

NEWSLETTER



4/07

November, 2007

AFUW is the voice of graduate women promoting advancement of women worldwide and their equality of opportunity through initiatives in education, friendship and peace.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to Members.

Annual General Meeting

It turned out to be a very special day, the day of the AGM. Nineteen colleagues with membership of 40 years or more were honoured for their loyalty and presented with a certificate. Of the rest, twenty-three sent their apologies, regretting their inability to attend on the day and received their certificates in the post. Many are still active members while a few, through failing health or their busy travel schedules, have sporadic involvement. It was evident, however, that all retain their interest in AFUW and its affairs. Congratulations once again and thanks for being there. The list of the recipients with their initial qualifications is printed in the Newsletter.

To add to the day's celebrations IFUW Vice-President, Shirley Randell, was in town and joined us for the ceremony and lunch, addressing the membership with news of the IFUW Conference and her own work in Rwanda. National President, Jenny Strauss, added to the occasion with her presence and a short address. Often we get caught up with our branch activity unaware of what goes on beyond it and having the four levels represented brought them closer and made them more real for all of us.

Elections

The elections resulted in myself, Jane Baker and 'Tricia Blombery continuing in our roles as President, Secretary and Treasurer for another 12 months while we welcomed newcomer to the executive, Michelle Imison as CIR. Michelle has also been appointed to IFUW Special Projects Committee.

I am pleased to advise that Anne Smith, member of City Branch (formerly Northern Beaches) has accepted nomination for the role of AFUW-NSW Vice President. We extend a warm welcome to Anne. You may remember reading that Anne was recently honoured by The Manly Daily with a Centenary Medal to celebrate its 100 years of publishing. Anne, BA and MA Community History, was honoured for her contribution to the Arts both for her work with the Manly Art Gallery and with the Manly Warringah Pittwater Historical Society.

A vacancy still exists for the second Vice-President. If you would like to know what goes on behind the scenes, I encourage you to consider nominating for this role. Rest assured that being a V-P does not mean you will be expected to become President next year but it is an excellent opportunity to contribute your ideas and opinions when decisions are made. Phone or email me to talk about it.

Guest Speaker

Susan McLeish stood in at short notice for the scheduled speaker, Alison Nicholls, who because of a serious family problem, was unable to be with us. Susan, also a rural woman and active in the NSW Farmers Association shared the plight of families on the land during the extended drought. A summary of Susan's talk appears at the end of my message.

A collection was made which raised \$140 to be sent to the Salvation Army in Dubbo.

Member Emerita

Dr Minna-Shaw Smith was unanimously endorsed to this status after a citation was read by President of North Shore Branch and former National President, Dorothy Betty. Congratulations, Minna, on this well-deserved recognition!

The text of the citation is printed later in the Newsletter.

A big thanks to River Branch, our hosts for the lunch. President, Charmian Warden, Secretary, Nada Taylor and a strong band of members ensured the guest speaker was cared for and the lunch arrangements were unobtrusively taken care of. I received many comments on the wonderful food. Thank you so much for hosting the day.

Monthly Monday Discussion Groups

Animated and involved discussion arose out of Joan Bielski's Paper "Disempowerment of Universities- Some personal thoughts" from which an historical understanding was gained about the erosion of independence of universities and the commercial focus which has arisen. The women present were keen to take action and start writing letters. More news re further discussion groups in the New Year. If you have expertise in an area that you would like to share in a discussion group either contact me or Carolyn in the office so that we can include your topic. We may also change the day from Monday to Tuesday.

AFUW Conference 2009

I can now confirm details for the Conference following the AFUW Council meeting. Mark the dates in your diaries: Thursday 26 – Sunday 29 November 2009 at Sancta Sophia College, Missenden Road, Camperdown, within the grounds of the University of Sydney. We changed the theme to match the IFUW Program for Action. The theme is now: **Women Building Sustainable Futures**. It covers not only protection of the environment but education, economic development, social justice and human rights.

AFUW Inc

National President, Jenny Strauss is moderating the IFUW internet forum, *Developments in Higher Education And Their Implications for Women Graduates*. If you wish to join/view the on-line discussion go to the IFUW home page- ifuw.org.com.

Jenny has asked each State or Territory Association to adopt an IFUW policy resolution from those passed at the recent Manchester Conference. We are to follow through by taking action or monitoring any action related to the resolution.

I recommend we adopt Policy Resolution No. 10 on Global Warming, printed in full on page 8, as it is the one most closely related to our 2009 Conference theme of Building Sustainable Futures. Let me know your thoughts on this.

The holiday season is almost here and end-of-year celebrations begin. I wish you and yours peace, joy and happiness and a wonderful new year.

-Ivy Edwards

FARMING FAMILIES IN THE DROUGHT WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Susan McLeish who studied Arts/Law, was the first woman futures trader in Australia and set up the Australian banking arm of Bank of America in London. She worked in structured financing in several other banks before returning to Australia in 1996, marrying a farmer and moving to Quambone, west of Coonamble. They run a cattle/sheep property with opportunistic cropping and have been in drought for 7 years. She is an Executive councillor on NSW Farmers Association and represents the Rural Women's Network on the State Advisory Committee to NSW Dept of Rural Resources.

Susan spoke movingly of living in drought, the sale of assets or borrowing to survive, the guilt felt by wives compelled to perform off farm work and involve their children in very real farm work (eg 6 yr olds driving tractors for adult to deliver feed when hand feeding stock).

Children may leave to go to city boarding schools but feel guilty they are not helping on the farm – and anyway Ravenswood and SCEGS Darlinghurst no longer take boarders and boarding opportunities are diminishing.

There are dwindling communities with dwindling resources. "Handing the family farm to the kids is the latest form of child abuse". In the local high school 11 teachers have been lost in the last year and, though year 7 has 120 children, there were only 6 year 12 students this year. Boys leave to go on the dole and girls get pregnant. Child care is available 50km away but can the cost of fuel to get there be justified?

We can help by enabling the children of the country to gain education and qualifications to take back to the country. We can press for improved infrastructure especially of the railways.

We can support a 'Dental Bus' to provide much needed dental care, be involved in the provision of fluoride tablets to these areas dependent on non-fluoridated bore water or facilitate a supply of outgrown school shoes since these are rejected by op. shops.

-Jane Baker

Annual General Meeting, 2007

Presentation of Dr Minna Shaw-Smith as Member Emerita

Dr Minna Shaw-Smith - friend and AFUW colleague.

I am privileged to present a pageant of endeavour in both her professional and community life.

After receiving her Bachelor's degrees in Medicine and Surgery from the University of Sydney, Minna served at the Royal Alexandra Hospital Children, first as a junior, then as a senior, resident. The hospital was still at its old site at Camperdown.

On her return from a short spell overseas, she began her long career with the NSW Department of Health. Her initial position involved assessing atypical children, regarding health and placement at school. Minna was first based at the Ryde Child Health Centre, then as Community Physician at Merrylands Health and Teaching Centre. At this site, she also supervised the work of paramedics training at Cumberland College.

Later, Minna became Senior Community Physician in the Western Regional Office and Drug & Alcohol Co-ordinator. Minna oversaw the work of twelve Health Centres. Their programmes met wide community needs — such as home nursing, psychiatric services, baby health centres, school, migrant and aboriginal health — in an area covering 1.3 million people.

