

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN

WOMEN AT WORK



SEEKS:

- 1) To unite Australian women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ;
- 2) To help Christian women to take a more effective place in the total life & mission of the Church.

November/December 1978

It's mid-November already! Wonder what Santa will bring you for Christmas.

Before we talk about that, I'd like to share a night's thoughts with you. It is now the wee small hours of the morning at our local hospital as I prepare a greeting for you and it's fair to say, I am awash with pain.

Sometimes pain makes me feel insecure; sometimes but never when it's in my hand and arm, as it is now. I lie here wondering why I find it strange - I think the answer has come! It has to do with sure foundations, faith and trust none of which seem to work without love.

When aged ten I had a severe accident. My parents were at home in Young. I was on holidays with relatives. Too old for Children's Hospital, I was in a women's ward of a large Sydney Hospital. The ladies, pitying my plight, adopted me as part of their families.

One day the doctors and a sister talked to me quietly of what might have to be done. My left arm might need to be amputated. I don't remember ever being really worried. I felt loved and secure in the ward. I felt very sad that the doctors had to "do it", to a little kid like me but I also knew that my mother and father wouldn't let them "do it" and they didn't. I remember telling God a lot about it and I knew Jesus loved little children.

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And now it's another year and the same old arm smashed up again - not so seriously.

My son left me last night, eyes sad at the reborn surgical collar. Now I know I should have told him "Don't pity me, son, just keep loving me and it halves my pain." My husband understands that.

After the Tokyo experience, I am more than ever aware of the need for a firm faith foundation, for more personal response to the world's pain. The suffering ones of this world don't want our pity either. They need our compassionate love in action to halve the pain or even remove it.

So of course, I really don't know what Santa will bring. One thing I know for certain - we will share again from our Father this Christmas the greatest gift of all - love come down.

May all joy be yours at Christmas and may we all be "aglow with the Spirit" throughout 1979.

Win Dougherty.

Ecumenical Conference of European Women Formed The World Council of Churches' sub-unit on Women in Church and Society acted as a catalyst at a Consultation of European Christian Women held in Brussels at the beginning of 1978, for the formation of a new autonomous body known as the Ecumenical Conference of European Women. The Conference functions will include exchanging ideas resources and documentation, exploring theology from a feminist perspective, to work for peace, and to encourage participation and leadership among women of all ages. Membership is open to all women's organisations, movements and individuals who are in sympathy with the aims and activities of the Conference.

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The Assembly of Delegates to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations will be held at Bangalore, South India from Jan.29 to Feb.7, 1979. Theme of the Assembly will be "Women, Justice and Evangelisation." There will be representatives from the World Council of Churches. A.C.W will send greetings.

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OUR SECRETARY GOES TO ARMIDALE. A pleasant afternoon was held at the Uniting Church Hall at Armidale NSW, on August 21st, when about 30 ladies from the various churches came to meet Miss Doris Mitchell. In the absence of the President of the Inter-Church Fellowship, Mrs. Gwenneth Fardon chaired the meeting and conducted a short devotional.

Mrs. Marg. Humphrey, an original member of the group which formed the Inter-Church Fellowship in Armidale, outlined the activities of the group since its inception about eleven years ago. From a very small beginning, there are now 7 denominations participating and over the year, many fine community efforts have come into being, directly because of the Fellowship. These include the "Meals on Wheels" service, the Community Health Centre, the ancillary Nursing Service and the Armidale Community Service.

The Fellowship is responsible for the Women's World Day of Prayer, and Fellowship Day Service is held in the chapel of the Ursuline Convent. Following the Service on Community Day, a continuous luncheon is prepared by the ladies for a nominal charge. The money thus raised is donated to local charities: something like \$500.00 was allocated last year, and this year \$580.00 was raised and donated to the Drug Recovery Centre and the Women's Shelter.

Miss Mitchell was welcomed by Mrs. Fardon and held the attention of all as she talked about the work of A.C.W in the City area, spicing her remarks with delightful humour. After question time, Miss Mitchell was thanked by Mrs. Joyce Bell and a time of fellowship concluded the meeting.

Joyce Bell.

"FORTY YEARS ON",

The old Harrow School Song might well have been the theme for a happy gathering of present and past members of the NSW Unit of A.C.W and their friends when they met on Monday evening, 6th November, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of the NSW Women's Inter-Church Council in 1938. The representatives of several Churches who were the foundation members regarded their action of setting up the Council as a "practical move towards Christian unity", and how well their early hopes have been fulfilled!

