

**** INFORMATION PAGE ****

ALL A.C.W. MONIES -- Affiliation Fees, Fellowship Of The Least Coin, Newsette Subscriptions, Offertories for Special Days and Donations to be sent to the TREASURER: Mrs Helen Richardson
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A.C.W. Local Branches:	\$15.00 per annum
Organisations:	\$15.00 per annum
Bible Society;	
The Girls' Brigade	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' FEES due 1st March : \$15.00 per annum
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NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -- NSW UNIT

ACW Website: www.acwnational.org.au

ACW seeks:

- ⇒ to unite Australian churchwomen in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
- ⇒ to provide opportunities for Christian women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together.

Mission Statement

Australian Church Women believe that there is one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one God, Three-In-One. We believe that Scripture teaches that salvation is only through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only Son.

PRESIDENT: Mrs Jennifer Peffer Tel: 9874 4056
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all,

Greetings - such a simple word, yet it can make a difference to someone's day when someone 'greet' them, wishes them well, welcomes them. For a person living alone that one word may be the first word spoken to them that day - it breaks the silence and brings light into their existence.

The new ACW National Executive have chosen as their theme for 2009-2011: **"From Darkness to Light."** May we, each one, seek to bring the special light of Christ into the often dark situations in which we find ourselves. At the recent National Conference in Canberra we were given a candle, imprinted with this message, to take and remind our State Units over the coming months that this should be our daily goal.

Some months ago I decided to share with you, in this the final Newsette for 2009, a Christmas tradition originally practised in the Northern Hemisphere, and this seemed even more appropriate after hearing the new theme and the message of the Candle! From a small booklet about Advent

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I read about the significance of candles... some things you just accept and then suddenly, you appreciate them with new understanding.

Traditionally, the four candles for the four Sundays of Advent were coloured, and symbolised the four centuries of waiting that God's people had to endure between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.

The white central candle is the Christ candle, lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning. The others are usually purple or blue with the third candle being pink.

Candle 1 is the Prophecy Candle (the candle of hope and expectation)

Candle 2 The Bethlehem Candle (the candle of love)

Candle 3 The Shepherd's Candle (the candle of joy) - the pink one.

Candle 4 The Angel's Candle (the candle of peace)

Christmas Candle – The Christ Candle, the central candle, is white. It is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to symbolise that the Christ has come. Its central location reminds us that Christ becoming man on earth is at the heart of the season, giving light to the world. Whilst in the UK last Christmas I was impressed by the number of folk who put a large white Christ Candle, in a special holder, in their windows to indicate they were Christian.

We recently had a guest from overseas who gave us a hospitality gift - a special holder and Christ Candle for us to use this coming Christmas. I hope that it will give us the opportunity to share the real meaning of Christmas to those who see it in our front window.

Every blessing to you and yours as we approach the Advent Season – may you experience afresh the wonder of God's love in sending his Son for our salvation.

Jennifer Peffer

PASTORAL CARE:

Please remember *Noelene Roose* and her family - her husband *Hugh* died in August and it is not long since she had to undergo chemotherapy.

Sandra Wise asked for prayer for her new little grandchild, and her son-in-law who was deployed to Afghanistan.

Jean Porteous has appreciated prayer support for her siblings who have faced serious illness.

Beryl Kirkwood was in hospital for a few days, and *Lyn Middleton* is recovering from shingles.

Please do not hesitate to contact either Jennifer or myself if you need prayer support - we have a number of members who can be easily contacted by email.

Olive Edmonstone, Pastoral Care Convener

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ACW NATIONAL CONFERENCE:

Held in Canberra, this was a time for fellowship, challenge and spiritual enrichment.

Our special guest was *Corazon Tabling-Reyes*, from the Philippines, who is the Secretary of the International Committee for Fellowship of the Least Coin. Cora gave the opening address and retold the FLC story and indicated that we may soon have resources other than printed material that can be used to help spread the message of FLC.

