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**\*\* 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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WCTU NSW	
The Girls' Brigade	
Bible Society NSW	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' FEES due 1st March : \$10.00 per annum  
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CONTRIBUTIONS to Newsette are requested from readers and should be sent to the **EDITOR:**

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# NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -- NSW UNIT

A C W seeks:

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

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 Carmel Keys Tel: 9977 5156

NUMBER 112

AUGUST 2007

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Dear Friends,

Our recent Spiritual Enrichment Day was just that. The presenters of the four facets of the theme provoked our interest whilst impressing us with how we need to be enriched spiritually and how we can enrich others.

*Scripture:* Reading the word of God is the centre of life. It is not designed to take people out of the world but rather to realise that God is in the world around us.

*Mission:* We ask Jesus to help us take up our cross and follow Him with the hope that the promise He gave us of sending the Holy Spirit to bless and multiply our efforts as his volunteers, his disciples of this day and age is a sure and certain hope.

*Social Justice:* We must learn to listen to the truths around us. It demands our respect for others. It warns us that we are trying to hear God's whisper in the breezes of life. To live without listening is not to live at all. We need to listen to the cries of injustice and to act justly.

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*Neighbours:* The human person is a social being, born part of a family, a community, a workplace. What does this mean? Who do we see? Our neighbours! We are required to make a spiritual commitment to look beyond our own door. What is the cost? It is love and love costs. The little daily things in life, at home, at work, the smiles; it demands we allow people to be who they are.

Look back over the Spiritual Enrichment Day. Think on what you heard and how you were enriched. Never see a need without doing something about it. Jesus said the harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so He sends us out as his disciples with his promise, to be always with us.

I look forward to hearing of your Fellowship Day Services at the next Council Meeting in August. May God bless you and your families. May He receive our friend *Rosalyn Bemrose* into his eternal embrace.

*Carmel Keys*

#### **PASTORAL CARE:**

*Rosalyn Bemrose* went to be with her Lord early in July. Council members had been praying for Rosalyn for many months, we need now to support her husband *Philip* and their family with our love and prayers through this difficult time.

We were saddened to hear that *Judith Baker's* husband *Jack* was called home in July. Please remember *Judith* and her family in prayer.

*Jennifer Peffer*, our President-elect, went to England for the birth of a little granddaughter. Little *Sophie* was admitted to hospital when just one week old with bacterial meningitis. We thank God that she is now showing some improvement but still needs our prayers for a complete recovery.

We were sorry to learn that *Marjory Baker*, a former President of ACW NSW, has been hospitalised for some time with a serious illness. She has now returned home. We think too of *Bernice Baker*, who also is unwell.

*Olive Edmonstone, Pastoral Care Convener*

#### **ASIA CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE:**

Following the ACW National Conference in Melbourne late September, *Shu Wen Chung*, Executive Secretary of ACWC will be in Sydney for one or two days and some of us will be able to meet with her if time permits, maybe share lunch or a picnic. For information nearer the time, contact Secretary Isabel Hewitt on 4969.6336.

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#### **A TRIBUTE TO ROSALYN MARY BEMROSE**

8<sup>th</sup> April 1948 -- 7<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Rosalyn was born to Charles and Mary Keyes, grew up in North Parramatta and attended the Methodist Church with her mother where she came to put her faith in the Lord Jesus. She met Phillip Bemrose in 1971 and they were married in 1973. Their desire in life was to put God first and to be an example to their children. They had the joy of seeing their three children come to trust Jesus as Saviour.

Over the years Rosalyn was involved in several Christian activities – church-run playgroups, teaching School Scripture, Inter-Church Commission of Religious Education in Schools and Christian Women Communicating International. When she was working for Scripture Union she was the co-ordinator of Beach Missions held along the NSW coast in Christmas school holidays. Phillip travelled with her to visit each of the 50-plus missions.

As well as being deeply committed to children's work Rosalyn regularly attended Christian Women's Fellowship at her home church, Hurstville Church of Christ, where she was President for one year and was also State President of the NSW CWF for three years. She was a representative of Churches of Christ on the NSW Unit of Australian Church Women, where she contributed by attending Council meetings and was a member of the Social Issues Committee.

