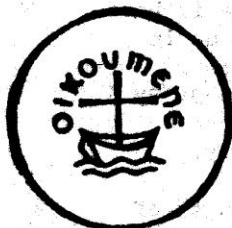


# Australian Church Women

## WOMEN AT WORK



SEEK: To unite Australian women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

To help Christian women to take more effective place in the total life and mission of the Church.

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March, 1983

Around the world, in many parts of the family of the Christian Church, there has been a renewed conviction in recent years that we must become more effective witnesses to the Gospel. The Gospel is God's Word to the world and to our neighbour, not simply a private blessing.

God is calling us to His newness for tomorrow, with opportunities of listening to what Christians around the world are calling us, through our Lord, to do.

As we come to this Lenten period, may we share together and support each other to bring the love of God to people everywhere.

May we pray to our Heavenly Father to help us to see the truth, to see the way to go, to see ourselves as we are, and to see Him in all His Majesty and love.

I have been much impressed by the following modern version of the 23rd. Psalm written by a Japanese writer - Tokio Megashue -

The Lord is my Pace-setter - I shall not rush.  
He makes me stop for quiet intervals,  
He provides me with images of stillness which restore  
my serenity,  
He leads me in ways of efficiency through calmness of  
mind, and His guidance is peace.

Even though I have a great many things to accomplish  
each day, I will not fret, for His Presence is here,  
His timelessness, His all importance, will keep me in  
balance,  
He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of my  
activity,  
By anointing my mind with His oils of tranquility,  
My cup of joyous energy overflows.  
Truly harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruits of  
my hours,  
For I shall walk in the Pace of my Lord  
And dwell in His House for ever.

Fran Downes,  
National Convenor F.L.C.

The following is a letter written to Vera Wilson, Western  
Australian Unit -

"How are you for so many years? With us we are  
fine. I am very sorry that since I left Australia I  
have not been able to write to you. Please excuse me  
and also ask all people that knew me or who can remember  
me to excuse me too.

Nakuru is fine. We have very heavy rains during  
day and nights. We are wondering what is happening  
because this should be our short rain periods but any way  
it is green and there are beautiful flowers everywhere.

I am still going on working with groups. I have  
a group of tailoring which have seven women and three  
men. They are generating a little income by making school  
uniforms. This is because of the money which your church,  
Floreat Presbyterian gave us. We thank them very much  
and also pray for them.

At the moment we moved from town where we have stayed  
for ten years in house and gone four kilometers away from  
place of work. I always walk back home but in the  
mornings I come by a bus.

My daughters have finished their secondary education and hope that they might be called to join University or pass well to join other ministries for professional courses.

On 15th. Dec. I will go home in Kakamega to join my parents for Christmas . The children and my husband are gone, they left me because I had not taken my leave yet.

If you receive this letter please say hello to everybody that remembers me.

I wish you merry Xmas and happy New Year. Greet your family.

MARY WEME "  
Nakuru  
Kenya

#### Asian Church Woman's Visit

At morning tea on Tuesday before Christmas at the home of Marie McCann, ACW New South Wales Executive members and previous conference participants, Win Dougherty and Reverend Dorothy McMahon, met Mrs. Gloriosa Rajendaran. Glo, as she is affectionately called, was the Assembly Secretary for the Asian Church Women's Conference held in Bali last October, and is currently on the Executive Committee of ACWC; she is also the Principal of an Anglican Girls' School in Kuala Lumpur and what a charming, beautiful and capable woman! She was visiting New Zealand and Australia on a holiday with her husband and two teenage children.

Valuable interchange of ideas of practice in ecumenical women's organisations was enjoyed, and when Glo spoke to us she explained the difficulties, yet, the great hope for the advancement of ACWC.

The Sixth Assembly of A.C.W.C. at Bali

The Sixth Assembly of A.C.W.C. at Bali, October 1982 had officially come to its conclusion. Reports had been submitted from Commission and Bible Study Groups, the new Constitution adopted, Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports presented and accepted, new Office Bearers elected and the Benediction pronounced at the final service of worship, culminating in the Bali Agape Meal.