Opening Worship included Holy Communion and a Remembrance Service where nine women from five State Units were named and a candle lit in memory of each as a symbol of them and their contributions to ACW.

Morning and Evening devotions were led by each of the State and Territory units and developed the Conference theme of "*Faith In The Future.*"

The Ecumenical Service was held at St Benedict's Catholic Church at which *Rev. James Haire* was the preacher. His message of Christianity as counter-cultural from Roman times to the present day emphasised the constant transformation that is needed at all levels as the church tries to establish one organisation from great diversity.

Informative sessions were given by a variety of organisations engaging young adults in ministry and service. We heard of '*Young Ambassadors for Peace*' (Uniting Church); *General Eva Burrows* (Salvation Army) was entertaining but challenging as she told of work amongst the marginalised around the Bourke Street premises, using the students who take a gap year as interns to train and take part in the outreach programme; '*Irene's Place*' is an endeavour of the Canberra Baptist Church and the Mennonite Mission network to bring together young adults into a household dedicated to discipleship, service and peace.

A highlight was Morning Tea at Yarralumla with the *Governor-General* who addressed the gathering and then invited us to enjoy the splendid garden with lakeside views and of course the daintiness of the food!

Weather conditions meant our trip to *Floriade* was cancelled but instead we were visited the Museum of Australia, with a vast range of Australianiana, and a coffee shop with views of Lake Burley Griffin. The formal Dinner gave opportunity to "dress up", eat at a leisurely pace and enjoy singing by a capella group '*Lady's Mantle*'.

However, Conference was not all play, and Business Sessions at times were spirited in debate. Australian Church Women is now incorporated in the ACT, and this was ratified at the first session and the Public Officer, who must reside in the ACT was appointed. The incoming National

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Executive (South Australia) have been charged, after due consultation with the State Units, with resolving any issues with the Web Page and also implementing a Public Liability Insurance Cover.

With regard to Special Days Orders of Service, it was agreed that there is scope for changes, and the World Day of Prayer representative was happy to hear some of the ideas put forward. There was support for inclusion of an ideas page with the Order of Service, giving suggestions for alternate worship styles to which the Service might lend itself.

At the handover, South Australia Unit distributed to each State President a Candle, as a symbol, on which their theme for 2009-2011 "*From Darkness To Light*" is imprinted and we were commissioned to take this message back to our State Units.

We give thanks to God for the ACT women who took on the organisation of this event, and pray that He will guide the South Australian women who have responsibility for the next.

(Condensed from Report by State Secretary, Isabel Hewitt)

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:

I was the speaker at The Salvation Army Aged Care Village at Bass Hill for World Community Day in October, also at Umina on the Central Coast, and at Jannali in the Sutherland Shire. As well as bringing the message from the Bible, I will have opportunity to weave in some thoughts about the FLC movement.

It was a privilege to attend the National Conference in Canberra and to meet *Corazon Tabing-Reyes*, who is the Executive Secretary of the International Committee of FLC. Corazon is very dedicated to her role and enjoys meeting people and sharing her story. She is very enthusiastic as she speaks about the FLC movement.

I have been in contact with women from various parts of the State in recent weeks. It is good to catch the enthusiasm of these ladies and the way in which they try to bring the message of FLC to the groups they lead or are a part of. There are also men involved in some of these groups and actually some of the office bearers are men in some areas. This is great! Keep it up!

I have been encouraged as I have read the letters which come from the many groups when they send in their FLC money, and the way in which people are happy to be a part of this great prayer movement. May God bless us as we serve Him and others in His Name.

Lillian Hodges, FLC Convener

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WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:

First I want to acknowledge and give thanks to our past WKS National Convenor, *Constance Aronson*, who has learnt computer and passed on news and has been a source of encouragement. Knowing I couldn't attend the National Conference, she sent me the Program, the Theme Song, and when it was over, a group photo....so very thoughtful! On the new National Executive in South Australia, *Maureen Clarke*, already a WKS Trustee, has been appointed as WKS National Convenor.