Then came Minna's first retirement, during which she obtained a Master of Public Health from the University of NSW in 1984. Back in harness, Minna next acted as tutor in English for migrant women, as Official Visitor to psychiatric hospitals, and for four years as a medical respondent member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

During this time, Minna was a member of Altrusa International, a community service organization for executive women. She served as its president from 1968 to 1970. Upon its demise, she gave her zest to AFUW—NSW.

Minna was an enthusiastic member of the River group, finally becoming its president. She regularly attended Central Committee meetings, and later achieved State office — first as State Vice-President and then as President from 1993 to 1995.

A keen net-worker, Minna showed her leadership by recruiting members and establishing 5 new groups within the Sydney area - Eastern Suburbs, Southern Suburbs, Northern Beaches, Inner Western Suburbs (she was its second President) and Hawkesbury-Nepean. The latter was based at the Kingswood Campus of the University of Western Sydney.

During later years, Minna continued to serve AFUW — as Membership Convenor, as member of our Education Trust, and representing AFUW on the *Women into Politics* committee. Until recently, she represented the City Branch on the present Central Committee and she has continued her long-standing support for the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund. Minna's wholehearted supervision of the "Trading Table" at Christmas functions will long be remembered.

Able clinician, educator and leader — Minna's successful professional career and outstanding service to AFUW present a true pageant of endeavour. She personifies the qualities envisaged in our AFUW award of Member Emerita.

*Dorothy E. Betty OAM
President, North Shore Branch*

Our congratulations and expressions of appreciation to the following members, who have achieved in the 2007-2008 AFUW year, at least 40 years of continuing membership of AFUW-NSW.

The earliest of our contributing members is Betty Shwabsky who joined in 1934.

A card system of membership records was commenced in 1966-67; our current joining dates are not accurate before that time. For this reason, earliest dates are not shown.

| MEMBER | NOW RESIDES | FIRST DEGREE | YEAR | UNIVERSITY |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Dorothy Balcomb OAM | Orange | BA | 1947 | Sydney |
| Helen Bell | Lindfield | BA | 1939 | Sydney |
| Joan Bell | Longueville | B Sc | 1952 | Sydney |
| Jennifer Bennett | Pymble | BA Hons | 1954 | London |
| Dorothy Betty OAM | Wahroonga | BA Hons | 1947 | Sydney |
| Alison Biddulph | Canowindra | BA | 1960 | Sydney |
| Beatrice Bradley | Armidale | BA | 1945 | Sydney |
| Edrith Brooks | Turrumurra | BA | 1947 | Sydney |
| Norma Cameron | Hurstville South | B Sc | 1943 | Sydney |
| Patricia Cameron | Killara | BA | 1966 | Sydney |
| Patricia Close | Mosman | B Sc | 1944 | Sydney |
| Judith Douglas | Beecroft | BA | 1950 | Queensland |
| Jean Mary Fagan | Cowra | BA | 1946 | Sydney |
| Rhoda Foster | Longueville | BA | 1945 | Sydney |
| Patricia Geidans | Lane Cove | BA | 1944 | Sydney |
| Sheila Gellatley | Matcham | BA | 1950 | Sydney |
| Elise Goodacre | Pennant Hills | BA | 1949 | Sydney |
| Judith Goodwin | North Ryde | BA | 1953 | Sydney |
| Pauline Griffin AM | Darling Point | BA | 1946 | Sydney |
| Gwen Hamilton | Adamstown Heights | BA | 1964 | UNSW |
| Dorothy Hartgerink | Warrawee | MA Hons | 1944 | Aberdeen, Scotland |
| Patricia Hutcherson | Turrumurra | B Sc | 1943 | Sydney |
| Colina Huxtable | Orange | BA | 1953 | Sydney |
| Mary Kane | Lavender Bay | B Comm Ec | 1962 | UNSW |
| Maren Von Krysko | Epping | B Sc | 1963 | UNSW |
| Gaynor Leaver | Wahroonga | B Sc Hons I | 1932 | Wales |
| Alison Lockley | East Lindfield | BA | 1943 | Sydney |
| Kathleen McCredie AM | Molong | BA | 1949 | Sydney |
| Vera McKeown OAM | Wollstonecraft | BA | 1964 | Sydney |
| Norma McMorran | Hunters Hill | B Ecs | 1947 | Sydney |
| Joan Neale | Orange | B Sc | 1939 | Sydney |
| Jean Orr | Lane Cove | BA | 1954 | Sydney |
| Elaine Peterson | Concord | BA | 1954 | Sydney |
| Vanda Phillips | Bellevue Hill | B Sc | 1945 | Queensland |
| Margaret Prater | Hunters Hill | B Ecs Hons | 1946 | Sydney |
| Lloyd Ramsay | Hunters Hill | BA | 1946 | WA |
| Gaynor Reeves | Lambton | BA | 1958 | UNE |
| Shirley Robertson | Mosman | BA | 1946 | Sydney |
| Marie Shelston | Five Dock | BA | 1947 | Sydney |
| Betty Shwabsky | Lane Cove | BA | 1934 | Sydney |
| Barbara Stoddard | Beecroft | B Sc | 1950 | Sydney |
| Lynette Thompson | Woodford | BA | 1955 | Sydney |
| Merle Thompson | Woodford | BA | 1967 | Sydney |
| Nancy Watts | Turrumurra | BA | 1944 | Sydney |
| Janet Winn | Toronto | B Sc | 1941 | Sydney |

29TH IFUW TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE – A PERSONAL VIEW

Our Secretary, Jane Baker, and our Treasurer, Tricia Blombery, were members of the Australian group which attended the Conference in Manchester. They have shared some experiences with us.

Jane writes:

You have all received an official report from this conference by our President and Delegation Leader, Jenny Strauss, in the most recent newsletter so this is a more personal account of my first IFUW Conference.

Tricia Blombery as national secretary, was an official delegate and attended the Leaders Training Workshops, the Business Sessions and the Futures Discussions. Hong Kong typhoons, missed connections and lost luggage meant I arrived late missing the Futures Discussion which pressed the view that we should concentrate on Education as the main focus of IFUW and not try to put the whole world to rights.

Day one was the final meeting of the 'old' council with a heavy focus on a new formula for calculating financial dues. Unless we descend to a 3rd world GDP or massively increase our membership we will never be directly affected by these proposals.

That evening Mary Robinson* was guest speaker at the opening ceremony. This was the main reason I decided to include attendance at the conference in an already planned trip to the UK. She did not disappoint! She linked her work and abiding interest in Human Rights to all the principles of IFUW. The full text is available on the IFUW website. Just as well as I sat next to a Japanese delegate and was sorry to discover her 'English' was so US based that she missed most of the powerful message delivered with an Irish accent.

The next evening we all joined in celebrating the 100th birthday of the British Federation. Many were in national costume and the British in Edwardian dress as of 1907. We had a summary of the history of the British Federation, founded down the road from the conference centre at Manchester Girls' High School. The whole week, but especially this evening, emphasised the easy international fellowship of such women's groups and the variety within such groups from the centenarian British through recently admitted Fiji and Scotland, the developing group in Rwanda and the recently discontinued affiliates from the USA.

