping young single parents; giving support at courts and teaching Religious Education at schools. She said that the scholarship had assisted in ongoing studies for her profession.

#### A Background to the Winifred Kiek Scholarship

Dorothy Ferrier (WKS Trust) continued with the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust presentation, giving a summary of the life of Winifred Kiek, from the book written by her daughter, Margaret Knauerhase. (Copy held by each State/Territory Unit)

**The Winifred Kiek Scholarship** was started first for Asian women and was intended for those taking leadership. In the early days courses in universities were free and students were hosted by members of ACW.

Dorothy explained the process of choosing those nominated for a scholarship. Changes have recently been made to the way scholarships are awarded, making Australian women also eligible.

Dorothy announced that the 1998 Scholar is **Milise Taipaleti** who was nominated by the **Sia'ato utai Theological College** of the **Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga**. Milise was born in 1973, her parents are farmers in Tonga. Milise will undertake a Master's Degree in Biblical Studies at Melbourne College of Divinity.

Dorothy read a Hymn which Margaret had written about the Trust. (Appendix 1)

Dorothy read Winifred Kiek's Favourite Benediction

Now may the hope of a better world, a worthier life, a holier morrow and a sweeter thanksgiving inspire us all with patient continuance in well-doing, and may grace, mercy and peace from Father, Son and Holy Spirit remain with us a now and always. AMEN

Ruth Burmester (National Life Member) moved, seconded by Barbara Bourhill (Western Australian Unit) that -A vote of thanks go to Margaret Knauerhase for the Hymn/Benediction.  
Motion carried

**Address to the Conference by Rev Iuminada Domingo**  
**Executive Secretary Asian Church Women's Conference. Appendix 4**

In welcoming Iuminada to the Conference, National President acknowledged to the generosity of both ACWC and the Winifred Kiek Trustees in funding her travel for the visit. It is a great pleasure to have Iuminada with us for the 1997 National Conference of ACW, particularly as she is such an extremely busy lady.

Rev Iuminada Domingo said she spoke on behalf of the sixteen member countries of Asian Church Women's Conference and brought warm greetings from all of them to their Australian sisters. In the presentation on 'The Asian Woman' which followed, Iuminada pointed out that she is like the bamboo in many ways; she screams out against injustice and physical, emotional battering, just as the bamboo thicket 'screams' when in a fierce wind storm; she is strong because of flexibility; and has the ability to rise from adversity, just as the bamboo will send out new shoots after a disastrous fire.. Bamboo is the symbol of resistance and endurance in Chinese philosophies. (Precis of talk attached)

Asian Church Women Conference celebrated the tenth Quadrennial Assembly in 1994 and launched a 3 part program, a) to develop/educate women , b) to equip women and c) better stewardship and resource development.

a) There are three main areas of education:

1) Lay Information - not limited to any age, our women must be better educated as to gender awareness, in the bible, and in society. Seminars on the elderly have been held in Japan, India, Sri Lanka as well as other places.

2) Curriculum development -ACWC is still looking for a financial partner in this field.

3) Scholarship program to fulfil the vision of our founding mothers. The present scholars from Myanmar are studying nursing and theology

b) In equipping women to better serve their communities, we are networking with government organisations. I recently returned from a Conference in the Netherlands, where I spoke on 'trafficking' with particular reference to women from my country, the Philippines. It is important that Europeans are listening to the voices of Asian women. In networking with other organisations, Christian women have an avenue to work out their faith. Also we express solidarity with victims. We join in prayer and work on global issues eg., In Europe, they are legalising prostitution - In Asia we are very much against it.

Our ACWC Office provides a listening ear for victims; with spiritual and legal counsel etc.

c) In promoting better stewardship and use of resources, we must find strategies for fund generation. It is important that ACWC establish an Endowment Fund - the signature cards you all received earlier this year are part of this plan. Giving \$1.00 and signing the card shows that you are in solidarity with Asian sisters.

We at ACWC are interested in setting up a 'revolving fund' to assist women to work/ market their own products among their own people, and not have to migrate in order to send funds back home to keep, their families alive.

The fourth area is that of publicity. ACWC Bulletin costs only \$15.00 per year. It is important that many women who do not live in Asian countries read this and become aware of the policies and programs of ACWC.

Iuminada answered many questions which enabled participants to better understand how ACW is allied with ACWC and just what Australian Church Women can do to support their sisters in Asia.

#### **CONFERENCE SESSION 4 Tuesday 23 September 7.00pm**

Housekeeping announcements:

Eileen Holley (National Executive) warned members that if keys are lost there is a \$35 replacement fee.

Members asked to please leave Hymn books in auditorium.

Olga Scott (National Executive) asked members to let her know of any changes in travel arrangements.

Prayer Partners sheets were handed out.

#### **Election of ACWC Voting Delegates.**

The voting strength was checked - there being 34 voting delegates present.

The Official Ballot papers were distributed to voting delegates.

At the invitation of National President Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) explained what would be involved in the 4 year term commencing in November 1998.

Lynette outlined the financial arrangements as decided at last Executive Committee of ACWC. In future, the fares of 4 Australian delegates will be paid by ACWC. Accommodation and Registration to the total of approximately US\$ 200.00 must be met by the delegates. No fares or other costs are paid for observers.

Leeola Loughnan (Western Australia) withdrew her name from list of nominees

Voting then took place for two (2) ACWC Delegates

The result of the ballot was -

1. Barbara Lacy, Victorian Unit - (20 votes);
2. Jean Thomson, ACT Unit - (12 votes)
3. Pat Walker, South Australian Unit - (2 votes).

**Barbara Lacy and Jean Thomson were declared elected.**

Barbara Lacy, having gained the highest number of votes, becomes the ACWC Australian Representative for a four year term commencing November 1998, at the conclusion of the 11th Quadrennial Assembly of ACWC.

Barbara responded and thanked members for the honour. Jean responded - an honour that ACT Unit wanted to nominate her and looking forward to attending. National President advised the unsuccessful nominee, Pat Walker (SA), that, in the event of either elected delegate being unavailable she would automatically fill the vacancy. Lynette asked the three nominees to meet her after the meeting closed.

#### **Asian Church Women's Conference Report**

In speaking to her report Major Lynette Green said:

I am very pleased to have Iluminada Domingo as our guest at this Conference. It gives us great joy to be able to show her our wonderful country and for her to meet the fantastic women who are involved in Australian Church Women. Iluminada, we thank you for your words to us this afternoon.

I have not a lot to add to my report, suffice it to say that we are doing well with our articles



for the Asian Church Women's Newsletter. Australia has had an article in 9 of 11 issues. There is a very lovely Aboriginal iconograph to appear in the near future.

Thank you also for the indications of a good response from the Signature Campaign cards. We have not put a date of return on these, but I urge Units to get them in as soon as they are filled in. Thank you for what you are doing to raise the awareness and finances of Asian Church Women's Conference so that we can fulfil a relevant and useful place in the Asian scene.

Since the report was written, I have received the 1997 ACWC Day Liturgy. The Theme is **"God calls the Church to be Bearers of Hope"** It was written by the women of the Philippines. I have a copy for each Unit. Please try to use this Service either in its entirety or at least in part.

Tonight, we voted in two delegates to the Asian Church Women's Conference 11th Quadrennial Assembly to be held in Chang Mai, Thailand in November of next year. The voting representation from this country is 4 delegates, as I have indicated. This includes any who are currently on the General Committee or the Executive Committee. Joan Tong was elected at the last ACWC Assembly to serve on the Executive Committee and we congratulate Joan on that achievement, and I thank her in your presence for her contribution to that committee. I am on the General Committee as your representative. With Joan and myself already delegates to the next Assembly, and with Jean Thomson as the second delegate, we will have our full contingent.

My term of office concludes at the end of the 11th Quadrennial Assembly. The incoming ACW Australian Representative, Barbara Lacy, will commence her 4 year term from that time.

Illuminada commended Major Lynette Green for her work - a lady who has a lot of wisdom to share. Also Major Joan Tong - commended and respected.

Lynette said it would be preferable to have representatives under 35!. Also useful to have an indigenous person. Now is the time to think about this and plan for the future!

Lynette also told us that on 30 June (date of hand over of Hong Kong) a motion was passed at the Victorian Unit meeting to write to Rev Mary Au in Hong Kong and subsequently a reply had been received. Lynette read this letter. Mary asked for prayers for wisdom in her work.

### **Financial Report of Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust**

This report was not in the Working Papers because of a delay in having the papers audited, but the Report was in the Members' Folders.

