



OWN MATTERS

Newsletter of the Older Women's Network NSW

Vol.7 No.11 – December 2010



OWN Sydney Invites you to Celebrate...

Join us at 87 Lower Fort Street for our end of year celebrations! Starting at 11.30am on Friday, 10 December. Bring a plate of something fabulous to share, and be prepared to join in the fun!

see *BTR - OWN Sydney Invitation* page 8



Looking for ways to cut your power costs?

...Households who take part in the program will get a free home power assessment by an energy expert, a Power Savings Kit and a personal Power Savings Action Plan...

see *Free help to cut Power Bills* page 15



Lorraine Inglis embraces No Good Deeds Day

... I keep Friday as my No Good Deeds Day...I thought that when I retired, there would be lots of days like this, but it isn't so. So I leave Friday as the day in the week when I do only things I enjoy...

see *No Good Deeds Day* page 19



Daphne Lera introduces Alice Herz-Sommer

... I remember after the first world war there was nothing to eat. That was a terrible war...At the camp, the officers allowed me to play for my fellow prisoners, and surrounded by the inhumanity of man, it was this that gave me the will to live... Music was my food. ...

see *A Life in the Day: Alice Herz-Sommer* pages 21-22

Older Women's Network NSW 87 Lower Fort Street Millers Point, NSW 2000

Phone: 02 9247 7046 Fax: 02 9247 4202 email: info@ownnsw.org.au web: www.ownnsw.org.au

Produced with the assistance of the Office of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW with project funding from the NSW Department of Health and assistance from the City of Sydney

Who Are We?

The Older Women's Network (OWN) NSW is the peak body for 19 groups in NSW. OWN promotes the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women through a range of activities and resources, and advocates on issues of interest and concern to older women.

OWN Matters is the news-letter of the Older Women's Network NSW. It is published 11 times a year. The annual subscription for individuals is \$22 and \$40 for organisations and includes GST.

Members of OWN groups in NSW are encouraged to contribute to **OWN Matters** with items of interest to older women and Letters to the Editor. They can be sent by email or mail marked Attention – Editorial Team. Please include contact details. Contributions must be received by the second Tuesday of each month.

OWN Matters is copyright. Material can be reproduced, but only with acknowledgement of its source.

ABN 36 992 030 904

Editorial Team

Beth Eldridge, June West, Lorraine Inglis, Helen Young, Louise Bentley and Pauline Marshall.

Admin Support

Margaret Holland and Margaret Kearney.

Layout and Design

Beth Eldridge, Louise Bentley.

Membership & Subscriptions

Maureen King

Mailout Team

Pat Rayne, Noel Carpenter, Veronica Willis, Corinne Campbell.

More help always welcome!

OWN Office



The phone hours at our OWN office are from 10:00 to 3:00.

If you call outside these hours you may get a recorded message.

Leave a message, with your contact number, and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Between 10:00 and 3:00 the phone will be answered by one of our friendly volunteers.

OWN Matters Direct!

We love to hear from you and publish what you have to say in our newsletter.



The best way, for you and us, is for you to email your letter or article.

We have an email address for your

especially contributions.

The email address is newsletter@ownsw.org.au

CONTENTS

New cover with snippets	1
Contact info & contents	2
Our Future in Our Hands	3
OWN NSW Quarterly Meeting	3
OWN History Project	3-4
OWN Communications	4
Next Quarterley Notice	4
History Project Update	5
Wanted - Pianist	5
OWN Matters Roster	5
Connecting people with services	5
Aboriginal Support Circle Issues	6-7
Renewed Efforts with Constitution	6
Justice Reinvestment	6-7
Historic Ayers Rock Resort	7
ASC Raffle	7
At and Beyond the Rocks	8-10
Sydney	8
Sydney End of Year Party	8
Bankstown Greek	9
Illawarra	9
House wanted	9
Northside Raffle Results	10
Nowra congratulated	10
Volunteers needed	10
Good News!	11
Reclaim the Night	11
Voluntary Euthanasia	11
Cruise of a Lifetime	12
Woman	12
How Could They?	12
One Good Deed	13-14
Energy Poverty	15
Free help to cut power bills	15
About Active Travel	15
Home remedy for arthritis	15
Memory Loss is a funny thing	16
Remembered or Unremembered	16
Theatre Group Report	17
Letters to the Editor	18-19
No Good Deeds Day	19
Cofee Break	20
Dancing with life	20-21
Defying the Gatekeeper	21
A Life in the Day: Alice Herz-Sommer	21-22
The Little Lady in Trousers	22-23
Love in Action	23
AFTINET	24
Millers Point Housing	24
Macquarie, Colony to Country	25
Mario Salad	26
Naplan Tests	26
Exercise at the Cross	26
OWN Sydney Notices	27

Disclaimer : *The views expressed in OWN Matters are not necessarily those of the Older Women's Network NSW, and we do not guarantee the accuracy of the facts in articles supplied by members. The Older Women's Network NSW accepts no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting, or not acting, upon any material in OWN Matters.*

Our Future in Our Hands

On 28 October we gathered at the OWN NSW office, representatives from most of the OWN groups, to decide and record what we wanted to work towards as an organisation in 2010/2011. This was our strategic planning workshop. Clare Crawford from Elton Consulting helped us work through all the issues.

First it was very important to discuss exactly what OWN is, what defines us, what makes us different from other groups of seniors. Then we listed key areas of concern and prioritised them.

We decided the main priorities for action were:

- Defining and communicating the role of OWN.
- Strengthening the advocacy role of OWN, both at local level and state-wide.
- Improving communications among OWN groups and between groups and OWN NSW.
- Strengthening the governance and funding of OWN NSW.
- Developing training and support to meet the needs of OWN groups.

In small groups we took one of the priorities and discussed where we might be on this issue by the end of the year and how we could work towards this. After lunch each small group reported back what they had discussed. We identified specific actions and responsibilities for the year.

Clare took our recorded ideas and wrote them up as a strategic plan, something for us to use as a guide to work with during the year. Having her help made the various processes much easier on the day and to have a professionally written up plan is great. If anyone wants a copy, let us know.

It was great to have so many women working together to create our strategic plan. Of course that is just the baby step. The big steps are ahead. We have the plan, but putting it into action is our challenge.

Lorraine Inglis



December 2010 - OWN Matters

OWN NSW Quarterly Meeting

Anne Dever and OWN Newcastle members hosted the most recent OWN NSW Quarterly Meeting on 18 November. It was a beautiful day with a warm welcome from Newcastle OWN to members from Wyong, Illawarra, Macarthur, Sydney, OWN NSW and the Theatre Group, as well as a terrific contingent of Newcastle members who also provided a sumptuous morning tea and lunch for their guests. The decision to move the quarterly meetings around NSW was suggested at the OWN NSW State Conference this year as a way of building better communication between OWN NSW groups. The next meeting will be hosted by the Illawarra group, to give more members from the southern regions the opportunity to attend.

OWN History Project Presentation

Pat Carlton explained to the gathering that the History Project has grown like topsy, with no initial guidelines, from the two workshops run by Dorothy Cora at the OWN Australia Conference in 2009. From those workshops it was suggested that the history should be recorded nationally, by state and individual groups. As our members are ageing, it was identified as a priority to record their stories - or face prospect that our history could be lost with them.

It was hoped that one day a bound book and maybe even a DVD could be made from the material gathered. At the time, Pat volunteered to be on the Newcastle Reference Group, and decided to go it alone when - to her surprise - no one else stepped up. Pat has spent the last 12 months compiling and completing *The Last Fifteen Years* - the history of the Newcastle Group to 2009. All the other NSW Group histories will need to be collected, edited and compiled to create an OWN NSW history, and in turn this OWN NSW history will be edited to become part of an OWN Australia's history.

To produce the Newcastle history Pat sent out questionnaires to all members to determine why they joined OWN, why they stayed and what they got out of being a member. Pat then collected all available records and compiled the history. To add interest, Pat interviewed 9 long term members (including herself) and recorded their reminiscences. Each interviewee was required to sign a disclaimer, and Pat edited the recorded interviews before including them as an aside to the documented history.

OWN NSW has, at various times, had TAFE and University students collating records held in various sites around Sydney into some order so that our history can be recorded. The exercise met with difficulties because the

students found it challenging to recognise the historical context of the events and understand the material they found. Ideally, because the job is so big, someone outside the network should be employed to collate all the available information. It is difficult to find funding that will enable us to undertake the research, compilation and editing a component of this exercise, yet funds may be available for the production of any resources produced.

Suggestions were made that:

- a university student could research and edit the project as their thesis. However, if the history was compiled by a student, that history may then become the property of the University and may need to be too academic in order to meet thesis guidelines.

- a historian be found. Pat agreed to check the internet and approach other women's organisations in an attempt to find a historian.

It was also suggested that all the histories be issued with ISBN numbers so that copies can be given to various libraries and be available as reference material. For a cost of \$40 OWN NSW can arrange ISBN numbers.

Wyong Group has completed their history, however, it is still to be published. Illawarra and Macarthur are taking the first steps towards recording their history.

OWN Communications/Technology

The process of obtaining a grant from FaHCSIA to provide a laptop, software, printer, mouse, backpack, surge protector and some basic computer training for all the groups in NSW and special project groups, as well as the weeks of setting up 21 units ready for delivery to each group, left everyone in no doubt that Beth had gone beyond the call of duty in her efforts to establish better communication between OWN NSW and the groups and the groups with other groups Australia wide. Beth was congratulated by the meeting.

Beth advised the following computer features and group requirements:

- Each mono computer package has one spare cartridge available, as required, from OWN NSW. Current and spare cartridge (which the company threw in as part of the deal) should be adequate for 12 months, but if you need to order more, contact OWN NSW to check on pricing, as groups will need to fund the purchase of future toner cartridges themselves.

- Each group has a component of basic computer training in their grant, for a specific number of members,

and the group must establish what is available in their area from a qualified trainer and liaise with Beth before implementing any training. Groups are also encouraged to explore options for free training for additional members to increase the skill level of the group overall.

- Each group must insure the computer package, and ensure that it is stored securely and not left unattended.

- The internet – which was supplied as part of a special 'Computer package' deal from the company who also included a digital recorder in each computer package.

- This internet deal is with Virgin broadband which uses the optus wireless network. It has 12 gigabyte capacity to use over 365 days. In the unlikely event that groups use up their 12gigs, they can 'recharge', buy buying prepaid vouchers from many stores or newsagents.

