

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.

OCTOBER, 1978

Greetings from your Editor.

We know that we live in the presence of God, but is God truly present to us? Many times I have been in conversation with someone, and later have thought, "That person lives in the presence of God." We turn to God in anxiety, sorrow, stress or strain; we have a personal problem and go to Him for its solution. We make petitions, and when they are granted we are joyful and full of gratitude. St. Paul says, "There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, ask God for it with prayer and thanksgiving." Ph. 4, 6f. So we ask and so we thank. We thank Him for receiving what we have asked for, and we thank Him for refusing it. We have all stood and looked back at dreams unfulfilled, ambitions unrealised, hopes dashed; and we have come to know that in keeping these things from us, God has shown us most of all His wisdom and His love.

St. Paul was always exhorting the early Christians to be happy, to rejoice!

Rejoice always!

Again I say, Rejoice!

.2.

We do give thanks for what seems good,
For health, success, for love or gain;
For all that pleases self.
And yet how thoughtless - blind -
To thank Him not for what is truly good:
For pain, unkindness, censure, blame,
For every hurt that comes from person, place or
thing;
By these keen instruments, do You, Divine
Physician,
Remove the harmful growths of self
To give new life, Your own true life.
Forgive then, Lord, my blindness; give me
The grace to take each purifying cross
and then --
Give THANKS with all my heart.

Joan Curtin.

LET'S READ.

What happens when women pray by Evelyn Christenson. Many accounts of astonishing answers to prayer. The power of prayer cannot be exaggerated. Its authenticity is verified by a testimony which appeared in "Women at Work" a few years ago and which I have always kept: "Dr. N. Jerome Stawell, a leading nuclear scientist in America said: 'With a delicate instrument we have devised, we can measure the wave length of the brain. Recently, we checked the emanations from the brain of a woman near death. She was praying at the time, and we could tell that something about her was reaching out to God. The meter registered 500 positive. This is fifty-five times the power registered by a 50- k.w. broadcasting station sending a message round the world. We are on the threshold of spiritual discoveries. No one can fathom the literal pull a Christian exerts when in contact with God. It is tangible far beyond the comprehension of mortality. It is similar, in one sense, to what we know of radar. These experiences have caused me to turn to God. I have been a Christian only a short time and I know little of the way. This I do know - the things of God are positive. I will endeavor to keep my life above the zero indication. The world little realises the impact of believing prayer. It is a moving of the resources of the Infinite!

ESTHER DEANS' GARDENING BOOK.

Growing without digging.

This is a delightful book which can be read with enjoyment and profit even if one has no intention of gardening. "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be meat" Genesis.

This book is written with such simplicity that a sense of exciting discovery is unfolded of the workings of Nature as God's creation. They are revealed by one who has never lost the wonder of penetrating the activity and energy of a garden at work, while you learn how Nature herself is able to control and eradicate pests. Many varieties of herbs are good repellants of insects and bugs: i.e garlic repels insects and cleanses and disinfects the soil; tansy grown at the door or placed in a pot on the window sill will keep out flies; marigolds are first-rate in killing the white fly which is a menace to tomatoes; as well as adding colour they bring the bees, the pollinators.

Don't kill that leopard slug; it doesn't eat plants but will clean up the garden of decaying vegetable matter. Learn to differentiate between snails, because the cannibal snail is the natural predator of the hump snail. And just as we like some neighbours and not others, so plants thrive better when compatible with their neighbours. The variety, the perfume and uses of herbs is given a chapter. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle and the herb for the service of men" Ps.104. This book is poetic, it is scientific, it is spiritual. No longer do I find it difficult to believe that plants like to be talked to or listen to music!

 * Some generous people held a dinner party to buy *
 * a bicycle for a missionary, on a distant island. *
 * The missionary received it, and happily peddled *
 * through the villages meeting joyful people. He *
 * peddled down the valleys and up winding tracks *
 * to people who had never seen a white man before; *
 * one day, he peddled into a cannibal village. He *
 * was promptly put in a pot, and eaten. His friends *
 * went in search of him, and when questioned, the *
 * Cannibal Chief replied: We thought he was *
 * Meals on Wheels! *

"DON'T TELL ME - SHOW ME."

Three hundred and forty women met in Nuku'Alofa, Tonga in August for the Area Seminar of the World Federation of Methodist Women.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Vera Dowie of N.Z., Area President and Mrs. Margaret Ayre, Area Vice President, the week began with Her Royal Highness, Princess Melenite's challenging address in which she said, "I believe we gather tonight, not as different colours, not with different positions, not as different races, but as one in Christ, Our Saviour."

Two days were spent visiting outlying villages where demonstrations of skills and crafts, tapa making, nat weaving, traditional dancing and village costumes brought first hand knowledge of the culture and lifestyle of the Tongan people. Seminar worship and study sessions followed for the next three days, Bible Study in the morning led by Deaconess Lesila Raiqita of Suva and afternoon addresses on "Education for the Whole of Life", "Women and the Use of Power" and "Living with those who differ from us." Following the key addresses, delegates grouped for workshops on the theme presented.

Each evening was given to a national presentation. New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga and Australia each made a contribution. Hawaii and the Solomon Islands were also represented.

The hospitality of the Tongan Church people was marked by warm generosity, expressing love and care for the guests in every way fully expressing the theme of the Seminar - "Don't Tell Me - Show Me."