Moved Dorothy Ferrier (WKS Trust), seconded Marie Majoor (CWLA) that the Financial Report be accepted. **Motion carried.**

### **Reports of the National Executive**

It was moved by Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ), seconded by Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit) that the reports of the National Executive be accepted. **Motion carried.**

**National President** In speaking to her report Evonne Sullivan said that throughout her term of office she tried to keep in touch with members, particularly by means of the 'President's letter' in ACW News. She felt it important to tell everybody of happenings while current. Visits to State/ Territory Units had been most worthwhile

On 27/ 28 August at Parliament House she attended the National Round Table of Women's Non - Government Organisations as the representative of ACW. This was the first time that ACW had been included among the 47 organisations represented. The occasion was very fruitful: Other representatives expressed pleasure that there were church based groups present. Evonne had received an invitation from the Prime Minister to attend the relaunching of Dame Enid Lyons book "Among the Carrion Crows". - on Thursday 25 September.

On 8th September Evonne attended the Presbyterian Women's Association Federal Conference in Sydney - an informative and enjoyable occasion. She felt privileged to be invited to attend.

**National Secretary.** Jean Thomson said that two sets of Minutes had been sent out since the Report was written. Tried always to get Minutes of National Executive meetings out promptly, (before they were confirmed at the next meeting) as National Executive thought it important that Units be kept informed of Executive action. Jean appreciated the prompt response which came when Senator Jocelyn Newman, the Minister assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women sought priority issues on "Matters of Concern for Women into the next Millennium" Jean recommended that in the next two years a real effort be made to get Unit Minutes to the National Secretary soon after Unit meetings.

**The National Treasurer,** Helen Lloyd, spoke on Audited reports. Honoraria had been paid to the ACW National Honorary Auditor, of \$100.00; the Winifred Kiek Trust Honorary Solicitor, \$50.00; and Winifred Kiek Trust Honorary Auditor \$100.00.

A motion was moved by Helen Lloyd (National Treasurer) and seconded by Barbara Lacy (Victorian Unit) **that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Motion carried.**

A motion was moved by Helen Lloyd (National Treasurer) and seconded by Anne Murray (SA Unit)

**That the National Executive deduct an amount not exceeding 10% from Fellowship Day, World Community Day and Fellowship of the Least Coin offerings/collections, for administration costs, until the next National Conference.**

**It is further recommended that State and Territory Units follow the same procedure.**

Janet Watts (WA) asked if the motion meant that 10% could come from each State's account and then 10% from the National account.

Helen replied that it was not necessarily 10% but that up to 10% could be retained

After further discussion the motion was put to the vote. **Motion carried.**

National President proposed a vote of thanks to the National Treasurer who had kept the books immaculately and always completely accurate. **Passed with acclamation.**

**Fellowship of the Least Coin** Eileen Holley (National Convenor for FLC) spoke to her report. Eileen recently moved from Canberra to Sydney, but endeavoured to attend National Executive meetings when possible. She felt privileged to go to New Zealand, representing ACW, for the 40th Celebration of FLC in Christchurch in 1996, and thanked Units for their generosity in assisting with travel expenses. A report was subsequently sent to all State/ Territory Units.

Two FLC grants have been allocated to Tasmania - one grant of US\$4,000 for the development of a School Chaplaincy at Launceston College and another grant of

US\$2,000 for the development of resources for women training for ministry at the WEC Missionary Training College.

An order was placed for Circles of Prayer No 14 but as Eileen had heard nothing about expected date of arrival at the end of last week she sent a FAX to a lady in Winnipeg, Canada. An answer was received today, - *that they were being sent by boat, and would arrive at the port at Canberra*. There was great concern about the delay in the arrival of the booklets and many suggestions about how to expedite their arrival.

It was moved by Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ) and seconded by Lee Edwards (Uniting Church Adult Fellowship): -

**That action be taken immediately to make phone contact with one of the Canadian people concerned to expedite delivery** Motion carried

As Eileen's term of office concludes on Friday there was concern that it would be difficult for the new National Executive to pick up this matter. Eileen is prepared to see the matter to a conclusion.

It was moved by Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit ), seconded by Olga Scott (National Executive):

**That Eileen Holley be authorised to pursue the matter of procuring the Circles of Prayer and sending them out to recipients thus bringing the matter to a conclusion before handing over to the incoming National Convenor FLC..** Motion carried.

Lynette Green (ACWC Representative) stated that the 1999 issue of Circle of Prayer will probably be brought home in suitcases by those who attend the ACWC Assembly in Thailand late in 1998.

National President thanked Eileen for the effort put into her Convenorship - it has not been easy, but on several occasions, thanks to Eileen's expertise, calm emerged from confusion!.

**Special Days** Betty Laurie (National Convenor for Special Days) thanked Captain Maree Hambleton of Queensland for the design of Art Work for the last two Special Days covers and the National Conference Banner.

Betty commented that her late husband had been thrilled that National President had made him an "honorary" member of National Executive, in recognition of his proof reading of Orders of Service!

**National Publications Editor** Beth Webb (National Publications Editor) asked that Units let the Editor know quickly of changes in Executive and always give correct addresses. She asked that regular news items from all Units be forwarded to the Publications Editor- please share news, as it is an important way to keep in touch.

Beth wished Major Miriam Pratt (Incoming National Publications Officer) joy as she undertakes the task of producing ACW News.

**Winifred Kiek Scholarship** In the absence of Jenny Jarvis (WKS National Convenor), Betty Farrell (National Executive) presented the report. Betty said that everything Jenny has done or promised to do had been done excellently. Even after she moved to Griffith NSW, she attended National Executive meetings regularly. Seven names have been added to the Bursary Book. Jenny's presence is missed at the Conference. Betty passed on her best wishes to Jenny's successor.

**Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust** Dorothy Ferrier, Chairman of WKS Trust, said it was important to appreciate that the Aboriginal Consultation was for Aboriginals by Aboriginals. At the 1991 Conference a sum of money had been put aside for the purpose, following that, there had been many letters to and fro between many bodies and ACW. It was wonderful to know that the vision of those who passed that motion in 1991 had been honoured. Although we would like to have had some feed back we know that the money given was appreciated.

Joan Tong (NSW) said that the video is still available from the Aboriginal and Islander Commission of National Council of Churches of Australia.

Dorothy thanked Units for their support of the Trust and expressed thanks to the National Executive for their prompt replies to queries, letters etc.

It was wonderful to hear Iluminada address us today, the WKS Fellowship has been well spent. Dorothy expressed the hope that all members of Units who have the opportunity to meet with Iluminada in the next week or so would come to better understand what ACWC is all about.

We thoroughly appreciated having both the 1997 Scholars with us today, and wish them both well for the completion of their studies.

The Trust is looking forward to working with the new National Executive.

At the close of the session, **The Tasmanian Unit conducted Evening Devotions.**

### **WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER**

**Morning devotions were conducted by South Australian Unit.**

### **CONFERENCE SESSION 5 Wednesday 24 September 9.00am**

#### **National Denominational Organisation Reports**

Moved Dorothy Ferrier (Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust), seconded Lee Edwards (Uniting Church Adult Fellowship) that -

**The Reports be accepted.**

**Motion carried**

#### **Anglican Mothers' Union in Australia**

Mina Whybourne (Mother's Union in Australia) spoke to the report. Within the Anglican Church of Australia, there is an active MU membership in all of the 23 dioceses, with a total Australian membership of over 11,000 and half a million world wide. Lady Eames, wife of the Bishop of Armagh, is the World President, and recently visited Australia as part of a world tour. Sydney Diocese sponsored Rachael McManus, 1997 Winifred Kiek Scholar.

Mina spoke of Deaconess Mary Andrews who died recently. A foundation member of ACW with continued involvement up to the time of her death. She will be greatly missed. The Deaconess College in Sydney has been renamed Mary Andrews College and in Blakehurst the Anglican Retirement Village has been named Mary Andrews Village, with a portrait of Mary featured there, in honour of this wonderful lady

### **Australian Baptist Women' Ministries**

Lucelle King reported that after the Convention in January 1997 the National Executive of Baptist Women is now based in Perth. It is the umbrella organisation which holds together all Baptist structures. Lucelle regretted that in some States, Baptists have not yet shown interest in becoming involved in ACW - they don't know what they miss!

### **Catholic Women's League Australia (Inc.)**

Marie Majoor spoke of the 38th National Conference in Hobart, from which she has recently returned, with 350 women attending and wonderful speakers.

There are 13,000 members in Australia in all States and Territories. A very pleasing happening is that Catholic Women's League Australia (Inc.) has been granted roster status in its own right at the United Nations meetings of ECOSOC. (This is in addition to World Union of Catholic Women) National President asked whether anyone had been nominated to be the UN representative. Marie replied that unfortunately there is not enough money to fill the position but that CWLA will use someone who is travelling or diplomatic staff/spouses to attend meetings.

