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**ALL CHEQUES** to be made payable to 'AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN' and **NOT** to any individual person.

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Denominational Groups: \$15.00 per annum  
A.C.W. Local Branches: \$10.00 per annum  
Organisations eg YWCA,  
WCTU, Girls' Brigade: \$10.00 per annum

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

**NEWSETTE** is the official journal of the NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women. It is published four times a year on the 1st February, May, August and November. The Annual Subscription is \$5 (payable to Treasurer as above).

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

(in the first week of the month prior to publication)

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He is the Way, the end of all my searching.  
He is the Truth; I'll trust his every word.  
He is the Life, abundant, everlasting.  
He is the Christ, the Saviour of the world.



# 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.

**PRESIDENT:** Mrs Peg Blake Tel: (02) 9524.9397

NUMBER 68

Print Post Approved  
PP 226253-0005

AUGUST 1996

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

Words are hard to find to express the depth of gratitude I have for the overwhelming warmth of love shown to me on the wonderful occasion of my Installation as your President for 1996/97. I was very conscious of your prayerful support prior to and during the Service. I thank you all so very much and of course shall value your on-going prayers. I have also greatly appreciated the many messages assuring me of blessings received at the Service of Installation and Dedication. To God be the glory!

As I take over the Presidency, I must express my appreciation of the leadership and encouragement given to us all by my predecessor, Mrs Lucelle King, and pray that God will continue to bless her richly as she serves Him.

As I said at the Service on May 20, the National Executive of Australian Church Women recently answered the question, "WHO ARE WE?" by saying that, in a nutshell, Australian Church Women is an umbrella organisation of Christian churchwomen's groups throughout Australia, one of its aims being to provide opportunities for Christian women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together. We continually pray that God will help us so to do, as we

look ever unto Jesus, following in His steps. So it was that I decided upon my theme for the Installation Service. I thought of the great example our Lord Jesus set us, and if we are to be seen as His disciples, following in His way, it must be obvious in our relationships with others; in our love and service for them, our prayers for them, and our unity with one another. How reassuring it is to know that Jesus has promised to be there with us, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, He calls, equips and motivates us in our journey.

As I study the map of our State and see the vast areas where there are as yet no branches of ACW, I do pray that together we can raise the awareness of Australian Church Women and encourage participation of others not yet involved.

In every step, in every stride,  
I'll let the Saviour be my Guide!  
His Word, His love, I will embrace,  
And let His wisdom set the pace.

May God be with you in all your endeavours for Him.

Peg Blake.

#### TWO SPECIAL DATES TO MEET SOME SPECIAL VISITORS:

Friday September 27: At Scots Church Sydney at 10.30 for 11 a.m. Meet and hear Asian Church Women's Conference Executive members as they come to Sydney en route to New Zealand for 40th Anniversary celebrations of Fellowship of the Least Coin - Illuminada Domingo (Philippines) Executive Secretary, Woranut Pantupong (Thailand) President, Rita Wong (Singapore) Vice President. Bring something to share for Lunch.

Friday, October 11: Our own NSW celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of Fellowship of the Least Coin - Birthday Luncheon at Salvation Army Function Centre, 140 Elizabeth Street Sydney - cost \$10.00. Special guests will be: Shirin Samuel (Pakistan) Executive Secretary of FLC; Mary Klein Dietrich (U.S.A.) and Dorothea Dilschneider (Germany).

Invitation Leaflets for both these functions will be distributed at Council meeting on August 19, or may be had by phoning Secretary Joan Tong on 9718.8640 (Home) or on 9266.9838 (Work).

#### ACW NSW STATE CONFERENCE REPORT:

The Salvation Army Leadership Training Centre at Stanmore was the venue for the 2nd Biennial State Conference of NSW Unit on May 16-17 1996. The very extensive large old home, built in 1872, is an historical delight in its architecture.

The Conference was a time of rich fellowship between women of the affiliated denominations. A very real debt is owed to Marie McCann, the Functions Convener, for her organisation and leadership of the Conference.

Morning Prayers were led by Marie Majoor (Treasurer) and Mina Whybourne (Minute Secretary), and the opening devotions given by retiring President, Lucelle King, on the Theme "God Is Life, Love And Unity." Joan Tong (Secretary) organised some enjoyable singing, accompanied by herself and Lucelle on ukeleles! We were delighted to have Jean Thomson, from Canberra, who is the National Secretary of ACW, with us.

