

NEWSLETTER

NEW SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

(State Unit of Australian Church Women)

No. 13

MAY, 1976

FROM THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

Down through the long corridors of time has echoed and re-echoed the lament of Moses in the west side of the wilderness ... "Who am I that I should go? Oh my Lord, send I pray some other person." How familiar those myriad excuses just why we should not be the one to do the task to which God seems to be calling us. How we forget the eternal promise which guarantees our blessing and joy... "I shall be with you." I know I was guilty of this self-same attitude at the commencement of this year as your President, and looking back over the months which have intervened I can only thank God for the rewarding and wonderful experience this has been to me and can truly and most sincerely say as Moses did...eventually..."I will sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously...the Lord is my strength and my song and He has become my salvation...this is my God and I will praise Him."

Month by month I am sure you have shared with me the warmth of that love and fellowship which binds us together in Him...never underestimate the value of our Inter-Church Council, and your own individual contribution, as we strive to establish His kingdom on earth by the application of the teachings of Christ to community, National and International relationships. My sincere thanks to the office bearers and Executive members for loyal support and unfailing co-operation, and indeed to each one of you also.

Another echo, this one from the National Committee meeting in Adelaide. "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites", an echo which I trust will live in our minds and hearts and go with us triumphantly into future years of service for Him. Jesus Christ frees us from the shackles of religion, frees us from the bonds of race, tradition,

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the limitations of imposed roles. Jesus Christ unites us...His victory becomes ours...no longer enslaved by sin we are united into One body by baptism...through His Crucified body...through the suffering and misery of the world and then through the Grace of God we have freedom here and now and eternally.

"May God who gives patience, steadiness, and encouragement help you to live in complete harmony with each other...each with the attitude of Christ toward the other. And then all of us can praise the Lord together with one voice, giving glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15, verses 5 & 6-Living Bible)

Gladys M. Bent

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Following a business career, Edna Baker felt the call of God to full time service, and entered The Salvation Army Theological Training College in Melbourne in 1934.

1936 Was appointed the Australian representative with a multinational Group of Salvation Army Officers to pioneer the work in South China, with Headquarters at Canton. During Sino-Japanese hostilities was appointed Chaplain in a Refugee Camp where thousands of displaced Chinese were being housed. Directed Women's and Girls' groups within the Camp, organised and conducted Sunday services, and mid-week Bible study groups.

1941 Returned to Australia and was married, serving as President of Women's groups in Townsville, West End and Ipswich Queensland where her husband had been appointed.

1947 Transferred to New Zealand serving in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland, being President of Women's groups, Educational Officer at the Wellington S.A. Training College, and Corps Cadet Counsellor for the Northern N.Z. Division.

1955 Appointed to Brisbane City Corps & President of the Women's Home League, and Fellowship groups including Outpost centres.

1956 At this time the mother of three children, with her husband appointed to pioneer The S.A. work in Papua/New Guinea. This included pioneering and establishing women's groups, Brownies and Girl Guide groups under the chairmanship of Lady Cleland, wife of the Administrator of N.G. Territory Pres.

1961 Returned to Sydney and became the Hon. Secretary of the W.I.C.C. serving with Presidents Mrs. E.M. Mansfield, Methodist, and also Mrs. D.J. Verco of the Churches of Christ. Became President/Elect, but

owing to her husband's transfer to West N.S.W. with H.Q. at Bathurst, this was changed. Here served as Director of Women's Organisations within the Division from Bathurst to Broken Hill, south to Grenfell, north to Mudgee.

1965 Transferred to Sydney West Division with Headquarters at Parramatta and became Director of Women's Organisations over 30 groups, which involved much travelling again extending west to Blackheath, south to Campbelltown, and north to Berowra.

1974 Became responsible for the Outer/Circle Home League, which comprises approx. 1,000 members scattered throughout Eastern and Northern Australia and overseas. This position requires a deal of correspondence and a monthly two-paged foolscap letter.