- If your laptop is stolen, immediately contact the police and notify OWN NSW. The computer has GPS that can be activated to help locate the computer and, if access attempted, a photograph can be taken of the thief.

- Thanks to Roxy Rascon, an OWN Australia Intranet has been set up as a private network (google group) for all OWN members across Australia. To check it out go to: <http://ownaustralia.org.au/>

- To access the members only section you will need to use your virgin broadband email address as your user name, and enter a password which is different to your computer password.

- The computers and equipment remain the property of FaHCSIA and cannot be sold or given away.

A couple of computers were set up and attendees invited to have a look and ask any questions. Beth spent some time instructing those interested.

Anne Dever, OWN Newcastle

Please Join Us!

Thursday 17 February
10.30am

Quarterly Meeting to be held at Illawarra OWN

All welcome.

Just giving you advance notice!

RSVP 4 February for catering purposes.

Phone Peggy Rodden to book 4268 0856.



OWN History Project Update

Joy Ross and I flew to Port Macquarie on 12 November 2010 to meet again with Margaret Howard who had been OWN's first paid worker way back in 1991. We had both worked with her and had very fond memories of our friendship and energetic work relationship.



Margaret Howard

It was a great reunion at Port Macquarie airport and both Margaret and Yvonne, her partner, gave us marvellous hospitality at their home on the banks of the Macleay River.

In our interview with Margaret we started recalling so many events - it was like a rollercoaster. It was about planning, fund raising, workshops, starting groups and all the great women who helped along the way.

And we all remembered Margaret's pet rat, Prudence, who was not appreciated by all the members of OWN.

Joy and I were so pleased that we had made the effort to go.

Renate Watkinson



Wanted Urgently

Pianist for OWN NSW Theatre Group to rehearse with us on Tuesdays and to play at our performances.

For more information please contact Jo Allon on:

4294 3786 or 0408 412 097

OWN Matters Roster

Hi to everyone, from both the *OWN Matters* Editorial Committee and the OWN NSW Management Team.

Both the editorial team and our readers would like to see greater variety in our magazine. The only way this is going to happen is if our readers write, so that we get different ideas and viewpoints. We have also been a bit light-on with articles in BTR. We discussed this at our recent strategic planning workshop and have decided to ask every group to contribute more regularly. This does not mean it has to be the report for BTR. Someone from your group might write a story, or a letter or an article on anything that takes their fancy.

We are drawing up a roster, and are asking two groups each month to make sure they send in something for the magazine. You might find it so easy, that you do it frequently, and that would be even better. You might send in a couple of contributions when it's your month. We simply want to hear what you have to say.

This is the roster for this year, but if you send something from your group every month it would be great.

February	Sydney	and	Wyong
March	Blacktown	and	Wollondilly
April	Hastings	and	Bankstown
May	Newcastle	and	Sutherland
June	Illawarra	and	SHOWN
July	Northside	and	Penrith
August	Nowra	and	Parramatta
September	Macarthur	and	Banks Greek
October	Hills	and	Sydney
November	Bankstown	and	Sutherland
December	Newcastle	and	Illawarra

Some groups will find their name there twice. I must think you are twice as keen! But don't forget, you can write as frequently as you like.

Lorraine Inglis

Connecting people with services

- Service Seeker is freely available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The directory is readily searchable by agency name, keyword and free text search and can be refined by geographic area.
- The Information can be provided in hardcopy and CD-ROM directories and is the basis for S2S electronic referral systems. The records provide not only content and addresses information, but also detailed and precise descriptions of the services offered by the organisations providing those services.
- For more information about Infochange Service Seeker, visit www.serviceseekere.com.au

Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Renewed Efforts to Change Constitution

It was announced on the 8th November that the Government will establish an expert panel to devise options for recognising Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the constitution. Julia Gillard, in her agreement with the Greens and Independents, proposed putting the question to a referendum either before or at the next election, due in late 2013. The USA, Canada and New Zealand have all recognised their indigenous people in their respective constitutions. This is also consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) have said that such recognition would greatly improve the self-esteem and mental health of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, bearing in mind that human beings need to belong and want to be included.

Megan Davis, Director of the Indigenous Law Centre and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of NSW, advises that there should be no time limit to this process. She advocates that a longer time period is needed because there needs to be "a targeted and long-term campaign aimed at countering the inevitable feelings of many Australians that change involves giving rights to one group at the expense of another...Ordinary people who have never met an Aboriginal person in their life want to be persuaded, not patronised."

It is proposed that the panel would be made up of indigenous and community leaders, constitutional experts and members of Parliament, leading to a national discussion and broad consultation before reporting in December next year. Indigenous advocacy for constitutional reform has been active for decades and let us hope that finally, consensus can be reached and the necessary changes be brought about.

Pat Zinn

Justice Reinvestment

A change of thinking by the Federal Government and the States is needed to combat juvenile crime in Australia. Incarceration is the least effective intervention in reducing crime. In NSW 53% of young people in detention are Aboriginal (it is 86% in Western Australia) and most Indigenous juvenile offences occur in the metropolitan areas.

Most juvenile offending arises from "the immaturity of youth because juveniles have different developmental needs to adults" according to Bruce Barbour, NSW justice ombudsman. Juveniles whose first court appearance occurs when they are young are more likely to commit more serious offences over time and governments need to focus their attention on the underlying causes of juvenile offending as early as possible. Lack of suitable bail accommodation for juveniles often results in a juvenile who has been granted bail, remaining in custody because suitable accommodation can't be found or the young person can't go return home because of family breakdown or safety or neglect risks.

Justice reinvestment is being advocated here in Australia, following successful outcomes in parts of the USA, whereby government funds are diverted from the construction of additional juvenile justice facilities to investment in community programs and services that address the underlying causes of juvenile crime. Justice reinvestment is a long term program (7-8 years), it needs secure, long-term funding and the community affected has to be involved and committed to take ownership of solutions. It is about genuine empowerment and building skills to help families and communities manage their young people. There needs to be an agreement by Federal and State governments to desist from law and order campaigning which is traditionally focussed on tougher rather than more effective responses to crime. Mick Gooda, the new



Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Social Justice commissioner is actively promoting and supporting justice reinvestment.

Pat Zinn

Historic Ayers Rock Resort Purchase

In the Northern Territory, the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) has bought the Ayers Rock Resort at Yulara, near Uluru, from the GPT group for \$300 million dollars. This covers all resort hotels and accommodation, associated infrastructure, the airport, and the workers village. The ILC has allocated \$50 million dollars towards capital improvements and the GPT will invest a further \$25 million dollars.

Through the local organisation Wana Ungkuntja, the Anangu at Mutitjula, the Imanpa and Docker River people will each acquire an initial 7% stake in the enterprise and will play a continuing role in the resort operation and management. At the moment, out of the 670 staff at the resorts, only one is Aboriginal! A tourism and training academy is going to be established, training 200 young Aboriginal people each year from 2013. Apart from tourism, there will also be industry-accredited training and finally, tourists will have a more authentic experience of Aboriginal culture and skills and there will be the jobs that have not been available until now.

On the 26 October, 2010, the 25th anniversary of the hand-back of Uluru-Kata Tjuta by the Australian Government to the Anangu was celebrated. The then governor-General Sir Ninian Stephen handed over the title deeds, five minutes later signing an agreement leasing the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park back to the Australian Parks and Wildlife Service for 99 years. Since then, the park has been run under a system of joint management with a board comprising mainly of Anangu members. But after the Anangu got their land back, the community

at Mutitjulu was denied many things that they thought would happen, and visitors still climb Uluru against their wishes. At the time, there was great opposition to the hand-back, especially by the NT Government of the day. NT Regional Development Minister Malarndirri McCarthy said at the recent celebration: "It's shameful to think that the celebration began with such huge protests. What people never understood is that the Anangu just wanted to share their culture." Many have said that the Anangu have been incredibly generous to continue to share their stories and culture. At last, with this new purchase, the local people will be able to move into new directions in education, employment and tourism.

Pat Zinn

It's Raffle Time Again!

This year the Aboriginal Support Circle are supporting the Kool Kids Club based at La Perouse, which provides supported activities after school and during school holidays for children aged 7 to 13 years. More than 80% of those attending the programs are Aboriginal, while more than 20% are being brought up by grandparents. The children benefit from sporting activities, music, art and dancing classes which foster respect, self-confidence, discipline and responsibility. Funding has NOT been secured after June, 2011 and with State elections next year, everything has had to be put on hold. However, the community is fighting back. For starters, Bidigal man, Laddie Timbery, has donated 40 boomerangs to be painted and then auctioned next month.

Once again the first prize is a beautiful hand-made patchwork quilt given by Barbara Malcolm. Additional prizes offer a choice of: an Aboriginal ceramic vase, a set of four place mats with an Aboriginal design, *Archaeology of the Dreaming* by Josephine Flood, a set of four soaps from Italy in gift box and two scarves with Aboriginal designs

Tickets are 1 for \$1.00 or 3 for \$2.00. The raffle is to be drawn in mid-December at OWN's end-of-year bash.

Pat Zinn



At and Beyond the Rocks



15 October saw us enjoying a special morning tea, a thank you to all those members who had had to resign from OWN Sydney committee in the past year - and who are greatly missed, as you will hear. Lack of space prevents *The Story of the Cake* that became part of this Special Morning Tea, but we had a great small celebration, and maybe that Cake story will be told in *OWN Matters* someday.

This week your committee met with just five members present. Veronica is overseas; Marilyn, our treasured minute taker, has had to resign suddenly. From ten members last year, we are now down to six, and six is not enough. We are spreading ourselves too thin, so listen up, members of OWN Sydney, **WE NEED MORE PEOPLE ON THE COMMITTEE.** Why not you?

Here's what we're about:

In the jargon of today, we "facilitate social interaction", that is, we arrange social events so that OWN Sydney members can meet and enjoy each other's company. To this end we organise four meetings a year: an outing locally, a Speaker of repute, our AGM enlivened by a shared lunch, and an end-of-year celebration at which we party, party, party and eat delicious food supplied

by you. (NB: DEC 10th this year). In between there are some other occasions that deserve recognition, such as *IWD*, *White Ribbon Day*, *Summer Solstice*, which we celebrate on a smaller scale or jointly with other groups.

We are bound by the OWN NSW Constitution. As we are also responsible for the money paid to OWN Sydney through membership fees, we need to have a committee with Officers and keep records in the normal way, but this is not arduous. We meet once a month from ten until twelve-thirty, rarely longer, talk over ideas for meetings through the year, plan who does what, receive reports on the groups within OWN Sydney, argue occasionally about issues (and that helps to keep us on our toes!) and now and again share lunch.