### **Church of Christ Women's Ministries**

Eunice Reidy in speaking to the report, said that the Church of Christ Women's Ministries National Executive is also in WA. They are looking at new ways and new methods of work within the church. The new National Co - ordinator has highlighted the Theme - 'Looking at new ways, new methods and new things'.

There was a gathering in Adelaide two years ago with the theme "Women 2000" and the second one is planned for NSW in October 1997. They are reaching a lot of younger women.

Marge Dredge from South Australia is looking forward to leading 'Women of the World' in the year 2000 in Brisbane.

### **Salvation Army Australia Eastern and Southern Territories**

Lt. Colonel Bernice Woodland spoke of the structure of the Salvation Army in Australia - thus the two reports. Eastern Region covers Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT; Southern Region covers the rest of Australia.

Bernice thanked ACW for the way in which the Salvation Army is accepted in all Units. She spoke of the work of Hilda Sigley from the Eastern Region in Africa, Hilda is at present battling cancer and prayers are needed for her. The work of the Army in Women's Ministries is inter - denominational and the four-fold banner includes Education - Worship - Fellowship and Service.

National President spoke in appreciation of the efforts of the two members of The Salvation Army on the National Executive. On hearing of Ken Jarvis' accident and the fact that Jenny could not attend the Conference, Evonne acted on Lt. Col... Beth Webb's suggestion to seek Major Eileen Holley's help - because "we Salvationists are used to being asked to do a job". Eileen immediately agreed and has done a marvellous job as official hostess. Beth Webb's thoughtfully prepared devotional program has been a highlight of National Conference.



### **Uniting Church Adult Fellowship**

Rev Lee Edwards reported that the National Committee for UC Adult Fellowship is also now based in Perth.

The National Committee is an umbrella organisation to encourage and resource Synod Committees. Both women and men share the responsibilities of the Adult Fellowship in the Uniting Church.

The work of the UC Adult Fellowship includes involvement with Women's organisations of the three churches from which we came. This includes the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the World Assembly of Methodist Women. (of which Joan Stott, known to many present is an Office Bearer)

Lee congratulated National President on her good management of the National Conference, particularly her humour, used to such good effect.

### **SPECIAL INTEREST REPORTS**

#### **World Day of Prayer, Australia**

Barbara Grealy in speaking to her report, said she had both pleasure and regret in presenting the second of two reports to ACW.

Pleasure because she appreciated the opportunity to present a report of the Australian working group to the National Conference and regret that this will be her second and final report. The position moves to another State every four years. Noeline Bruce will present the report in 1999 at Brisbane.

A copy of the Report of the Meeting of the International Committee of World Day of Prayer, held in Melbourne in 1995 was tabled.

Copies of Guidelines for Local Committees were tabled.

The next International Meeting will be held in Capetown, South Africa in April 1999.

National President made a small presentation to Barbara in recognition of her outstanding work for World Day of Prayer, Australia

#### **The Girls' Brigade Australia Inc.**

Renelle Neale, National Administrator, in speaking to her report thanked ACW for the invitation to attend, saying this was her first Conference.

The Girls Brigade is a body in 57 countries of the world, divided into two regions at present. Australia is part of the Asia Pacific Region, the Atlantic Region includes all the Northern hemisphere countries affiliated. There are 264 Companies in Australia with 10,000 girls involved. Next year an International Conference will be held in Brisbane with 290 leaders attending plus a special International Camp for 250/300 girls from all regions of the world. At this Conference it is envisaged that the Girls Brigade will be divided into five regions world wide Europe, Africa, Asia, America and the Pacific (including Australia and New Zealand).

On the 4th October the Australian Triennial Conference will be held in Western Australia with 80 participants registered.

Renelle explained the process of girls, from 5 years upwards, earning awards, with badges to place on sashes with the highest award being the Queens Badge.

### **Woman's Christian Temperance Union of NSW Inc.**

Beryl McLaughlin in speaking to the report, told us that it was not truly a national report, only covering New South Wales. She told how the WCTU had commenced in NSW in 1882, and has been an active organisation ever since, affiliated with the NCW of NSW since the beginning of that organisation.

We would like to think that we could achieve as much as the women of 100 years ago. Like so many organisations, WCTU has a problem with ageing, low membership and the need for younger people to become involved.

WCTU works with other organisation to help solve the problems of drugs, alcohol. We have recently commended the NSW Commissioner for Police on the recent "Harm Minimisation Program " throughout the State. WCTU runs a successful Schools Program using puppets, and recently included their brochure on 'Peer Pressure' in a mail out from a large High School.

The White Ribbon badge is still recognised everywhere, we are still an active organisation after over 100 years.

### **National Council of Churches of Australia Network for Women and Gender Relations**

Ronis Chapman in speaking to the report said she felt the group is starting to come together. They have a huge mandate:- to offer recommendations to the NCCA General Committee on matters relating to women.

A survey of women in the Church is currently being put together, it is obvious that a great variety of work is being done by women in all member churches of NCCA.

The Network is a National body, currently based in Sydney, but Ronis finds it hard to co-ordinate with other members.

Edith Ridge, ACW National Archivist, is also a member of the Network

National President, Evonne Sullivan attended the 2nd National Forum of NCCA in Brisbane in July 1996 as an official observer.

**Housekeeping matters.** National Treasurer indicated that if units wish to take back crested items in bulk this is permissible and they will be billed for them.

Anne Murray (SA Unit) said that the SA ACW History Books are on sale for \$5.

### **CONFERENCE SESSION 5 Continued Wednesday 24 September 10.30am**

#### **Motion No. 2**

The New South Wales Unit moves:

**That Australia should apply for membership of the International Committee of the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC)**

Moved Jan Harrison (NSW Unit) seconded Peg Blake (NSW Unit)

Joan Tong (NSW Observer) was given permission to speak to the motion, and said that although we are pleased to be part of the Asian body of Church Women, we feel that it is

right to have our own country's body, as a separate part of the ICFLC. NSW Unit thinks that ACW's monetary contribution is sufficient to warrant this motion to be a member in our own right. We do not wish to secede from ACWC, rather have additional membership as an individual country in ICFLC

Barbara Grealy (World Day of Prayer) speaking against the motion, said that Australia is part of the Pacific Council of Churches. In an International Committee with representatives of all countries you could finish with a committee of 148 countries! Whereas this aspect has been kept manageable by having representative of different world areas.

Margaret Cook (NZ Observer). told us that Finland, Canada and Brazil represent their own region. South Pacific is represented by Fiji.

FLC National Convenor Eileen Holley, read Membership Guidelines ...This always goes by regions - Australia is linked with Asia; New Zealand with Pacific. But there is no harm in asking can we become an individual member.

Margaret Florence (Incoming Executive) spoke against. Canada is a region on its own. Relating to finance - do we have an idea about what financial commitment would be involved - would we be able to provide finance.

Lois Harris (SA) against. Concerned re finance. Until some definite information on the makeup and organisation of ICFLC (the Constitution) would like to vote against.

Olive Ackland (National Life Member) Concerned about statement "because of amount of money given". Money is not the most important part. Prayers are the important part. This is why against motion.

Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) gave some clarification -

Illuminada attends meetings as a representative but is ex officio. We are represented by the President of ACWC Woronut Patapong and Vice President Rita Wong.

New South Wales right of reply -Jan Harrison (NSW) We are an ecumenical region. Membership is not consistent with finance. The responsibilities of membership are there.

The motion was put - For -2. Against 33.

**Motion Lost.**

National President thanked NSW Unit for bringing forward the matter, which raised valuable discussion.

Motions 3 and 4 are no longer relevant. **Jan Harrison (NSW Unit) formally withdrew Motions 3 and 4.** submitted by New South Wales Unit

#### **Motion 5**

The Trustees of the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust

Dorothy Ferrier Chairman of Trustees moved **That the surplus funds from the 1997 and 1998 scholars be credited to the Winifred Kiek Fellowship Fund.**

Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive) seconded the motion.

The motion was put - For 35. Against - nil

**Motion carried**

Bible Study commenced at 11.30 am conducted by Sister Lorraine Gatehouse CSB

In introducing Sister Gatehouse, Beth Webb (National Executive) told us that Lorraine is a well known educator in areas of Faith, highly regarded in ecumenical circles, and not only in Australia, but world wide .

Sister Lorraine asked us to reflect on women on a journey, and asked us to listen to the spirit of God, as he speaks to our world, our culture and our needs.

As we consider our Conference Theme ' Jesus Christ the way ahead' we must try to understand what this means for today. We must take a trip back to the early history of the church. Biblical scholars are now able to give us new insights, into the divergent story, feminist story.

