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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
33 Lynwood Avenue
DEE WHY 2099
(Tel: 9971 0278)

PLEASE NOTE:

- ⇒ For safety reasons **DO NOT** include the word "Treasurer" when addressing envelopes.
- ⇒ **ALL CHEQUES** to be made payable to "Australian Church Women NSW Unit Inc." and **NOT** to any individual person.

FEES from AFFILIATED GROUPS are due 1st March each year as follows:

Denominational Groups:	\$25.00 per annum
A.C.W. Local Branches:	\$15.00 per annum
Organisations:	\$15.00 per annum
WCTU NSW	
The Girls' Brigade	
Bible Society NSW	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' FEES due 1st March : \$10.00 per annum
(includes subscription to Newsette)

NEWSETTE is the journal of the NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women and is published four times a year in February, May, August and November. Annual Subscription is \$5.00.

CONTRIBUTIONS to Newsette are requested from readers and should be sent to the **EDITOR**:

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NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -- NSW UNIT INC

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: Major Lyn Middleton Tel: 9529 6744

NUMBER 106

FEBRUARY 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Dear Friends,

It's a real joy to greet you at the beginning of 2006 through the medium of *Newsette* and to wish you all a very Happy New Year! I pray that your year will be one rich in blessing and the joy of the Lord, but may the prayer of Lawrence Tuttiett be ours when he wrote:

*Father let me dedicate this new year to Thee,
In whatever worldly state Thou wilt have me be.*

Genesis is probably a good book to turn to at the beginning of a new year and as I do I read:

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Now the earth was formless and empty. Gen 1:1-2*

Unlike other creation stories the biblical account of creation affirms that God started with a clean sheet. The earth was formless and void. It was not already marred. Out of nothing, God created an amazing world. Whilst I am sure our diaries for 2006 are rapidly filling up, it is still true to

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say that the year that lies ahead is a clean sheet awaiting the creative genius of God at work within us, as we walk hand-in-hand with Him, to make something wonderful and meaningful of the experiences that lie in store. We can then pick up again the prayer of the songwriter Tuttielt and say:

*If in mercy Thou wilt spare joys that yet are mine ...
If Thou callest to the cross, and its shadow come ...
Let my glad heart, while it sings, rise by faith's exultant wings,
And what'er the future brings, GLORIFY THY NAME!*

Along with the world, we too come directly from the creative hand of God. Martin Luther said: "God created the world out of nothing. As long as you are not yet nothing God cannot make something out of you."

In this new year may we surrender to God fully and allow Him to continue his creative work in us.

My warmest regards and may the peace of the Lord be with you!
Lyn Middleton

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW UNIT
ANNUAL SERVICE OF DEDICATION
and
INSTALLATION of PRESIDENT
for 2006-2008

MRS CARMEL KEYS

to be held in the presence of
Bishop David Walker, Bishop of Broken Bay Diocese
at St Mary Immaculate & St Athanasius Church

50 Whistler Street, Manly

on MONDAY, MAY 15 at 11 am

Lunch will be served in Parish Hall. Limited Parking available in church grounds. Two Parking Stations in adjacent Central Avenue. Ferries from City on the hour and half hour. Buses 143 & 144 from Chatswood Station. Church is 5 minute walk from Wharf and Bus Terminus.

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FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:

I do pray that all our readers are feeling rested after a wonderful Christmas and holiday break and looking forward to a bright New Year working with a will for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Of course not all of our problems and sadnesses will go away but if we look to the Light of our being and know of His love and goodness to us, we can tackle anything.

We are now in the 51st year of the Fellowship of the Least Coin, and what a blessed year it was in 2005. All over the world, there were celebrations for the Jubilee Year, including an inspiring segment at our Australian National Conference at Collaroy, where we were honoured by the presence of *Dr Esther Byu*, the Executive Secretary of the International Committee of FLC. She was such an inspiration and it made us feel so proud of the FLC movement.

Since October our Least Coins from NSW have added up to \$10,387, which includes \$7,226 from World Community Day Services.

Congratulations and thank you all so much.

Janet Lang, FLC Convener

2005 WORLD COMMUNITY DAY SPECIAL PROJECT:
NEWS FROM BROKEN HILL ABORIGINAL FELLOWSHIP

During the disastrous storm in early November there was no serious physical injury to people, but families suffered serious damage to their homes, which will require extensive rebuilding and renovation. However there was a note of praise that the storm added significantly to the level of local water storage.