Guest Speakers were both informative and challenging.

JOAN ELLISTON AM gave an interesting insight into National Council of Women, its achievements and hopes in this its Centenary Year, and the need for it to be seen as a peak body.

DR BERNARD THOROGOOD gave a semi-imaginative record of ecumenical achievement as though viewed from the year 2035; he told of what had happened and could happen ecumenically from our position here in 1996.

REV MARJORIE ROBERTS enlightened us regarding her particular ministry among mentally-ill people and the Christian input which is so necessary there.

REV JAN FROST conducted an uplifting closing service centred on unity.

However, the speaker who most inspired us was ANNE PATTEL-GRAY Ph.D, D.D. who gave a Christian Aboriginal perspective of the Theme, ably assisted by her sister Lyndell, who conducted a workshop following Anne's talk. Questions discussed were regarding:

- .. The relevance of God in our lives;
- .. How to improve the infant mortality among Aborigines;
- .. Practical ways to further relationships between Aborigines and other Australians, with emphasis on the Christian viewpoint.

Anne concluded by saying "We are all Spirit" regardless of

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our colour or culture.

Shirley Wells (FLC Convener) shared an imaginary 'diary' of FLC from its inception 40 years ago, presented in the form of a 'dialogue' between herself and Heather Reid. A copy of this may be requested from Shirley if anyone would like one.

As some came only for the day sessions, those who lived-in spent the evenings watching videos on racial attitudes and rejection suffered by black people; also on "How NOT To Conduct A Meeting!" The latter was ably illustrated by an hilarious play about an ACW Branch from the town of 'Daddledoo" which was meeting to arrange its Fellowship Day; their conclusions about everything they discussed was "daddledoo!"

Joan Tong (State Secretary)

#### **DECADE OF CHURCHES IN SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN:**

The NSW Ecumenical Council offered me the opportunity to hear MIRIAM THERESE WINTER at her workshop on Women's Spirituality and The Future Of The Church.

Miriam, a leading voice internationally, expressed her concern for gender-based issues, pointing out the fact that in Genesis, Chapter One, God created humanity, both male and female, in the image of God.

The workshop was very well-attended, participants contributing many ideas e.g. women are the Church and don't just go to it; women should not leave 'the church' but stay with it and help to sideline ideas of authority; women should witness to the priesthood of all believers.

The presence of so many women was evidence that the church is alive with the same strong spirit and voice that Miriam proclaimed during the workshop.

Marie McCann (ACW Representative to NSW Ecum.Council)

#### **FROM WOMEN'S ACTION ALLIANCE NEWS:**

"Exciting to read in the Queen's Birthday Honours list of Lt-Colonel Beth Webb of A.C.T. who received the medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to the community, especially to women and Australian Church Women. Beth has worked with National Council of Women of S.A. and the A.C.T. Unit of Aust Church Women as well as as a member of W.A.A."

(Contributed by Brigadier Mabel Ward)

Congratulations to Beth from N.S.W. Unit!

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

At the July Council Meeting we had a visit from Deaconess BARKAT DASS from Pakistan, who was the 1978 W.K. Scholar. Barkat is a delightful lady, who presented a very challenging message and shared her experiences with us in the showing of slides.

Some of Barkat's background - born 1942, the seventh daughter in a Christian but very poor family - showed great promise - father said "This very bright child must be educated" so she was sent to school - the only one of her sisters or brothers to receive that opportunity. Matriculated - nursing and mid-wifery training - became Theatre Sister, Nursing Superintendent, Nurse Educator - Director of Nursing Education for 17 years 1973-1990. Bible College course in Pakistan - in 1978, as W.K.Scholar, lived at Deaconess House, Sydney whilst completing Diploma in Theology.

In 1990, was ordained Deaconess and appointed in charge of Women's Ministry for the very large Diocese of Karachi and Principal of Day-Centre for Mentally-Handicapped and Exec. Secretary for Brenton Carey Hostel for Girls - in all these responsibilities she took over from Deaconess Shirley Harris, who had served in Pakistan as a CMS missionary for more than 30 years - and who accompanied Barkat to our meeting.