You are an OWN member - don't you believe in OWN? Could you be doing more? Should we be doing more? Is this why we get such a poor response when we lay on an event for us all?

There, now I've laid it on nice and thick, a beautiful final 2010 message to all. But it's no good pretending: unless we participate we can't flourish and grow - we can't even survive. We need enthusiastic,

active people coming forward with energy and ideas to inspire us; and people who can work behind the scene to put on events that will add to our enjoyment of being an OWN Sydney member, to make it relevant. Unless we want to become ON the Rocks instead of AT the rocks, we need to replace each one of those for whom we held our special morning tea.

HAPPY CELEBRATIONS!

Brigid Sen

OWN SYDNEY

INVITES YOU TO



END OF YEAR
CELEBRATIONS

AT 11.30 AM

ON FRIDAY 10
DECEMBER 2010

AT 87 LOWER FORT STREET
MILLERS POINT

[JUST NEAR THE 431, 433
BUS TERMINUS]

BRING A PLATE OF
YOUR FAVOURITE
GOODIES TO SHARE



BRING YOUR TALENTS TO
SING, DANCE, RANT N RAVE

At and Beyond the Rocks

Bankstown Greek

In July some of our members took part in a programme called SHARE - Learn for Life, which was a lot of fun. Later in July our dancing group performed at the well-known *Bankstown Bites* which is a yearly international food festival.

Our trip to Canberra for Floriade was a great success; all members enjoyed the flower displays.

On 28 October we danced as part of National Water Week and for the Bankstown Council Environmental and Arts Festival at Garrison Point, Georges Hall.

Pink Ribbon Day on 25 October is always a big day for us. This year we collected \$3,670 for the Breast Cancer Foundation. Congratulations ladies and a big, big thank you to everyone who took part in any way. To celebrate our success, we organised to see the historical theatre play *The Persians* on October 29.

On 1 November, we began a seven week falls prevention programme: *Stepping Out With Confidence*.

Ladies, be aware of a bag snatching epidemic. Two of our members were robbed of their bags in the same week, one at Liverpool Station, at 9.00 am in the morning and one on a busy Bankstown street.

Our get well wishes go to our member, Joanna, after her knee operation and also sincere sympathy goes to our other Connie, who in recent weeks has tragically lost her only son, just 36 years old. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, dear Connie.

Time is flying, Christmas is just around the corner, and I am sure we are all planning our parties. I would like to wish all a Happy Festive Season. Keep healthy, and see you next year.

Connie Kondilios

Illawarra OWN

How do we best get our message of positive ageing across to the wider community? We have all been told, time and time again, that the best way to inform and inspire our audience is with humour - with that spoonful of sugar that makes the medicine go down!

With this in mind, and with that wonderful example provided by the illustrious OWN Theatre Group, some of Illawarra OWN's enthusiastic members have been meeting over the last few months to write a series of humorous short skits about the pleasures and pains of growing older. These will all be blended together with suitable music of course - and we have at least three dates early next year when we plan to perform our efforts.

Members prepare suggested material at home and bring it to the drama group meeting for approval. We have found that we bounce ideas off each other very effectively and we do much better work as a group than when writing as individuals. We are constantly amazed at the calibre of the suggestions brought forward by some of the quieter members as well as the professional show-offs who make up our numbers.

Above all, we really have fun! It is seriously "uncool" to laugh at your own jokes. Let me tell you we are all seriously "uncool". At the end of each afternoon's work we are all exhausted from laughing! Even if our production never sees the light of day we have already all enjoyed tremendous benefits from the whole exercise.

Let me recommend this idea to other OWN Groups. You will be amazed at the talent you discover, it is a wonderful bonding activity for members and a superb tonic if you're feeling a bit 'down'. Who cares if the show is never performed in public? This is one activity where perhaps most of the fun and benefit is to be had in the creation of the performance.

Of course, after our performance, we will not say no to being rich and famous! Then we will just have to write a show about the pleasures and pains of being superstars.

Peggy Rodden



WANTED to house-sit or rent:

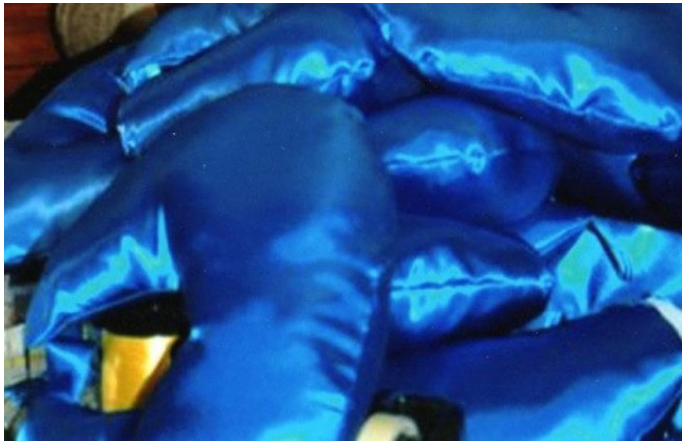
- Family needs 3 bedroom house
- or unit from mid-January for 3-6
- months. Furnished or unfurnished.
- Happy to mind pets and garden.
- Please call Kate Maclurcan:
- 0412 771 394

Beyond the Rocks

Results of Northside Raffle - November 2010

The Northside Wellness Activities Centre would like to thank everybody for their generous support for the raffle of our handmade quilt depicting Australian Fauna. The raffle has been drawn and won.

First prize of the quilt went to Rosalie Gringes, and second prize of the peacock wall hanging went to Paul Jarman. We received a donation of a hand crocheted blanket from one of our members, and this was added as a third prize; it was won by Di Douglass. The winners have all been notified. Proceeds of the raffle will be used to fund the venue hire cost for our needlecraft group next year.



As a thank you to everybody, the needlecraft group has decided to assist the Zonta group with the making of breast cushions for post operative care for breast cancer patients.



The Breast Care Cushion aids recovery by allowing the woman to sit, sleep and rest comfortably, as well as by preventing hurt from bumps while walking around and also help to relieve any of the discomfort experienced from the wearing of seatbelts.

Rhoda Sexton



Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

NORTH NOWRA
NSW 2541

Jean Trebble

Thank you for your letter of 14 October.

What a generous thought to send me the two volumes of memories from World War II. I was captivated and moved by your own story of your war years in Tasmania, the Italian prisoners of war, and your father's memories of World War I.

I've had many happy encounters with the Older Women's Network over the years, and am not at all surprised that they should have suggested the challenge of writing your memoirs! Congratulations to the OWN, and also to you for sharing your story with us.

With my kind regards, and thanks.

*My affectionate regards
Quentin* 25-10-2010

GOVERNMENT HOUSE CANBERRA ACT 2600 AUSTRALIA

Volunteers needed for breast cancer research

I heard about this site a couple of weeks ago when it was Pink Ribbon Day. You might know about it, if not, check it out: <http://www.register4.org.au/>

It is run by the National Breast Cancer Foundation and their goal is recruit volunteers to discover more answers to breast cancer. It's free to join, they aren't asking us to raise money. They are looking for women of all ages and sizes to help in research.

As they say:

"Breast cancer is still the most common cancer affecting Australian women and over the last few decades its incidence has been on the rise. More research is needed so we can pinpoint better preventative measures and help find a cure."

There's much more information on the website. I've registered – looks like a good idea to me.

Bobbie Burke

Advocacy Issues

Good News!

OWN NSW can claim some of the success through our representation of older women, reflected in the newly released *Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standards* that comes into force, May 2011, which address some of the concerns raised in the OWN NSW submission during the consultation last year.

In making our submission we stated our concerns over the limitations in the accompanying reference material for the consultation, which was mainly concerned with statistics for users of mobility aides. We pointed out that our intention was to 'raise the bar' and to be inclusive of a greater number of older Australians, 65 years and over, who will represent approximately 25% of the population in Australia in just over two decades. We stressed that the Government's objective should be to deliver significant outcomes for a burgeoning sector of the population through greater scope in terms of access.

It would appear the new *Disability Access Standards* does just that. The Attorney-General's Department states:

"The Premises Standards will further the Government's social inclusion agenda by progressively ensuring that people with a disability and the ageing population have better access to a wide range of public buildings. Improved building access will afford older people and people with mobility, vision and hearing impairments greater opportunities to access employment and services and to connect with family, friends and the community."

see: www.ag.gov.au/premisesstandards

Greater attention is paid to improving access for sight and hearing impaired and to all classes of public buildings including hospitals, schools, halls, cinemas, cafes, public transport buildings and caravan parks and for the first time, swimming pools are included. All of which we included in our submission.

There are, of course, limitations and these result from exceptions regarding who, when and under what circumstances the Premises Standards apply. Essentially, these include new buildings and when the make-over of an existing building by the owner or occupier of the building is planned.

There is a webcast on the Australian Human Rights website that provides many of the details. It's worth a look!

Sonia Laverty

Reclaim the night

What a lovely balmy evening this was for the annual Reclaim the Night march with Jo, Joy, Frances and yours truly from OWN and at least 200 others, from a babe in arms to a 90 year old. Safety and security is just so important and the mantra of the evening covered it all:

Yes means yes, No means no,

However we dress, Wherever we go.

Before the march the gathering was addressed by Dr Larissa Behrendt, Professor of Law, on the issues facing indigenous women and the coming together, particularly amongst older women, to face this serious challenge. A woman from the Free Burma campaign told us of the suffering that Burmese women face at the hands of the military, where wages are paid in drugs and alcohol – if not fully, at least partly. The march had the universal theme of upholding the rights of all women to live in a world free from violence of all types.

Attendances at this rally and the Feminist Conference earlier in the year may signal a return to activism by young women, as both events were attended by schools and university students, as well as many women who'd independently decided the cause was a good one. The handing out of whistles was a good idea and we marched as one, saying a line of the words and then blowing on our plastic whistle. Drummers were also present, with Liz Ireland leading the troupe.

All in all, a very good night! Jo and I retired at the end of the march for a G&T in a local hostelry, which gave us a good vantage point into Martin Place, where the post-march entertainment was being held.

Rita Tratt

Voluntary Euthanasia

In this month's *OWN Matters* you've asked us to contribute advocacy issues for OWN. We members are a varied lot and not all of us have the skills to activate protest, even though we may feel very strongly about certain issues. Nancy Brown, you have inspired me, with your article, to carry on the discussion about voluntary euthanasia, which is not strictly speaking just an older woman's issue, it affects men too. Some years ago I went to a very well-attended meeting at OWN on this subject, organised by Jan Monson, and we wrote to an M.P. We also watched a video about Dr Nietzsche and an 80-year old woman who had decided that, although she was well, she didn't want to carry on living and having to suffer the deterioration of her body.