Those of us who worked with Rosalyn in Christian women's work will always remember her commitment to the work and enthusiasm for it. Her expertise and wise counsel were greatly appreciated. We know that her commitment came from a deep faith in God and a desire to see others come to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

We will all deeply miss Rosalyn, her bright smiling face, her kindness and all the other facets of our association with her, but we thank God that she is now with Him and that her labour in the Lord has not been in vain.

ACW send our loving sympathy to Rosalyn's husband Phillip, sons Chris and Darren, daughter Karena and their families.

*(Contributed by Jean Porteous, Past State President)*

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#### ANNUAL SERVICE OF DEDICATION

On a beautiful late Autumn day St Brigid's Catholic Church, Millers Point opened her doors to allow us to appreciate the wonderful construction of this magnificent building, the history of which was given in May Newsette, but it is worth another reminder. St Brigid's was built with convict labour as a combination school-chapel five years before its parent church St Patrick's, Church Hill. In 1833 the then Governor of NSW, Richard Bourke, approved the building plan for "a Roman Catholic School House, to be occasionally used as a chapel". *Sister Gemma Pearson* (a Marist Sister who has been ministering there as a pastoral assistant to the residents of Millers Point for 17 years) says: "Tish" said the convicts, "well, one day in seven is occasional" so right from the beginning it was used as a place of worship. It may have been built by hands that were well work-worn but since then and to today it is cared for by loving dedicated people to the glory of God.

In this setting we were privileged to share fellowship and be ministered to by our President *Carmel* and National President *Major Elaine Johnson*, our Guest Speaker. Elaine reminded us that "the earth is the Lord's" and it is our responsibility to care for this land on which we live. God has given us this responsibility and our task is to live so that this earth will be here for generations to come and that God will be glorified in all that we do in and through Him. Elaine spoke of many varied ways in which we can do this in our everyday life. Thank you to those who have taken on responsibilities on Executive and Committees; please pray for and support these ladies.

A wonderful lunch followed and we took the opportunity to fellowship and enjoy the lovely setting. both in and outdoors.

*Nancy McLaren, Publicity Convener*

#### SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT DAY 2007

Another inspiring, encouraging and challenging day was shared by approx 40 members for our 2007 Spiritual Enrichment Day at Scots Presbyterian Church in the heart of Sydney on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

After a welcome cup of coffee/tea and some nibbles President Carmel welcomed everyone to this beautiful church. The day was planned to cover the topics "How have you been spiritually enriched by *Scripture* and *Mission*?" and "How have you enriched others as well as yourself by *Social Issues* and *Neighbours*?" Speakers from different denominations covered these topics, sharing their thoughts from Scripture as well as their

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own Christian experience.

**SESSION 1** *Jean Porteous* introduced her topic '*Spiritually Enriched By Scripture*' and had asked *Ethel Wladsiuk* to share her testimony of how throughout her Christian life the Word of God has helped her. Ethel read selected verses of Scripture and told us of the importance of the Scriptures to herself and especially through the strong guidance of her mother. Jean stressed that God's word is not just 66 books put together with a set of rules to be followed but The Word of The Living God; not just a collection of facts of history but God's Word that tells us who God is; not just history but encouragement and illustration of how this Word of God can show us that God never lets us go. During the reflection time we looked at Psalm 119: 9-18

**SESSION 2** *Bev Elliott's* topic was '*Enriched by Mission*' and using her experience within her denomination and own particular church, Bev shared verses of Scripture coinciding with the different aspects of mission undertaken in her Presbyterian faith. Mission is described in the World Dictionary as "Being sent on some special work or service." How does that relate to us as Christians? and How can we help to make a difference? were some of the challenges given to us. During the reflection time we were asked to consider "What am I doing?"

**SESSION 3** *Sister Joan Bird's* passion for *Social Issues* was very evident as she posed the question "*How Have I Enriched Others Through Social Issues?*" Isaiah 61:4 and Luke 4:18 The Spirit of The Lord is upon Me.....