The new Scholars for 2010 are:

Ruth Marsipal from Papua New Guinea and *Tomu Faknaufon* from Fiji - we look forward to details about them, and much prayer is needed as they prepare.

Leinamau (2007 Scholar from Vanuatu) is still busy, island-hopping, ministering and showing leadership, giving out lots of encouragement.

Imelda Marcos (2008 Scholar from The Philippines) now living and working in Jerusalem. Fewer emails now, very busy, and in a more difficult situation. Prayer needed are for stability in the land, with warnings it is getting like back in the 80s - a radical recently called for a "day of rage."

News of 2009 Scholars:

Inese Foiakau in Sydney - Most challenging time in her life. Really relying on God. A recent Distinction for an assignment surprised and encouraged her. Two assignments done in October, then another two to finish. Because of work commitments she had to miss the Canberra Residential (mentioned in last Newsette) so was given CDs and DVDs (a miracle!) from which do the major assignment. She is working on a huge work project to be completed by end of November and is really thankful for prayers for energy and commitment to "finish the marathon" - extended family have been helping.

Christine Ferguson in Melbourne - has visited ACW Victoria Council but was not able to get to ACW National Conference in September as she was in Queensland for College Mission Week, after which she went home to New Zealand to visit family and meet her sister's new baby. Back now and busy with assignments and exams and would appreciate prayer still for what God wants her to do next.

Soon I will be sending Christmas cards to those we are in touch with.

Judith Cayzer, WKS Convener

ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE:

At the recent ACW National Conference in Canberra, *Major Laurel Pearce* of the Western Australian Unit and *Mrs Fran Moss* of the Queensland Unit were elected as the official ACW delegates to the ACWC Quadrennial General Assembly to be held in Indonesia from 7-12 October next year. *Major Donna Bryan* remains the Australian delegate to ACWC for the next 4 years, having been elected to the Executive Committee. *Mrs Pat Walker* concludes her term with ACWC after the Quadrennial Assembly next year. Each country is limited to only 11 delegates to the Assembly, including the official delegates.

The money so generously given from the ACWC Emergency Fund in the wake of the disastrous Australian bushfires is to be used to replace church property (offering plates) in the worst affected areas.

Our ACWC Celebration on Sunday 18th October was at the Northside Community Church (Churches of Christ), at Crows Nest. Approximately 120 people attended the Multicultural Concert of Praise which was a variety-packed afternoon of rich blessing from soloists, choirs, pianist, violinist, flautist and timbrel group. Below is a picture of the Korean choir "Shine." The congregation responded warmly to every item, and the guest speaker *Major Kwan-ki Kim* gave a challenging insight into the rapid rise of Christianity in South Korea and its modern day missionary thrust.

From the generous offertory, over \$730 was given for the work of ACWC, and a lovely time of fellowship was shared at afternoon tea following the concert. My sincere thanks go to the ACWC committee of our NSW Unit who rallied around me with wonderful support as ushers, welcomers, caring for the guests and especially *Martha Noel* for her splendid effort in organising the afternoon tea. We look forward to another great concert next year on 31st October 2010 at The Salvation Army, Campsie.

Lyn Middleton, ACWC Convener



SOCIAL ISSUES:

PROTECT MARRIAGE! DO NOT LEGALISE GAY MARRIAGE! Petition your local Federal Member to protect marriage, which is between a man and a woman. We need to arouse the conscience of all - we must set the standards and make an outcry. Who do we expect to do it? Write now to your Federal Member, C/- Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600.

Respect For Life Sunday is about acknowledging God as author of life and death and the sacredness of human life. Ideas of human selection exist today just as in Hitler's time - Eugenics such as prenatal testing, and IVF procedures where unborn children with disabilities are aborted.