So where to now? The whole subject has come up again and has been aired by the news media. I think the drawback is, that our polities are mostly younger and cannot possibly imagine what it is like to be elderly, frail, suffering a debilitating disease and being kept alive by medication and nursing care.

I am sure that a way of avoiding exploitation of the system and avoiding abuse can be found so that this whole subject can be tackled realistically.

Pat Zinn

If you had a choice...



Cruise of a Lifetime

Travel has a market with all kinds of tours aimed at sections of that market, whether specific interests, activities or age groups. There are adventurers who walk in the Himalayas, tourists who wander through the galleries of Paris and travellers who cross the Americas by train. There are music tours, walking tours, history tours, volunteers tours... You name it, it is there.

Others prefer to travel without having to move out of their hotel. They book into a travelling hotel, a cruise ship, which might show them the world. The market must be huge, judging by the number of cruise ships travelling the globe. Almost 400 000 Australians went on a cruise in 2009. Cruises might be for just a couple of weeks, but they can take many months, depending on their destinations.

Cruise ships have quite a large proportion of older passengers, probably more than 30% over 60. The longer the cruise, the older the average age of passengers. They avoid the challenges of travelling from place to place, using a variety of transport, booking into different hotels, passing through all the checks at airports, even deciding where to go. Travel is made easy, and entertainment all the way is part of the deal. I suppose a cruiser with special needs would need to travel with a carer. This could be an alternative to a retirement village, and would be cheaper than some.

As well as a well-equipped hospital, the ships have a morgue down below. Almost every cruise takes home some people who don't make it, who die enjoying themselves, having fun. What a great way to go! Their bodies are stored in the ship's morgue, till they get back to port. No burial at sea these days.

I can see a place for cruises for those who don't want to come back, for those who want to escape terminal illness, for those who know they have dementia and don't want to face that future. It would need the same safeguards as proposed for any legislation on this subject. Would the ship have to be registered in a country which allows a civilised death for those in this situation?

And could it really be called *Cruise of a Lifetime*?

Lorraine Inglis



Woman by Gary Baker

The central character, Annie (Sharon Flanagan) is crusty, cranky, very funny and homeless. We find her standing before a set of large gates. She believes her ex-husband Johnny (Chris Leaney) and their daughter Louise (Matilda Ridgway) live in the mansion behind those gates. Written by a man, this tough minded, challenging drama, takes us on a journey into Annie's mind and memory. *Woman* throws into relief the life of one particular woman to illuminate the lives of all women. How much choice does a woman have in the world?

Sidetrack Theatre, Addison Road Centre, 142 Addison Road, Marrickville

Friday, 19 November, to Saturday 11, December 2010

Tuesday – Saturday 8pm

\$30.00, concession: \$25.00

BOOKINGS: 02 95503666

How Could They?

Older women play a critical role in supporting their families and communities. Many do not recognise that the situations that they are entering into have the potential for abuse.

How Could They? is a series of 5 brochures exploring the legal and financial issues:

- for older women considering gifts and loans
- *One Good Deed...*
(pictured right)

These brochures have been developed by and for older women, based on real situations.

You can view or download the entire series at: <http://www.ownsw.org.au/HowCouldThey.php>

The questions, strategies and resources contained in each brochure have been designed to empower older women with tools to resolve problems and strengthen their position, without jeopardizing their personal relationships.

Beth Eldridge

Personal factors Maria should consider:

- If Maria lends money to Peter, how will this affect her relationship with Markus?
- Does she have any legal right to see her granddaughter if Peter refuses to allow it?

The information contained in this publication is intended for use in NSW, and relates to the law as at 1st May 2010.

Contact OWN NSW:
phone: (02) 9247 7046
info@ownnsw.org.au or
www.ownnsw.org.au to obtain further copies of this publication.

This publication has been developed by The University of Western Sydney and The Older Women's Network NSW, produced with the financial assistance of the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW.

The Foundation seeks to advance the fairness and equity of the justice system and to improve access to justice, especially for socially and economically disadvantaged people.

<http://www.lawfoundation.net.au>

This publication is intended as a guide to the law and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice.

Disclaimer: any opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Law and Justice Foundation's Board of Governors.

Agencies and others Maria could contact for help and advice:

- 1 The Older Persons' Legal Service (A service of The Aged-care Rights Service). Tel: (02) 9281 3600 or 1800 424 079 (toll-free)
- 1 Financial Information Service (FIS). Tel:131 021
- 1 LawAccess NSW
Tel:1300 888 529. TTY:1300 889 529
- 1 Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC) (02) 9273 1558 or liac@sl.nsw.gov.au
Tel:1300 888 529. TTY:1300 889 529
- 1 Welfare Rights Centre -
Tel:(02) 9211 5300
or 1800 226 028 (Toll free)
- 1 Her solicitor. If Maria does not have a solicitor, she could contact the Law Society of NSW Solicitor Referral Service on (02) 9926 0300 for a list of solicitors in her area who deal with elder law matters.

One Good Deed...

Legal and financial issues for older women considering gifts and loans



Like most mums, Maria had always been ready to lend a hand. What was different this time?

Maria had spent most of her life working at several jobs, whilst raising her kids as a single mother. Eventually she bought her own business in a carpet cleaning franchise...



LAW AND JUSTICE
FOUNDATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES


University of
Western Sydney
Bringing knowledge to life

When Maria finally sold her business she was able to buy her own home and had enough money left over for an investment property that would pay her a solid weekly income, promising a carefree retirement.

Maria also continued to provide generous financial support to her two sons, Peter and Markus. She paid the school fees for all three of her grandchildren and for music lessons and additional tuition.

When Peter was made redundant last month, he approached Maria for some financial assistance with his family mortgage. When Maria had her solicitor draw up a loan agreement, Peter was furious - he said this was unnecessary, and that it just proved she cared more about Markus. He also said that her actions could render his daughter, Emily, homeless and is refusing to let Maria see her granddaughter. He has not refused Emily's school fees for next term.

Questions that Maria might ask:

Q. How can I diplomatically explain to Peter that, this needs to be a loan and not a gift?

A. Explain to Peter that your ability to assist depends on being able to carefully manage your financial assets.

Draw up with your solicitor a loan agreement incorporating a repayment plan that Peter can manage, and explain to Peter that his and Emily's future financial security also depends on this.

Q. Should I insist on a written agreement?

A. Yes. A written agreement is essential, as it will outline:

- how the money is to be repaid,
- when it is to be repaid, and
- whether any interest is to be paid.

A written agreement - signed by both of you and witnessed - will establish that the money you have given Peter is a loan, not a gift, an important point if there are any disagreements in the future.

Q. If a problem occurs and Peter does not repay the money, what can I do?

A. A loan agreement would enable you initiate formal negotiations to reschedule any outstanding repayments, or undertake legal action in the event that disagreements occur, or should Peter and his wife separate.

If this situation arises it is important that you seek legal advice as soon as possible, since there is a limitation period within which you would be entitled to begin legal proceedings.

Q. How will this loan impact on the distribution of my estate upon my death?

A. Having a loan agreement in place, specifying that the debt owed to you by Peter is to be repaid immediately upon your death will ensure that the loan will not impact upon the distribution of your estate.

Q. What other arrangements can I make in case Peter is not in a position to repay the loan at the time of my death?

A. It is important that your will outlines all aspects of your estate, including any loan agreement in place with Peter.

Your will could stipulate that any debt still outstanding by Peter under the loan agreement at the time of your death should be offset from Peter's share in the distribution of your estate. It is very important that you seek legal advice in the drawing up of your will to minimize any problems that could arise when your estate is distributed.

Making Savings



Let's talk about Energy Poverty

Energy poverty is something people experience when they have inadequate access to a supply of energy. Energy poverty affects people's day-to-day lives, impacting on their health and wellbeing. Four short video clips created by PIAC's Energy + Water Consumers' Advocacy Program (EWCAP) and posted online this week focus attention on energy poverty. You can access the clips at <http://www.piac.asn.au/energy-poverty>

The clips include conversations with: Kevin, an energy consumer; Dr Lynne Chester, an energy researcher from the University of Sydney, and Dr Alan Morris, a sociologist from the University of NSW.

A short panel discussion on Energy Poverty is also included.

If energy poverty is something that you have experienced or feel strongly about, PIAC invites you to leave a comment on the website listed above. EWCAP's policy team will use your feedback to advocate for affordable and accessible energy for energy consumers across NSW.

The Energy Poverty web page also includes a link to information about support that is available for people who are struggling to pay their energy bills.

Carolyn Hodge
Policy Officer Energy & Water
Consumer Advocacy Program
Public Interest Advocacy Centre Ltd
Phone: (02) 8898 6520

December 2010 - *OWN Matters*

Free Help to Cut Power Bills

The NSW Government is introducing a free Home Power Savings Program which could save eligible households up to 20% off their power use.

Households who take part in the program will get a free home power assessment by an energy expert, a Power Savings Kit and a personal Power Savings Action Plan.

The Power Savings Kit includes an 'eco switch' to turn off stand-by power, 4 energy efficient light bulbs, low flow showerhead, shower timer, tap aerator, draught-proofing strips and door snake.

Eligible households include: NSW residents (both renters and owner occupiers) who are energy utility hardship customers or hold a Centrelink Pensioner, Low Income Health Care or Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner or Repatriation Health Care (Gold or White) card.

The program is open to all eligible households by calling 1300 662 416:

Visit: www.savepower.nsw.gov.au

About Active Travel

Active travel is to walk, cycle and use public transport, rather than driving a car. You can be more active in your daily life! Saving money, keeping healthy and cheerful!

Council on the Ageing (COTA (NSW) has just published a new leaflet on active travel.

The leaflet describes the benefits of active travel and specific tips on how things work, e.g. using PrePay tickets and the Pensioner Excursion Ticket, and the NSW Photo Card instead of a drivers licence, plus information about car sharing and cycling.

COTA (NSW) has also made submissions to Staysafe, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Road Safety about making conditions safer for older people to walk and cycle; these submissions are on our website. We are also delighted by the recent initiative, called *Transforming Sydney*, an agreement between the NSW Government and the City of Sydney that values the urban space for walking, cycling and getting around by public transport.