But more awaited us.

The following day most of the delegates took the opportunity of making an all day tour to Mt. Kintamani, during which we saw a performance of the Barong Dance and admired and purchased some of the work of the local wood-carvers, silversmiths, Batik workers, artists and straw weavers.

After dinner tired participants gathered in the Meeting Hall for vespers, conducted by delegates from Pakistan. Formal hymns, readings and prayers were followed by an invitation to go to the front of the Hall, take a candle, light it from a large one already burning there and process in single file along the path leading to the beach, a distance of approx. 350 metres. The strains of "Rejoice in the Lord Always" and other favourite songs echoed in the still, warm night air as we formed a circle around the three metre high wooden cross at the end of the pathway, underneath which stood the retiring President, Mrs. Gloria Santos (Philippines) and the newly elected President, Mrs. Boonmee Julkiree (Thailand). The noise of the waves breaking on the nearby beach, and the circle of over 100 candles held by women from such a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds is now a treasured memory.

Was it only five days before that we had arrived at Dhyana Pura? During that short time our common commitment to Jesus Christ had enabled us to brush aside the formality and diffidence which is often present when strangers meet, and His Spirit had created an atmosphere in which a frank and deep sharing of personal experiences become possible. Learning from and listening to others whose Christian faith is lived in such different circumstances from those in Australia was, for

me, a memorable occasion.

Candles flickering in the darkness, a deep sense of the presence of God, prayers of thanks for past blessings and of intercession for the future, offered beneath the Cross at Dhyana Pura, made a fitting finale to the fellowship of the Assembly.

VERA WILSON  
(Western Australian Unit)

Extract from Western Australian Unit Annual Report

The following information is taken from The Annual Report of the Western Australian Unit of A.C.W.

"The highlight of the year was that of Vera Wilson being selected as an Australian representative at the Asian Church Women's Conference in Bali. Since her return she has shared with us the exhilarating and spiritual experiences with such enthusiasm, at having the privilege of being given the opportunity to participate. We have enjoyed every minute of it, and would like to thank Sir Ronald and Lady Wilson for opening their home to us so Vera could show us her slides and give us a few more details."

Report from South Australian Unit of A.C.W. to Women at Work

At the recent A.G.M. of the S.A. Unit, Secretary Jean Middleton presented her final Annual Report at the conclusion of her five and a half extremely valuable years as Secretary. Reports were recorded from our representatives to the S.A. Council of Churches, the National Council of Women, the Women's World Day of Prayer, the Council for Christian Education, the Bible Society, the Women's Switchboard and the U.N. Status of Women Committee as well as Convenors of various sub-committees and reps. of our Branches at Brighton, Goodwood, Prospect, Southern Districts and Port Augusta.

A report of their attendance at the A.C.W.C. Assembly in Bali was given by Bernice Mason and Barbara Grealy.

For many years, the S.A. Unit held a social function in the City, the proceeds of which were given to a different non-church-orientated charity each year. However, three years ago, it was decided to hold these functions in various suburbs and so our "Community Concern Luncheons" were born. During 1982, our chosen charity was the Kersbrook Riding School for Disabled Children and, as a result of nine luncheons being held, a cheque for \$2,225 was handed to them at our A.G.M. Our chosen project for 1983 is to be the Kampuchean Association of S.A.

Concluding her Annual Report, Jean mentioned how much she had learned from "the gracious, capable leadership and dedication" of her five Presidents she had served - "Alder Hall, Betty Crouch, our dear (late) Nell Kain, Pauline Crosby and Dorothy Haensel." She said it had been a time of personal growth for her and "a rewarding experience to have been privileged to serve a Unit which I feel fulfils the aims of fellowship, understanding and service, and those of A.C.W."

At the conclusion of the A.G.M., Rev. Norah Norris (visitors to the last Adelaide National Committee Meeting will recall Norah being a Vice-President of the National Working Committee at that time, before her ordination) conducted a Service of Dedication during which she dedicated Office Bearers for 1983.