The reading Luke 10: 38 - 42 is the story of two women. Listen to the story as it is read. Luke is trying to give women a better place in the community. This also occurs in Acts, and Paul's letters, where the idea comes through that women were part of the public ministry of the early church.

Women DO have a place, We are claiming that place in the world in 1997.

Like puts this story in the 'journey' section of his gospel, just after the story of the Good Samaritan, with Jesus questions to and the reply from the lawyer. about the Torah.

Elizabeth Schuster- Fienze in her interpretation of the story reaffirms that the study of the Torah was a totally male pursuit, so girls were not educated. Therefore it was a totally unheard of thing for Mary to 'sit at the feet of Jesus the Teacher' to be educated. In those days, the only way was to listen and remember what the teacher spoke about. Jesus reply to Mary tells us that He was affirming a woman's right to be educated, just like the men.

This has implications for today. We need to have reflective/ contemplative times and 'sit at the feet of Jesus' But we live in a different time, have a world full of conflict.

When we meet with our God, it is a place where all people in the world meet. One cannot be a private Christian, we are called to grapple with challenges, and to be 'in the world'

We need to understand how we can make a difference, for example by being present at Parliament House to protest against the proposed overturning of the Wik decision, we need to be seen to be in solidarity with our Aboriginal sisters.

Jesus wants us to do more than 'sit at His feet' We are called to have Life and that in abundance.

**After Lunch -**

**Participants took part in either a Coach tour of Floriade, or Canberra Sights.**

#### **CONFERENCE SESSION 6 Wednesday 24 September 7 00 pm**

(Voting strength 34)

National President welcomed Marie McCann as a NSW observer .

Shirley Brooks Tasmania read a poem/ prayer

National President informed the meeting that she had received a letter informing her of a bequest to the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust of \$1,000 from the estate of the late Deaconess Mary Andrews. The cheque was handed to National Treasurer who would process same and hand the legacy to WKS Trust. A letter of thanks would be sent to Mary's executors.

**Motion as distributed with Conference papers.**

From the Tasmanian Unit: moved by Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit) seconded by Narelle Digney (Tasmanian Unit)

That as a result of the misunderstanding of a potential applicant of the word Multi Cultural we move: -

**That the word Christian Women should be adopted to simplify the information dispensed by the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust.**

Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit) in speaking to the motion said that Multi-cultural was to cover everybody, so no-one was excluded, but however was seen to only refer to people of migrant / ethnic background. Christian Women takes in everybody. As Paul says - we are all one.

Narelle Digney (Tas Unit) The words **multi-cultural** are used where we are looking for someone other than of Anglo-Saxon background.

The ACW Guidelines (Page 10) were quoted - The scholarship shall be offered to Christian Women.

Dorothy Ferrier (Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust) stated that when the wording was changed it meant absolutely every woman who lived in Australia. The perception of multi-cultural has changed over the years. She felt that the application form makes it clear that we mean everybody in Australia.

Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ) spoke because some of these changes took place during her term as the National President - Some of our people in Australia, including indigenous sisters, don't feel they are able to apply for this scholarship. The words 'Christian Women' are already there. Important to have 'multi cultural' there to encourage other people (not Anglo -Saxon ) to apply.

Betty Farrell ((National Executive) Quoted from minutes of the last conference on page 14 -ie. That the Winifred Kiek Scholarship be offered only to women of multicultural Australia .. ie.. Aboriginal, Islander, Ethnic and Caucasian and/or that the Winifred Kiek Scholarship be offered only to Area 3, ie. Multicultural Australia and Pacific Island Territories".

Heather Reid (NSW Observer) For the motion. Commented that in her opinion 'Multicultural' generally means people who have come here from overseas. So that this can be read as if Australian women cannot apply.

Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit ) WA would vote against the motion. Dorothy Ferrier had indicated that a covering letter would make it very clear. Feel that would solve the problem.

Deidre Hunter (Tas Unit) Exercised the right of reply. Misunderstanding of the term 'multi-cultural' still exists. It is necessary to clarify that it does include everyone.

The motion was put to the vote. In favour 2: Against 32

**Motion Lost**



### **Motion from Tasmania**

Moved Deidre Hunter (Tas Unit), seconded Barbara Lacy (Vic Unit).

**That State Convenors of Fellowship of the Least Coin and Winifred Kiek Scholarship, at all times have on hand, current copies of application forms for grants and scholarships, to expedite the process for applicants.**

Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit) in speaking to the motion. Said that the various steps in the process of applying can take several weeks each, making the time frame far too short when having to get signatures etc.

Eileen Holley (National Convenor FLC) Spoke in favour of all units having application forms. ACW Guidelines direct that the forms be sent out in September/October which gives plenty of time, as applications for grants are due to be forwarded to the National Executive in March.

Dorothy Ferrier (WKS Trust) Realises motion only meant to be helpful. The Trust is continually updating the forms to make them better understood. If forms are sent out too early some areas may get an old form. On the surface it looks helpful but in actual fact it would be a hindrance. Forms are sent out at the end of December or early January.

The motion was put. In favour 2. Against 29. Abstained 3

**Motion Lost**

### **Motion 6**

The Queensland Unit moves -

**That in the ACW Guidelines the words "Winifred Kiek" to read "Winifred Kiek Scholarship Leaflets to be sent to State/Territory Units by the first week in March"**

Moved Ailsa Skippen, (Incoming National Executive), seconded Averil Jell (Queensland Unit)

Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive). In moving the motion said that - It is more convenient to post both the WKS Information leaflets and the Fellowship Day Service sheets together. There is a cost consideration as well as postage. This would eliminate delays and double postage

(ACW Guidelines page 13/6 quoted)

Guidelines - Page 2

Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive) Each year we seem to have problems with the time when the leaflets arrive, because they are always at the Unit later than time of service necessitating two mailings - cost of postage a consideration as it comes from the offering. Some branches say they receive them too late to go to speaker.

Jean Thomson (National Secretary) In the Diary for when action should be taken - February for Fellowship Day leaflets and March for Winifred Kiek.

Audrey Sherwin (ACT) Understood Fellowship Day Service came out as a single copy to be photocopied locally.

Reply that within States they then have to be posted out to all branches.

Beth Webb (National Publications Editor) Very often find it is cheaper to send papers in two parcels.

Lucelle King (Australian Baptist Women) Commended WKS Trust on their choice of scholar and that we were told in September, at the Conference. Will be good if this procedure keeps up.

Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) When sending out Unit Newsletter and Fellowship Day Service plus poster and then three weeks later get WKS Leaflets it makes a big hole in the budget.

The motion was put. For 33 Against 1.

**Motion carried**

**Motion 7**

**The Queensland unit moves that past members of National Executive be deleted from the mailing list for National Minutes.**

Moved Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive) seconded Aileen Mortensen (Queensland Unit)

(An amendment to Guidelines on page 5)

Ailsa Skippen. Why would past National Executive need minutes? Also, we need to consider cost of postage and photocopying for an extra 10 people. Could be \$100 per year. If motion about 10% being taken out of collections is of concern using finances to send out minutes to past National Executive needs consideration. In past anyone who wanted minutes paid for them.

Shirley Brooks (Tasmania) When Units receive the National Minutes they make copies themselves. Tasmania does this.

Betty Farrell (National Vice President). Asked how immediate past National Executive felt about this.

Barbara Lacy (Vic) Discussed motion at Unit. Felt that immediate past National Executive should be given option but happy for it to be done by Unit Secretary. It is important to keep up with what is happening.

Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive) Past National Executive of 1983/85 did not receive any Minutes other than the ones paid for. Paid \$10 each.

Joan Tong (NSW) Each State should take initiative to make copies for past National Executive provided they want it.

Jean Thomson (National Secretary) The National Secretary has the constitutionally allowed responsibility for making amendments to the Guidelines to better administer ACW. ACW will either pay at State level or National level. National Executive members serve well for two years and it was seen as a courtesy to keep them up to date with what is going on. Many thanks have been received from members of the immediate past National Executive.

Motion put to vote. For 24. Against 10.

**Motion carried.**

## **Motion 8**

The Queensland Unit moves: -

**That the National Executive arrange for insurance cover for all functions which are conducted in the name of Australian Church Women by State and Territory Units and their Branches.**

Moved Averil Jell, (Queensland Unit) seconded Miriam Pratt (Incoming National Executive)

Averil Jell in speaking to the motion, said that as new insurance provisions relating to personal risk when using various premises for ACW meetings and functions do not provide cover, it is considered that this matter needs to be urgently considered. Queensland had looked at incorporating but too difficult to make National Incorporation. Insurance cover is very expensive.

Lois Harris (SA Unit) Does any State have an insurance to cover their committee. SA does. Some insurance covers members of a specific denomination using their premises.