I was Rapporteur for one of Kathy Mumford's sessions on Education for Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women. This was a seminar which generated such interest that there were papers for 3 sessions. My role gave me insight into the feedback collected from each session and the responsibilities of convenors.

As I was not an essential part of the business sessions I was lucky enough to get to many of the parallel sessions for which Jenny Strauss, as overall convenor, should feel justifiably proud. Highlight was Elisabeth Rehn who not only appeared in a plenary session, Women as Peace Builders, but also in a parallel session. This past Defence Minister of Finland, Under Secretary General of the UN and special representative in Bosnia Herzegovina, and great-grandmother, was an inspiration to all. Others that stand out are: a young Irish doctor working in the AIDS/HIV programme in Uganda; our own indigenous rep, Michelle Webb from WA, in a small group discussion on solving educational problems in our own area – she described her bridging programme at Curtin to enable indigenous women to enter tertiary education; someone from the Urban Policy Group of Manchester City Council talked about building sustainable cities and the redevelopment of Manchester City centre.

Members of the IFUW teams in Geneva and New York told us how we have a part in influencing the UN. We have an advocacy to perform in persuading the Australian Government to support the development of a high level Women's Division within the UN and to press for Australian compliance with the already accepted resolution on Aid levels as a percentage of GDP.

Memorable too were the waiata sung after much choir practice by the New Zealand delegation to celebrate the election of Louise Croot** as IFUW President, and the Indian delegation singing their anthem about Mother Earth on the 60th anniversary of Independence.

The political interplay in the business sessions was fascinating; the accommodation reminiscent of an English boarding school in the 1950's but the company terrific! It is an expensive exercise but if you can get to Mexico City in 2010 seize the opportunity- and do read the full reports when they are available on the IFUW website.

* **Dr Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Her address was entitled *Women, Human Rights and Human Security*. Some extracts of her address follow.

****Louise Croot**, a geographer with qualifications from Otago and Massey Universities in NZ and long term experience in Public Health and Health Promotion and broad experience in governance and team management, was nominated for president by the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women and AFUW.

DR MARY ROBINSON *From her Keynote Address:*

“I would like to applaud your wisdom in examining the themes of education, information technology and human security together, for they are absolutely interconnected. When our human security is intact, we are free from want, free from fear and free to take action on our own behalf. As the Commission on Human Security stated in their seminal report, *Human Security Now*, when we are “*protected from critical and pervasive threats and situations, we are able to build upon our strengths and aspirations*” to live lives that reflect our inherent dignity and embody the rights to which we are entitled.

Human security means that our communities are based on systems “*that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood*”. It means that people on the move are protected, that our economic security is intact, that accessible health systems are functioning, that violent conflict is an abstract construct and that basic education is a daily reality for all children, especially girls.”

“I am reminded of a dimension of human rights that is sometimes overlooked: Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - which states that everyone has duties to the community. It is essential that we reflect on how well our own societies, and particularly those in the poorest countries, are guaranteeing rights like education to their citizens, and how well they ensure that every person, especially the most marginalised, have access to the resources necessary to act with agency in their lives. This is one of the duties we all bear as holders of rights. It tells us that it is only within the context of our community that the “free and full development” of our personalities is possible. As Eleanor Roosevelt, the chair of the eminent group of jurists that drew up the Declaration, once said, “the destiny of human rights is in the hands of *all* our citizens in *all* our communities”. I applaud the community of university women gathered here today for taking this duty seriously, and for accepting the responsibility to work towards a more fair globalization for all, in which human rights and human dignity are respected and upheld.”

Dr Robinson pointed to the coming together of women and community to work for human security in a new body, including academic women, the Women’s Leaders Intercultural Forum (WLIF). With three partners it will convene the International Women Leaders Global Security Summit in New York at which seventy-five women leaders from government, international organizations, academia and civil society will discuss four topics in depth - climate change, humanitarian intervention, responses to terrorism and economic policy. The hope is that from this gathering will come a “*diplomacy force*” of women who will act in concert to resolve some of the most pressing humanitarian and conflict-related crises. “*The women who will participate in WLIF are dedicated to this work because they are aware, like all of you, that the world is increasingly interconnected. They know that “their community” now stretches farther than the end of the block they live on, or the national borders that surround their country.*”

Dr Robinson closed her address by returning to the Universal Declaration of Rights which forms the foundation of international human rights law and which will reach its sixtieth anniversary on 10 December, 2008. She described it as the most important internationally agreed statement of values and shared responsibilities we have. It is central to providing tools to hold us accountable for our performance in civil society, the business sector and governments alike.

She went on: “In a famous passage Eleanor Roosevelt spelled out how she thought the message of human rights would be promoted in a world devastated by two terrible wars and the Holocaust in Europe: [I am changing the text to be gender sensitive to this audience!]”

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: the neighbourhood she lives in; the school or college she attends; the factory, farm or office where she works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

“Almost sixty years later we need to build on her words, and to recognise that if human rights are to be known and to matter in small places all over the world, they must matter much more in the corridors of power. In the 21st century that means they must matter in the boardrooms of major corporations, in the halls of universities where the leaders of tomorrow are educated, and also in a personal way through the goodwill and commitment of leaders of every stage. “With today’s technologies, we have the means to convey the human rights message in ways never imagined by the men and women who drafted the Universal Declaration. .. Promoting human rights in new and creative ways to mark the declaration’s 60th anniversary would be a powerful symbol to ordinary people, to governments and to human rights advocates around the world. Less than a decade into the 21st century, it would tell them that there is a commitment to building a future where human rights become a reality for all people”.

IFUW MANCHESTER LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Tricia Blombery reports:

For me one of the most exciting aspects of the Conference was the discussion of the Future of IFUW which began as part of the Leadership programme and continued as a plenary that evening.

The presenter was a professional facilitator, Cemil Alyanak, who is continuing these discussions with the new IFUW executive. What he said was important then but is also very relevant at our national and state level where we are looking to rejuvenate the organisation.

His key point was that if IFUW is to survive it must change and change means **counter-intuitive thinking**. It is obvious that what we were and how we did/do things is no longer working. All sociological research shows that the under 40s are not “joiners” in the way our generation was. Their needs are different and their means of achieving their goals is different.

To progress IFUW we need to resist diversification – there’s lots of other groups trying to save the world – and serve our membership. We need to resist universal trends and focus on our own sector. He saw the focus of IFUW to be on University Women in four phases:

1. preparation for university
2. at university
3. going into work
4. giving back to society.

Most of us are in the “giving back” phase but we need to tailor our efforts to assisting in the earlier phases. We are doing this through our scholarships and awards but we need to explore ways whereby we can better listen to the young people and hear their proactive vision.

The challenge he set IFUW is to find out how we can meet members’ needs in all the four areas and how we can do this at our local level. We need to build a sustainable future, with sustainable funding, so we meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations.

Michelle Imison was elected Co-ordinator for International Relations (CIR) for AFUW – NSW at the recent AGM. In a recent issue of “Graduate Women” Past President, Rosemary Everett, briefly described the CIR as an officer of AFUW or a State/Territory Association Committee with particular responsibility for communications with IFUW and with other NFAs (National Federation or Association affiliated with IFUW). At the Manchester Conference, on the nomination of AFUW, Michelle was elected to the **Special Committee on Project Development**. Michelle is eminently suitable for her participation in this committee by her qualifications and background interests.