Consider the life of Jesus. He touched the marginalised, those deprived of their rights, those treated unjustly. Each person has been created in the likeness of God and with the same dignity. When we look at our world it seems that all the benefits of some are obtained at the cost of others. Nations have no right to squander while others have none. Everyone should reach their potential. These are some of the issues and challenges that face each one of us in our world today and especially us as Christians. Sister Joan shared her young life experience of some knitted gloves going to help someone in a far off nation who she knew she would never meet and yet would be blessed by something given by her. St Francis of Assisi's life was turned around when he saw a leper outside his town wall. Can we *Live Simply* so that others may *Simply Live*? Our reflection time was a challenge to consider again Isaiah 61:1.

**SESSION 4** "*Neighbours, Everybody Needs Good Neighbours*"- the theme song from a popular TV show in this session we heard stories and experiences of five of the Baptist ladies, *Beryl Kirkwood, Winsome Penn, Martha Noel, Ramona Cowle* and *Olive Edmonstone* in dealing with their

neighbours, being unto them and sharing with them what Jesus expects of us. Am I doing enough for my neighbour? Can they see a difference between me and their non-Christian neighbour? We are called to show love in action, to respect, care for, not harm. We do this through our trust and faith in our living Lord. People come into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime and this was reflected in a little story told about Jamie a little boy who wanted to visit where God is. After walking for a while he came to a park and decided to sit down and have something to eat. Nearby was an elderly man whom Jamie thought looked a bit hungry so decided to share his biscuits. The man gave Jamie a beautiful smile, so Jamie decided to share his drink as well. Again the man gave a beautiful smile. This of course made Jamie smile back. Realising that it was getting late. Jamie decided to go home where his mother asked him why he looked so happy. His response, "I met God today and he has a beautiful smile." Meanwhile the elderly man went home and his son asked why he looked so happy. His response, "I met God today and he looks much younger than I thought he would be!" (an abridged version). Our reflection time "Neighbours, who and what?"

It is hard to sum up the whole day but one quote used can reflect what Scripture, Mission, Social Issues and Neighbours will mean when we consider the Living Word of God, "Centre our lives on the Word of God, live our lives in this world and in the Word and never see a need without doing something about it." *To Live Without Loving Is Not Living At All.*

Thank you to President Carmel for organising such a great day and though the day was cold and none of us shed our warm coats, scarves and gloves, all of us can say that God is good and His word is alive in those who desire to love and serve Him. Thank you to those who shared their thoughts and time to bring God's message to us.

*Nancy McLaren, Publicity Convener*

#### **FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:**

*Esther Byu*, the outgoing Secretary of the International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin will be retiring on 31 December 2007, after completing two five year terms of service. Many of us have met Esther, some several times, and have been inspired by her leadership and dedication.

Esther writes "My ten year journey with the Fellowship of the Least Coin Prayer Movement has been a joy, and a fulfilment of my life, especially the significant event of the fiftieth anniversary Jubilee Celebration of the

FLC, which was held in October 2006. All of this has inspired me to move on towards another adventure in life with thanksgiving, contentment, confidence and joy, with renewed faith, commitment and hope in God." We pray that Esther will have a peaceful retirement after her wonderful service to this prayer movement.

Australia received three FLC grants for projects this year. I will briefly outline them.

- 1: **"Rainbows"** Launceston City Mission, Launceston, Tasmania. Aim of the project: to assist children in expressing their feelings, working through grief and discovering coping tools following a death in the family or other significant loss.
2. **CDO (Choices, Decisions, Outcomes)** Ascot Park, South Australia. Aim: to provide to High School students throughout Adelaide a programme that builds self-esteem, respect for life, teaches life skills and empowers them to make healthy lifestyle choices in regard to sexuality and relationships.
3. **Timor Leste** Women's Leadership Care Training, sponsored by the YWCA of Australia. The aim: to provide training for staff and volunteers of the Protestant Church in Timor Leste's social development Agency (Yasona) in childcare and women's leadership. Emphasis will be on "train the trainer" and providing opportunity for women from rural areas.

I will detail these projects at a later date. Thank you all for your continuing support.

*Janet Lang, FLC Convener*

#### **WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:**

We trust you enjoyed the Fellowship Day Service with offerings received, invested for financing the Winifred Kiek Scholarship. The Trust has decided on the Scholar/s for 2008 to be announced in due time. We can be praying for their readiness to take up this opportunity.