Various amounts were mentioned - quoted by Insurance Companies

Terry Reeves (Incoming National Executive) CCI Insurance stated cost would be exorbitantly expensive.

Olga Scott (National Executive) Would cost the earth. In Quota Club they could not afford it.

Averil Jell Exercised the right of reply Question to Girls Brigade -Do they have National cover. Answer No. This is a real worry that something can happen and that ACW be up for a lot of money if we have no cover. Should have cover for State and National functions.

The motion was put to vote. For 6. Against 28. **Motion lost.**

## **Motion 9**

The South Australian Unit moves -

**That an abridged version of Fellowship Day and World Community Day services be made available in large print for use in retirement villages and nursing homes.**

Moved Anne Murray (South Australia Unit), seconded Lee Edwards (UC Adult Fellowship)

Anne Murray spoke to the motion. As some elderly have poor eyesight the large print would be helpful. As this would require more sheets of paper or a larger size, it is suggested that an abridged version of the service for use in nursing homes and retirement villages would be appreciated.

Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit) supported the motion as a way of keeping older members in touch with service - a kindly gesture.

Betty Farrell (National Executive) As a resident in a Retirement Village feels it is a good idea.. The matter is covered in Guidelines page 24.

Marie Majoor (CWLA) Their retirement village residents would be insulted. Deleting is not breaking Copyright.

Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) The copyright is owned by us.

Jean Thomson (National Executive) Quoted Page 24 of Guidelines No 9 - You could

consider writing the Order of Service in two forms.

Lee Edwards (UC Adult Fellowship) Proviso should be that this adaptation is done at National Executive level, not at State levels. This would then mean that 2 versions of Master sheets were sent out.

The motion was put to the vote. In favour 31. 3 Abstained. **Motion carried.**

#### **Motion 10**

The Victorian Unit moves -

**That the position of Publicity Officer on National Executive be reactivated.**

Moved Barbara Lacey (Victorian Unit) , seconded Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit)

Barbara Lacy in speaking to the motion, said that denominations in Victoria are experiencing difficulty in obtaining delegates to ACW, and involving people generally. With all the many issues confronting the Church today, we are concerned to present a united front to the community. We note that at 1981 Conference (Tasmania) a Publicity Officer was part of the National Executive with the task of disseminating information to the State Units for release to church and general press etc. On Monday we spoke of the importance of communication. Our Task Force will need all the assistance it can get. Information in Minutes has to be brief. Therefore such things as profiles of speakers, Winifred Kiek information needs to be consigned to one person.

The motion was put to vote. In favour 23. Against 11. **Motion carried**

Lynette Green (ACWC Australian Representative) commented that the new National Executive has the option of co-opting someone who need not be living in Queensland.

**Evening devotions were conducted by NSW Unit**

**THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 1997**

**Morning devotions were conducted by the ACT Unit.**

**At 9am Evonne Sullivan**, National President welcomed Senator the Honourable Jocelyn Newman, Minister for Social Security and Minister assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women to the Conference.

Senator Newman addressed the Conference, telling something of her background , the things that influenced her to enter politics, and her busy life as a Minister in the Government.

Copies of Senator Newman's speech were later delivered and distributed to Conference Participants.

Senator Newman answered a number of questions from the floor, before she left to attend another function.

The National President, Evonne Sullivan and Incoming National President Aileen Mortensen left the Conference to attend the launch by the Prime Minister at Parliament House of the reprint of the book written by Dame Enid Lyons "Among the Carrion Crows"

National Vice President Betty Farrell took the chair for

**CONFERENCE SESSION 7 THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 1997 10.30am**

(Voting strength: 33).

**Recommendation 1** Submitted by National Executive

**To promote better communication between State and Territory Units and National Executive, we recommend that each State and Territory Unit exchange Unit publications such as periodical Bulletins, Newsletters and Information Leaflets; it is further recommended that a copy of each be sent to the National Publications Editor.**

In speaking to the recommendation, National Publications Editor, Beth Webb, said it is necessary that the National Publications Editor should receive a copy of all bulletins, leaflets, newsletters that State/ Territory Units produce. .

In seconding the recommendation, Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive) reiterated that it is invaluable that we exchange information.

Heather Reid (NSW Observer) pointed out that ACW News goes to many people outside the organisation, perhaps some of this information is only for ACW members.

Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive ) commented that there is not room in ACW News for every scrap of information contained in State newsletters. We should trust the National Publications Editor.

**Recommendation Accepted unanimously.**

**Recommendation 2 from NSW Unit.**

**Clarification is requested on the criteria for affiliation with ACW, denominationally speaking, and by what method is an individual deemed eligible for affiliation. The ACW Constitution gives no direction.**

Peg Blake (NSW Unit) in speaking to the recommendation said that in some NSW Unit branches there is confusion as to whether sects, 'new age' churches and other 'churches' can be affiliated. Peg asked how we decide who is eligible for affiliation with ACW ?

The recommendation was supported by Lucelle King (Baptist Women of Australia) who said that there were problems in some regions.

Margaret Florence (Incoming National Executive ) commented that in Queensland, the Queensland Churches Together (Ecumenical Council ) had wrestled with this question recently. The Incoming National Executive could ask for some advice.

The Chair asked if what we were looking for was really a "Mission Statement"

Barbara Bourhill (WA Unit ) said that she agreed that ACW did need a mission statement and suggested that an amplification of the AIMS would be the best thing to do.

On the motion of Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ) seconded by Beth Webb (National Executive) the NSW Recommendation No 2 was resolved into the following motion:

**That State/Territory Units each formulate a Mission Statement and forward these to National Executive for processing into National Mission Statement - to be presented at next National Conference**

Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ) in speaking to the motion asked how many States and Territory Units have a Mission Statement for themselves? . Each State is different, State and Territory Units have different affiliates. Some States are affiliated with State Councils

of Churches but not others Some denominations affiliate with ACW and not with State Council of Churches. Not an easy task. Suggest that we go home to units and look at the matter. We are bound to God in one spirit. Denominational feelings fall off here. Not easy and need fine tuning. Don't leave it all to our National Executive - go back to States and formulate a Mission Statement and forward that on to National Executive. Get a National Statement to be presented at the next biennial National Conference.

Lucelle King (Australian Baptist Women) asked if the mover and seconder would agree to remove word Mission and replace with "Statement of faith". - not agreed to.

Lee Edwards (UC Adult Fellowship) in speaking for the motion, This is about our Mission - about who belongs.

Beth Webb (National Executive) Not only churches have a Mission Statement but also businesses. Indicates who you are: what you are: where you belong.

Margaret Greenslade (SA) Asked whether the Motion could have the word "each" inserted after "That State/Territory Units"

Mover and seconded agreed.

Eunice Reidy (Churches of Christ ) exercised the right of reply. Would like to add a clarification. We already have a statement of the Aims of ACW. The Mission Statement is a clarification of who we are; where we are going.

The motion was put to the Vote. For motion - 32. Against - 1. **Motion carried.**

#### **Recommendation 3** from Victoria

~~Victoria recommends that: Any Motion defeated at a National Conference shall not be submitted to the following National Conference.~~

Barbara Lacy (Victorian Unit) in speaking to the recommendation said that over recent National Conferences she felt that matters had been raised which had been soundly defeated at the previous Conference and this meant the Conference wasted time going over old business. We must take time and listen to the workings of the Holy Spirit in many things.

Dorothy Ferrier (WKS Trust) in seconding the recommendation said she agreed with Barbara, and thought we wasted a lot of time on business which had already been decided.

Janet Watt (WA Unit) in speaking against the recommendation thinks that we may limit the Holy Spirit by supposing that business is 'old' - never to be re visited.

Marie Majoor (CWLA) asked about the suggested name change brought up at the past two Conferences. NSW Unit hopes that this will eventually be decided and thinks that we are limiting ourselves if we never look again at business decided at an earlier Conference.

Recommendation put to the vote. For 5, Against 28 **Recommendation Lost**

#### **Recommendation 4** Submitted by National Executive

**That the incoming National Executive consider appointing a representative from the appropriate State / Territory Unit of ACW to attend meetings which are being held in that State / Territory and which ACW National Executive considers important. This applies especially with any Women's National Non Government Organisation Fora.**

Betty Farrell (National Executive ) in speaking to the recommendation said it was important that ACW National Executive could feel free to call on any State/ Territory Unit to provide a representative who would report back to ACW National Executive. This could



be even more important in future, with the costs of travel escalating, and Queensland at a distance. In the ACT, the Unit would be honoured to represent the National Executive if requested to do so.

Terry Reeves (Incoming National Executive ) in seconding the recommendation said she felt it was very sensible to send a representative from a nearby State/ Territory Unit to Conferences and meetings where the ACW National Executive deemed it appropriate.