Want to know more?

Contact Chloë Mason from COTA (NSW) on (02) 9286 3860 or chloe.mason@cotansw.com.au

Simple home remedy for arthritis in the hands and wrist

My mother suffered from arthritis for many years and I realised I would probably inherit the condition. So 25 years ago I stopped eating meat and chicken and managed to stave it off until now, when I started to experience sharp pains in the wrist and fingers of my right hand. This is what my doctor advised me to do:

Put ordinary cooking oil on your fingers, hand and wrist, pull on a rubber glove (make sure it's long enough to cover the wrist) and soak your hand in a jug of hot water, as hot as you can stand it.

I watch T.V. or read and soak my hand for about 20 minutes, adding hot water as it cools. It works! It seems to help for a couple of weeks, but you can do it as often as you need to. I keep a rubber glove, a recycled plastic container and a little brush handy and paint the oil on. That way it's easier to make sure it covers the whole hand and wrist.

Pat Zinn

Lest We Forget

Memory Loss is a Funny Thing

Lunch with Dorothy Cora at the Sutherland Tradies was a welcome catch up after her tour abroad, for more than one reason! I mentioned my disgust at my short term memory loss. She asked if I thought it had worsened. I said yes, emphatically.

Then she told me, somewhat reluctantly, that she had heard that OWN NSW had received *three* consecutive copies of my 'thank you article' about my 90th birthday bash. I was bewildered at first and then remembered I had run off three copies – one for OWN Sutherland's newsletter, one for OWN Matters and one for the Tradies stalwarts, Graham Hill and Bob Sharkey, whose support has been so crucial for Sutherland OWN. I'd thanked the latter only in *OWN Matters*, which they do not subscribe to.

I am so grateful to Dorothy for asking that question about my memory loss and telling me about the three copies going to OWN. Otherwise I would not have corrected the oversight and sent thanks to the proper groups.

I accept short-term memory loss is a reality and enjoy moments we have at Big Sister when sharpening memories through quiz questions and shows.

But if friends don't remind us when they notice something wrong, we would all lose!

Don't you forget it!

Noreen Hewett

Remembered or Unremembered

A few weeks ago, in Mexico, many celebrated the Night of the Dead, as they do each year. They had been to the cemeteries and tidied and decorated the graves of their relatives. Then they took them food and drink to spend the night, celebrate with them and remember them. They remember their dead.

Very few of us ordinary folk are remembered after we die. Some people might be remembered for out of the ordinary deeds or ideas, whether great or gross. But most are forgotten, sometimes, sad to say, even by ourselves. There are those of us who achieve great deeds as part of a group and our names will be unknown and our deeds might not be noticed, but our achievements could be celebrated. Margaret Mead said:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

We now have the Greenway, a walking /cycle track, but even more, a wildlife corridor, connecting Iron Cove to Cook's River. In the inner city it has become difficult for small birds to survive and breed. A group of dedicated volunteers from the Inner West Environment Group has worked for 10 years on landcare projects, clearing weeds

and planting indigenous plants, to achieve their vision of the wildlife corridor. The work is not finished because this is an ongoing process. Some of the small birds are already increasing in number and variety in the area. A colony of Long-Nosed Bandicoots was discovered along the Greenway. The four local councils are now also involved with the project. The names of those in IWEG won't be remembered but they will have achieved their vision and wildlife will be able to move along the corridor (and I don't just mean the cyclists).

Last month, with a group of friends, I walked part of Wollie Creek Valley. This is the last piece of remnant bushland in the inner-west and a group of people have been trying to have it declared National Park. But for many years they have worked long and hard, clearing it of weeds, germinating local seed, planting indigenous plants, making a walking path, guiding people and explaining what they have tried to achieve. They know that there are some areas they won't restore in their lifetime but what they have achieved, unnoticed and unheralded is incredible. They record the creatures they hadn't seen there before: fish, frogs, reptiles, insects, birds and mammals. No one will remember the volunteers, but they will have saved a small stretch of bushland, and the creatures that live there.

Any weekend you will see the locals at Camperdown Memorial Park, enjoying the only patch of green, with their picnics and BBQs. Very few will be aware of what lies beneath the grass. In 1848 the main Church of England cemetery was established here but was considered full, and closed, eighteen years later, after between 16,000 and 18,000 bodies were buried in recorded, pauper and clandestine graves. 100 years later the council decided to resume three quarters of the very neglected cemetery. Headstones were placed wherever they could fit in the reduced space or against the wall built to separate park and cemetery. They didn't have to worry about the pauper graves. Pauper graves often had many people buried on top of each other and such graves were prohibited from having headstones.

Now the graves have disappeared, the names have gone from the headstones, and those buried are long forgotten. The name which might be known is Macleay because of the Macleay Museum in Sydney University. This museum was built to house the Macleay collection which includes 20,000 animal species and half a million insect species. Alexander Macleay, William Sharpe Macleay and John William Macleay, who built the original collection, are not really remembered.

I myself like the plaque in the cemetery which reads:

In memory of the many humble, undistinguished, unknown, unremembered folk buried in this cemetery, whose names are not written in the book of history but are written in the book of life.

Lorraine Inglis

OWN NSW Theatre Group



Ho Ho Ho it's that time of year and in December the Theatre Group is giving Christmas cheer at the Doll Collectors Christmas party and also a charity performance for people who live in Boarding Houses at the Burwood RSL.

We are also performing at the Campbelltown Domestic Violence Conference, so it's a perfect balance for the season where happiness and sadness abound, depending on one's circumstances.

In October we performed the *You're Never Too Old Show*, at two seminar/forums for Mental Health Week and were reminded of the issues facing older people and the good work of mental health professionals. We performed for 110 nurses at the Riverglenn Unit at Greenwich Hospital and a similar number of various categories of workers at the Northern Sydney Education Centre at North Ryde. So the message of positive ageing from our group is a strong and very vital one and is really being taken on board by those who care for older people who may be struggling with depression and other illnesses.

We performed our *Don't Knock Your Granny* show at a conference at the Gilroy Village at Campbelltown for Pastoral Care Workers, where the feedback from Denise, one of our members, was that the Care Workers found it very valuable and will incorporate the messages into their practice. Following our show at Riverglenn, we were asked to return there for another conference in November and that busy month also saw us performing at the Centre for Ageing in Woollahra. Phew!

On the being 'entertained' side of life, several of us went to a show *For the Love of Mic* at the Seymour Centre (mic incidentally, is short for microphone) directed by our one-time and often returning director, Joanne Cahill. It was great fun, with several incredibly talented performers singing original songs and memorable songs from composers like Sondheim and Lloyd Webber. Joanne did a very funny number on the ups and downs of living in The Shire, where she resides. We look forward to another performance and we're also looking forward to our Christmas lunch at Balzac

Restaurant in Randwick, which has been organised by Brigid, an early supporter of this renowned eating place. Bells and whistles will definitely feature on the menu. We will be doing Kris Kringle and here is a truly awful Kris Kringle joke.

What do you get when Santa comes down your chimney when the fire is alight?

Da dum – a krisp kringle (obviously a Northern hemisphere joke)

So after such corn, what can the Theatre Group say except to wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas and we'll be back for our first planning and celebration meeting in the Year of the Rabbit at the Mott Hall on Tuesday, 18 January.

But before we go, our very talented and esteemed pianist Rhona has indicated that we need to start looking around for a new pianist in 2011. Please see the separate advertisement on page 5 of this issue.

Rita Tratt

Note: 14 Dec final rehearsal for 2010. Resuming 25 January 2011.

Centre Stage

by Dorothy Cora

\$15.00 plus \$7

Available from Older Women's Network NSW

Ph (02) 9247 7046

admin@ownnsw.org.au

Published in 2009 by the

Older Women's Network NSW

with financial support from the

City of Sydney

Letters to the Editor



Makeover

Congratulations on the bright, bold, new format of the newsletter.

Nothing like a makeover to brighten up your day. The cover is an invitation to dive right in and devour the contents.

I think the articles on legal and financial considerations for older women are brilliant, well presented and in 'user-friendly' language.

If Louise doesn't read this section before making any commitment (financial or otherwise) to John, she's headed for trouble! I wish I could see John's face when she hits him with the fact that she is going to seek legal advice before changing any of her circumstances.

Helen Young and Nancy Brown are so right. Lucy Porter is indeed one fantastic older woman, remaining her bright and optimistic self while coping with health problems and the difficulties of bringing up her young grand-children. Onya Lucy, you have my admiration and best wishes.

Thanks again for the new-look newsletter and its interesting content.

Enid Leighton

I love Lucy too

Let me add my voice to Nancy Brown and Helen Young's admiration for Lucy Porter.

Lucy, you have a heart as big as an ocean liner and knowing you is one of the best things that has happened to me since joining OWN and the Aboriginal Support Circle. You are never too busy to spread your love far and wide and make things happen in your community and surrounds, whether it's the La Perouse primary school, the Two Women Dreaming Group, the Kool Kids Club and your own beautiful grandchildren who are finding love, peace and security with you.

The publication of our book *Steppin' Out and Speakin' Up* was your brainchild and you inspired the rest of us to make it happen.

Lucy, I love you dearly. I wish you happiness, good health, retaining your wonderful sense of humour and the strength to continue overcoming obstacles.

Pat Zinn

Congratulations

May I offer you and the *OWNMatters* team congratulations on the handsome new layout of the newsletter, not to mention the attractive use of colour! It is a tribute to all who have laboured hard to make it happen.

Kind regards

Bev Cameron

Outstanding!

I just wanted to thank you for an outstanding layout of last month's magazine with your effective use of colour. Onya!

Cheers, Pat Zinn

Need to Expand!

I much enjoy, appreciate and look forward to the regular *OWNMatters*. Informative and moving, often challenging. The last issue was totally new to me and others. I believe it needs wider cover and support, not to mention public awareness and discussion – good wishes

Norah Huppert



Pauline's Protest

An article discussing the merits of erecting a new war memorial in Canberra, by Dr Sue Wareham and Brett Odgers, had me agreeing wholeheartedly that, with an estimated \$21 million price tag, that money could be better utilised by promoting a culture of peace.

If we truly believe that never again can we allow the level of death, sacrifice and horror experienced in the two World Wars to ever happen again, then why not celebrate some of humanity's greatest positive achievements? This could be in the form of monuments, gardens and public spaces that inspire us to be more loving, sharing and compassionate family members, neighbours, colleagues, friends - human beings.