*Vivien Cheung*, our 2006 Scholar, and little Alexander are more settled and thankful for all prayers. Keep *Cathy Paraka*, our current 2007 Scholar from Papua New Guinea in your prayers – no news but no doubt very busy.

Our other 2007 Scholar, *Leinamau* here in Sydney has been very busy and our prayers for her are being answered in abundance.

She returned to Sydney on July 15 after 5 weeks home in Vanuatu. Her Emails to me told of excitement in visiting the islands, sharing her adventure here in Australia so far, and Scripture Union leaders from

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Sydney visiting and working with her for a week. Before her trip home she appreciated new friendships taking her to a Church Camp at Katoomba, preaching at Newcastle and Grantham, gifts of Ugg boots, her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday with several celebrations of cakes, candles, cards and gifts. My husband and I attended her first course Certificate in Evangelism Graduation Service – a moving time with 7 others from various Pacific areas. This has all created much promotion for ACW and WKS – thankfulness for your partnership in prayer, support and funding has been humbling. I have taken photos along the way. From July 16 to August 12 she will be at Springwood Uniting Church for her second field placement, the she will be full time back at College for the Christian Counselling Certificate Course until September 28, then back to Vanuatu till October 7. Principal Rev Ian Stebhens and his wife Rev Margaret are truly wonderful people in their service in this ministry. Your prayers are valued; for further information on the above, please contact me (02) 9896.3758.

*Judith Cayzer, WKS Convener*

**EXTRA NOTE re WKS:** The last issue of Newsette in May included *Norma Dumbrell's* report of her ministry in Myanmar in January, but omitted to mention that Norma had met *Mai Zin Zin Wah*, our 1999 Scholar. Mai was full of thanks for her scholarship; she is now responsible for all the Youth work of the Anglican Church of Myanmar. Another point for praise!

#### **SPECIAL DAYS:**

Packing Day for the 21 parcels of material for Fellowship Day in July went smoothly. The theme for the Service, which was written by the West Australia Unit, was *Heaven's Bread*, with readings from Exodus 16 and Matthew 6:25-34; attractive new leaflets advertising the Winifred Kiek Scholarship were included in the packages, as the offertories go to support that project.

NSW Unit was asked to write the Service for World Community Day in October, for which the theme is *Enough For Each Day*. The copy of the Service has been sent to the National Executive and our thanks go to those on the committee responsible for writing it.

From the National Executive we have heard that after considering the three World Community Day Special Project Applications received, they have decided on 'Project Rachel' submitted by Tasmania Unit as our project for 2007. This is a ministry of compassion which aims to bring healing and reconciliation to those lives hurt by an abortion experience. The stories told are very varied but all carry the same elements of severe regret,

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shame, guilt and alienation from Church and God. Many have received counselling and some have experienced a Rachel's Vineyard Healing Retreat and found the healing to be more than they could have imagined. Dependent on their circumstances attendees are charged a fee for the retreat but most are unable to pay, however they are not turned away but welcomed and 'Project Rachel' provides a scholarship.

*Pamela Freeman, Special Days Convener*

#### **SOCIAL ISSUES:**

I attended the Social Justice Conference held at the Salvation Army Congress Hall on March 30-31. A wide range of speakers whom many regard as the forerunners in fighting for social justice in Australia New Zealand and across the world challenged and informed us.

The Conference comprised input from speakers and then a variety of workshops, which covered a range of social issues and gave information on what actions were being taken. We were also challenged as to how we were acting for Social Justice. Topics of the workshops were:

**Understanding Your Welfare System:** How to Lobby Government; Fighting for our Local Environment. (Friday Morning)

**Social Justice Education:** Drug Addiction; Human Trafficking; Understanding Issues faced by Indigenous Australians. (Friday Afternoon)

**Mental Health:** Social Justice in the Workplace; Refugee Awareness. (Saturday Morning).

It was difficult to choose from this wide variety of groups but I attended those relating to the environment; human trafficking, and refugees.

At the opening session *Major Campbell Roberts*, Salvation Army Director of Social Policy NZ, gave the introductory address. He invited us to let ourselves be challenged by the speakers and to look into our immediate community to see where we are called to fight injustice. This is a Biblical imperative calling for a passionate commitment and a fight against evil. A personal commitment calls us to speak out against injustice and not just donate to charity even though that is praiseworthy. He asked us whether we had lost our way in the fight against injustice. We need, he said, to consider our contemporary context; meditate on the biblical concept of justice and mercy and discern our motivation for action. We need to believe that change is possible and work to make it happen.