For the coming year, the Fellowship has set new objectives for mission to be more effective in evangelism to and within the local community. A new family has been attending church, who are seeking to rebuild their relationship with God and need acceptance with the wider church as they worship and serve together.

Pastor Mark Kickett led a funeral service for one of the elders in Wilcannia and is involved in pastoral care to the wider Aboriginal community. We are asked to pray for relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members, and for relationships between families and individuals in their day-to-day lives, as there is an ongoing serious criminal trial in progress. *Mark* and his wife *Carol* and their children, *Phillip* (16), *Lisa* (14), *Micah* (12), *Thomas* (10) and *Nathan* (8) continue

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to serve their people in this special way, while he still works in full-time employment. He needs our prayers as he and the Fellowship seek to fulfill the purpose of the gift given from our Community Day offering for work amongst the children.

(Contributed by Beryl Kirkwood, Baptist Delegate)

WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:

We have received a letter of introduction from our new ACW National ACW Convener, *Una Birtchnell* in Victoria. She is looking forward to her role and to contact with us, and sends Season's Greetings to all.

New pamphlets are being prepared for the two new 2006 Scholars.....

Vivian Cheung (NSW), undertaking post-graduate bachelor degree in Theology full-time at Moore College and working part-time as a physiotherapist at Wollongong Hospital; she will commence a Master of Arts in Theology in February this year.

Tania Eichler (Queensland), undertaking further training at St Francis' College, Milton. to further equip her for her ministry as a Deacon, in preaching, teaching RE, community chaplain etc. Tania is married to Mark, with two children, Sonny (9) and Zoe (7).

Let us continue to pray for *Una, Vivian and Tania*.

Christmas greetings were sent to past and present scholars with whom I am in touch. Return greetings were received from *Milise Kale* (*nee Taipaliti*), 1998 scholar from Tonga, now in Melbourne, and *Doreen Tan* (*nee Tie*), 1990 scholar from Sarawak, Malaysia. Both are well and busy in their ministries and send their love and prayers. *Doreen* had been away in South Africa for the 10th International Toy Library Conference, which she found very useful.

Just received as this goes to press - greetings and photos from 1997 scholar *Rachel McManus*, who was married to Craig in November; they expect to be living in Sydney, where Ivy May will be starting school and Rachel will continue her studies. She sends her love to all, and hopefully we will have contact with her again

Una's greeting and blessing from ACW National was:

*"The richest gifts are God's to give
May you possess them as long as you live
May you walk with Him and dwell in His love
As He sends you good gifts from heaven above"*

Judith Cayzer, WKS Convener

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NORMA DUMBRELL'S MINISTRY IN MYANMAR (BURMA):

I arrived in Yangon (Rangoon) on 30th December, travelling with four men under the direction of *Ted Penney* from Bible Society Australia. We were met by *Daw Marilyn Bennett*, President of Mothers' Union, Yangon Diocese and organiser of the Women's Conference, also by the manager of the Ruby Inn, the small family hotel. His family are lovely Buddhist people who have western itinerant Christian workers staying there because they like them! Foreigners are not allowed to stay with any Burmese people. The people are very gracious and hospitable who though very poor dress neatly - a credit to them as their bathroom is often just a tin shed with a tap and bucket. They like to lavish guests with small gifts, which I am sure causes them to go without basic necessities.

I was informed that the Conference would be for 3 days instead of 5 as planned. However I was still to give my 15 Bible talks, that is, 5 a day instead of 3 a day!

The Conference began at 8.30 am, reduced to 3 days because the women cannot spare the time. Those who came from villages and towns far away slept on the floor on their mats, and others came and went by bus or whatever means they could - some coming and going all the time. Of the 80 women enrolled there was an average of 45-50 at each session. To us this does not seem many but when I learned of their difficulties, their poverty and that they are not allowed to evangelise or build churches and are discriminated against by their illegal military government, I marvelled.

Each morning I gave 3 Bible Studies on Colossians and each afternoon 2 talks on the Psalms. On the second afternoon (to avoid drowsiness in the heat) I suggested they break up into groups and share what they had learnt, what struggles and difficulties they were experiencing in their Christian lives, and to pray with and for each other. Their reports back were written up on the board and translated for me. It was amazing how much they had learnt, how the studies had helped them and how Colossians will help them in the future. Later we had some games and fun, which helped me to relate to them because I was the "teacher." In Asia teachers are very much respected so instead of eating with the other women I was taken out for lunch and dinner almost every day! The Archbishop's wife, a delightful friendly woman, came to most of the sessions, even though her son was being married on the Saturday.