She graduated from the University of Sydney- Bachelor of Arts (Hons1) in 1999 concentrating on Gender Studies and French and is currently undertaking a Masters of International Public Health.

Through the University’s Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Refugee Language Program, Michelle co-teaches a course in Academic Writing.

She is currently doing a short-term internship in Dhaka, Bangladesh, under SUZY (Scaling up Zinc for Young Children with Diarrhoea – funded by the Bill and Belinda Gates Foundation), a Project of the Health Systems and Infectious Diseases Division of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh.

She worked as a gender assistant under AUSAID's Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development Programme, Bangladesh 2004-5. There she came in contact with Dr Shirley Randell and has assisted her informally in the evaluation of submissions to the IFUW Special Committee for Project Development 2005-7, especially with the Bina Roy Projects for Development to which AFUW – NSW contributes.

The Bina Roy Partners in Development Programme (BRPID) encourages international solidarity and partnerships between IFUW federations and associations. Its primary goal is to support projects empowering women and girls through education and leadership development. Donor contributions help pay the IFUW membership fees of national affiliates in more than 30 countries. This enables these groups to keep and invest an equivalent sum on local projects.

Michelle is a Member of the State Committee of Oxfam Australia in 2003-4 and 2005-7 and has been its Secretary since 2005.

Michelle is a member of the choir of the Church of Christ Church St Lawrence in Sydney and is widely known for her participation in the Sydney University Musical Society and church and choral music activities.

GLOBAL WARMING

The 29th IFUW Conference resolves:

1. to direct the IFUW Board of Officers through its representatives to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to encourage the establishment of fora in which creative artists and scientists, cognizant of the effects of global warming, co-operate to present to the general populace works of the imagination, comprehensible and persuasive of the urgency of global warming;
2. to recommend to NFAs that they support such programmes and events in their own countries.

Plan of Action

1. IFUW to monitor, through its UNESCO representation, the programmes of international festivals for events which perform this function; influence organizing bodies to include such events; support and publicize relevant literature, film and painting;
2. IFUW to circulate to NFAs information about these, so that NFAs can give publicity to such programs;
3. IFUW to plan inclusion in future IFUW and regional conferences events of creative imagination that engage the science of global warming.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The biennial conference last month of the national body of Australian Plants Societies, hosted by the Newcastle Group of the Australian Plants Society NSW, was entitled “**Gums to Gullies: Flora in Transition**”, reflecting not only the great diversity of the ecological regions of the Hunter Valley but the changing conditions of the flora within it. One of the speakers was **Patrice Newell**, author and former SBS newsreader and TV presenter on Channels 7 and 9, who now manages a large certified bio-dynamic farm, “Ellswood”, near Scone. She says that her awareness of environmental issues was stirred “in the early 1980’s when she was working on a Seven network documentary that exposed Australia’s agricultural land being used as a third world dumping ground for toxic chemicals.”

Since moving to the property some twenty-one years ago with her partner, Phillip Adams, Patrice has been deeply involved in her local community, including participating in a group working with the Scone Shire Council to encourage the implementation sustainable practices in every aspect of municipal policy from subdivision regulations and development planning to water management and street lighting.

In 2006 she became a founding member of the Climate Change Coalition and ran as a candidate for the Legislative Council in NSW. The group has since become a registered political party and is contesting the current Senate elections. “As with climate change, sustainability affects every aspect of community life from private behaviour to business practices.” Patrice’s life has been depicted in the ABC’s documentary series, *Australian Story*.

The papers from the conference have not yet been published but we are indebted to their producer, Allan Woollett, for making the text of Patrice’s address available to us.

“I’ve been invited here today to speak about climate change. I’m not a climate change skeptic.

I believe that human beings are the driving force in CO₂ and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

I believe that human beings are highly intelligent and if organized are capable of minimizing negative impacts.

Clearly whilst many people are taking personal responsibility for their GHG emissions, many politicians remain skeptical or cynical. They’re not committed to change, and indeed, may prevent it occurring.

And if the science is wrong? Well, perhaps the earth is flat!

However most of us take out some form of personal or property insurance and most of us acknowledge that prudent risk management makes sense. So why not take precautionary action now because the impact of climate change if the science is right, would be catastrophic. And the cost of GHG emission reduction, even if the science is wrong, is manageable, perhaps, even profitable.

The evidence suggesting the statistics regarding GHG emissions are wrong is very low. To continue with business-as-usual guarantees an irreversible increase in global atmospheric GHG concentrations. There’s a danger of massive corporate bankruptcy. There’s a certainty of moral bankruptcy.

And where is Australia on the spectrum? We're not alone in experiencing climate change. Every person on earth will feel the impact if the world over heats. Australia should be leaders in showing the wider world that you can have your cake and eat it. In other words, we can maintain economic success without polluting at the same time. That is the challenge.

Let's just ponder for a minute what could happen if the science is right and we are sluggish in our response. Leaving aside small issues of wars which cause dislocation of populations and perhaps the deaths of tens of millions --

GHG's will continue to increase. So will the temperature of the planet. This will trigger more glacial melting. And this will trigger the oceans to rise. Weather patterns will be disrupted. Extreme weather events will escalate. Rain patterns will be profoundly different. More will fall in the north of Australia. Less will fall in the south of Australia. Evaporation will increase everywhere.

So how will that look?

Firstly, a lot of what we know as the coast won't be there. Most beaches will be gone. Forget the ocean views – your house will be in the ocean. Our ports won't function. Global trade will be massively disrupted. Oil shortages will trigger security scares. Many low lying cities: Shanghai, New York, London, and Amsterdam will all have big problems. Many low lying countries will disappear: from Bangladesh to the Pacific island nations. Political and economic refugees will be overwhelmed by *ecological* refugees seeking a safe haven. But no haven will be safe.

Meanwhile, what will it mean for Australian flora?

Clearly if we allow the temperature increase to occur, then the regional mapping of native flora will change.

It is disturbing that we're here in the 21st century discussing a potential catastrophe in native vegetation when we are yet to fully map the native vegetation of Australia. Travis Peake, speaking here this week, was given the task of mapping the remnant native vegetation of the Hunter Valley less than 10 years ago. After hearing about his project I made contact with Travis, I couldn't believe there wasn't a comprehensive record of our flora. It was indicative of how low in the pecking order – how little we value native vegetation.

Does it matter if the vegetation of an area is stressed? Won't plants more suited to the changing landscape just move in? We know that nature abhors a vacuum. We know that whenever we disturb nature and expose the soil, a plant- deemed desirable or undesirable -will move in and seek its roots. This is competition at its most raw and ancient.

So what if a new set of plants take over? Having already disturbed so much of our landscape, having already reduced the biodiversity of most of the grazing lands that occupy most of our nation, having wiped out the native vegetation along most of the rivers and creeks and flood plains across the whole nation. Why worry about more of the same?

What species, new and old will be up to the task? And what is that task?

