



*Australian Church Women*

*"women at work"*

No. 3

MAY, 1973

As the Australian Delegate on the Asian Church Women Planning Committee and elected to the Working Committee, Mrs. F. Bailey attended this meeting of the Working Committee of the Australian Church Women to inform us of her position and of the distribution of the funds from the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Asian Church Women Conference invites participation in its Quadrennial Assemblies from every country where the Fellowship of the Least Coin is supported. It first met in 1950 in Hong Kong when it became evident that a central body was needed to decide where funds would be distributed. The Chairmen and Secretaries have all been Asian women with Mrs. Shante Solomon as Executive Secretary for the Fellowship.

All requests for grants are considered by the Working Committee yearly, the last grants being decided about February 1973. Applications for grants must be completed by the end of 1973, although the money may not be available until late 1974. If the request is for something outside of Australia contact should be made with that country to confirm that the aid asked for is what the country really needs.

The Assembly of Asian Church Women will be held in Bangkok in October 1974 and the chosen theme is "Go thou and do likewise". Mrs. Bailey requested suggestions for the study programmes on this theme, taking into consideration Asian Christians and culture and their wider Christian influence and their problems of population explosion, war, poverty etc., and the Christian responsibility.

The Working Committee of seven with Mrs. Shante Solomon meets in June to make detailed plans for the 1974 Assembly. At the moment Asian Church Women Conference is trying to create a link with Indo Chinese Women through the Fellowship of the Least Coin programme of reconciliation. To try to achieve this they are hoping to send a team of five women to four countries in Indo China, North and South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

In "Women at Work" May-June 1971 I read where Mrs. Sylvia Simpson was featured in the Melbourne "Herald" because of her appointment in charge of the joint pastorate of North Balwyn and Deepdene Congregational Churches.

Since February 1973 Mrs. Simpson, who is a war widow with two sons and five grand children, is Director of Pastoral Care and Training for the Collins Street Independent Church in Melbourne. She joined the ministry fifteen years ago and has worked hard on many Congregational and inter church committees and is at present President of the Congregational Women's Fellowship of Australia.

At Woomera in outback South Australia the ladies raised \$300 towards a missionary project and also celebrated their 21st birthday with the Catholic, Lutheran and Church of England ladies gathering for a South Sea Island party.

The Interdenominational Women's Group in Lae, Papua New Guinea are very busy with their programme alternating between serious discussion, study nights and novelty programmes. They enthusiastically welcomed Mrs. Shante Solomon when she stopped in Lae on her way to Rabaul and felt privileged to meet her in person.

The third Congregational minister in Brisbane who has been administering the Eagle Junction Congregational Church for three years was recently ordained. She is the Rev. E. McChesney-Clarke and she has performed all the duties of a church minister except officiating at weddings since her husband, the Rev. J. A. McChesney-Clark, died in 1969. She has three sons, one of whom is still at home and two grandchildren. Mrs. McChesney-Clark was born in Scotland and took her Master of Arts degree at Cambridge University where she and her husband met. She is a member of the State unit of Australian Church Women.

Mrs. George Nash is Queensland Area President of the World Federation of Methodist Women and has been to Canberra to address a Methodist Women's Guild Rally of the Goulbourn Valley District. Later in the year Mrs. Nash is to go to Mexico City for a meeting of Area Presidents and at present is busy planning for the Area Seminar to be held in New Zealand next year.

H/Deaconess Mary Andrews has been appointed Vice President of the World Federation of Deaconesses with special responsibility with South East Asia and Pacific areas. She is going to England to attend the World Federation of Deaconesses Executive meeting which is to held at Central Deaconess House, Hindhead, from 14th to 17th May. Prior to that she will be attending a consultation on deaconesses and communities in St. Helena's Retreat House in Drayton Green, London, from 3rd to 9th May. This will be attended by heads of Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic communities and deaconesses' associations. The theme is 'Living in the Holy Spirit today'.

From England, she goes to Berlin, Germany with the Secretary of the World Federation of Deaconesses to see the work of their Order where they have over 2,900 deaconesses engaged in various types of Christian service. From Berlin she goes to Frankfurt to see some deaconess work there, and then to attend an English speaking Retreat at the Sisters of Mary, Darmstadt. After that, she spends a few days at Potsdam with a former graduate of Deaconess House, Sydney. She returns to Sydney on 1st. June.

A programme to help people to a better understanding of Aboriginal people and through understanding promote healthy and helpful relations between them and other residents of Gove Peninsula, was the purpose of a series of meetings held at Nhulunbuy, in the Northern Territory. These meetings were arranged and held at the United Church Centre where the Rev. Alan and Mrs. Matthews are working. One of the participants said "By knowing something of our neighbours we must be on our way towards understanding. From that aspect the aim of the course was achieved".

The final words of the message from the Presidents of the World Council of Churches in March 1973 are,

"Let us pray for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit so that we may help men who suffer spiritually and materially to live hopefully knowing that God remains faithful to His covenant with men."

Capt. Beryl Golding

for

The Working Committee-S.A.