Rachel who assisted with the Conference and played a guitar-like instrument for the singing, was an energetic and happy person. One afternoon I was told we were going to visit her church way out in the villages. When we arrived many people had gathered. She served tea with them all sitting round me on the floor; then they *(Continued on Page 8)*

C H I N E S E A D V E N T U R E

Written and Contributed by Isabel Hewitt, NSW State Secretary

Another group of Aussies on the big adventure trail
This time to mainland China of its secrets to avail
Kathy, Peter, Sarah, Paul, Anne, Alison John and John
Trish, Howard, Isabel, Doug made up the delegation

Tree plantings and tall buildings were everywhere in Beijing
Road networks with flyovers were a very common thing
In contrast was the Great Wall with challenging steps and stairs
Our views were quite restricted because of the misty air
The Ding Ling Underground Palace and Ming Dynasty tombs
Were in a large garden setting to give visitors room.
We walked the sacred way – with a guard of honour we feel –
Civil, army dignitaries, carved beasts imagined and real

We became as little ants in vast Tiananmen Square
Enjoyed Forbidden City but we wished for more time there
Summer Palace enthralled us – long corridor, marble boat
Seemed a bit incongruous, there was no way it would float!
Privileged to see pandas early morning Beijing zoo
Eating all the bamboo shoots, moving around for us too
Factories and Friendship Stores were interesting to explore
And the acrobatic show brought us marvels by the score

Xian was more orderly with familiar street plan grid
And city wall and towers gave views else from us were hid
Terracotta warriors in their serried ranks stood tall
Except of course the many who had crumbled in their fall
Temple, mosque, winter palace, Tang Dynasty dancers too
The Great Wild Goose pagoda, time in Arts Museum flew
Art work by local farmers, kite flying and hot pot lunch
Made Xian quite a city whose image still packs a punch

Sun Yat Sen Mausoleum in beautiful mountain park
Was a highlight in Nanjing which certainly made its mark
New underground train at night was an adventure for some
Going to Olympic site where rock concert had begun
The river area lights – astonishing to behold
As after dark they dazzled in that town quarter of old
We heard of Marco Polo in Suzhou, Venice of East
Took a ride on canal boat, enjoyed a riverside feast

The Master of Nets Garden, pagoda on Tiger Hill
Were certainly good to see, as was the silk factory mill
Capping all, Glamor Hotel lived fairly much up to name
We came to terms with barter and some excelled at this game

We walked the 'pagoda trail' when we visited Hangzhou
Loved the boat ride on West Lake although the sun didn't show
With cameras, through the mist, we tried to capture small arched
Visited tea plantation where bushes were neatly ridged bridge
Saw disciples of Buddha at Linyin temple that day
Dodged umbrellas and puddles as we tried to find our way.
The acrobats and dance show displayed spectacles and thrills
As feats quite unbelievable showed us the performers' skills

We moved on next to Shanghai – enormous by any guide
From Grand Hyatt coffee shop we took in the vista wide
City lights from the river and Nanjing Road lights at night
We joined with many locals to take in these lovely sights
Shanghai Museum's exhibits were wonderful to behold
Not least Minority treasures as seen in days of old
We became more confident and explored in ones and twos
Finding places of interest, sharing with others the news

After many Buddhist shrines attending church was a treat
And China Christian Council took welcomed us as we did meet
Repair of the cathedral is apparently to be
We wish them well in their work – a bright future we can see
Our group of twelve became ten as two went their separate ways
Then boosted to twenty one – one German, eight USA
Amity staffers guided, local partners were introduced
Told how funds were being spent – on their worthiness we mused

A change of pace at Guizhou, a southern rural province
Where Amity showed us round some of their helpful projects
Education is vital to improve prospects for poor
From primary to middle school, training teachers and more
Facilities were varied, some classrooms were far from good
But efforts on teachers' part gave hope that the future would
see a change for the better no matter the family plight,
giving all an equal chance – surely each child's basic right

Interaction with students in their special English classes
Gave us opportunity to speak with young lads and lasses
Rote learning in primary schools seems the order of the day
Many students per teacher make hard any other way
Much spectacular scenery – terraced hillsides, mountain peaks
Diverted our attention from roads of which no-one speaks
Spare a thought for road menders who work with primitive tools
Breaking stones' and carrying heavy loads like human 'mules'

The doctor at the clinic has found her life ambition
Meeting the need of families in primitive conditions
Xianma village was poor but received us with kindness
Church choir was really superb – leaving was teary blindness
Improving farm production, women's micro credit schemes,
Water to village households are priorities it seems
The needs are quite enormous, a challenge to one and all
We think of how to respond as Christians who've heard the call