Those who attended the "Ruby Anniversary" Party found the

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meeting room in the Uniting Church Building beautifully decorated with red and white flowers; they were welcomed with delicious fruit drinks prepared and served by the W.C.T.U ladies and enjoyed a sumptuous buffet dinner. The Anniversary Cake, with its ruby red sash enjoyed pride of place and, at the appropriate moment, the President, Mrs. Marie McCann invited the past presidents who were present seven in all, to form a guard of honour while Mrs. E.M. Manefield (President 1961-62) cut the cake.

The second part of the evening was spent in more serious vein when a panel of speakers, all former Presidents, spoke in turn on "WHERE DID WE COME FROM?"; "WHERE ARE WE NOW?"; and "WHERE ARE WE GOING?", providing much food for thought. An interesting, but all too brief, time of comment and questions followed, after which the thanks of all present were conveyed to the panel members and to Mrs. L. King who devotional message had been so helpful. This happy celebration made us mindful of our great heritage and filled us with hope for the future.

D.M.M.

Korean Presbyterians Ordain first Woman.

SEOUL. Less than 3 years after the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea voted in favour of the ordination, the decision was implemented when Miss Yan Jung Syn was ordained to the ministry and inducted as a pastor in Suwon.

Miss Yang, who has been blind since the age of 6, first studied music at Osaka, Japan, but then switched to medicine, specialising in neurology.

After teaching neurology for a period at the Pyonguang Christian Nursing School, she left North Korea and moved to Seoul, where she was enrolled as a Theological Student at Hanuk Seminary.

Later, she obtained a Master's Degree in Education in the U.S.A before returning to Hanuk as a faculty member. Now at 57, Miss Yang has begun a new career as an ordained minister.

What is to be achieved in prayer will take a lifetime to accomplish. It is the opening up, fostering and deepening of a relationship with God.

"BEHOLD THE NEW DAY" was the theme of the International Christian Women's Fellowship (Disciples of Christ) Quadrennial Assembly in the U.S.W, June, 1978. Helen Banks (Vice President Australian C.W.F and Jnr V.P. Victorian C.W.F Churches of Christ and Executive member of A.C.W Victorian Unit) was the only Australian delegate attending with 5,000 women from Canada, U.S.A, Ecumenical and Overseas guests. Addresses were given by several International people including Dr. Beatrice Melano Couch, Argentina, and Dr. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches who conducted three "Bible Dialogues" based on Scripture "According to Luke", a record of the way God deals with humanity.

Dr. Ronald E. Muller speaking on "Basic Human Rights in an Uncertain World Economy called for a new understanding of 'moral behaviour' to apply to institutions as well as individuals.

A British Psychiatrist-Theologian, Dr. Una Kroll told us: "We can never have absolute freedom. One person's freedom means another giving up some freedom."

Dr Addie L. Wyatt: International Vice-President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen of North America spoke on "Women, save yourselves! If the world is to be better it must begin with me; we have a responsibility to help an ailing world.

The programme included Contemporary Drama and Dancing, liturgies, organ recitals, a choir of 100 voices, 105 People Mover (Interest) groups, including the Male and Female in Us (a lesson on genetics); a Rewarding Look (Bible Study on women); Helping our 3rd World Sisters (a talk on Zambia); China memoirs (a film on China today).

Sharing Communion is always a very profound experience, both emotionally and spiritually. The many challenges we received from the speakers, the dramas and the interest groups throughout the week caused excitement, confusion, disruption and often diversity among us. However, in the Communion Service we were brought into wholeness, as we shared the Lord's Supper. To hear the one communion prayer in a variety of languages gave us the strength, the hope and the solidarity to move out into courageous action that we might find new horizons "IN THE NEW DAY".

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INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN LONDON MARKS THE CENTENARY OF THE SALVATION ARMY.

Detailed planning, at least two years in advance, assured adequate accommodation for 30,000 overseas delegates to the Congress marking the Centenary of the Salvation Army. Approximately 1,000 came from Australia. Help from Salvationists in Britain enabled many to come from developing countries, and musical groups such as a Boys' Band from Korea and singers from Soweto were included.

At the opening session on Friday, 30th June 1978 it took almost three-quarters of an hour for 2,000 official delegates from all over the world, each group with some national distinguishing feature to march to a central position in the Empire Pool. Then Prince Charles joined the Archbishop of York and the many official guests who took part in this historic meeting.