More than ever before we need plants to do their job. We need them to sink carbon. We need them to go about their business photosynthesizing, taking that CO₂ out of the air and putting it into the soil. And in the process, these precious plants will be re-building the soils of Australia. We may even build much better soils than the country has ever known. For I hope that we'll come to our senses, see the error of our ways and realize that everything begins with good soil. We must value the earth and plants as we never have before. They are our best hope in the fight against negative climate change.

Nature is responsive, but doesn't like to rush things. Climate change demands that it accelerate its processes. We know that nature is an enthusiast for biodiversity. We also know that humanity benefits from the richness of biodiversity.

Thankfully, despite the well known destruction of the Murray Darling Basin we haven't been quite as reckless as in the US, where one grass has been allowed to dominate the food chain and overwhelm all natural competition. Yes, it's a four letter word. CORN.

Corn isn't just on the cob these days. Corn is dried and reconstituted into a vast array of food components from corn starch, colouring, corn oil, corn sugar. It's even responsible for the gloss on a glossy magazine. You've only to look at obesity and ill health in the USA to recognize that pinning so much hope on one grass, at the expense of a rich agriculture diversity is a no-win situation. Converting US agriculture to sustainability will be an immense and perhaps impossible task for them. We have room to move here.

We know that industrial agriculture has reduced topsoil. But we also know that we can rebuild soil. We know that the great thing about living soil is its resilience. Humus plays a vital role in soil fertility. When there's lots of humus, plants suffer less stress, are healthier, produce higher yields. The nutrition of food grown in soils with high humus is better. This life-death cycle constantly underway in the soil is recycling carbon. Carbon is the structural components of plants and animals. There's movement between the plants, animals, soil and air and water. And on and on it goes.

We began to lose the plot a century or so ago when we discovered that soluble acidic NPK fertilisers could provide a short cut to plant growth. In the same way as steroids are a short cut to athletic performance. Suddenly the old ways of recycling were ditched and the fertiliser industry was born. Plants were growing with acidic fertilisers and without humus. It was as if the soil didn't matter any more. We've taken our eyes off the earth and put our faith in artificial fertilisers believing that we could grow anything anywhere.

Before we bought our farm in the Hunter Valley back in 1986, we'd made a garden in Sydney that absurdly was full of ferns, camellias and subtropical wonders requiring a very extensive drip and spray system. We'd attach a container to the end of the hose and spray liquid fertiliser over the whole garden. We did it for years until we sold the house and not once did I re pot a plant. The soil just didn't matter.

During that time I was an over enthusiast for acid loving plants but when I got to the farm and did a pH test I discovered the garden and most of our paddocks had a pH of 7.5 -8. Yet that didn't stop me from buying a lot of iron chelate, and planting 50 gardenias and white azaleas. Please forgive me for my insanity.

Wherever I went, whomever I spoke to, insisted you could change the soil to your whims. But all the azaleas and gardenias died. Every single one of them. If I add up the cost of fertilisers, plants, maintenance it ran into the thousands. I paid for my sins. I'm making this public confession because I still meet people who believe they can transform a garden or a paddock via such extreme measure. People who still believe they can bend nature to their will and whim.

Yet we are at a time in history when we must ask, what nature itself has to offer. What is it capable of providing? Can I nurture this land? What can I produce here? And will the land be better afterwards. If the answer to that question is NO, we shouldn't be doing it.

These are tough confronting times. We must change our ways. Here are our options.

- A. We continue on our mad and merry way allowing the world to over heat, triggering negative weather patterns and passing the buck to our grandchildren. OR
- B. We come to our senses in the nick of time. We accept that we live in an ecology NOT an economy. We appreciate that in Nature there is NO waste. That what goes around comes around.

We acknowledge the need for clean air and fresh water and demand energies that drive our activities be constantly renewed.

In other words, energy generation must function within the laws of nature.

And that law forbids uncontrolled and uncontrollable pollution. If some activities continue to pollute they must be acknowledged and the polluter must pay, and pay mightily.

Yes, humans are highly intelligent. We're capable of making the right decisions. It's a question of forcing those in power to ensure polluters pay the price and we convert our production to truly renewing systems.

Are we up to it? When we meet again in ten years time, we'll know the answer.

SURVEY OF WOMEN SCIENTISTS

Tricia Blombery, in her position as national secretary, has received a request from Rosemary White, National Co-convenor, Women in Science Enquiry Network, asking if members of AFUW would be interested in participating in this research project, to be conducted by Anne Buffier, All Saint's College, Maitland. Anne was awarded a Premier's Macquarie Bank Science Scholarship in August this year.

Edited extracts from 2 emails from Anne:

I am a Biology teacher awarded a grant to interview female scientists and gather information that can be summarized for high school students who are required by the syllabus to study practicing Australian scientists.

My research is to enrich the body of professional knowledge for science teachers. There is no academic award for me attached at the end. The focus of my study is the identification of practising female Australian scientists both in Australia and overseas via a program of visits to research institutions and universities.

Interviews with scientists / researchers and observation of their research work will form the cornerstone of the study and be translated into the publication of a booklet and CD resource. This resource to be entitled, Redressing the Balance: Practising Female Australian Scientists will be made available to all secondary schools in NSW.

The study tour will incorporate fact-finding visits and interviews with interested female researchers.

If you are working in a field that suggests your input could be valuable please respond to anne.buffier@mn.catholic.edu.au

and let 'Tricia know that you have done so (9560 8070) AFUWOZ@bigpond.net.au.

Rosemary White can be contacted at the CSIRO Plant Industry (02-6246 5475) rosemary.white@csiro.au

TEMPE MANN REPORT

The Tempe Mann Scholarship is awarded under the auspices of the Education Trust which invites your support. See notice below.

Dr Negin Amanat, current recipient of the Tempe Mann Award, has written two emails from the University of Ulm, in Germany.

1) I have been working as a visiting post-doctoral scientist at the *Institute of Orthopaedic Research and Biomechanics* in Ulm, Germany since June 2007. The Institute is involved in a diverse range of research with its main research areas being bone healing and osteoporosis, biomaterials and tissue engineering, knee and joint kinematics, and spinal research. I have conducted my research in the field of fracture healing and developing computer programs to simulate the real life situation. In the time that I have been here I have learnt so much more than I thought I would, and have gained a wealth of knowledge from the group of scientists I directly work with. I have developed a computer program that converts CT-scan data of fractures into computer models that can then be analysed to determine properties such as strength. This provides a non-invasive method for determining the quality of healed fractures.

Life in Ulm has been a change from the much larger Sydney. Ulm is a town of approximately 120,000 occupants and was actually the birth place of Albert Einstein. The river Danube runs through the city, and Ulm's cathedral has the tallest steeple in the world. I have not yet walked up to the top due to my fear of heights, but it might be something I will try to attempt before I head home. The quieter, less busy, small city life has been a nice change; there don't seem to be traffic jams, and the public transport is unbelievably punctual. On Saturday mornings, I head to the city where the fresh produce markets are and stock up on delicious fresh fruit, vegetables and cheese. I always treat myself to a serving of Bratwurst on a bread roll with lots of mustard. The Germans really know how to prepare good meat and good bread!

I have really enjoyed my time here in Ulm, and I am extremely pleased with the experience I have gained that I will be able to further improve on my return to Sydney. I am very grateful to the AFUW for their kind support!