NEW SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1975-1976

At the Annual Meeting held on 21st April, 1975, Mrs. G.M. Bent took office as President and was installed at a well attended and inspiring service held at the Church of Christ, Belmore, on 24th May. Under her wise guidance the work of the Council has been maintained and a happy spirit of fellowship continues to mark our activities.

In recognition of their long and faithful service, Life Membership was conferred on two greatly valued members, Mrs. R.H. Dougherty and Mrs. J.B. Montgomerie, both former Presidents of the Council.

We have continued to hold our Council meetings in the Pitt Street Congregational Church, and would wish to express thanks to the Minister and church officers for their kind courtesy in this regard. We appreciate, too, the arrangements made by the Department of Administration of the Methodist Church for our Executive to meet in their Committee Room, month by month.

Thanks are due to the following ladies who have addressed our meetings:- Mrs. Heather Stevens, following her return from Malaysia where she had represented Australian Church Women at the Seminar on Family Life Education held in Penang in April 1975; Mrs. Mary Weme of Kenya, the 1975 Winifred Kiek Scholar, who, at our August Council meeting, told us much of her country and its people, and of her plans to help the women there; Mrs. Joy Cooke, Vice-President of Christian Women's Conventions, who spoke in November of the development, programme and plans of the movement; and Mrs. Dorothy McMahon, who at our final

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meeting in March, gave a most informative and stimulating address on the World Council of Churches Assembly, held in Nairobi late last year. Our horizons have, indeed, been widened as a result of all that we have heard and learnt from our visitors.

At the biennial meeting of the National Committee of Australian Church Women, held at Lincoln College, Adelaide, in August 1975, the Council was represented by the President and Hon. Secretary as delegates, while Mesdames M. Stanhope and D. Woodhouse attended as observers. Reports presented at the meeting indicated gratifying developments in the life and work of State Units, together with increased interest in and support of the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Fund and the Fellowship of the Least Coin. The Working Committee of A.C.W. is now located in Western Australia, and plans are in hand to hold the next biennial meeting of the National Committee in Perth in August, 1977. Copies of "Women at Work" issued by the Working Committee are distributed among our members and provide an opportunity of keeping in touch with the activities of A.C.W. in all States.

Observance of "Fellowship Day" in July and "World Community Day" in October provided many opportunities for churchwomen in city, suburban and country centres to worship together, discuss matters of common interest and concern, and create and deepen friendships. We express our heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Mary Down, who, over a number of years, has organised the despatch of material for Special Days and has received and collated the reports from centres where services have been held. Mrs. Down's resignation from the Council has been received with great regret, and we have recorded our appreciation of her assistance so cheerfully given.

The Council presented a submission to the Committee of Enquiry into Religious Education in NSW Government Schools in November, 1975. Our thanks go to Mrs. M. McCann and the members of the sub-committee which she convened for their help in collecting material and preparing the submission.

The final event in our busy 1975 programme was an Ecumenical Day of Retreat, held on Monday, 8th December, in the Crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral. The theme of the W.C.C. Assembly, "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites" provided the basis for addresses throughout the day, and the final Act of Worship, in which representatives of our member Churches took part, gave opportunity for recollection and renewal of our commitment to our task. We thank Mrs. Joan Curtin

and her assistants for all they did to arrange such a happy and helpful day and look forward to similar experiences in the future.

In conclusion, I should like to record my thanks to our President for her leadership and thoughtfulness, to other office-bearers and Executive members for their loyal support throughout this past year and to all Council members for their continued interest and co-operation, so generously given.

12th April, 1976.