To my mind this would be a fitting mark of respect to those who have died in wars and invite us to create a more honourable future. After all, that is what they were fighting for.

Pauline Marshall

Some thoughts on marriage

A controversy is on about Gay Marriage, yet to me the custom of marriage is as out-dated as the last Century.

Did you know that Mendelssohn composed the Wedding March? As kids we sang a long time ago "Here comes the bride, fair fat and wide, see how she wobbles from side to side". Too often ceremony still dictates she is to be 'given away' by one man to another, exchanged like some bag of goods.

Is it any wonder the bride is almost always late for the occasion? Then we're expected to spring up, craning our necks to view the wedding dress and veil - which now days costs a fortune! How much better it would have been to forgo this nonsense and spend this as a deposit on a house?

Enid Harrison

What a Team!

I just wanted to send a huge thanks to the team at OWN that have kept me connected: our faithful and hardworking OWN Sydney, and OWN NSW Management Teams, all the brilliant volunteers that help to keep the office humming along - I miss sharing that fun with you, to our world-class editorial team who bring us this fabulous newsletter each month; and of course to Kris and Beth who keep us working years past our retirement age, and loving every day of it! I doff my cap to you all, and raise a glass to you to mark another brilliant year. I'm proud to be part of this organisation.

Peg Hewett



No Good Deeds Day

I keep Friday as my No Good Deeds Day.

For a start, I don't go to meetings, at least not to committee meetings or such. I'm not supposed to do any work. I don't even read or send emails about such things on Fridays. I sometimes go to gatherings like Politics in the Pub, but that's because I enjoy myself.

I don't even go to gym, even though I enjoy gym, but it is hard work. I try to avoid housework, gardening and shopping, unless its shopping for something that gives me a lift. I have been known to cook, but only if its essential. I try to have no appointments, no dentists, or doctors, or other invasive gigs on Fridays. I avoid seeing an accountant or tradesman or other expensive person. I don't go to events that are worthy but boring.

Friday is meant to be my day to use as I like. I thought that when I retired, there would be lots of days like this, but it isn't so. So I leave Friday as the day in the week when I do only things I enjoy. This doesn't mean I do nothing all day Friday, because I would be bored ... I might change my library books, because I enjoy reading. I might fiddle around

with my hobbies like bromeliads or jewellery making or drumming. I might have my hair cut or go walking or sit down to write.

So how do you get a No Good Deeds Day? Choose a weekday on which you currently have no responsibilities, no meetings, no child-minding, no regular appointments. If you don't have a free day, move things. Mark it in your diary for the next few months as NGDD. You might need to organise other days for washing or housework (if you enjoy tidying your cupboards or polishing your silver you can do it on your NGDD, even though it's work. Whatever gives you pleasure)! Cook a meal that you can microzap, but don't forget this is the day, when you can eat out or have a take-away, because this is your soul day.

Now decide what you want to do and plan for this. Go to the library, make an appointment for your next haircut, ring a friend about lunch, find someone who will go to Sculptures By the Sea, get out that hobby you haven't had time for. Keep keeping that day for yourself. If something comes up that gives you no joy, do it on another day. Stick to it. You can say to anyone, "I can't make it that day." You can say: "I'm busy on ..." What could be more important than a Good For My Soul Day?

Lorraine Inglis



Our OWN Stories

Coffee break

One of my favourite TV programs is *The Gruen Transfer*, where a bunch of quirky advertising people try to out-do each other with ads selling the impossible ... like flogging ice cubes to Eskimos. It takes me back over 50 years to when I was in advertising, and indeed nothing seemed impossible in those days either.

Eric Hawkins was our boss ... a small man with bright brown eyes, who drove an enormous and very vulgar Cadillac. Eric had a genius for employing crazies, and in those days I seemed to fit comfortably into that scene.

I was employed as a copywriter, working with a young Account Executive called Doug Evans. We handled the agency's food accounts ... Gibsons Tea and Coffee (what happened to them, I wonder), Cottee's jellies and drinks, Peak Freans biscuits and Pecks Paste are a few I remember. Every day was a laughter fest in Doug's office while we dreamed up ways to promote our products. Most of them were ridiculous, if not downright dangerous, but Uncle, the agency's accountant, kept telling us that the ideas that did work were making lots of money, so we went on laughing.

It's a wonder Gibsons weren't sued over one of our promotions. We figured that what got people hooked on coffee was the smell ... the aromas from a coffee shop are very persuasive ... so we wrote a letter to city businessmen praising the virtues of coffee as a 'pick-me-up' – and Gibson's Coffee in particular – and I then tipped a good handful of coffee grounds into each envelope before sealing it. Our theory was that when the envelope was opened, the recipient's office would be filled with the enticing aroma of our product and Gibson's coffee would gain a foothold in that establishment.

What really happened, of course, was that when some poor secretary opened this piece of mail, the coffee cascaded over her desk and everything on it, and the aroma was much less compelling than the overpowering urge to kill someone.

Fortunately, Gibson's advertising manager had OK'd the crazy scheme and he had to field the testy telephone calls. He forgave us, but only after we'd given him a long and vinous lunch.

It was when television started in Australia that the wackiness really started. But that's another story.

Helen Young

Dancing with Life

Life has been challenging for me lately. In subdued mood, I trudged up Oxford Street to the National Art School [formerly East Sydney Tech] where this year's Postgraduate Exhibition was on display. At least the sunny morning and the lively city atmosphere provided welcome distractions from my more sober thoughts.

Turning into Foley Street and walking beside the sandstone wall of the NAS, I heard a voice, heavy with disgust, saying 'Isn't that awful!' Surprised, I saw a woman behind me pointing to a small object resting on a projecting wall ledge. Uncertain whether I felt bemused or amused, I noticed it was a life-size replica of a pistol but its barrel was in the shape of an erect penis. Remaining silent, I watched her try to remove the object. 'Oh, no! It's stuck!' she sighed. 'Why do people do these things!'

'Are you a local?' I enquired, intrigued by her concern for the 'tone' of Taylor Square.

By now, earlier, morose musings had begun to fade, I walked with the woman, allowing her unexpected topic of conversation to prepare me for other surprises the morning might hold.

Joining the group of OWN's Lost Ladies sipping coffee and commiserating with each other over the ravages of ageing, I felt I was back in more familiar territory. But, in another moment, our guide had joined us. With him we entered a world of astonishing contemporary artwork, learning about the artists, their creativity and technical expertise and the rationale for the exhibition's more formal presentation.

Subtle colour toned works gave way to stark black and white forms. Intriguing pottery, complex abstract designs etched on metal and delicately crafted *objets d'art* inside the hall led us on to a graceful, life-sized horse of intricately wrought iron rods and to other sculptures outside. Moving on, we reached what was for me the most memorable exhibit. In a mirror-walled corner dangled a large mobile, its colourful and alluringly shaped acrylic pendants adorned with black human hair. It possessed that tantalising quality that both shocks the observer with its confronting eroticism yet entices her/him to touch its seductive and intimately familiar protuberances.

Satiated with so much fascinating stimulation, we knew we could absorb no more and went our separate ways homeward. As I again approached Taylor Square, I noticed a new blue-tiled wall built alongside the public toilet which has long stood beside the Criminal Courts. On the tiles were permanently inscribed personal messages, some sad, some hopeful, others puzzling, put there by members of the Sydney gay and lesbian community. As I stood

Remarkable Women

deciphering the messages, a young woman joined me and began an enthusiastic and detailed account of the building of the new wall. I listened, warmed and inspired that Sydney society is becoming so much more positive and supportive of its gay and lesbian members.

Setting off again, engrossed in new thoughts, I realised all earlier personal concerns had dissipated. I could only surmise that when the going gets tough, if we can keep going, we may be surprised by life's spontaneous dance and delighted by its mysterious embrace.

Bev Cameron

'Defying the Gatekeeper One Girl's True Story of Resistance and Rebellion'

Margaret Spivey printed by Jo Jo Publishing Victoria

Unmatched in its expose of an extraordinary journey, this remarkable true story of bravado celebrates the fortitude of a Forgotten Australian determined to transcend the legacy of an abusive child welfare institutional system.

Margaret Spivey was born into chaos. As an infant she knew poverty, she knew violence, she had experienced neglect, then before her second birthday she was to experience the worse kind of terror, she was to find herself utterly alone.

Margaret Mickey Spivey stood before the children's court charged with 'No Visible means of Support' her mother was given a choice 'stay with me and dump your kids or remain behind with your brats', she chose to stay with Russell, her violent partner.

Margaret was separated from her only family, her two sisters. She was allocated with the wardship number 77318 and quickly sent off to an already overcrowded children's home.

With a 'Give it to me, its mine' attitude, Margaret was determined she would not become another insignificant and forgotten entity. She would survive and she would be noticed.

Margaret became identified as a troublemaker, a problem child and in place of the security and understanding she craved, she was shunted from one home to the next, referred to as a 'Psychiatric Case' and in an attempt to force her into conformity she was heavily medicated.

Defying the Gatekeeper gives an honest account of the seemingly entrapment of State Wardship, its legacy upon the life of one of its captives, the trauma as seen through the eyes of the child who survived it, including her yearning for death as an escape from her intolerable

existence. It speaks to a life of alcoholism, homelessness and prostitution. But amongst all its tragedy it is a fervent story of hope. A lighthouse for anyone despairing of ever experiencing a meaningful and contented existence.

Defying the Gatekeeper heralds the power of resilience, resistance and rebellion. A publication that speaks to the heart of all of life's possibilities, all its splendours and encapsulates the extraordinary power of transcendence.

A Life in the Day: Alice Herz-Sommer

The 104-year-old pianist survived two years in Theresienstadt concentration camp in what is now the Czech Republic. Her son, Raphael, also survived, but died in 2001. Today Alice lives alone in north London

I wake up at 8am. This is also the time Magda arrives. She's a Polish lady who comes for an hour every morning. Sometimes I get dizzy when I'm getting up, so she's there to help me wash and dress. I have a wardrobe full of clothes, so I never need to buy anything new. Today I'm wearing a knee-length skirt and matching cardigan that my twin sister, Mizzi, knitted me. Sadly, she died 30 years ago. In the winter, I wear woollen tights and Fila black trainers. They're warm and good when it rains.

For breakfast I have a cup of hot water and two pieces of white toast with feta cheese and some fruit - a banana, an apple or a pear. I never use butter or margarine, I haven't drunk tea or coffee for over 40 years and I don't take any kind of vitamins. At 9am I go for my first walk, maybe up to our local high street or around my block. Until I was 97, I swam 20 lengths a day, but now walking is better for me. My doctor says he's never seen such great calf muscles.