2) Hello Everyone at AFUW!

So sorry for the late reply Ivy! I hope all is well in Sydney. I thought its time for another update from me. I have been here now for 4 months and things are going really well. I have made progress with my project and am now trying to troubleshoot some strange results I am getting. The experience I am gaining is great; I have learnt more than I imagined I could in 4 months so I am very pleased with that! The people I work directly with are extremely helpful too and never fail to have a solution when I get stuck with something.

I have been using Matlab and Ansys programs. I'll spend a little time on some technical jargon. I have successfully written a Matlab code that converts micro-CT scan data of bones into 3D computer models. I am now simulating loading on these 3D models using ANSYS to assess the load distribution within fractures. This is the tricky bit as I have to validate the models and make sure they correctly represent the "real life" results. Ok, jargon over!

I have attached some photos. One is a group photo of us on our work outing to Lake Constance. That was a great day which started off with an hour and a half hike that was uphill the whole way, but the views at the top were worth it. Another photo is of people in the Danube River on what is called Schwoermontag in Ulm. It's a public holiday in Ulm and thousands of people float down the Danube on home-made boats and blow-up boats and generally try to get all the on lookers wet. It was pretty funny to see! I've never seen so many people splashing around in a river. Another photo is of the cathedral in Ulm which is its main attraction, the steeple was too tall for me to fit it in the whole shot!

Working here at the Institute in Ulm has been absolutely great in terms of my career and the experience I have gained. Living in Germany is great and I experienced Oktoberfest in Munich on the weekend. I can't believe how much beer these Germans are capable of drinking! But it's great to see so many traditional Bavarian outfits.

Hope all is well with everyone in Sydney!!

STOP PRESS

Exciting News!

The AFUW-NSW Education Trust has been accepted by the Australian Taxation Office as a **Deductible Gift Recipient.**

This means that you can now make deductible donations to our Scholarship funds and help more women to become graduates. No amount too small.

Send to Education Trust at the AFUW – NSW office address.

Ring 'Tricia Blombery (9560 8070) if you want more information.

AUSTRALIAN AID FOR CAMBODIA FUND

We have received a letter of acknowledgement from Jean Heath, General Manager of the Fund, acknowledging AFUW – NSW's cheque for our continuing sponsorship of two female students at the Maharishi Vedic University which we have now supported for some years. She writes:

Thank you for your continued contribution to our project, we are most grateful for your support. I am able to talk to organization if people are interested in hearing more about what we do. in particular, we are always looking for graduates to teach at MVU. Age is not a barrier, I personally prefer older people as they seem to cope better with the environment in Cambodia than do younger people. There is more information about us on our webpage at www.aacf.ws. Interested applicants should send their CVs to me at P0 Box 71 COOGEE NSW 2034, or contact me by email: info@aacf.ws.

Ms Heath included letters from our two sponsored students whom she said she personally selected when she was in Cambodia in the early part of the year.

From Sok Chenda Fourth year Management student in Marketing at Maharishi Vedic University

Hello! Kindness person My name is Sok Chenda,

I am very happy to say thank you very much. I think you are kindness person that you never know me as face, heat, abilities and everything related with me but you dare to help for supporting me to study. However I'm really do not make you are hopeless. I have to work hard to reply your kindness because the knowledge is better property, the thief can not steal, the more spend the more increase so I try to do it is in my best for my whole family and my donor. Even thought I have not met you face to face or do not know your family. I still happy to say thank you and I hope one day I may meet you when you come to visit Cambodia Country.

Nowadays, I leave for two blocks more to study I will finish fourth year Management student. But at the end of this month I have to go field trip for four or five days at Angkor Wat temple in Seam Reap Province. After that I have to find internship in the Organization or Companies in the Phnom Penh to write thesis for my vocation for three months.

The last time I wish you and your family good luck, health, and get successful in every thing that you wish.

From Mam Pisey Second year Management student in Accountancy at Maharishi Vedic University

My name is Mam Pisey. Nowadays, I am studying in Maharishi Vedic University. I am a second year student. My specialization is accounting in faculty of Management.

How are you today? How is your family? Today I am very well. Do you know my bachelor degree will graduated at fourth year? Now I received your fund for my study. You do not know me but you help me when you give me this money I can divide it my study. I can buy the books pens clothes foods and something for my life.

First of all I would like to say thank you from far away, although I do not know you but you are very kind that you gave the present or person like me.

My family is a farmer when I study at high school it is very difficult because my parents cannot support me. I promise with you to study hard and try to graduate this university.

I hope I can meet you one day when you come to visit my country. The last time I wish you and your family have a good health successful in your job happiness in your family and better and better life.

CELEBRATE BEING AN AUSTRALIAN

The other major scholarship activity of AFUW – NSW is its participation in the **Australia Day Awards** of the National Council of Women NSW. These are presented during the annual luncheon in Parliament House, this year on **Wednesday 23 January**.

They will be awarded to a number of tertiary students *to assist them in gaining higher qualifications*.

We hope that a good number of AFUW members will be present to mark the occasion and support our awardee. Make up a table or join other members in making up the numbers. *Inquiries: Ivy Edwards See FLYER*

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| <p>20/03/2008 <u>BPW NSW - CEO Charity Golf Challenge</u> BPW NSW and 2MBS-FM invite you to support this initiative associated with Project 5-0 to raise awareness and funds to STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN</p> |
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BRANCHES - REPORTS AND CALENDARS

CENTRAL WEST Members and very many loyal friends and guests listened attentively to film critic David Stratton at the Hotel Canobolas, Orange last month. David spoke of his life in the world of film and of his favourite films: top of the list being "Singing in the Rain"! David expertly handled a long and vigorous question time. The topics of film censorship, archiving of films and the importance of film critics were some areas for David's evaluation. David Stratton is a former Director of the Sydney Film festival and is currently film critic for The Australian. He has been the film consultant to SBS from its inception and then presenter of both the "At the Movies" Week and Cinema Classic for over 22 years.

All present were impressed with his knowledge and memory of particular movies, their actors and directors. David is currently lecturing in Film History in its 10th year as part of the Continuing Education program at the University of Sydney

Proceeds from the luncheon will help fund the \$1000 HSC Prize for the highest UAI score (and University acceptance 2008) Students must have attended a secondary school or an eligible TAFE and have lived in a 100km radius of Cowra NSW during 2007.

CITY The last half of this year has seen members of City Branch continuing to enjoy the sights, sounds and activities of our city. Such activity has been a mix of intellectual stimulation and social interaction coupled with simply having a good time.

Amongst highlights of the last six months was the presentation in June by AFUW-NSW President Ivy Edwards who detailed her experience in Lebanon at the time hostilities broke out in 2006. An accompanying PowerPoint presentation really "brought home" the realities of the situation. Lunch at a nearby Lebanese restaurant was enjoyed by all.

In July members enjoyed hosting the very successful Jamieson Award presentation. It was wonderful to see so many members from other Branches attending. Special thanks to Jane Baker, Tricia Blombery and Ivy Edwards for catering and organisational arrangements.