Doris M. Mitchell
HONORARY SECRETARY

CONVENORS' REPORTS

Fellowship of the Least Coin - During 1975 over 100 letters were received from interested correspondents and groups, many of whom have participated in F.L.C. over a number of years. Quite a few new enquiries have also been made. Invitations to talk to groups about the Fellowship have been welcomed from both outer suburban and country areas. The 4th Quarterly News Bulletin for 1975 featured an article by Mrs. Shanti Solomon in which she spoke about our world in travail and how more than ever we need to pray for peace and for men that they may see the vision, accept the responsibility and work to bring it into being. The Bulletin gave news of the programme of the Asian Church Women's Conference showing how, for leadership development purposes the area would be divided into four zones. Allocations for 1975 were listed, the Australian project approved being the Aboriginal Medical Centre in Redfern. The "Circle of Prayer" Vol. VI has been printed and copies are expected shortly. During 1975 our N.S.W. offerings for F.L.C. totalled \$1758. In 1976 two Australian projects have been approved for grants - Nungalinga College in Darwin - an Aboriginal Training Centre - and the work of the Missionary Sisters of Charity among elderly aborigines in Bourke, N.S.W.

Marjorie Stanhope

Winifred Kiek Scholarship - To share in assisting a Christian woman to gain further knowledge and skills, which are not readily available in her own country, is a very important area of concern for the N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council.

We rejoice to hear that Miss Kalpana Airan in Satara, North India, is using some of the knowledge gained while studying community group work at the University of Sydney in 1973. In a recent letter, Kalpana informed us that the foundation laying ceremony of her new school was

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NEW SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

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HON. TREASURER'S STATEMENT

1st April, 1975 to 29th February, 1976

GENERAL FUND

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
Opening Balance at 1.4.75	294.63	Printing & Duplicating	82.20
Offerings Annual Service	77.40	President's Honorarium	25.00
Overseas Travel Fund	138.83	Exes-Secretary, Treasurer, Promotion & Publicity Officers	125.78
Delegates' Travel Fund	23.65	A.C.W. National C'tee Meeting - Travel & Accommodation	402.40
Affiliation Fees	54.00	Affiliation Fees -N.C.W.	10.00
Sale of Literature	1.40	-W.C.T.U.	1.00
Transferred from Fellowship Day Offerings	236.88	Donations - use of Church and Meeting Room	40.00
Transferred from World Community Day Offerings	204.13	Gift to Mrs. M. Weme	10.00
Bank Interest	66.34	Closing Balance	400.88
	<u>\$1097.26</u>		<u>\$1097.26</u>

FELLOWSHIP OF LEAST COIN

Opening Balance at 1.4.75	119.16	Australian Church Women	1758.21
Receipts	1655.28	Closing Balance	16.23
	<u>\$1774.44</u>		<u>\$1774.44</u>

FELLOWSHIP DAY

Opening Balance at 1.4.75	Nil	Australian Church Women	566.81
Receipts - Offerings	789.59	Transfer to General Fund	236.88
W.K.S. Fund	<u>19.10</u>	Closing Balance	<u>5.00</u>
	\$ 808.69		\$ 808.69

WORLD COMMUNITY DAY

Opening Balance at 1.4.75	92.12	Australian Church Women	420.04
Receipts	532.05	Transfer to General Fund	204.13
	<u> </u>	Closing Balance	<u>Nil</u>
	\$ 624.17		\$ 624.17

S U M M A R Y

General Fund	400.88
F.L.C.	16.23
Fellowship Day	<u>5.00</u>
Cr. Bank Balance	<u>\$422.11</u>
Interest Bearing Dep.	<u>\$500.00</u>

L. Perriam
Hon. Treasurer.

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Convenors' Reports (*Contd.*)

to take place on 21st March. We invite Council members and friends to contribute to a gift which we plan to send to Miss Airan for the project through which she is seeking to help the less fortunate mothers and children of her community.

The 1975 scholar, Mrs. Mary Weme, needs our support and prayers as she seeks to help families in rural communities in Kenya.

The 1976 scholar, Miss Sarah Ah You from Western Samoa, has settled in happily at the South Pacific Commission Training Centre in Suva, Fiji, where she will study in a course of Home Economics.

This is the first time that the Winifred Kiek Scholarship has been given to assist someone studying in a country other than Australia, because the training provided there is more suitable for the student than what is available here.