A 'love-gift' was presented to Barkat from our Unit, and she produced delightful small gifts for every lady present.

1995 Scholar - it is good to know that Rachel Rolland, whose course was postponed because of the volcanic eruptions in 1994, has been able to take up the Women's Leadership Development Training Course at the Training Centre in Ministry and Leadership at Malmaluan, Rabaul PNG during 1996.

1996 Scholarship: Cambodian Christian Women's Association - officially recognised by the Government of Cambodia as a Non-Government Organisation in 1994 - then commenced development programs.

The projects receiving support from W.K.Scholarship are:

- .. Tailoring & Weaving Course;
- .. Literacy Courses;
- .. English Language Training.

Other programs CCWA are seeking to continue are "Empowering Women in Leadership" and the "Rural Credit Program."

Beth Finlay (WKS Convener)

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**FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:**

Our 40th Anniversary Celebrations are well in hand and I hope you will be able to join us on October 11th at the Salvation Army in Sydney - details of this are set out on Page 2. We look forward to meeting our Asian guests - it will be a privilege to hear all about FLC from them.

May I remind you of the suggestion that in this 40th Anniversary year, to give special recognition of God's blessings over the years, we might offer 40 coins, over and above our regular giving. It would be wonderful if, as a result of extra praying and giving, many more grants could be given to the needy this year.

For copies of Circle of Prayer (Special 40th Anniversary issue) (\$2 or \$2.50 posted), literature, offering boxes or teaspoons, please write to me or phone (02) 9872.1719.

We look forward to our World Community Day Services in October; may God bless us all as we gather together to worship Him.

I am sure the following list of Grants given for 1996 will be both helpful and interesting.

Shirley Wells (FLC Convener)

**1996**

**Projects Grants for the Regions**

1. Africa	US\$ 33,000.00
2. Asia	US\$ 23,000.00
3. Canada	US\$ 9,000.00
4. Europe	US\$ 9,000.00
5. Middle East	US\$ 21,000.00
6. Pacific	US\$ 8,000.00
7. USA	US\$ 5,000.00
8. WCC	US\$ 8,000.00
9. WDP	US\$ 5,000.00
10. International	US\$ 11,000.00
Total	US\$ 129,000.00

**Block grants**

1. Africa	US\$ 10,000.00
2. Asia, ACWC	US\$ 25,000.00
CCA	US\$ 5,000.00
3. Canada	US\$ 5,000.00
4. Europe	US\$ 10,000.00
5. Middle East	US\$ 10,000.00
6. Latin America	US\$ 10,000.00
7. Pacific	US\$ 10,000.00
8. USA	US\$ 5,000.00
9. WCC	US\$ 10,000.00
10. WDP	US\$ 10,000.00
TOTAL	US\$ 110,000.00

**Grand Total**

1. Emergency Grant	US\$ 10,000.00
2. Budget for office	US\$ 91,500.00
3. Project Grants	US\$ 129,000.00
4. Block Grants	US\$ 110,000.00
Grand Total	US\$ 340,500.00

<u>COUNTRY:</u>	<u>PROJECT:</u>
New Zealand	Training Courses
Philippines	Christian Children's Home
India	Consultation of Women and Men of Reformed Tradition in Asia & The Pacific.
Philippines	Community Health Education
Romania	Ecumenical Women's Training Courses.
Sierra Leone	Bumbuna Women's Farming Association
Cameroon	Home-Making Training for Njinteh Christian Women
Zambia	Kanonibo Women/Youth Project
Zimbabwe	Kunzwa Nokuita Soap-Making Project
Uganda	Egangakinds Women's Group