The recommendation was

**Passed Unanimously**

**Recommendation 5** From NSW Unit

**That all State / Territory Units update their contact/ mailing list. These are printed in ACW News following the AGM in each State/ Territory and should be filed for reference and use.**

Peg Blake (NSW Unit) in moving the recommendation said that Joan Tong had told her that it was only by the good graces of the present occupier of the premises that mail, sent to an address she had vacated 9 years ago was ever passed on!

Recommendation seconded by Pat Franklin (Victorian Unit)

There being no discussion it was put to the vote and

**Passed unanimously**

**Recommendation 6** from the WKS Trust

**We recommend that the favourite benediction of Winifred Kiek be included in future Fellowship Day Services.**

Dorothy Ferrier (WKS Trust) told us she was sure that Margaret Knauerhase would gladly give permission for this to be done. The benediction will be available to all as part of the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Trust Presentation, included in the Minutes of this Conference.

The recommendation was seconded by Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit)

In discussion, questions were asked about copyright, and answer given that once it was printed as part of the Order of Service, then Copyright was in hands of ACW.

Carolyn Holmes (Queensland Visitor ) was granted permission to speak. Carolyn asked that the inclusion of the benediction be **OPTIONAL** not mandatory .

Mover said that as this was a 'recommendation' it was therefore not mandatory, but that amendment was acceptable.

Recommendation including the word 'optional' was put to the vote,

**Passed unanimously**

**Ms Jeanette Mathews** Associate Minister, Canberra Baptist Church led the Conference in a Bible Study based on **Woman in the Gospel of John**, illustrated with overheads.

Copy held by each State/ Territory Unit

## **CONFERENCE SESSION 8 Thursday 25 September 2.00pm**

National President welcomed everyone to **Conference Session 8.** and thanked Betty Farrell (National Vice President) for chairing the previous session in her absence.

Evonne told us a little about the function at Parliament House, where she and Aileen had been most warmly welcomed. It had been a privilege to have Aileen accompany her, altogether a good PR exercise, ACW was one of very few Women's NGO's at the function.

Aileen said she had always been told that Evonne knew everybody, and this had been borne out this morning when Evonne introduced her to her own Federal member, Andrea West, member for Bowman. Andrea had been very friendly and offered her help to ACW. The Prime Minister had shaken them both by the hand.

National President announced that it was now time to formally approve the names of the Incoming National Executive.

The names of the Incoming National Executive were read.

<u>President</u>	Mrs Aileen Mortensen
<u>Vice President (1)</u>	Mrs Terry Reeves
<u>Vice President (2)</u>	Mrs Ina Collard
<u>Secretary</u>	Mrs Margaret Florence
<u>Minute Secretary</u>	Mrs Averil Jell
<u>Treasurer</u>	Mrs Joan Trudgian
<u>Convenor, F. L. C.</u>	Mrs Mollie Jean Hunt
<u>Convenor, Special Days</u>	Mrs Val Van de Wiel
<u>Publications</u>	Major Miriam Pratt
<u>Convenor, WKS</u>	Mrs Ailsa Skippen

It was moved Averil Jell (Queensland) seconded by Ailsa Skippen (Incoming National Executive) that the list of nominees be approved.

The ACW National Honorary Auditor will be Mr Christopher Walsh.

Betty Farrell (National Executive) Formally moved that the ladies so named be approved as the National Executive 1997 - 1999. Barbara Lacy (Victorian Unit) had great pleasure in seconding the motion.

**Received with acclamation.**

The new National Executive will be formally installed at the Conference Dinner tonight.

### **General Business**

1. Letter received from Mrs Rathie Selvaratnam (Victoria, Mothers Union) two days before the Conference. National Secretary read the letter - about Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Rathie suggested ACW make a national statement and apologise to the Aboriginals.

National President asked if any Units had received similar correspondence from Rathie.

Lynette Green, speaking for Victoria, said she understood that Rathie had contacted somebody in each Unit about this matter, but that Victorian Unit had had no communication at all.

Leila Wilson (WA Observer) said she was expressing her own views, not those of her husband (Sir Ronald Wilson). Reconciliation must cover everybody, both Christian and non Christian people. We must follow the States' line, and work with State Reconciliation Councils which include people from all walks of life. . There is a great groundswell of support in all States. The sensible approach is best.

Jean Hambley (ACT Unit): ACT Unit had not heard from Rathie Selvaratnam, so had not considered the matter.

Averil Jell (Queensland Unit ) Nothing had been received by Queensland Unit before delegates left to attend the Conference and the matter therefore had not been discussed. She thanked Lady Wilson for her guidance.

Anne Murray (SA Unit) two matters on this subject had arrived only days before the Conference. Too late for the Unit to discuss it. A copy of a 'Sorry' letter had been received, and members of ACW in South Australia have the address if they wish to use this.

Four 'stolen' women spoke at a public meeting, recently in Adelaide, touching the hearts of all. Subsequently a Reconciliation group had been formed in an Adelaide suburb near to the orphanage where the women had lived. The site is now just a paddock, but a memorial plaque will be erected on the site.

Anne moved that a letter of support/ solidarity be sent to Sir Ronald Wilson, thanking him for the report on 'The Stolen Children' and the way in which this report has touched so many people throughout the land.

Marie Majoor speaking for NSW told how she went to the Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne. Endorsed sending the letter to Sir Ronald. ACW in NSW is linked to the Women's Reconciliation Network. Education is important. A time of story sharing happening in NSW, moving slowly, but we need to listen to the stories.

Betty Laurie (National Executive) spoke about happenings in country towns for example - in Bega NSW the town organised a 'Black and White' picnic, especially for children, everybody got to know each other better.

Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit) told how ACW had been involved in 'Sorry ' letters for the 'Sorry ' Books as featured in issue of *Mia Mia* This will form a permanent record of all letters. We must find ways to share the pain, and show that we are listening.

Lucelle King (Baptist Women) . At the last Assembly of Baptist Women, it was decided that as none present had personally been involved , it would be inappropriate to 'apologise'. However, the Assembly decided to write a letter of deep regret for things done in the past.

Leila Wilson (Western Australian Unit) said that sometimes telling their story was all the people asked, they just wanted to be listened to. Sometimes they requested help, like the woman who needed assistance to visit her 'country'. Letter under discussion refers exclusively to Aboriginal Reconciliation, whereas the Inquiry was set up to inquire specifically into 'the Stolen Children'

Lois Harris (South Australia Unit) attended a meeting of Rural Women at Murray Bridge. it was wonderful to have women leaders of group on whose land the Conference was held to welcome us. We went on an escorted walk through the wetlands there, and learnt a lot about the fauna and flora of the area.

Leila Wilson (Western Australian Unit) said that while we could all appreciate Rathie Selvaratnam's need for ACW to be involved, it was more practical that individuals give their support to the movements already going on in their local area. More sensible to move along the lines of being part of activity in our own district.

National President then suggested that National Secretary, Jean Thomson should write to Rathie, telling her the topic had been discussed and that ACW members were urged to support the Reconciliation movement in their own State or Territory .**Agreed.**

National Secretary, Jean Thomson also to send a letter of support to Sir Ronald Wilson  
**Agreed.**

### Announcements

Eileen Holley (National Executive) made announcements about arrangements for departure.

Units were reminded to collect Banners

Mollie Jean Hunt (Incoming National Executive) would be pleased to give out any stocks needed of FLC Money Boxes and Prayer Cards before the Conference ends.

A vote of thanks to Olga Scott for her expertise in organising transport to and from various terminals was passed with acclamation.

National Secretary, Jean Thomson read the letter received from Heather Reid (NSW Observer) re the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. In the letter, Heather asked that ACW consider a submission on this subject.

Jean Hambley (ACT Unit ) pointed out that Australia had already ratified the UN Convention, in December 1990, and is therefore bound under International Law to this Convention. A UN Convention has indirect effects in Australia, eg.... If Australian Law is ambiguous on any point, then the judge can refer to the UN Convention covering that subject. A booklet titled 'Australian Promises to People, - the Alternative Report' has been published, is readily available, and this has already been sent as submission to the UN. This, along with other submissions will be considered when the Government formulates the official reply to the UN.

Lynette Green (ACWC Representative) The subject covered by this letter is part of a greater document which is being dealt with in sections - e. g. The lowering of the Age of consent., already dealt with by the Australian Federal Parliament. As we do not have the Article before us, feels that there is very little ACW can do in an informed way to respond.

Heather Reid (NSW Unit) told us that the issues had been brought to her attention from several different sources, there was obviously concern about a number of issues covered in the Convention. The UN Convention does not appear to adequately cover such things as the Rights of the Unborn Child, Rights of Parents, Government rights to overrule in the best interest of the child, the suggestion that unsuitable carers may be chosen.