The City Branch AGM was held in August with the following elected:

President: Christine Hosking

Secretary: Tricia Blombery

Treasurer: Jane Baker

Central Committee Representative: Jeanette Knox

September saw some wonderful exhibitions at the Art Gallery of NSW. Members met as a group to view the exhibitions with some joining a very informative "One Moon, One Sun" aboriginal art tour whilst others delighted in the treasures of the Arts of Islam exhibition.

Our October activity was a tour of the Sydney Conservatorium. A very interesting talk preceding the tour provided information about the history and architecture of the Conservatorium. Following the tour, members were treated to a wonderful concert by the Sydney Conservatorium Wind Symphony. A general meeting followed the concert with the 2008 calendar of events and activities being determined. Once again such activities aim to highlight the cultural and educational aspects of the City of Sydney.

For some years the previous Inner West Branch awarded an end of year prize to a Year 12 student from Sydney Girls' High School who has faced adversity and intends proceeding to university. City Branch is pleased to continue this in 2007. An award of \$300 will be presented to a selected student at the school's end of year 2007 prize giving ceremony.

In addition, an award of \$500 will be presented to each of two selected female students who successfully complete the Tertiary Preparation Course from Ultimo and Bankstown TAFEs in 2008. City Branch will also continue to support the Bina Roy program and the NCW Australia Day awards. Members are to be congratulated and thanked for their contribution to these awards and prizes.

The discussion paper *Reforming AFUW*, was distributed to City Branch members in October with the expectation that serious and thoughtful response be generated, thus providing the opportunity for Branch members to be part of the decision making process regarding the very important issue of the future of AFUW.

In November, as this Report goes to print, members will travel to Watson's Bay to enjoy a celebration of both Christmas and a very productive year of activity. Special thanks go to members of City Branch who have joined in with enthusiasm and vigour to ensure that we continue to enjoy educational and intellectual activity, friendship and good will.

On January 23 we will have a Business meeting 11.00am at St James Church, King St, Sydney, followed by lunch at Parliament House for the NCW Australia Day Awards.

On Thursday February 21 we will meet with guest speaker and member of CFUW, Dr Kate Le Maistre, Faculty of Education McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Venue and time TBA. For details contact Christine Hosking 9599 0186.

On Thursday 13th March S.H. Ervin Gallery visit to view 2008 Salon des Refuses: the "alternative" Archibald and Wynne Prize selection. Cost: \$6/\$4 senior. Followed by meeting and lunch at gallery café. For details and lunch booking contact Pauline Harvey on 9484 1859

HUNTER VALLEY Since June, we have been unable to hold our dinner meetings at our usual venue in Bimet Lodge because of flood damage which the building suffered during the big storm of 5th June. For the June meeting, our President, Halina Turnbull very kindly opened her home for us to hold our meeting and arranged catering by Martines. We met for dinner in Halina's "cellar" where we enjoyed the food and some of Halina's fine wines. Phillip Foreman, Professor of Special Education at the University of Newcastle spoke to us on the inclusion of children with disabilities in the general education stream. Many of our members have had first hand experience of this endeavour, with different results and mixed feelings. This made for a very spirited and interesting discussion.

In July, we held our AGM at the Merewether Golf Club. One of our own members, Mary Kelly, spoke to us about her 'artistic journey', and showed us a representative collection of the paintings she has done over the last three years. The paintings varied from watercolours to oils and acrylics, from detailed flower paintings in delicate colours to bold abstract creations in vivid and exciting hues. Her mastery of a variety of media and styles was most impressive, and our members were delighted and inspired.

In August we again met at the Merewether Golf Club and our speaker was Ms Suzanne Pritchard who has been active in Landcare in the Lake Macquarie Area for many years, presenting 'hands-on' science shows to children in preschools and vacation care centres. She spoke about her experience in the Landcare movement, coordinating the efforts of many groups who are concerned about pollution and possible deterioration in water quality and wildlife habitat in and around one of Australia's important lakes.

In September, we returned to Bimet Lodge for our monthly dinner. Our speaker was Ross Bingham, the manager of Ronald McDonald House at the John Hunter Hospital. He gave a power point presentation that was most interesting and comprehensive. Our members learned of the problems of parents when children are transferred to this large regional hospital from hundreds of miles away. The accommodation provided is as convenient and homelike as possible, so that families can lead as normal a family life as possible in the circumstances and also spend most of their time in the Children's Ward with the patient.

We learned of the Ronald McDonald Room, built in a courtyard of the hospital adjacent to the Children's Ward. Here, parents of local children are provided with extensive facilities for relaxation when necessary and for laundering bedclothes quickly for the small patients. We felt very proud that the efforts of local volunteers have helped to create such a warmly welcoming and helpful place for families in distress. Ross Bingham has invited us to arrange for our members to visit Ronald McDonald House ourselves.

In October, the guest speaker at our dinner was Dr. Wendy Gunthorpe, a behavioural scientist, with a Ph.D in behavioural medicine. Her particular interest is in the development of culturally appropriate instruments to assess mental health risk and resilience. She spoke about her current research projects involving the development and evaluation of tools and methods to assess mental health among Indigenous people living in remote communities in the Top End. Many of the problems encountered relate to differences in how symptoms present and how these symptoms are perceived and communicated.

Wendy described how her research team tried to overcome these problems. She focussed on what was learned about culturally appropriate methods of assessing mental health in young indigenous adults. The team, with the nurse as the pilot, flew backwards and forwards over the Top End to trace young indigenous adults who had been studied from birth and were now scattered over 54 remote communities and spoke any number of 24 indigenous languages.

She described the organizational problems of finding appropriate translators and the physical problems of conducting questionnaires sitting under a tree in the dust with a subject who was often deaf in one ear from a prevalent bacterial infection. Wendy's account was marked by good humour and our lively interest.

Our book club continues to read a chosen book each month. In June we read 'The Spider Trap' by Barry Maitland and in July 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne. In August we planned to read 'The Broken Shore' by Peter Temple. Just weeks before our meeting, however, the Temple book won the "Golden Dagger" Award in the UK. All copies quickly disappeared from libraries and bookshops. We had a film night instead, 'Amazing Grace', the story of William Wilberforce's fight against slavery. For September we read "The Inheritance of Loss" by Keiran Deski, but, owing to the sudden illness of our hostess, the meeting has to be rescheduled next year.

In October, we read Tom Stoppard's play "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead". An unusual choice, as we had not discussed a play before, it proved very interesting and provoked a spirited discussion. In November our Cinema Party evening went awry. We arrived at the cinema to find that our chosen film, "Death at a Funeral", was not showing and the staff had no knowledge of our booking. Fortunately, we had the confirmation e-mail from the GU Theatres management to support our claim.

The theatre was showing Cate Blanchette and Geoffrey Rush in "Elizabeth" for ABC listeners, so we were offered free entry to that. All but two of our party accepted and we went in to find that the large theatre was already almost full. The film was spectacular and the acting was excellent, so, in spite of the mishap, our group enjoyed the evening's entertainment.

For three weekend days in July, we again catered for volunteers and customers at the University Book Fair. This biennial effort, held for eight days, is assisted by our branch members by our catering for morning and afternoon teas and lunches. According to one of the organisers, this was the best Book Fair ever. For us it was also the best ever in terms of funds raised, because it was the first time we charged the volunteer Friends of the University.