The Australian delegation was enriched by the inclusion of two aboriginal women, Mrs. Joyce Charger and Mrs. Susan Dhangal of Elcho Island, who made a significant contribution to the Australian presence in the Seminar.

Heather Stevens.

Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking together in the same direction.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

BARKAT RECALLS HER VISIT TO QUEENSLAND.

An exciting trip and brief touch of Sunny Q'land. When itinerary was given to me to study, it did not make much sense to me of distances, places and people. Though I was anxiously looking forward to be there in much warmer climate from Sydney. One of my friends commented that you will find Q'landers much friendly and will enjoy the warmth of Sunny Q'land, which I found 100% true.

From 26th August to 11th September was full of excitement, joy, pleasure and friendly gatherings. In all, these activities, there was much for me to learn. Each branch did something special to make me feel at home. Each one of my hostesses to me was an old friend, elder sister with full motherly care. It won't be out of place to say that even their husbands and rest of household accepted me with open arms and gave me warmth of their understanding; took special interest in me, my country and my welfare. This could not have been without the efforts of State and National bodies of A.C.W. The words are too short to express the depth of their deeds and my joy being with them.

Each gathering made it so easy to share lots of my experiences of Pakistan and gained knowledge and experiences in Australia. Their interesting questions motivated my thinking on deeper level, the opportunities available and making best use of those, when I go back home. Each interview of local and church paper made me aware of the difficulties faced by Christians with a new hope and stronger faith and how much Christians need to contribute for betterment of our nation.

When I look on the photographs of Q'land, each person and place reminds me of happy moments and worthwhile trip. I had seen many hospitals, blue nursing, maternal and child health centres, where authorities made special efforts to show me the areas which could enrich my knowledge, learning, teaching and administration experience, and I appreciate highly.

You must be wondering that holiday trip is full of meetings and business trip and no enjoyment; this is not true. I had seen the best spots of recreation, entertainment and of leisure, from Brisbane to Mackay-Hook, Hayman Island, having beautiful viewing underwater observatory and Great

CONFERENCE OF NSW SYNOD OF UNITING CHURCH - "LISTENING".
Continued from August, 1978 issue of Women at Work".

On the second day, Rev. Dorothy Wacker led the group in thinking about "Who sets the pattern?" Our circumstances, environment and people set the pattern - also schools, the media, peer groups, advertisers, church and community groups, and make us what we are. We have a choice and have to make constant decisions, take responsibility for our lives. We are set apart as human beings, unique, with ability to think, the spirit capacity, and greater creative ability, so WE decide who we are in the end. There have been people with great vision, whose influence extended beyond their death, agents of change in the world - a costly and sometimes a lonely thing. We have in Jesus an agent of change - so what about us as 'people makers' - 'for such a time as this' in order to set patterns.

The challenging questions were:-

- "What about you under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?"
- "What about you, a disciple of Jesus setting the pattern?"
- "What about you in the community of the church?"
- "What about you as pattern setter in response to human need"
- "What about you, a pattern setter grasping your greatness' and releasing the gifts that are yours?"

Christ is the pattern setter. We have the power of the Spirit and it is a costly and an intentional thing to set the pattern. We may have to stand alone and take responsibility for the sake of life itself and to uphold its full value. For the sake of that life as we have seen it, supremely in Christ who has set the pattern for every human person.

We spent time in personal reflection: in 'Listening to Myself'; and we enjoyed "Singalong" times.

There was a depth of feeling as we gathered in a circle for a unique service led by Rev. Dorothy Wacker and Rev. Janet Wade as we celebrated in Holy Communion.

Dorothy Woodhouse,
Hon. Secretary, NSW State Unit

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FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK.

AREAS OF CONCERN - At the meeting of the National Committee held in Perth in July, 1977, it was agreed to encourage A.C.W. State Units to undertake study in such areas of concern as Family life, Multi-cultural society, Simpler Life style, Tourism and Women and Trade Unions. From time to time, news has come to hand from some Units regarding the way in which this assignment has been tackled: now the Working Committee would like to receive an official statement from all Units summing up their activities in the areas selected, and particularly, any action decided on, as a result. Will State Secretaries please let me have these reports no later than the end of November. Thank you.

CIRCLE OF PRAYER, VOL. 7 - I have received advice that parcels of the new volume of "Circle of Prayer" were posted from Singapore in September, addressed to the State Secretaries for F.L.C. according to the requests received by me earlier this year. So far no account has been received, but when this comes to hand I shall advise the Unit Secretaries so that the necessary selling arrangements may be made. A supply is also coming to the National Working Committee so that later orders may be dealt with as required.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL FUND. The members of the Working Committee would wish me to thank all those who have made contributions to this fund, helping us to meet our financial obligations with respect to Australian representation at the A.C.W.C. Assembly in Japan. Remembering that A.C.W. members are committed to the support of our own Winifred Kiek Scholarship Fund, Fellowship of the East Coin and the annual World Community Day Project, their willingness to undertake this additional responsibility every four years is much appreciated. We should like to offer the suggestion that State Units might consider making an ANNUAL contribution to the Overseas Travel Fund so that the Working Committee would be in a better position to assess its resources in this regard and, in the Assembly year at the end of the quadriennium, the feeling of anxious stress might be avoided! Will you think about it.
Doris M. Mitchell (Hon. Secretary). (02) 328.7119