Visiting the waterfall was respite from village roads
Setting was magnificent, water coming down in loads
We marvelled at the bonsai and interesting rocks as well
Shopping opportunity without the usual hard sell
Chinese food was no surprise – perhaps spicier than home
But purple cakes at breakfast with treats under other domes???
We didn't get the measure of Mongolian barbecue
Pretty ordinary really and certainly nothing new
Many times we met our match with what was put before us
But when the pickings were lean the moans became a chorus
Undisclosed secrets remain: what was that glutinous mass?
Where did the leftovers go? probably best not to know.

All went well for eighteen days then we struck a little snag
"Plane's been cancelled" we were told, countenances sagged
Peter, Howard, Doug and Paul worked hard to get us started
At midnight eight reached Hong Kong, in Shanghai Anne and
John parted

Our thanks to all our leaders, specially national guide Grace Wu
Ruhong for Amity part, local leaders, drivers too
Kathy who made arrangements, Peter who worked hard at times
For those who shared adventure, 'Blest be the tie that binds'

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produced a most elaborate western style cake for my birthday and sang Happy Birthday to me in English and Burmese! Rachel's son *Joshua* (10 years old) then recited and did the actions to Psalm 103, one of the Psalms we had studied during the Conference, which *Joshua* had learnt with the actions at Sunday School. This was one of many times I felt very humbled.

Another humbling experience was meeting *Joan*, one of two translators. She was very regal, her English was very good and she looked young and attractive. I was amazed to learn that she had 5 children. I asked her what her husband's occupation was and she told me he had died 18 years ago when the eldest was 12 and the youngest only 3. I discovered later that he had been the Archbishop! Her children are now grown up, two are preparing for ministry and she herself is the leader of an international Bible Study Fellowship.

During my time there I spoke to a gathering of clergy wives which I was told later was very helpful because many of them out in the villages do not know what they are supposed to be doing. I also spoke to a group of 37 theological students on four Psalms, explaining I was not a theological teacher like my husband, but I just loved sharing God's Word. I also spoke at a Methodist Church in Yangon, and later to their Women's Fellowship Group. All my material was avidly photocopied for people who were literally starving for the Word of God and they all told me they would be using it to teach to their people in the villages - each church has at least four to six village churches.

A reunion of graduates from Trinity College, Singapore, where we had known many of them as students, was arranged before I left. Many are now scattered in ministry all over Myanmar, so only 8 could attend. We had a lovely time of fellowship, which was both encouraging and sad, hearing of deaths of spouses and children since leaving Singapore.

You will be pleased to hear that *Mai Zin Zin Wah* (WKS Scholar in 1999) was there, and is well. She is in charge of religious education for children and young people for the whole of Myanmar. She sends her love and will write to you soon.

My heart is very burdened for these people who are longing for good teaching because for so many years their country has been closed to the outside world, but is now opening up to tourists for short periods. Of course all the sects and "odd teachings" are coming into the country as well, so we must be vigilant in taking the true message of salvation through Jesus Christ into this country.

(Thanks to Norma for this touching and challenging Report

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PAN PACIFIC & S.E.ASIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION:

A Variety of Interesting Speakers in Second Half of 2005.....

In August *Margaret Coleman* spoke about Malta, following a visit there with her husband, and its history and people. *Trina Corbett* showed FREESET BAGS, made from jute by women in India, the sale of which helps women there who are trying to break free from the prostitution cycle.

In September it was the Spring Luncheon with many visitors, including ACW President *Lyn*, at which the speaker was *Meghann Everett*, who worked in Vanuatu as a lawyer within the Ministry of Finance & Economic Management, made possible through AusAid. Her work was about the illegal importation of drugs and the illegal export of products. From the proceeds \$365 was given to Manam Island and \$365 to the East Timorese Studies, an ongoing project.

In October we welcomed *Stella de Saint-Salvy*, Executive Assistant of the YWCA of Sydney, who reported on various programs of the "Y". Many of these were new to her listeners and showed the diversity and scope of the modern YWCA movement. I recommend *Stella* to anyone looking for a good speaker on a subject we seldom hear about, the YWCA of Sydney.

In November our PPSEWA International Peace Officer *Mary Cabrera* reported to us on her travels in that capacity to some of the Pacific countries.

PPSEWA members are very privileged to have such speakers, who educate us about people and countries we may never visit ourselves.