The sales to the public just cover the cost of our purchases. The many generous donations of food from our members made it possible to have a substantial profit on the day. In addition to organizing and purchasing provisions beforehand, many of our members gave much of their time and effort in preparing food and serving it on the three days. We anticipate that we will clear about \$1,435:00 in total. This year, we will put the proceeds towards our branch scholarship fund.

We continue to support the education of three East Timorese girls in their final years at St Josephs Secondary School in Dili. Father Edward Roy (Father Edu) wrote in August thanking us for our continuing support, advising us that the school will open on September 1st for the Spring Term and promising to send an update on the progress of the girls. In October, we received delightful letters from the girls who are the recipients of the scholarships. Our members were charmed by their gratitude and their ways of expressing it in English.

After some considerable delay, we were recently advised that the Margaret Auchmuty Prize for Education for the 2006 academic year was awarded to Jessica Lamrock and the Huldah Turner Prize for Mathematics was awarded to Ngoc Tran.

NORTH SHORE The Spring Meeting followed the AGM at 11.30 am with the President, Mrs Dorothy Betty, in the chair. The guest speaker was Cate Faehrmann, chief executive officer of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. This is a non-profit non-government organization established in 1955. It currently represents 120 environmental groups, on whose behalf it has input into legislation and government decisions.

Cate, with a BA (Humanities) from La Trobe University, is currently working towards her MBA at the University of Technology. The funding for her research was from the State Government. She was, previously, a media adviser. Cate spoke about Conservation, and especially conservation in NSW and Kuring-gai. Her interesting speech was based primarily on both global and the local picture. She dealt with important 'green' issues, including global warming, saving urban bushland, and helping households become more water and energy efficient. She expressed her hopes for a community increasingly influenced by environmental law.

Under the heading, Health of our Environment, she talked about world loss of bio-diversity, over use of water, the falling pressure of ground water, mangrove loss, which is even greater than that of forests, and over use of river systems eg the Darling River.

She reported that climate change is having an effect on bio-diversity, which, in turn, will affect us by reducing our food supply, rural livelihood, health as well as mental health. However, she did not include world over-population or forest denudation.

It was agreed that we need tougher regulations to reduce remissions etc, but we MUST be aware NOW and not wait for another forty years before taking the problem seriously.

Our Christmas Luncheon will again be held at the Almgren Centre, Dunmore Lang College, Macquarie University, on Monday 3rd December commencing at noon. The theme for the day will be Celtic Heritage supported by the speaker, Susannah Fullerton, President of the Jane Austen Society, whose topic will be "Literature – Our Celtic Heritage, based on her recent studies in Ireland and Scotland. Further details from Greta Recsei on 9487 2061.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS At our August AGM we were honoured to have Jocelyn Murphy, CEO of YWCA of New South Wales, as our guest speaker. She enlightened members as to the diversity of the current programs that the Y is engaged in State-wide, and also in the Wingecarribee area.

One of the many programs running in this area is "Books for Bubs". Jocelyn's enthusiasm and dedication to the project was infectious. She is hoping to attract a local sponsor to help with this project.

Dr Barbara Nicholson addressed us in October with an in-depth knowledge of Aboriginal culture. A law academic with post-graduate students under her supervision, Barbara is an indigenous Australian with a wealth of experience in Aboriginal/ Government relations. We were fortunate to have her insights into the Federal Government's "Intervention" strategy.

Our book club had completed its second year of existence and presently has a membership of six regulars. Books read lately include "Paper Nautilus" by Nicholas Jose and "A Thousand Splendid Suns" by Khaled Hosseini.

Recently, our annual fundraising garden party was held in the pretty Moss Vale garden of Elizabeth Shepherd. It was judged a success in all ways and raised enough funds for two scholarships for 2008.

Our Christmas Dinner Meeting will be held on Monday, 10th December, at Dormie House, Moss Vale, at 6.30 for 7.00 pm. The speaker will be our member, Dr Celeste Rossetto. For further details ring Sue Nagy on 4841 0357.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN - NSW Inc.

Office and Margery Murray Room
Basement Level 280 – 282 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000

ABN 23 098 188 689

Office: Ms Carolyn Vaughan **Mondays** (Ring first)

Postal Address: **PO Box A2231 Sydney South 1235**

Phone/Fax: **02 9283 7878**

Email: afuwsw@netspace.net.au

Website: www.afuwsw.org.au

Membership Renewal

PO Box 124 Woodford 2778

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|--|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
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| Vice Pres 1 | Mrs Anne Smith | 2/44-46 Lauderdale Ave Fairlight 2094 | 0437 670 418 CHINESTEVO@YAHOO.COM.AU |
| Vice Pres 2 | Vacant | | |
| Secretary | Dr Jane Baker | PO Box 345, Concord West 2138 | 9743 0534 jane.baker@optusnet.com.au |
| Treasurer | Ms Tricia Blombery | 11 Park Road, Marrickville 2204 | 9560 8070 stuart_tricia@bigpond.com.au |
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Newsletter Editor Ms Lyn Thompson PO Box 38, Woodford 2778 4758 6637

Material for the Newsletter may be faxed directly to 4758 7169 or Email: lkthom@bigpond.com ("l" as in lyn)

Deadline for next Newsletter Reports and Calendar 1 March 2008

NB Details of 2008 Branch activities are yet to be determined.

Known arrangements for December and for early 2008 are printed at the end of the relevant branch reports.

Information about Branch programmes may be obtained from:

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|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|--|
| Central Coast | Mrs Joan Smith | 4333 4020 | jmsmi829@tpg.com.au |
| Central West | Mrs Susan Brown | 6342 9342 | browndara@gobushmail.com.au |
| City | Ms Christine Hosking | 9599 0186 | chosking@netspace.net.au |
| Hunter Valley | Ms Anne Drinkwater | 4957 5740 | adrinky@bigpond.net.au |
| North Shore | Mrs Dorothy Betty | 9489 1142 | |
| River | Mrs Nada Taylor | 9436 2889 | nada_taylor@yahoo.com |
| Southern Highlands | Mrs Sue Nagy | 4841 0357 | abisu@bigpond.com |

NEW MEMBERS

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Mrs Patricia Baker (Assoc) | Bowral | Mrs Nancy Manefield | Waverton |
| Dr Frances Booth AM | Hunters Hill | Mrs Renate Messerle (Assoc) | Turrumurra |
| Mrs Elizabeth Chapman | Bowral | Ms Yuvisthi Naidoo | Pymont |
| Ms Kate Colleran | Randwick | Ms Kay Nankervis | Peel |
| Ms Arwen Cross | Concord | Mrs Denise Playoust | Mosman |
| Mrs Margaret Dibbs | Moss Vale | Ms Linda Renz | Hornsby |
| Ms Julie Druce | Newcastle East | Ms Carmel Rose (Assoc) | Waverton |
| Mrs Pauline Harvey (Assoc) | Beecroft | Ms Virginia Ross | Burrawang |
| Dr Marion Hass | Seaforth | Ms Colleen Schonhoffer | North Gosford |
| Ms Dianne Kennedy | Bateau Bay | Ms Laura Thomas | Darlinghurst |
| Miss Jessica Kermode | Randwick | Ms Long-Seng To | Carlingford |
| Mrs Maralyn Lawson | Greenwich | | |