Human Life should always be respected. Pray for the courage and faith of patients to say "I want to live, please don't stop giving me food."

Surrogacy is disrespectful of a child's dignity. The Queensland Government is planning to introduce a Bill to decriminalise surrogacy.

Death Penalty - Prayers please for *Scott Rush* who is making his last appeal against his death sentence in Indonesia. Pray also for his cell-mate who has no family support.

Catholic Health Australia is meeting with the government and other welfare organisations, insisting it is important to ensure low income Australians are given equitable access to health care if Medicare Select, a proposed tax-funded health insurance, is ever introduced.

Be a GREEN CONSUMER - Be concerned about the environment and purchase products that are eco-friendly. This is about being an active protector of the creation God has given us.

Violence Against Women - All Ministers, Federal and State, are co-ordinating a new plan to reduce violence. This will build on expert advice and will be a National Plan for three years to bring together ministers in different fields.

Global Health Care - For economic reasons common diseases are neglected in developing countries. Many die because drugs are diluted or fake. Anti-malarials are at least 50% fake, which leads to prolonged illness and death in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Coal Mining on Queensland's Darling Downs would need 2.5 times more WATER than the whole annual consumption of Toowoomba and mean less flow for the Murray/Darling.

On Meet The Press on October 7th, *Dr Galbraith* gave a most interesting address on the needs of the disabled - Local Government has a large responsibility in this field.

What will we leave for the next generation?

Carmel Keys, Social Issues Convener

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SPECIAL DAYS:

The Theme for World Community Day Services held at the end of October was "*Faith, Yesterday, Today And Tomorrow.*" Here is a report from just one of them:

"*Parramatta Branch* observed World Community Day in an informal manner - participants were seated around tables in the church hall. After the Speaker's words, people were asked for responses to the topic of Faith and it is hoped that the less formal setting may encourage more involvement with some of the churches. One person had attended in response to reading the details of the Service on the ACW Website."

Pamela Freeman, Special Days Convener

NSW ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:

The half-yearly meeting of the Council will be held on Saturday, 14th November at Newcastle, under the topic "*Receiving The Gift.*"

Please pray for those who meet that day, as they discuss how ecumenism is developing at the local level.

Pamela Freeman, ACW Representative to NSW Ecumenical Council

A VERY SPECIAL CELEBRATION!!

Congratulations to Sister Joan Bird.....

The NSW Unit of Australian Church Women expresses sincere congratulation on the celebration of her Jubilee in the Order of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary.

What a milestone!

What a witness of Christian service and commitment!

We pray that Sister Joan's service and witness in her parish will continue to be a blessing in her personal pilgrimage.

We in ACW have appreciated the contribution she has made over the years as a Council Member and especially as Social Issues Convener.

CONGRATULATIONS also to *Major Nancy McLaren* (and her husband *Philip*) - Armidale and District is to be the new location for Nancy and Philip from January next year.....a new challenge for them in ministry and mission.

Nancy has served as a State Council Member, and as National President,

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and is currently our Publicity Convener - we will miss her and her contribution to our Executive and Council Meetings. We look forward to her input into NSW Unit in that area of our State and support her and Philip in their new sphere of service, praying for God's blessing and guidance.

(Contributed by President Jennifer Peffer)

BIBLE SOCIETY'S PRISON LITERACY PROJECT:

Julie Bryant, the Bible Society's Director of Women's Ministry, reports on her recent visit to Papua New Guinea, which is our closest neighbour, with 19 provinces and more than 600 islands.

The PNG people are mainly Melanesian, with many people from other countries, including Australia, China, Malaysia, UK, NZ and other Pacific nations. PNG has over 800 different spoken languages but the major ones spoken are English, Pidgin English (Tok Pisin), Motu and Hiri Motu. Although Christianity is predominant, local beliefs and traditions are practised. The wild mountains, volcanoes, much are rich in natural resources like oil and minerals, timber etc.