When I come back I will then sit at my piano until 1. I live in a studio flat in a small block and I know some of my neighbours will be thinking: "Ah, its 10 o'clock! Now Alice starts!" For the first hour I will work on a piece from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier. My two index fingers bend in, so they often do what they want, not what I want. But I still play. It requires concentration and discipline. After that I rest and then play pieces from my own repertoire. Music is my religion.

I've been playing the piano since I was a small child. My twin sister and I were the youngest of five children and we all grew up in Prague when it was still part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Franz Kafka was a friend, and my mother's parents knew Gustav Mahler's family - she played with him as a child. She'd often speak about him and still now when I listen to Mahler I feel my mother is

Remarkable Women

sitting here next to me. We were all musical and by the age of ten I was playing concertos. I also went on to be taught by one of Liszt's pupils.

I stop for lunch at 1pm. Once a week, Magda does my shopping. For years I've been going to the same butcher. He chops up enough chicken portions for a week, and I put them all into a big pot, followed by loads of vegetables – carrots, potatoes, onions, leeks. It is a wonderful meal and I have it every day, with some salad or fruit.

I remember after the first world war there was nothing to eat. That was a terrible war. Nobody came back. Then inflation was so high that money had no value. I believe the consequence of that war was Hitler.

In the 1930s my two sisters moved to Palestine. They needed money to do that and my mother sold her house. My father had died in 1930 and I didn't want to leave her on her own, so I stayed behind. I'd also got married and in 1937 I gave birth to a boy, Raphael. Then, in the summer of 1942, my mother was issued with a deportation order. She was 72, and ill. I went with her to the assembly point and stayed until the very last moment. To this day I do not know where she went. It was the lowest point in my life. Nobody could help me get over that grief.

Then one day I heard an inner voice. It said the only person who could help was me. The following day I began practising Chopin's 24 Etudes – one of the most difficult pieces ever written. I worked on it every single day. The next year the Nazis came for us, too. We were taken to Theresienstadt. Twelve months later my husband, Leopold, was sent to Auschwitz, then Dachau. I never saw him again. At the camp, the officers allowed me to play for my fellow prisoners, and surrounded by the inhumanity of man, it was this that gave me the will to live... Music was my food.

Of the 15,000 children in our camp, Raphael was one of only 130 to survive. He was seven. The Russians liberated us, but living under communism made us afraid of our friends, our neighbours, and, a year later, we emigrated to Israel – we were lucky to get out. I taught music and Raphael became a wonderful cellist. I was there for 37 years, and when he moved to London, I came here too. I was 83. He died in 2001. A beautiful painting of him hangs in the centre of my flat.

In the afternoon I go for another walk, and at 3.30pm my friends visit me. I love that and I love young people. I identify with them absolutely. I'm the only one of my own siblings still alive, but I have two grandchildren, David and Ariel, and a daughter-in-law, Genevieve. In the evening I'll have more soup and salad and maybe watch some TV.

I love *University Challenge* and *Mastermind*, and all nature programmes. On Fridays I always listen to *Any Questions?* – I still appreciate the idea of people being able to say whatever they want.

Before I go to sleep, I like to read. I love biographies of the great composers, philosophers and writers. I always want to know what they thought about all the big questions in life. If you're in a good state, old age can be the most beautiful time in your life – it's only then that you are aware how extraordinary it all is.

I've always been an optimist and I believe laughter is a wonderful thing. Every night, when I go to sleep, I think I've had another wonderful day and tomorrow I will repeat it all over again.

A Garden of Eden in Hell: The Life of Alice Herz-Sommer, by Melissa Müller and Reinhard Piechocki (Macmillan)

Contributed by Daphne Lera

The Little Lady in Trousers

Known as The Little Lady in Trousers, Mary Walker was the first qualified surgeon in the American army during the Civil War. A campaigner for women's rights, suffrage and female dress reform – she wore men's clothing, including a top hat, exclusively for most of her life. This caused great controversy, ridicule and physical assault on a regular basis.

Born in 1833, the second eldest of six, Mary decided early on to be a Doctor. She taught school in her late teens and applied to many medical schools, which all rejected her. She railed against this injustice. In 1848 she joined the suffragettes and the Bloomer society (named after Amelia Bloomer) for dress reform. It was considered indecent that their dresses ended at the knee, so baggy longjohns (named after Mrs C. Longjohn) were added. They wanted to ride the new bicycles and play tennis.

In 1854 Mary was accepted at Syracuse Medical School at a huge rate for the time of \$55 per term, three terms a year for five years. She studied anatomy, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology and graduated in 1856 – one of a handful of women doctors in a population of 30 million.

When she married Dr Albert Miller, the words honour and obey were deleted from the service, and she refused to take his name. Their joint practice in Rome Georgia failed after two years, as did the marriage, because the locals would not accept her. She finally divorced in 1868 and was known as 'that vile creature' by other women, who thought she demeaned womanhood.

Remarkable Women

At the start of the Civil War in 1861 there were 17,000 troops and 130 surgeons; soon there were 500 regiment, and each needed a surgeon and assistant surgeon, but still Colonel Lawson – in charge at 81 and called ‘the silly old dodderer’ – rejected her and all female nurses and doctors. Mary appealed to the President, but was rejected. She joined as a volunteer in Washington and wore full military uniform. She was very hard working and the soldiers regarded her as a Florence Nightingale, but the medical staff detested her. The hospitals in Washington were crowded and hundreds of women visited looking for information about their husbands. Mary organised a Women’s Relief Organisation, holding concerts to raise money, and also badgered places for accommodation for homeless women.

By this time General Burnside was in charge, with 13,000 working in field hospitals but still women were refused until finally Mary’s colleagues came to her support. She entered no-man’s-land to treat civilians and stole government stores to help them. She was captured by southern forces, but exchanged after five months.

In 1865 Lincoln recommended Walker for the Congressional Medal of Honour and this was granted by his successor, Andrew Johnston. For the next 35 years she fought to get a pension for the nurses who had served in the Civil War; after she addressed Congress in 1900 the pension was awarded.

Mary Walker was an arch non-conformist who made the prim folk of her time uncomfortable. People started to distance themselves from her discussions of pre-marital sex, birth control, divorce, abortion and temperance reform. When she got a job in a government office she was dismissed 10 months later for sexual harassment. Yet she was amazingly perceptive – 130 years ahead of her time she insisted passive smoking affected children; at nearly 80 she toured in support of vaccination.

In 1917 the Army Review Board struck Mary Walker off the list for the Congressional Medal of Honour, but she never gave it back. There was no real need to – President Jimmy Carter restored it to her posthumously in 1977.

Contributed by Annette Butterfield, Lost Ladies

Love in Action

Inside the vast supermarket my devoted spouse(DS) and I, having picked up everything we needed, strolled towards the one available check-out. Some steps behind him, I reached him as he started carefully unloading our shopping onto the conveyor.

Without pausing to wonder why he was placing the items down so hesitantly, I began to help him with my usual

enthusiasm but he cautioned me tacitly and nodded in the direction of the customer ahead of us. I stopped to observe an elderly woman of slight build, somewhat stooped and shaking slightly from some nervous disorder. She had not unloaded her trolley at the beginning of the conveyor, but was instead handing her shopping, item by item and very slowly, directly into the hands of the check-out operator. I was dismayed, we were in for a long wait. The customer waiting behind us, assessing the situation, turned and wheeled her trolley away.

Should we follow suit? I gazed at the elderly customer more intently. Her thinning hair was bleached a tired blonde, she wore bright lipstick and was dressed in blue denim jeans and jacket with shirt-tail fashionably dangling below her jacket hemline. She became for me a more interesting figure for conjecture. Much of the shopping in her trolley consisted of pet food. Was she, like so many older women, living alone, lonely and dependent on the affection of her pets for a sense of significance and security? My impatience began to dissipate.

Minutes passed. All her shopping was packed. Again we waited while, with trembling fingers, she extracted the necessary notes jerkily from her wallet and handed them to the check-out operator. DS and I returned to unloading our goods onto the conveyor.

At that moment, I heard the check-out operator ask her aged customer if she wanted her goods sent by home delivery. The elderly woman struggled to comprehend what the operator was talking about. Without doubt, the idea was new to her. A difficult and disjointed conversation between the two women ensued as the cashier had a strong foreign accent and the older woman, already hindered by her own difficulties, worked hard to follow her. It took several attempts for the cashier to get the woman’s details correctly, but finally the customer departed, leaving the cashier to spend a few more moments applying labels to the shopping bags.

Finally, she straightened up and smiled apologetically. ‘I’m sorry you’ve had such a long wait,’ she said, probably waiting for some curt remark from us. But, by this point, my perspective had changed from impatience and irritation to one of respect for her patient attention to the welfare of a very needy person.

‘That’s alright,’ I said. ‘I can only admire the care you give your customers.’ And I meant it. In the more usual rush and bustle of our contemporary world, such kindness is uncommon. DS and I left the supermarket in renewed good spirits, reflecting on our vicarious experience of neighbourly love in action. Clearly, some of its power had touched us.

Bev Cameron

Politics: from world to OWN backyard

AFTINET

The Australian Government is involved in negotiations for a Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) with the US, Chile, Peru, Brunei, Singapore, New Zealand and Vietnam to develop a multilateral agreement based on the bilateral agreements the US has with four of these countries. This will resurrect all of the issues that were debated in the Australia/US Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA).

Concerns about how this might affect us in Australia led to the formation of an organisation known as AFTINET (Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network Ltd). It is a network of unions, churches, environment, health, and other community groups which supports fair trade based on human rights, labour rights and environmental sustainability and which supports fair trading relationships with all countries.

Over 30 organisations have asked the government to adopt the following principles in the TPPA negotiations:

- No further changes to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme which would increase wholesale prices and reduce affordable access to medicines.
- No Investor-State dispute process which would give special rights to international corporations to sue governments for damages.
- Full rights to regulate labelling of genetically engineered food and to regulate GE crops, including those already existing.
- No further weakening of the Australian Government power to regulate audio/visual media for Australian content purposes.
- Retention of the Foreign Investment Board and of its powers to review foreign investment in the public interest.
- No weakening of quarantine regulations
- No reduction in the ability to have local content requirements for government purchasing and industry policies that support local employment.
- Strong labour clauses that require signatories to enforce the International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards in the ILO convention, with trade penalties for non-compliance.
- Strong environmental clauses that require all signatories to meet all applicable international environmental standards including those contained within UN environmental agreements, with trade penalties for non-compliance.