Barbara Grealy  
Publicity Officer

#### Force Ten Appoints New Promotions Officer

Brisbane woman, Miss Elizabeth Lobb has been appointed as the new Promotions Officer for Force Ten, the joint Australian Council of Churches and Roman Catholic overseas aid programme. Miss Lobb will take up the position in February and continues the work of former Promotions Officer, Mr. Nick Gillard.

An active member of the Roman Catholic Church, 31 year old Miss Lobb currently works for a Public Relations Consultant. In her spare time, she has acted as publicity officer for Amnesty International in Brisbane and has been involved in the work of Action for World Development.

Miss Lobb is completing a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Queensland with majors in journalism and language in the media.

Force Ten is the churches' own regular commitment programme for aid and development. Each month, over 6,000 Force Ten members receive an information bulletin inviting their support for a specific development project in the Third World. Through Force Ten, the Churches of Australia provide a means for Australians to commit themselves to supporting justice and development projects throughout the year.

#### Personal Par

A.C.W. members Marie McMahon and Dorothy Woodhouse were members of a large congregation at Eastwood in December when Mrs. Dorothy McMahon was ordained a Minister of the Word of The Uniting Church. It was an impressive service. We wish her well as she takes up her appointment at Pitt Street Uniting Church. She is well known in the ecumenical movement, having served as Associate Secretary at the Australian Council of Churches, N.S.W. Council and representative at the A.C.W. National Committee Meeting in Sydney in 1979.

#### Alcorn College

The following is an extract taken from a letter received from the Principal of Alcorn College, Colin L. Warren, written to Myra Dixon -

"At the close of the 1982 academic year I write to acquaint you with the progress of SALASEINI KANAVAKACA.



Sala has shown outstanding ability to cope with the course prescribed for her and has shared with me that she has grown in many ways both spiritually and in the area of her personality. She has been most grateful to the Scholarship Committee for this opportunity and has asked that I thank you for allowing her this opportunity during 1982.

It is clear that Sala will be returning home with a new dimension to her ministry and with much greater self-confidence. She has left the College very much richer for having been with us."

#### Australia/Burma Prayer Partnership

Information is to hand that some letters have not been getting through to our Burmese Praying Partners but the ones that have, have been joyously received and some of these have been answered.

The Convenor has written to Daw Mya Kyi informing her of the activities of the various State Units, also sending a copy of our Burma/Australia Prayer Partnership State Unit Monthly schedule. It is understood they have a map of Australia and follow the state plan.

The following is an extract taken from a report from Lynette Green, Tasmania, of meeting with Burmese Delegates at A.C.W.C. Assembly -

"The 3 delegates to the Assembly were Daw Mya Kyi, Daw Khin Sone and Nyunt Nyunt Thein. Each of these women work at the Burma Council of Churches. The first two ladies are in their sixties, the third is a very young looking 30 year old. Nyunt Nyunt has a Bachelor of Arts Degree and is a law graduate. She is employed full time by BBC but practices law in her spare time for experience.

Each of the five Australian delegates received a hand worked tote bag made by the Mon race in the State of Kanbawza.



Nyunt Nyunt gave me a least coin which is called a Pya (pronounced Peer-ar) 100 pya - Kyat.

On the Wednesday afternoon of the Conference a day trip to Kintamani was organised. As I would be doing this trip during the next week, I decided to use the time to go into Denpasar to fix up some business. As it turned out our three Burmese friends had the same idea. What a morning we had. We caught a taxi into Denpasar and called on our friendly local Salvation Army Captain. After morning tea he drove us to the bank and we asked him to show us where we could catch a taxi home and then we were on our own. Talk about the blind leading the blind! We went down the main street calling in at most shops to have a look around. Nyunt Nyunt was after dress materials. Mya Kyi and I found some very nice embroidered handkerchiefs and bought up the entire supply. Shortly after we started on our shopping spree, a group of male street sellers were trying to entice us to buy their wood carvings. After a while they left our Burmese ladies and concentrated on me, no doubt thinking I was a rich American! The ladies thought it was a great joke that I should have so many followers. These gentlemen followed us all the way up the street, patiently waiting outside every shop we entered and taking up the sales pitch as we came out. We all had a good laugh on the way home. The first few days of the Assembly were ones of being polite and friendly, but it wasn't until our formal talk and informal shopping that the Burmese ladies and myself felt the warmth of friendship. Daw Mya Kyi remarked as we were leaving that our meeting would make a big difference in their participation in the prayer partnership. Amen to that."