**COUNTRY:**

**PROJECT:**

Kenya	Christian Women of Kenya
Kenya	PCEA Thururu Hunger Project
Kenya	Mothers Vision, Kamiago Women's Group
Kenya	Athieno Nyamundha Women Group
Kenya	Horticultural Farming On A Medium Scale
Liberia	Revolving Fund (Income-Generating)
Minsk (Belarus)	From The Tree of Life of The Garden of Hope.
Egypt	Mission of Justice
Lebanon	Young Woman Issues Retreats
Lebanon/Palestine	Exploitation of Women
Egypt	Women of Colour
Jordan	One In The Spirit
Syria/Egypt	Healing And Enabling Literacy
Lebanon	Literacy
Australia	Girls Brigade NSW Yappara Stage 2 Development
Philippines	Healing & Justice Comfort Women Advocacy Project
China/Japan	Consultation for North & South Korean Christian Women on God's Kingdom As A Seed Which Grows Into a Tree
Canada	Creative Northern Voices
Canada	Innu Women's Walk
Canada	Alpha House - Children's Program
U.S.A.	Training in Worship Project
Pacific	Economic Justice For Women
India	Middle Orthodox Women's Consultation, Middle East, Asia & Africa
Australia	Lowarda Aboriginal Corp. Jewellery & Artifact Business
Japan	Asian Regional Consultation on Elderly

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**FORUM on PEAK BODY FOR WOMEN:**

Representatives of some ten National Women's Organisations were present at YWCA in Melbourne to discuss the 'Interim Report.' The proposed Agenda for the Forum was to: "Make further progress towards agreement on ... Mission ... Membership ... Management ... Money."

After review of the Interim Report, the majority of discussion took place in small groups around tables. Group findings on each of the above Agenda items were then tabled and from these a Final Report would be produced.

My observations on the feeling and overall direction of this Forum were .....

**MISSION:** The general consensus was that the Mission of a Peak Body would be to:

- .. Provide an avenue of access to Government and Community bodies for all women's organisations, for the advocacy of members' interests and welfare;
- .. Assist government in forming policy relating to women's issues;
- .. Initiate research and training and disseminate information pertaining to women's interests and issues.

The way all this would be done was subject to considerable debate with strong support for CAPOW! to be more involved.

**MANAGEMENT:** This was an area of debate but it was generally felt that it would require a network of interest groups, each linking in with the others, under the oversight of some kind of a co-ordinating mechanism or representative board.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Most felt there would need to be categories of membership, to accommodate all sizes and types of groups. Some discussion on 'mixed-gender' groups which had women's committees, also on 'individual' membership; definite agreement there should be no Government representative members. Suggested Categories were:

- .. Full Membership - Women's National Organisations;
- .. Affiliated Membership - Organisations active in fewer than five States;
- .. Subscribers - for information only.

Voting was another contentious issue - this would need to be regulated according to membership numbers.

**MONEY:** Created much discussion, with no one making any firm commitment to supporting a Peak Body! I believe this will be quite a stumbling block. To establish such a body would

require a very substantial sum of money and assurance of continuing financial support. Most felt that the Government should be asked to make an initial lump-sum contribution - suggested figure was a quarter million dollars!

Suggested membership fees were:

- .. Full Membership - \$500.00
- .. Affiliated M'ship - \$? (Sliding Scale)
- .. Subscribers - \$100.00

(I consider that ACW would be one of the groups not able to make any firm commitment to on-going financial support).

Summing up, I feel a real tension as to what continuing involvement of ACW I should suggest. It appears that the core group of a Peak Body For Women would have fairly militant feminist tendencies and that ACW would have some difficulty in accepting some of their attitudes and methods of management. At the same time, there is the sense that as a Christian women's national organisation, we should keep some involvement, in order to present a Christian voice and perspective in the secular situation.

The diversity of ethos and interests of women's organisations is enormous, and just how any "peak body" could have a representative voice is to me a real problem. I present this Report for consideration of whatever further action may be best for ACW.

Joan Tong (State Secretary)

**BIMBADEEN NEWSFLASH:** (From Volunteer Librarian Betty Burke)

**"Moving" News:** The Uniting Church had a camp-site at Cootamundra which had closed down. Bimbadeen (Aboriginal Training College) was offered buildings free of charge, but we would have to meet removal and re-erection costs. With no money, but in faith, we decided to buy two buildings at a cost of \$13,000. Within three days of that decision, \$9,500 was sent to us, specifically for this purpose! We have faith that the means of renovation will be supplied.

**Even More "Moving" News:** At present the Library is a cluttered collection of books and boxes on a closed-in verandah. As we are getting the new buildings, the back wall of the Library will be knocked out and the area now the boys' dormitory incorporated into the Library, enlarging it about four-fold.

