

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW UNIT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 222 PITT STREET, SYDNEY
on Monday, 21 November, 1994

OPENING: The President, Mrs Lucelle King, welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the year, commencing devotions with reading John 3:16 and I John 4:8,9. We were reminded how much God loved us by giving us the gift of His Son, Jesus, and that nothing can separate us from that love (Rom. 8). We saw, too, that Jesus also gave us a gift. He gave us the Holy Spirit (John 16:13,14), which maintains the spiritual life within us, and we too have to share this love, especially at Christmas time, to all people. Prayer followed and then the Executive, led by Lucelle, joined in a chorus, "The Gift Goes on".

PRESENT AND APOLOGIES: There were 50 in attendance with 9 apologies. A special mention was made of apologies from Yvonne Davis, holidaying in New Zealand and sending greetings, and from Juliet Backhouse, who has had a fall and was committed to our prayers.

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING were confirmed as a correct record.

BUSINESS ARISING:

1. It was reported that the Ecumenical Luncheon had been well attended on 31 October and well presented, and that the talk by Marie McCann had been most interesting.

2. ACWC Service: Although only 27 had attended, it was agreed that this first attempt had been very worthwhile. The excellent address by Marie McCann had given a clear insight into the plight of many of the Asian women, as discovered in her travels. It was agreed that such a Service in the future might have a better response following a personalised invitation to Asian women, and a carefully chosen venue.

3. Venues for functions in 1995: Two Special Functions are planned: Spiritual Enrichment Day 17 July and Ecumenical Luncheon 9 October; details to be discussed at February meeting and venues considered.

4. Membership lists are now available.

5. Functions attended: ABM on 28 September - Helen Richardson (having attended representing UCA), reported on the excellent missionary speakers.

BWF on 24 October - Mabel Ward reported that she had had a very pleasant time at Bankstown Town Hall, enjoying the address of the World President.

6. Visit to Taiwan - ACWC 10th Assembly - Lucelle gave a brief report on the visit to Taiwan, distributing interesting photos. There were six people attending from Australia, six from New Zealand and 150 from other parts of Asia. "Partnership through Christ in a Changing World" came through very strongly with an Asian perspective on the role of women - the status and rights of women in the community. We heard of the four Bible studies - excellent discussion on women in the Bible (likened to the women's plight in Asia). There was a splendid Taiwanese Cultural night - International Night when 17 countries were represented. Full report later.

7. ACWC Bulletin available - fee of \$8 due today.

8. It was noted that 38 people had attended the World Community Day Service at the re-commenced Lower Blue Mountains Branch at Penrith.

9. Latest edition of NEWSETTE now available.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. National Minutes 9 September: Re Disaster Relief Fund, noted that \$1,000 had been donated towards Australia's Farm Hand Drought appeal.

Noted that Rev. David Gill, Gen. Sec. NCCA, had been contacted re role of ACW in new structure of NCCA Commission Women's Affairs, etc.

Copy of new Circle of Prayer, compiled by women of Africa, "Search for Reconciliation", 12-page booklet on history of FLC. Convener to photocopy for State Conveners.

WKS: Trustees have been meeting concerning the selection of next scholar and also considering making some alterations in the scholarship. Joan Tong, at this point, told of meeting in Taiwan with a lady from the office

where our past scholar, Nighat Gulzar, worked. The lady thanked ACW through Joan for all that had been done for Nighat: "she is a different girl....smiles....lifts her head....you have done so much for her".

NSW suggestion that ACW name be changed to "Church Women United", has been tabled; to be considered at next National Conference. All states have been asked to give consideration to this alteration.

2. ACW NEWS to hand.
3. From the Hon. Dr Marlene Goldsmith MLC, keeping us informed re Pornography Bill.
4. Newsletter of NSW Ecumenical Council SHARING and invitation to "A Day Away" - a reflection day for women on 22 October 1994.
5. National Minutes - October.
6. National Executive Circular 4 with Christmas greetings from National Secretary.
7. Dr Marlene Goldsmith - return thanks following passing of her father.
8. Helen Danko with apologies for not attending recent functions, explaining something of the difficulties being experienced by the Ukrainian Orthodox Sisterhood.
9. Postcard from Joan Curtin in Hong Kong with apologies for absence from luncheon.
10. Invitation to attend AGM of the CWLA in St Patrick's, Parramatta, 7 December. Mabel Ward to attend.
11. Bronwyn Bishop - Lobby for Life - splendid work noted in recent awareness of breast cancer.
12. Letter of thanks from St Andrews Cathedral Committee for ACW contribution in Festival of Flowers '94.
13. NCW: Invitation to attend a "Celebrate Being an Australian in 1995" Luncheon on 24 January 1995 in Parliament House Dining Room at 12 noon. Ticket \$35. Peg Blake to represent ACW.
14. Letter of resignation from Dorothy McEwan. Letter of thanks to be sent for faithfulness in serving her Church on ACW Council.
15. Lyons Forum Newsletter.

REPORTS: TREASURER: A reminder was given to patronise Mary Andrew's Trading Table and to make a donation towards Morning Tea. Accounts passed for payment - ratified.

WKS: Letter from Doreen Tie. Attention was drawn to current ACW News and the comprehensive report given there about visit of Margaret Napier to St Louis Hospital, arranged by Malai. No decision yet regarding next scholar.

FLC: \$8,000 received to date. Shirley Wells read from last year's let. from Shirin Samuel, and from VOICE OF CANADA in Circle of Prayer. Lucelle spoke of WCD Service at new branch in Camden. After explaining the purpose of FLC, and knowing that they would not have collected through the year for FLC, she suggested that they take a 5¢ piece and make a prayer as they came forward with this offering.