Joan Tong (NSW Unit) said that as Heather had brought the matter to our attention, if it is the will of the meeting, that we should do something about this, then perhaps the Incoming National Executive would wish to hand it back to Heather to complete, as she has already done so much work on the subject.

National President asked if the Incoming National Executive had a point of view on the matter remembering that the submission has to be prepared and sent off by the end of October.

Terry Reeves (Incoming National Executive) We are prepared to take the material, consult experts, and consult with Senator Newman, who may be able to offer advice. If it is the wish of the meeting, we will work on a submission.

### **Meeting Agreed**

National President thanked Terry for her suggested way of handling the subject. She asked that, if the National Executive does decide to write a submission, it be circulated to all State/Territory Units for prompt reply/comment before it is submitted to Government, with a copy to Senator Newman if that is seen as appropriate.

Heather Reid (NSW Unit) Thanked the meeting for supporting the matter. Last Conference it was decided that every Unit would have a Social Issues Convenor. This is the sort of issue that such a person would be involved in - some people are good at writing letters, even if they cannot be active in other ways. She urged Units to activate the position .

National President endorsed what Heather had said, but pointed out that the appointment of

a Social Issues Convenor was recommended not decided.

Deidre Hunter (Tasmanian Unit) asked about a recent newspaper article about paedophilia. She pointed out that we all should be aware of things that don't look right and contact our local Member of Parliament to clarify and then do something about it if possible.

Lois Harris (SA Unit) urged strongly, that as National Conference of ACW we should do something about this problem of paedophilia practised by Australians overseas. She strongly urged that the Incoming National Executive write to the appropriate authorities. She also asked for approval in principle to write a motion to be ratified tomorrow.

#### **Meeting Agreed**

Jean Thomson (National Executive) pointed out that there is already an Act of Parliament covering the behaviour of Australians overseas with relation to underage prostitution and child pornography. We need to check the status of this Act.

The motion was accepted in principle

#### **The Conference Dinner was held at JOHN XXIII COLLEGE**

The dinner commenced at 6.30pm attended by 100 Conference participants and guests

'Sophisticated Swing' presented two brackets of numbers - between courses, and were enthusiastically applauded by the assembled dinner guests.

The Incoming National Executive was formally installed at the conclusion of the Dinner

The Incoming National Executive conducted the Evening Devotions.

Thanks were expressed to Betty Farrell (National Executive) for organising such a happy occasion

#### **FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER**

Everybody assembled for transport to Government House for the **Vice-Regal Reception** and Morning Tea at 10.30 am.

Conference Participants, including husbands attending with their wives and husbands of the outgoing National Executive were graciously received by Sir William Deane and Lady Deane. Morning tea was served in the State Dining Room, while the Governor General and Lady Deane mingled with their guests. Guests were invited to wander freely in the public rooms of Government House, including the Governor General's Study and other rooms not generally open.

Guests left Government House at 11.30 am after a most enjoyable visit to Australia's No 1 residence

Many informal photographs were taken before lunch at John XXIII College.

## CONFERENCE SESSION - 2 pm

Outgoing National President Evonne Sullivan welcomed all to the last session of the 1997 Conference. Evonne gave an especially warm welcome to Aileen Mortensen, the Incoming National President, who joined her at the executive table.

The Motion moved by Lois Harris (South Australian Unit) was then read.

The South Australian Unit moves

**'That a letter be sent by the ACW National Executive to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, expressing the deep concern of the members of this conference regarding the involvement of Australian citizens in Child Sex Tourism and prostitution overseas, particularly in Asian countries, and asking that any Australian living/travelling overseas, regardless of diplomatic status, be liable to prosecution for any offences committed under the relevant Act/s'**

Seconded Marie Majoor (CWLA) who asked that copies of the letter go to both the Prime Minister and Senator Newman.

As the motion had already been accepted 'in Principle' there was no discussion.

**Motion carried**

In closing Conference session 8 National President expressed her gratitude and that of Conference participants to the Reference Committee, the Scrutineers, the Honorary Timekeeper and Official Pianist, for their contribution to the smooth running of the Conference. Special thanks were extended to Shirley Birch, (S.A.) for her helpful guidance to the Chair.

## CONFERENCE CONCLUSION

Many participants expressed thanks, and congratulated the outgoing National Executive for a wonderful, enlivening Conference.

Speakers included Barbara Grealy, on behalf of the members of Special Interest Groups, Lee Edwards on behalf of the National Organisations and others

National President was complimented on the happy atmosphere in which the Conference Business sessions had been conducted. Members of Executive were thanked for the cheerful way in which they had helped all participants.

Illuminada Domingo on behalf of the 16 countries of ACWC said how much she had appreciated the gifts of the wealth of experience and dedication to duty that she had found present in this the first Conference of ACW she had attended. She congratulated and commended the work horses of this 1997 Conference and wished the best to Incoming National Executive. Let us all uphold each other with prayers and thoughts.

Judy Harvey on behalf of the NZ women. Thanks for the creative, thoughtful and enriching devotions each Unit has prepared and brought to us. We commend all for the love and fellowship you have shown to us, it has been rewarding to get to know you better. May God go with the new committee as you commence your work.

Marie McCann (NSW Unit) speaking as a visitor said that the fellowship at this Conference has been very special, across denominations. We should encourage more visitors to attend National Conferences, as this would help women to better understand the meaning of ecumenism.

Deidre Hunter (Tas Unit) It has been an absolutely wonderful Conference, my first one.



Congratulations to Evonne and all the outgoing National Executive.

Anne Murray (SA Unit) expressed the thanks of participants for the wonderful extras - 'Sophisticated Swing' to entertain us at the conference dinner, and the wonderful visit to Government House this morning. The memory of our gracious hosts will long live with me.

Lynette Green (ACWC) thanked the outgoing National Executive for consideration during the past two years. It has been very useful for both sides, (ACW and ACWC) to have interaction.

National President thanked all for their words of appreciation. Evonne also said that we all very much appreciated the presence of the New Zealand Observers, but especially the visit of Iluminada Domingo to Australia. Participants joined in acclamation of Iluminada.

Beth Webb (National Executive) introduced the **Closing Devotions**. All joined in singing the Conference Song for the last time. After readings and prayer, all State/Territory Units brought/sent messages of encouragement and support to the Incoming National Executive. These were read and placed in a special 'baton' which was handed from the outgoing National President to the Incoming National President

National President, Evonne Sullivan, formally closed the 1997 ACW National Conference, paying tribute to the members of the 1995 - 1997 National Executive, and expressing her thanks to all participants for their valuable input to Conference.

SONG FOR THE WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP

Suggested tunes	165 (ii)	What a Friend (AHB)
	148	Love Divine (AHB)

When a woman hears God calling,  
Wherever she may be  
On our ears that voice is falling,  
Ours the task to set her free;  
For the wider spreads her thinking  
Richer is the gift she brings,  
Each new revelation linking  
Service to the King of Kings.

When a woman wants to give Him  
More than yet she has to give,  
We can help her to receive Him  
And in Him to work and live.  
How will her high call be measured  
In the land where she was born?  
She herself may not be treasured,  
And her hope be laughed to scorn.

This, our birthright of compassion,  
Has been an open door,  
Each one, in her special fashion,  
Entered in, to serve God more.  
And our prayers go with her giving  
To the task she is to do  
For this Trust, still onward flowing,  
Is a woman's dream come true.

*Margaret Knauerhase, 1997 (Winifred Kiek's daughter)*

THOU ART THE WAY

Thou art the way, none other dare I follow;  
Thou art the truth, and thou hast made me free;  
Thou art the life, the hope of my tomorrow;  
Thou art the Christ who died for me.  
This is my creed, that 'mid earth's sin and sorrow,  
My life may guide souls unto thee.

I would bring peace to lives torn asunder,  
Ease aching hearts with words that soothe and heal;  
I would bring peace when, breaking like the thunder,  
Men rise in war and hatred feel.  
Peacemaker, Lord! Now I am stirred to wonder;  
O take me and my calling seal!

*Arch R Wiggins (Used by permission - The Salvation Army)*

## **Greetings received for 1997 National Conference Appendix 2**

The Honourable John Howard MP, Prime Minister of Australia

The Honourable Kim Beazley MP, Leader of the Opposition

Senator Cheryl Kernot Leader of The Democrats

Senator Kate Lundy ACT

Mr John Forrest MP, President of Parliamentary Christian Fellowship

Mrs Kate Carnell, MLA Chief Minister of ACT

Mr Greg Cornwell MLA Speaker of the ACT Assembly

Mr Trevor Kaine MLA

Mr Bill Wood MLA

Ms Marion Reilly MLA

Ms Louise Littlewood MLA

Mr Harold Hird MLA

Mr Michael Moore MLA

Mrs Elizabeth Appelby - President of Mothers Union Australia

‘I hope that delegates experience the wonderful bond of unity in Christ - in such an ecumenical gathering’

Archbishop John Battersby - President of NCCA

‘I look forward to contact with your important organisation as we continue to work together for the coming of God’s Kingdom’

Darwin Branch of ACW ‘best wishes, sorry not to be with you ‘

Alice Springs Branch of ACW -

‘we hope that all goes well, our prayers will be with you’.