Victorian Unit Report -

For Australia/Burma Prayer Partnership day, Father O'Keefe from the St. Columban Missionary Society screened a film on Burma. It showed various aspects of the life of the people - their self sufficiency in making clothes from locally grown cotton, making their own bricks, using bamboo for woven walls etc.

There seems to be a common faith in caring for the poor, there is a valuable work done by many organizations and women's organizations are very influential.

We need to pray for the people of Burma constantly.

Western Australia Unit Report - Miss Joan Miller

A special Burma Day was held in the form of a Forum at the Uniting Church, Subiaco. Mrs. Hza Sheim was the guest speaker and gave an outline from the First Beginning of Christianity in Burma. Mrs. Mary David also took part. Both ladies came from different areas of Burma and expressed that Christianity was wide spread and that there was freedom of worship. The ladies answered many questions and morning tea was served.

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A letter has been received from Brigadier Rose Flood-Queensland, a retired Missionary and spent some time in Burma. She keeps in close contact as Liaison Officer and has given us an outline of much of The Salvation Army activity in the country of Burma.

Isabel Macintyre  
Convenor.

Asian Church Womens Assembly Bali 1982

Bible Studies - Under the leadership of Dr. Chang Sang traced how over the centuries, interpretations of the Bible placed women in stereotyped secondary roles and of how we can with the authority of the Bible move into partnership with Christ to a covenant relationship with God. As Christians today we must confront the structures and values of the society of which we are a part - the task is renewal, a renewal of faith, of right relationships between men and women in the churches. Over the past 25 years women have moved from traditional roles in the church to new and responsible roles and education is needed as they face these changing roles of today.

Spiritual Renewal - Rev. Lydian Niguidula - Philippines

We need to grow in spirituality so we are able to be attuned to God's will. Jesus' own style of spirituality, His life of withdrawal and involvement, His constant searching out of God gives us a model and a way of producing this growth.

Withdrawal - to be alone with ourselves and God.

Practice the presence of God

Reading and study of God's Word

Cultivate spirituality - search for truth, read novels, poetry, sing new songs, listen to what the people are saying.

Be involved in the lives of the community around you.

Worship will then no longer be a ritual but a celebration of God and Life. The only purpose of worship is to worship God and the only aim of prayer is that God's will is fulfilled in us.

Olive Ackland

A.C.C. Grants for emergencies in Africa and Asia

\$10,000 immediate grant to assist the 2 million "illegal immigrants" recently expelled from Nigeria. This grant from the Christmas Bowl income is a preliminary response to a one million appeal launched by the World Council of Churches on behalf of the Christian Council of Ghana.

Indonesia \$7,000 to assist the victims of recent earthquakes in the Indonesian island of Flores. This grant from the Christmas Bowl will assist in relief program.

A.C.C. sends airshipment of medicines to Lebanon

A consignment of drugs and medicines worth \$10,000 from the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories in Melbourne was airfreighted to Lebanon on February 11th, 1983, at the request of the Australian Council of Churches. After receiving an urgent appeal from the Beirut based Middle East Council of Churches, the A.C.C. asked the Australian Overseas Disaster Response Organisation to organise the purchase and transport of the drugs. Qantas provided free transport to Athens.

"We are delighted that we have been able to respond so quickly to the request of the Middle East Churches" said A.C.C. Spokesman, Rev. Ron O'Grady.

A.C.C. assistance to the Palestinian and Lebanese people injured in the June Israelia invasion of Lebanon now totals \$98,000.

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GREETINGS

Greetings have been received from former Winifred Kiek Scholars - Mary Au, Dien Suminyatiningsih, and Barkat Das who gives praise to God for her miraculous healing in her recent illness.

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