**Students:** No new students this year but we are hoping for new enrolments for 1997.

(From Presbyterian Newsletter, contributed by Peg Blake)

**REPORT on NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN SEMINAR:****THEME: "THE DECISION IS YOURS"**

Welcome by HON DR MARLENE GOLDSMITH MLC: Messages sent by the media to teenage girls - "be stick-thin with large breasts."

Opening Address: SENATOR JOCELYN NEWMAN, Minister Assisting Prime Minister for the Status of Women & Social Security.

1943 Dame Enid Lyons - first woman member of Federal Parlt.

1996 14%-20% women in Parliament - 46 women/224 men members.

4 Women Ministers - 2 in Cabinet of present parliament.

There have been 3 female State Premiers.

2 women have led the Senate - Liberal Speaker, Labour Deputy.

30.5% as against 4.5% now on government boards.

Would like to see the country recognise the voluntary work done by women.

Interim arrangement for women's non-govt organisations as funding is always short. Senator Newman has a staffer who will liaise on urgent matters if you ring her office.

Plans to hold a yearly 2-day round-table conference - each national organisation would present a 3-page Report on topics with which they have been concerned during the year.

Domestic Violence is a Crime - there are plans for a National Summit on this in September.

Violence in the Media - Videos - the Internet; a ministerial committee has been set up by Senator Allston. Write letters expressing your concerns, also on pornography. Can something be done about advertising of pornographic nature between 5.30 and 8.30 p.m?

Speaker: DEBORAH SIDDOWAY BA - Law Student - National Council of Women Young Achiever Awardee.

Women of Decision - role models for young women of today - grandmother, mother, and other women through history - slave girl who rescued 300 on the 'Black Railway'; Elizabeth Fry, prison reformer; Mary Reiby, convict who became prominent business woman; Hon Elizabeth Evatt; Justice Mary Gordon, Chief High Justice, whose research showed that women are paid only 67% of men's wages.

Speaker: DR HILDA DESARTS - 'Looking Back, Going Forward.' Octogenarian - born 1915 in England of German parents. 1950 opened first paperback publishing company in Europe - ran it till 1968.

She observed that today one is not 'old' - you are 'chronologically gifted' !!

History - when taught in the past was about dates, wars and

battles - not about mums and dads, sailors, farmers etc and how people adapted to change.

Stages of Age - read Psalm 90. Rhythm of life is 7 years.

Birth-7 yrs Physical growth; 7-14 Emotional growth; 14-21 Spiritual growth; 42-49 physical decline; 49-56 mental development in understanding; 56-63 emotional growth, acceptance; 63++ spiritual growth.

Greek word for 'enthusiasm' means "God within me" or "the Spirit driving."

The challenge of age - Ipswich City Council has put modems in all schools and the city library; Social Security Dept loaned 12 computers for use in private homes and retirement villages.

Her Ideal - a mixed 'retirement village' - Seniors, Tertiary Students, Single Mums, Professional Couples. Elderly people could baby-sit, supervise homework, cook meals etc. - young people could mow lawns, do repairs, teach computer etc.

Speaker: LIZ TEALE (Liz Harris on TV): Women! Power Behind The Throne! Set yourself a dream! Change yourself and this may help change the world.

Altogether a most stimulating and thought-provoking seminar.

Heather Reid (Social Issues Convener)

**A BIBLE SOCIETY CAMEO:**

To Each His Own.

Gertie Huddleston is one of a remarkable group of elderly Christian women at Ngukurr in the Northern Territory. Once the "Roper River Mission", Ngukurr is now a self-governing Aboriginal community - one of the places where books of the Bible are being translated into Kriol by Aboriginal Christians.

During a trip to the town of Katherine, Gertie attended the Anglican church, where she heard an appeal for "Bibles For China." On returning home Gertie asked literacy workers Lance and Gwen Tremlett if they had any spare Bibles, saying "Perhaps we can gather some together to send to China." Lance explained that they needed Chinese Bibles, not English ones! "Now I understand" said Gertie, "They need Bibles in their own language just like we need them in Kriol." She later came back with a donation for the Bible Society, saying "Everybody needs a Bible in their own language."

(The Gertie of this story was a young woman at Roper River Mission when Editor Beryl & her husband were missionaries there in the late 1940's. Her sisters Dinah & Betty, both widows, after training at Nungalinya College, were the first aborigine women to be ordained Deaconesses.)