Margaret Watson, Vic Unit of ACW greetings

Anne Green, Qld Unit of ACW ‘ May God bless the Conference’.

Norma Bishop WKS Trustee

‘My most sincere wishes for a most successful & blessed conference’

Mary Campbell - National President of CWLA

‘Best wishes for a successful Conference’.

Federal President of PWA of Australia Mrs Fay Schinckel

‘Greetings - wish God’s richest blessings for a very successful Conference’

Archbishop Carroll ‘prayerful good wishes’

Bishop Pat Power ‘greetings’

Bishop George Browning ‘prayers are with you’

Rev John Mavor President of the Assembly of the Uniting Church of Australia

‘My prayerful good wishes for a successful Conference’.

Mrs Joan Stott

'Sorry not to be with you, am representing Uniting Church at a World Conference in Rome I wish God's Blessing on your endeavours.'

Mrs Dorothy Clack

'greetings and good wishes for a rewarding time of fellowship and service'

Mrs Marion Dodds 'may your time together in Conference be Blessed by God'

Ms Lorraine Davis Nhulunbuy NT - Greetings to all

Mrs Jean McCallum - Baptist Women's Union

Mrs Veronica Sladdin Best wishes

Commissioner Michael & Mrs Palmer Commissioner of A F P

Dr Philip Oliver - Australian General Secretary - Bible Society, Blessings on you

Principal Chaplain M. L. Davis RAN Best wishes for a blessed Conference.

Archdeacon Jeff Driver Director St Mark's Theological Library greetings

NCW of ACT best wishes for a successful Conference.

Mr Jack Waterford - Editor of The Canberra Times

Tasmanian State Committee of World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer, Australia

Lt. General J. M. Sanderson wish you well

CWL of Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Mary Uhlmann, President, writes

"the thoughts and prayers of our members are with you"

Laurel King 'supporting you in prayer and spirit during the Conference.'

Capt. Maree Hambleton

'thinking of you, wish you a successful Conference, may the Lord be with you'

Dorothy Haensel

'May your time together be empowered by the Spirit and blessed with fellowship and love, that all may be one'

Australian Church Women 1997 National Conference Session 2

Victorian Unit - Future of ACW Appendix 3

The aims of ACW are very straightforward and clearly defined.

1. To unite Christian women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
2. To promote co-operation, understanding and reconciliation between men and women in Church, family and society;
3. To help Christian women to take a more effective place in the total life and mission of the Church;
4. To provide opportunities for Christian women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together;
5. To encourage fellowship, service and understanding nationally and internationally.

About two years ago the Victorian Unit, like your own, no doubt at times past, got ourselves into groups and discussed ways and means whereby we could promote ACW in the community and among our women's groups. The discussion was lively and some of the recommendations of that discussion have been implemented.

In April of this year we looked at our aims to see if we were still on track and investigate the possibility of looking at ways to further foster those aims.

Our executive have been concerned for some time that we are only keeping ourselves going by perpetuating business items. We most certainly enjoy the guest speakers and we have had some really great speakers. But, for the most, we meet each other for a couple of hours every 2 months and that is that. As a group we don't do much more than that. Two of the highlights of the year are our Quiet day and the Film day. These are both successful events in their own way. One of the excuses is that we are all busy people and that is true. Another excuse is that we are getting old. Ain't that a sure fact!

I was 34 years old when I joined ACW. My journey with ACW has taken me to three states and several National Conference and I am now serving my fourth national executive. I think that might qualify me to give an overview of what the face of ACW is. The first thing to note is that every unit of ACW is different. It is run differently. The activities apart from Special Days, WKS and FLC are different. Some have meetings quarterly, some bi-monthly and others monthly. Some have projects and support them vigorously and I am particularly thinking of South Australia in this instance. New South Wales has their own Conference from time to time. I have blatantly stolen an idea that South Australia used some time ago and we have commenced the practice of the executive worshipping together at each others' Church on a quarterly basis.

We are all out there doing things. Are they relevant ? Are they necessary ? I, for one, appreciate all the friends I have made through ACW. We've had some good times together. But it is more that friendship.

ACW suffers the same problems as do the Church women's groups that we represent: aging population, competition of interests; and improved quality of life style in the over 50 age group. I heard from one of the speakers at our council meeting that women under 50 are

into 'causes' and women over 50 are into commitment to a group. It is no wonder then, that we are represented in the main by many grandmothers! If we understand this way of thinking, then we can start to attack and be pro-active. Instead of trying to "sell" ACW as a group to which to belong to our younger age group, we could successfully sell the concept of FLC, for instance. We may well include the younger members of our constituency in some of the justice issues that our Social Justice Convenor may make us aware of, and so forth (think of your own ideas). Let us older ones join our group and enjoy the fellowship and let the younger ones be informed of the things for which they may bring response.

Can we exchange ideas for promotion of ACW that have been successful in your Unit.

How many Units were able to promote this conference in their own Church newspapers and magazines. This is where a national publicity and promotions officer can be of help. With a bit of creative and imaginative writing and presentation it is possible for us to keep ACW to the fore in Christian newspapers and even the national dailies.

What is our future ecumenically? Are we being represented and noticed at our various Councils of Churches? Should we have a closer link with the NCCA Women's desk? What is our relationship with ecumenical bodies? Should we perhaps be issuing our own Reconciliation Statement ?

What is our future financially? Are units finding it difficult to make ends meet. How do you finance your activities? We have just had prepared for us by our Treasurer a 9 - year budget to give us some idea of where we are headed and it doesn't look good. We, as a unit, are now faced with some hard decisions as to where we are going to get extra funding to keep going. The cost of national conferences comes into it, of course, but this has been thrashed out before.

What is our future? Is it time to start thinking about a National Website on the Internet for ACW with links into Unit Web sites?

Well, enough talking from me. The time is open for discussion on these issues. Please use the time constructively. We do not need to be reminded what the problems are. If you have found some solutions in your Unit or possibilities for creative thinking, please share it with us.

Lynette Green

September 1997



## Appendix 4

### ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

By Iluminada A. Domingo

On behalf of the 16 affiliate member countries to Asian Church Women's Conference, I bring to you their warmth Christian greetings.

In 1958 Rayann Ma, from Hong Kong convened an Asian church women's gathering to affirm the many gifts they discover among themselves as Asian women. It was then that the Asian Church Women's conference was born with a vision to unite all Christian women in Asia to help bring healing from brokenness to wholeness caused by patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism and globalization. It focus it mission to help Asian women to work for reconciliation, peace and justice individually and collectively.

During this quadrium -1995-1998, the Asian Church Women's Conference focuses to cluster program with the thrust on Christian Education and Nurture, Witness and Service and Stewardship and Development. The Christian education program is responsible in enabling the Asian church women to grow and transform the world in response to the mission of the church. Its foremost task is to EMPOWER women in the development of their critical and moral and spiritual attitude rooted in their own cultural heritage and proclaimed by Jesus Christ.

Activities : Gender Sensitivity and Awareness Training

Liturgical Renewal

Curriculum Revisions

Scholarships awards to two Asian women to be professionally develop for a  
College/University degree in both theological and non-theological course  
Consultation Seminar on Elderly

The Witness and Service as a cluster program is responsible in facilitating in the SHARING of our faith to the world into actions. The main focus is in response of the church to the pressing and social realities and challenges.

Activities : Networking with government and non-government, ecumenical bodies

With out resources (human and materials e.g newsletter)

Advocacy (prayer rallies, resolution letters) on pressing issues

The Stewardship and Resource Development is responsible in facilitating the organizations towards the SUSTAINING faith of its constituency and the organization.

Activities : Endowment fund of US \$1M in ten years

Pledge Commitment Campaign

US \$1 signature

Cooperatives

ACW newsletter

### Participants List

#### Guests:

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Salvation Army Southern Territory	as above
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The Girl's Brigade	Mrs Renelle Neale PO Box 294 Burwood NSW 2134
Woman's Christian Temperance Union	Mrs Beryl McLaughlin 2/15 Morwick St, Strathfield NSW 2135
National Council of Churches in Australia Network on Women & Gender Relationships	Ms Ronis Chapman c/- Private Bag 199, QVB P O Sydney NSW 1230