But the key resource is people and the country's progressive development is determined by the level of skill. In the population of 600 million, the majority are illiterate and this contributes to the continued rise of issues such as HIV/Aids, Malaria, and Diarrhoea etc. When illiterate prisoners are asked how do people get information about health and other social issues affecting their lives, the answer may be by listening to other people, or the radio; "We see pictures on posters and leaflets but cannot read the information, many times we get second hand or incorrect information. We would like know what is happening around us. We want to read the Bible ourselves. It is like living in darkness - we cannot read labels in the shops - even if we could afford it, we are afraid to give our children medicine as we cannot read instructions or measure correct amount of doses."

THE PROJECT:

The Bible Society's three-year *Prison Literacy Project* began in October 2008 and is focused on the spiritual rehabilitation of prisoners through Bible based literacy.

Carol Price, a member of Bible Society NSW Board and President of World Day of Prayer and I travelled to PNG in August this year to see the work in progress, with a view to promote it here in NSW and through the World Day of Prayer and raising support for our work in PNG.

We visited Bible House in Port Moresby and attended the signing of the

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Memorandum of Understanding with the Bible Society of PNG CEO and the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Correctional Services at the Department of Corrective Services, the document which acknowledges our partnership with the Department and their full endorsement and cooperation.

The present focus is the prisons which have less access to services and the highest number of illiterate inmates, targeting 4,000 illiterate prisoners.

The first step is training as teachers for selected detainees who are serving more than one year in prison. After completing this training, they will then teach literacy under Bible Society supervision. Learning to read and write will enable them to read the Bible and also enable them to make decisions in their personal lives and to translate simple Bible stories into their own vernacular, empowering them to contribute in their communities after their release. The third group to benefit from the project is the illiterate people of those home communities, who by attending literacy lessons given by ex-prisoners will also learn to read and write.

We visited the Buimo Prison in Lae, and saw a literacy class was in progress in the chapel. I gave a short impromptu talk, reminding these Christian inmates that we are all part of God's family. After I spoke the men sang a beautiful harmonious song and the women sang on us being brothers and sisters in Christ! The guard sitting next to me was as moved as I was. These 8 men and 8 women are about to graduate - from being totally illiterate to a grade 3 level. Each detainee is screened for competency and Christian commitment. The language they are learning to write is Pidgin English.

We then ventured into the Maximum Security men's prison, seeing prisoners pacing with blank stares, but others with whoops of welcome. In a cage-like area we found a dozen men sitting on a cement floor having their class, copying their lessons into cheap exercise books with pencil, rubbing out as they went to conserve paper - an exercise book, ruler and a rubber is all they own. There are 96 illiterate prisoners attending classes.

Then we came to the women's section where we saw the women work at making Billums (woven string bags). As well as literacy they can learn crafts, sewing etc. They cook for themselves in huge cauldrons over fires outside their dormitories, where their babies and children also live.

I left that prison with a sense of sadness that the work is so huge and the workers so few but I also saw a sense of joy and accomplishment in those who can now read their Bibles and understand its message.

(Condensed from Report by Julie Bryant, Bible Society Representative)

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AN ALPHABET TO THINK ABOUT
AT THE END OF THE YEAR . . .

A lthough things are not perfect
B ecause of trial or pain
C ontinue in thanksgiving
D o not begin to blame
E ven when times are hard
Fierce winds are bound to blow
G od is forever able
H old on to what you know
I magine life without His love
J oy would cease to be
K eep thanking Him for all the things
L ove imparts to thee
M ove out of "Camp Complaining"
N o weapon that is known
O n earth can wield the power
P raise can do alone
Q uit looking at the future
R edeem the time at hand
S tart every day with worship
T o "thank" is a command
U ntil we see Him coming
V ictorious in the sky
W e'll run the race with gratitude
X alting God most high
Y es, there'll be good times and yes, there will be bad
Z ion waits in glory . . . where none are ever sad!