Some questions we can ask ourselves:

- Where are women weeping today and why?

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- How can we save the children? What injustices affect them?
- Who is on our streets and why?

He reminded us that working with others fighting for social justice and getting as many people as possible involved in different ways is how we can accomplish the mission of Jesus in our world today. Living counter-culturally as the Bible promotes is a Christian response. Our own structures must reflect what we speak out about and we need to ask ourselves whether we live apart in our own security zone.

Personally I found the whole Conference enriching, heartening and challenging and hope in future issues of Newsette to share more of its richness.

*Sister Joan Bird fmm, Social Issues Convener*

#### **PAN PACIFIC & S E ASIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION:**

The International Conference was held in Auckland NZ. Of the 100 who attended 15 were Australians and at our April meeting we heard their report. The theme was "*Women Making A Difference Through Peace*" and the Millenium Goals were studied. It was agreed that we should concentrate on Goal 3 "To promote gender equality and empower women" e.g. the proportion of men and women in our Australian Parliaments.

Also in April, Harmony Day was celebrated by 88 women (including PPSEAWA members) attending the Great Synagogue on a follow-up to the visit last year to the Gallipoli Mosque. They were privileged to attend the Passover Seder and Kosher Lunch.

In May the speaker was *Mahboba Rawi*, now an Australian citizen since her escape as a teenager from Afghanistan in 1983. She and her husband have raised a family here, tragically losing a son in an accident at the Kiama Blowhole. Her uncle, also a refugee, knowing the plight of refugees, went to Pakistan and formed a bakery business, from where free bread is distributed to homeless children. He also founded a school for these children, first for boys, later for girls. Mahboba recruited her friends and They work hard to raise funds to further projects in a country which has had 20 years of war, death and destruction. Mahboba has written a book '*Mahboba's Promise*', selling at \$35 from which, after costs, all proceeds go to fund these projects. Donations of money, time, services or expertise are welcome. Contact: Mahboba's Promise PO Box 6234 North Ryde, 2113

*Edith Ridge, ACW Representative to PPSEAWA*

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#### **NSW ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:**

Following the opening, people addressed the question "*Facing The Challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Where To Now for Ecumenism?*"

*Jim Mein*, Moderator Uniting Church NSW Synod, noted that ecumenism, like Interfaith Dialogue is not generally on the agenda of local churches. Leaders of various faiths need to share, encourage, resource and consult at the grass roots levels to encourage unity.

*Fr Doru Costache* of the Romanian Orthodox Church shared his frustrations as he works with a congregation that wants to continue in the old mother tongue, making it difficult for others to be embraced within the faith or to have women participating in services, and cross culturally.

*Amanda Jackson* (Micah Challenge) told of efforts to reach the poor and disadvantaged, treating them as people with both practical and spiritual needs.

*Sr Trish Madigan* pointed out that 50 years since the Declaration of Human Rights, the global picture has changed little. In fact, the gap between poor and rich has widened. Women in the church still need to be empowered. Her question was "Are church teachings and practices part of the solution or part of the problem?"

Later in the day, *Rev Tara Curlewis* of the Uniting Church was inducted as the incoming President of the NSW Ecumenical Council and Reports were received from the various Commissions of the Council:

**Social Justice Commission** reported on implications for the way churches work together. Workshops are planned during 2007 to aid in understanding how various denominations approach the question of homelessness.

**Partnership for Development Commission** presented examples of the Council working with the poor and disadvantaged including the Refugee program, particularly the impact of current government policies. The Sisters of Mercy are to be approached about funding the managerial position at the House of Welcome in South West Sydney.

**Local Initiatives Commission** looked at the ongoing struggle for local churches to work together.

As a postscript I was conscripted to play the keyboard at the Service of Dedication of the Council Commission members, after which delicious gourmet food of both eastern and western cultures was served by the women of the Syrian Orthodox Church as the host church for the meeting.

*Pamela Freeman, ACW Representative to NSW Ecumenical Council*