During the next 9 days a large number of special events provided inspiration and interest for all, officers and soldiers, bandsmen, singers, women and youth as well as some seminars for special branches of work.

On Sunday, 2nd July, Commemoration Services were held in the morning in Westminster Abbey and in the evening the Melbourne Salvation Army Staff Band led a delegation to St. Paul's Cathedral Service when the Army flag was received and placed on the Altar.

Outdoor rallies in Trafalgar Square and on the final Saturday at the Wembley Stadium provided added opportunities for witnessing as well as fellowship with other national groups and gave us a new perception of the breadth of the Salvation Army's operations.

Following the Congress large groups of the delegates visited Britain and Europe and our group spent a week in the Holy Land. This was a stirring experience when, in fellowship with like-minded pilgrims, we "walked where Jesus walked and felt His presence there."

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Man Driver: The other car collided with mine without giving warning of its intentions.

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Mrs. Agnes Loyall addresses the Assembly of A.C.W.C.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made,
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
Know ye that the Lord, He is God,
It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people."

With this magnificent declaration, that we are His people, His loved ones, His children with worth and dignity and great value, I welcome you all to the Sixth Assembly of the Asian Church Women's Conference.

This is indeed a great day, because the A.C.W.C's Assembly meets today in its Sixth Session. Founded in 1958 with the theme "COME SEE - GO TELL" it has grown from strength to strength, to the maturity and courage of CALLED TO CHANGE - COMMITTED TO SERVE". For indeed it takes faith and vision and courage to change and be agents of change. The demands are rigorous and unrelenting.

The beginning of the A.C.W.C was small, but daring in its dreams of bringing Asian Women across national, political, cultural and language barriers to a Christian Fellowship, with a common purpose, committed to peace and reconciliation.

However, it is the 5th Assembly held in Bangkok in 1974 that marks a watershed. With a prophetic vision and great daring the Assembly addressed all Christians on crucial issues, such as Hunger and poverty, exploitation of women and girls, injustice and inequality for Women in Church and Society, Leadership crisis. The implementation of the 5th Assembly statement during the 1974-78 quadrennium is proof of the seriousness of purpose, and the single mindedness of A.C.W.C.

A.C.W.C has promises to keep because it is committed to demonstrate Christ's love in all areas of life. As long as our sisters in Asia are exploited, as long as there is violation of human rights and dignity, A.C.W.C cannot rest, but must move on to right the wrong, to bring HEALING AND WHOLENESS. The work has just begun and the 6th Assembly calls all the Christian Women in general and Asian women in particular, to CHANGE AND SERVE. A.C.W.C must be prepared to fight battles to help women step out of dependence and become self-reliant.

HEALING AND WHOLENESS IS OUR GOAL.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK.

All A.C.W members and readers of "Women at Work" will, I know, be sorry to learn that our National President, Mrs. R.H.Dougherty, had a very nasty fall at Sydney Airport on her arrival from Tokyo, where she had attended the 6th Assembly of the Asian Church Women's Conference. She proceeded to Canberra to carry out several engagements, including speaking at the World Community Day Service, and on her return to Sydney entered hospital for surgery and treatment for a badly fractured left arm. Our thoughts and prayers are with her and we trust it will not be long before she is able to return home.

We look forward to receiving reports of the A.C.W.C. Assembly when these are available; in the meantime, we offer our congratulations to Mrs. Gloria M. Santos of the Philippines, who has become President for the new quadrennium. Those who met Mrs. Santos when she was in Australia earlier this year remember with pleasure this delightful lady and will wish her well in her new and very responsible position of leadership.

Sister Barkat Dass, our Winifred Kiek Scholar, is nearing the end of her stay in Australia. She will be farewelled by members of the NSW Unit at their meeting on November 20th, and will fly to Melbourne that afternoon for a few days. On the 24th she will go to Adelaide, and on the 29th to Perth. In each city, A.C.W members have arranged an interesting programme for Barkat, including meetings with their members and friends. She will leave Perth on December 1st for Singapore and expects to reach Karachi on December 5th. Our prayerful good wishes will follow her as she returns to her home and family in Pakistan; we have a new and valued friend through whom our horizons have been widened, as we hope hers have been as a result of her stay in Australia.

As this will be the last issue of "Women at Work" for 1978, I should like, on behalf of the President and members of the National Working Committee, to extend to all A.C.W members our warmest greetings for Christmas Joy and New Year Happiness.

Doris M. Mitchell.

Honorary Secretary. 2000

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