Mary Andrews

Publicity - In order to make the work of the Council better known and invite interest in our activities, information is regularly sent to the denominational papers as well as the metropolitan newspapers. Details of services arranged for Fellowship Day and World Community Day are provided, as well as information about our Annual Service of Installation of the incoming President, Fellowship of the Least Coin and Winifred Kiek Scholarship holders. These latter have always been interesting to meet and radio interviews with them have been arranged without difficulty.

Contact is continuously maintained with "Women at Work", the monthly publication of Australian Church Women, and news about Council events or individual members is regularly forwarded.

As we have a scrap book in which to place our news items, it is always appreciated when members hand me these, cut out and marked with the date of publication. I would appreciate receiving such items whenever published; it is very encouraging to know that publicity material is being used.

Joan Curtin

NEWS from other organisations . . .

National Council of Women

We all consider that we lead very busy lives, probably we do, but it is most challenging to attend N.C.W. as your delegates and discover the scope...the all-embracing activities...of this widely representative body of women dedicated in so many ways to the betterment of the Australian way of life, particularly as it applies to women and children.

I felt a most humble participant in a distinguished company, and let us always be grateful to God for those who never flag in this enthusiasm and dedication. Thank you once again, for this valuable experience you have given to Mrs. M. McCann and myself.

Gladys M. Bent

Good Neighbour Council

The Annual Conference held on June 14th, 1975, marked the 25th Anniversary of the Council. In welcoming the delegates and guests, the President, Mrs. J. Metcalfe, MBE, BA, Dip.Ed., spoke of the aims and objectives which were formulated 25 years ago as being basically those of the Good Neighbour Movement throughout Australia today - the welcome, welfare and integration of our new citizens. The Conference was officially opened by the Hon. A.J. Grassby, Special Adviser on Community Relations; Mr. M.S. Ruddock M.L.A. represented the Premier of N.S.W. In the evening delegates and friends attended the Shell National Folkloric Festival at the Opera House.

The Annual General Meeting took place on 1st December, 1975. The Annual Report covered the many-sided programme of the Council, with special reference to the decentralisation of activities, the Home Tutor Scheme, Ethnic Radio, and the contribution made by the many contact workers through their welcome and follow-up visits to new arrivals. The work of the staffs in the Regional Offices was highly commended, and the hope was expressed that additional funds would be made available to enable more of these offices to be established, so that all migrants might be provided with localised neighbourhood services.

Jean Venables

GLIMPSES OF ZAMBIA

The Revd. Dorothy Wacker, President of Australian Church Women, was one of the Australians who attended the World Council of Churches Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya in November-December, 1975. Later she visited Zambia, spending several weeks with Violet Sampa, a former Winifred Kiek Scholarship holder, whom many of our Council members met during her stay in Australia. Here is part of Dorothy Wacker's account of her visit to "Violet's World".

"Violet's everyday world of 'school and church' became mine during the three weeks that I stayed in the Southern Province. At Njase Girls' Secondary School, 5 miles from Choma, 120 miles north of Livingstone and the Victoria Falls, her chaplaincy duties were minimal because it was holiday time - but members of the staff from India, England, the United States, Scotland, Holland, Zaire and Zambia were to me a sign of the complexity of the task of independent-nation building. At St. Andrew's Church in Choma, the congregation witnessed to Violet's creative ministry and more than fulfilled her expectations as they presented their own nativity play on Christmas Eve - a play marked by reverence AND hilarity ... as they overflowed the little buildings on Christmas morning ... as they burst into song during my sermon-time ... as they shared with deep faith and emotion in a family's mourning at the funeral service marking the death of their 17 year old son ... as they met as a Women's Sisterhood for learning and serving ... and as they gave me a copper plaque as a token of their wholehearted acceptance of me as their Christian colleague from Australia. At the school chapel, the Zambian world of 'participatory democracy' came alive in the Synod meetings of the United Church of Zambia, held there from 5th-12th January. Delegates from all the member-churches were given TIME - to think, to ask questions, to make comments, to gather information and to be involved in the decision-making process of this 8 year old church bringing together Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches and the Paris Evangelical Mission. The chapel walls with their 8 large murals of gospel scenes, in which all the participants were painted as black Africans, were very appropriate walls to surround such meetings.