Edith Ridge, ACW Representative to PPSEWA

'CAPE CRUSADER' SHOWS HOW TO EMPOWER:

Just over a year ago *Noel Pearson*, director of Cape York Institute for Policy & Leadership, phoned *Professor Kevin Wheldall* of Macquarie University to bring his remedial reading program to a small school in the remote township of Coen.

In November 2005, at Cairns TAFE, the Professor presented the results of fewer than 17 weeks of the program. These results were encouraging, in stark contrast to a national backdrop of dismal indigenous education outcomes, despite the money and efforts of decades of government policy. Professor Wheldall and his partner, *Robyn Beaman*, manager of Macquarie University's *Making Up Lost*

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Time In Literacy program, recruited two instructors with masters degrees in special education, to live at Coen, 500 kms north of Cairns, and run the program. They took the 9 least proficient readers from years 2 & 3 and put them through the program's intensive, systematic instruction in phonics, word skills, sight words and peer tutoring. They also took 10 slow-progress readers in years 5 & 6 who were 3 or 4 years behind basic reading skills.

By the end of one term, the older group could read 69 words a minute. By the end of the year, the average was 101 words read correctly - a 46% gain. They made this progress with an average attendance of 75%, some attending school only 37% of the time, others as much as 94%.

Professor Wheldall and Robyn have run the same program at Ashfield Uniting Church for 11 years, since *Rev Bill Crews* asked them to help disadvantaged children. So far the program there has taught 530 children to read and has now been expanded to Redfern.

In Coen a *Computer Culture Project*, which includes Macquarie's literacy program, has been launched. Noel Pearson speaks of several ideas, such as recruitment mechanism for good leaders and teachers and effective teaching methods, but also children keen to learn and parents involved with the school. Projects already in place include community tutors and homework clubs. *Westpac* is sending staff to set up family income management and student trust accounts for each child. Each of the 350 adults in the community is expected to contribute a regular amount, to be spent only on textbooks, uniforms, computers, boarding fees for secondary school

The challenge is to transform these and Noel Pearson's many other good ideas into realistically priced reality.

(Condensed from Sydney Morning Herald Article Nov 17 2005)

THE DAY GOD 'SOCKED IT' TO HIM:

Each year many of us donate to agencies of our churches for making up Christmas hampers. Here is a story about just one hamper

God Uses A Christmas Hamper To Answer A Mother's Prayer

The silence was so intense you could almost touch it. For the first time in his life he was consciously aware of the intervention of an unknown God. And it was all because of some socks!

Jim and Betty came to Anglicare office just before Christmas, in desperate need. Jim had been made redundant simply because his

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employer didn't want to pay him over the holidays, and they had a newborn daughter. It would take 6 weeks to access unemployment benefits. They were in such financial difficulty they did not know how they would survive even for just six weeks.

They came to Anglicare's Welfare Office at Marrickville, and met *Christine Green*, who visited them at home and was able to help with baby clothes and nappies, a stroller and basket. "As I was leaving" Christine reports, "I asked if they would like a Christmas hamper and a toy for their daughter." Jim and Betty were delighted by the generosity. While Christmas hadn't been really important to them before, this year was different. - with their new little girl, they would love to celebrate Christmas like other families.

"The couple were not unaware of God" Christine points out. "Jim's mother, a Christian living in UK, continually reminded them that she prayed for them every day. So I said to them that maybe now could be a good time to reach out to God and ask for His support."

Jim and Betty nodded but said nothing. As Christine was leaving, she asked if there was anything special they needed or might like for Christmas. Betty said she would love something pretty - perfume or nice soap. Jim just lifted up his feet and said half in jest, "I have no socks without these huge holes. If God could send me some in my size (13), I could believe my mother's prayers are being heard."

Just a few hours later at the office, Anglicare workers were looking for a suitable hamper to give them. Orders had been placed 6 weeks earlier and there was very little left in store. And then came one of the moments Christine will never forget. "To our amazement there was a hamper left, and in it was a feminine gift set, and not one, but four pairs of size 13 socks!"

Christine took the treasures back to Betty and Jim, and the result was life changing. Jim, Betty and Christine all wept together, moved beyond words by God's provision through the faithful giving of others. They vowed never to forget God's provision and decided to seek out their local church. Jim called his mother that night and told her celebrating Christmas would be an important part of their family life.

We can never know what God might do through even our simplest acts of kindness. Someone donated 4 pairs of size 13 socks. Someone gave \$40 to sponsor a hamper. And together they changed two lives.

(Condensed from Anglicare Action-Partners Newsletter)