PROMOTION: There were 41 WCD Services held, with seven new centres taking part. Good attendances and increased offerings were reported. Bourke had to cancel this year. Gosford had 31 attending but because of the poor response in the area they have decided not to form a branch but will support FLC. It looks as if Terrigal will take in Woy Woy. Interesting to note that more menfolk are attending and even taking part in the Service. Theme and music greatly appreciated, many commenting on the sense of peace felt afterwards. Following the special offering taken for SHALOM, it was noted that work has begun on the retirement village there. Dss Mary Andrews indicated that she had used the WCD Service at the Decade meeting and it had been well received. Convener, Edith Ridge, reported that she was following up an enquiry received from the Punchbowl area. She asked that she be advised as soon as possible where there will be a new contact person in a branch, so that forms can be sent out correctly for Fellowship Day, etc. Helen Stutchbury expressed thanks on behalf of the Upper Blue Mountains Branch for help given by Hazel McIver and other Salvation Army ladies at their Service.

PUBLICITY: Hazel McIver asked that any advertising material relating to Fellowship Day and World Community Day be passed on to her so that she can advise

Radio Stations 2CBA and 2GB (Rev. Gordon Moyes had promoted ACWC it was noted); sale of souvenirs is enabling us to do this sort of promotion and publicity.

SOCIAL ISSUES: Heather Reid spoke of her "adventures" at the Presbyterian Market Day in the Showground in October and recommended this annual event to members. She was amazed at the number of ACW people she met there. It was noted that Dr Marlene Goldsmith's Pornography Bill was to be debated in September - no result yet. We were encouraged to support the Christian politicians. Concern was expressed regarding material being used in primary schools on sex education. Parents and other concerned people with any queries about this material (which contains crude art work) should ask to see it at the school and if they find it offensive they should ask that their children be taken out. Good response has been received from Girls Brigade for FLC. Concern was expressed re gambling hold on the community and the effect it is having on family life. It was agreed that everyone should draw the attention of her denomination to these problems, and that a letter from ACW be sent to the Premier's Dept. pointing out factors for concern from the Christian point of view. It is estimated that by 1996 a third of the annual income of each Australian will be gambled away. The danger of involvement even in raffle ticket sales was pointed out.

BRANCHES: No report. Information still to go out to branches advising as to the kind of account that should be opened. Regarding affiliation of a denomination with ACW, it is essential that they believe in the Trinity and the atoning death of Christ for our salvation. Even if they can't be affiliated on a denominational level, they could be affiliated on a local level. Executive to look into the matter.

SPECIAL FUNCTIONS: Further discussion at February meeting.

NEWSLETTE: Deadline on 16 January 1995, at Executive meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Marie McCann stressed that ACW should be seen and heard to be a positive voice of women - a strong, united group, serving and praying together. Attention was drawn to an article in the SUN HERALD recently: "Beating the Baby Blues", which followed a NSW Government report, "If Motherhood is bliss, why do I feel so awful?" - at the launching of Family Week. Minister for the Status of Women, Kerry Chikarovski, said that this is a serious condition affecting the lives of thousands of women and their families in NSW each year. Key recommendations from the report include the introduction of parenting education in NSW schools. After much discussion it was moved, seconded and agreed that our Convener for Social Issues write a letter to the SYDNEY MORNING HERALD saying that we support the recommendations from the report to the NSW Government - "If Motherhood is bliss, why do I feel so awful?" - particularly the introduction in NSW schools of parenting education. We add that the subject be a core one for both boys and girls and that it include food technology as well as life and home management. We congratulate the Minister for the Status of Women, Kerry Chikarovski, for launching the report at the beginning of Family Week. It is an urgent matter that we have more education for parenting and home management for both boys and girls.

Members were urged to listen to Radio National "Insights" program if possible this afternoon at 2.10 and Dss Mary Andrews asked for prayers in connection with the proposed Ecumenical Centre in Canberra.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the following Memorial Minute (prepared and read by Mina Whybourne) be sent to the National Executive with the appropriate contribution for the Memorial Bursary Fund:

"Olwen Lean, who died on October 25, 1994, was a firm believer in ecumenism and served on the State Executive and Council of our NSW State Unit for many years. She was a foundation member of the Lane Cove-Longueville Branch in 1968 and more recently was a foundation member of the Bellingen Branch. She was also a Life Vice-President of The Mothers' Union of the Anglican Church and a member of the State Council of World Day of Prayer Committee.

Olwen knew the love of God and His love formed the basis for her total lifestyle. She reached out to others in a truly humble and gracious manner and

many considered her greatest gifts were those of encouragement and support. She used these God given gifts wisely and widely to help others in their walk with the Lord.

We thank God for her life and the privilege of knowing her."

It was noted that Rev Iluminada Domingo, the new Executive Secretary of ACWC, would be in Sydney this week and those who are able to come and meet her were asked to come at 12 noon on Friday, front of 222 Pitt Street.

Next year's program will be available at February meeting.

Prayers were sought for Navamani Peter, recent Vice President of ACWC, who will be visiting Sydney 10-14 February 1995. She will be en route from India to Melbourne for the World Day of Prayer International meeting.

Lucelle showed items brought back from Taiwan, including the Worship Book (prepared by NSW State Council).

NEXT MEETING will be 20 February 1995. The Baptist ladies were thanked for the delicious Christmas morning tea and the Presbyterians were reminded of their turn at the next meeting when the Baptists will attend to the chairs.

CLOSE: There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.45 with the Benediction.

Confirmed 20 February 1995 