This world was very much a world of 'demand and promise', 'of people and the future'. The need for leadership, skills and facilities in the Southern Province is great and the willingness of people to learn is very noticeable. The Church at Maamba, the mining centre that provides all of Zambia's coal requirements, is a symbol of the demand and promise. People worship now in the Mining Company's hall and sit on the floor unless they bring their own chairs - nearby, the concrete base of a church building has been paid for by the worshippers, the walls will be paid for by the mining company, while the roof and furniture are still a matter of prayer and hopefulness. The Production Unit at the school is a symbol of people and the future. Each High School is required to have one, in an attempt to upgrade agriculture and the rural scene in the eyes of people being lured to the city by the power of a developing technological world ... and last year, at Njase, the 400 girls produced enough maize and chickens to provide for their needs."

(From "Women at Work")

THE N.S.W. WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL, which was formed in 1938, now includes in its membership representatives of the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic Churches, the Churches of Christ, the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends.

Each Church may appoint eight representatives to the Council, and, in addition, its local Branches and special interest groups such as the Y.W.C.A. and the Girls' Brigade are represented.

The Aim of the Council is:

- 1) To promote fellowship and co-operation between women of all branches of the Christian Church; and
- 2) To provide an avenue whereby Christian women as directed and used by God, may unitedly strive to establish His kingdom on earth by the application of the teachings of Christ to Community, National, and International relationships.

The N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council acts as the State Unit of Australian Church Women.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Council Meetings at Pitt St. Congregational Church at 10.30 a.m. on third Mondays - June 21; August 16; September 20 - Branches Day; and November 15.

Executive Meetings at Methodist Church Office, 139 Castlereagh St., at 10.30 a.m. on June 7 (note change of day); July 12; August 9; September 13; October 11; November 8.

Fellowship Day Services - last week in July.

World Community Day Services - last week in October.

FELLOWSHIP DAY - JULY, 1976

The theme is "Confessing Christ Together" and the Order of Service has been prepared for Australian Church Women by Mrs. Elizabeth Appleby of Perth, who was one of the Australian delegates to the 5th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in Nairobi, Kenya in November-December, 1975. She has brought together prayers and readings used at the Assembly by Christians from all parts of the world, from many different backgrounds. As we take part in the Fellowship Day services, we witness to our fellowship with all people everywhere who confess Christ.

Details of Fellowship Day services in city and suburban areas will be available at the Council meeting on June 21.

N.S.W. WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL
(State Unit of Australian Church Women)

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1976-1977

President:

Mrs. Lt.Colonel Keith Baker, 26 Grand Ave., Westmead 2145...635 0596

Past President:

Mrs. G. Bent, 45 Kitchener St., Caringbah 2229.....524 9086

Hon. Secretary:

Miss D.M. Mitchell, 33/250 Jersey Rd., Woollahra 2025...328 7119

Membership Secretary:

Mrs. W.S. Chambers, 5a James St., Northwood 2066.....42 3029

Hon. Treasurer:

Mrs. C. Perriam, 6/37 Ormond St., Ashfield, 2131.....798 6481

CONVENORS:

Fellowship of the Least Coin:

Mrs. R.W. Stanhope, 36 Dettman Ave., Longueville, 2066.....42 6078

Promotion:

Mrs. Major I. Hill, 60 Patrick St., Hurstville, 2220.....57 2096

Winifred Kiek Scholarship:

Deaconess M. Andrews, L8/250 Jersey Rd., Woollahra 2025....32 2023

Publicity Officer:

Mrs. J. Curtin, 7 Upper Cliff Rd., Northwood, 2066.....42 6191

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LIFE MEMBERS:

Mrs. G.H. Briggs; Mrs. R.H. Dougherty; Mrs. A. Hall;
Mrs. G. Knight; Mrs. M. Miller; Mrs. J.B.Montgomerie;
Mrs. E.G. Pearson; Mrs. C.W. Stolz; Mrs. W. Wyper.

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