Want to do anything? Send a message to Trade Minister Simon Crean to support these principles in the TPPA negotiations through the website www.aftinet.org.au

Cate Turner

From Clover Moore: re MILLERS POINT HOUSING

At my forum for Millers Point public housing tenants this week, I informed tenants that the Minister for Housing told me that the Government will proceed with sales of local public housing over my opposition and their protests. Tenants remain angry that their community will be broken up and are fearful that they will lose their homes.

The Government has already sold twenty properties, two more will be auctioned on 14 December and a further fourteen are slated for sale on long term leases.

At my further meeting with the Minister, I argued against the sales, and will continue to push the Government to value and retain public housing which is close to services, transport and jobs. I am very concerned that the Government may sell more homes, despite past promises that no more sales were planned.

The Minister claims that the Millers Point sales are necessary because these 170 year old homes do not meet the needs of most people on the housing waiting list, and cost too much to repair. The Minister said that the Government is “committed to maintaining a strong and vibrant public housing neighbourhood at Millers Point.”

According to the Minister, seven of thirteen currently vacant properties in Millers Point are being re-let and Housing NSW has not been able to let fifteen boarding house rooms. I asked him to use the vacant rooms to provide homes for key workers who need low cost housing. The large vacant properties should be used as boarding houses or short term housing for the many people who need a place to live.

The Minister says that Housing NSW has spent \$21 million on maintenance of Millers Point homes since 2000, and repairs continue with work to begin this financial year on properties in High Street, Windmill Street, Dalgety Street, Kent Street and Gloucester Street.

This is good news – many tenants have been waiting a long time for repairs.

* My petition opposing the sales www.clovermoore.com/main/page/2338.pdf

Clover Moore

Book Review

MACQUARIE from Colony to Country

Harry Dillon & Peter Butler

This biography, published in the Bicentennial year of Lachlan Macquarie's governorship of the colony of New South Wales, is a well documented, fascinating read.

Lachlan Macquarie was born in 1761, in poor circumstances, in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland. Fortunately, Lachlan's uncle, Murdoch Maclaine, assisted him financially with his education and prospects. Macquarie never forgot his uncle's generosity in "getting through the world from my earliest youth, with credit and honour". This experience may well have influenced Macquarie's attitude toward the emancipists (former convicts pardoned for good behaviour), when he became governor of the colony of New South Wales.

For many years Macquarie served as an officer in the British army. His first wife, Jane, whom he married in India in 1793, died there less than three years later. Macquarie married again, in 1807; this time to a distant cousin – Elizabeth (nee Campbell).

When Macquarie was appointed governor of New South Wales, he commanded the 73rd Highland Regiment. Ambitious, he hoped for a life peerage if his tenure was deemed successful. Sworn in on the first day of 1810, Macquarie was to retain his position for twelve years – the colony's longest serving governor. In 1813 he was promoted to Major General.

Prior to Macquarie's tenure, the colony was essentially a gaol to accommodate those convicted felons who weren't hanged. Under these circumstances the governor's authority was necessarily unquestioned. But by the time Macquarie arrived the population had grown, and the community included many free settlers and emancipists. Macquarie and Elizabeth contributed to the native-born population when their son, Lachlan junior, was born in 1814.

Macquarie appointed many emancipists to important positions. Free settlers, notably John Macarthur and the Reverend Samuel Marsden, complained to influential associates in England about the colony's arbitrary form of government. By this time, only one in three people were convicts. Emancipist, Francis Greenaway, a brilliant architect, appointed by Macquarie, designed numerous fine public buildings which would transform the colony from what was formerly a cluster of rude huts into a gracious township.

Exploration, encouraged by Macquarie, revealed vast pastoral potential and he founded many townships including Windsor, Richmond and Port Macquarie.

After three years Treasury, alarmed by "Macquarie's spending excesses," required him to economize. In 1817 the Secretary of State for the colonies wrote to the Home Secretary questioning whether the object for which the colonies were set up still applied. This foreshadowed a new Act of the British Parliament in 1823 which would undermine the positives of his administration. During Macquarie's tenure, he was effectively "Minister for Everything", although his only administrative experience had been military.

Lachlan Macquarie's governorship ended on 30 November 1821, following Royal Commissioner J.T. Bigge's report to the British Government. On receiving confirmation of his recall at the end of 1820, the Macquaries toured the various outposts under his command. They were touring the North Coast when Macquarie's successor, Lord Brisbane, arrived in Botany Bay.

Macquarie and family sailed for England on board the "The Surrey" on 15 February 1822. They were deeply affected by the sense of loss shown by the inhabitants of Botany Bay on their departure. Macquarie had first been accorded a formal farewell by the new governor, officers and other dignitaries of the colony. Then, the immense crowd of ordinary citizens that swarmed around the cove demonstrated their affection for him, "vessels flew their colours and the Dawes Point Battery saluted the old Viceroy for the last time."

Major General Lachlan Macquarie was retired on half-pay and never recovered from the blow to his self-esteem. He died on a visit to London on 1 July 1824.

Lachlan Macquarie's tombstone on the island of Mull refers to him as "The Father of Australia". I believe that his egalitarian attitude foreshadowed Australia's social inclusiveness.

June West

OWN LOST LADIES

1 December: 10am at Windmill St then at 11 at S.H.Ervin for Euan McCloud exhibition . \$8. AGAIN IF YOU WANT TO STAY FOR LUNCH WE NEED TO BOOK.

8 December: 11am at Windmill St for a guest speaker, then 12 Noon Christmas Party.

BRING PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE – OVEN AVAILABLE. BRING WRAPPED GIFT COST NO MORE THAN \$10 TO EXCHANGE.

15 December: 9.30 am Art Gallery of NSW for the "Entombed Warriors" last seen in Sydney 1983. Cost \$20. This is a special tour – no queue.

Annette Butterfield

Eat, Think, Move

Mario Salad

This month's recipe comes with a story.

Fifty years ago (can it be that long? oh dear!) I was a mad keen skier. Four of us had booked a small lodge in the Perisher Valley for a fortnight and traveled to Cooma by overnight train. From there we had planned to take a bus to Smiggins Holes and ski into the valley. But that was the year when huge snowfalls had made the road impassable from Sponar's Inn, about five miles downhill from Perisher, which left us with only one thing to do.

It was a long walk through the snow, but we trudged on cheerfully enough, with thoughts of a warm lodge awaiting us. Well the lodge was there, at last, but our troubles weren't over. It had been double-booked and four other tenants were already installed. It had started to snow again, we were dog tired and the three tenants at home weren't about to welcome us in. It looked like time for a St Bernard dog and brandy, when a figure appeared through the falling snow. He was singing, his name was Mario, he came from the mountains in the north of Italy, and he saved us.

Of course we must come in, he insisted. Nobody in the mountains turns away a traveller, especially in a snow storm. He quickly poured schnapps for us all, jollied up the others, and set about preparing dinner. We shared that small lodge; eight of us, for a fortnight and it was hilarious. We stayed in touch for years, but my lasting souvenir of that holiday in the mountains is the recipe for the warm salad this generous, hospitable man served that first night. I've been making it ever since ... the recipe has gone to friends around the world ... and of course it's called ...



MARIO SALAD

- 4 potatoes cut into chunks
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- Pepper
- ½ Chinese cabbage, very finely sliced
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- 1 heaped tsp caraway seeds

Prepare cabbage and parsley. Boil potatoes in well salted water until just cooked. While potatoes are cooking, mix garlic, oil and s & p, and line salad bowl with cabbage and parsley. Drain cooked potatoes and add to cabbage while still very hot, sprinkle with caraway, dress with garlicky oil mixture and toss well so that the hot potatoes wilt the cabbage. Serve immediately.

Don't even bother with this salad if you don't like caraway seeds. There isn't a substitute. There was no substitute for Mario, either.

Helen Young

Naplan tests 2011

If you have a relative who will be sitting the Naplan test next year, the writing task will be to write a persuasive text. The web site is:

http://www.naplan.edu.au/writing_2011

The web site supplies the marking criteria, an example (Books or TV), and a FAQs section. All students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sit the same test.

I would think that a persuasive text will be used for a couple of years.

Anne-Marie Kestle

Exercise at the Cross

Come and try out one of our weekly exercise classes at the Kings Cross Community Centre.

Mon: 2.00pm Creative Movement – \$3

Tues: 10.30am Stepping On 7 classes – \$15

Tues: 9.30am Tai-Chi Advanced – \$3

Tues: 10.30am Tai-Chi Intermediate – \$3

Thurs: 10 am Tai Chi Beginners – \$3

Thurs: 11.15am Gentle Yoga - **Free**

Fri: 10.30am Gentle Movement – Feldenkrais – \$3

Kings Cross Community and Information Centre Inc,
50-58 Macleay St Potts Point,

adjacent to Fitzroy Gardens, Tel: 9357 2164 or email
kxcc@bigpond.com

OWN Sydney Notices

WOW! Subscribe NOW!

Subscription to *OWN Matters* is \$22 per year, due every JULY 1!
Subscribe NOW for 6 months for \$11.

Want to join **OWN Sydney** at the same time? We can fix this up in the same way, if you tick this box and include just another \$5

Would you like to donate? \$.....

Payment method

I enclose a chq/money order for \$11 - covers to Jun30, 2011 made payable to OWNNSW **OR** Please debit the following credit card for \$11 (plus any donation)

Visa

Mastercard

Bankcard

Total amount:

Card no.

____/____/____/____

Exp. date __/__/__

Name on card (please print)

Signature

Address

State & Post Code

I need the large print version (on A3)

I'd love it on email

Email only - don't post

Email address:

Looking for a gift idea?

Please send the above subscription to:

Name:

Signature

Address

State & PC

With my best wishes!

Members and friends are welcome to attend all activities

Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am-11.45am every Wednesday

Held in Mott Hall, Argyle St., Millers Point.

10.15 - 10.45 Special End of Year Morning Tea Tai Chi & Last class for 2010, 15 Dec. Classes resume 19 January 2011.

Drumming

12.15 - 1.30pm Wednesdays, Mott Hall, Argyle St. Millers Point.

\$8 per session. Drums and gourds are provided. If you would like to drum please contact Lorraine: 9569 0051 Last class for 2010, 15 Dec. Drumming resumes 2 Feb 2011.

Lost Ladies

10.00am every Wednesday during school terms, exploring various locations or topics of interest. End of year party, please bring a plate of food to share and a wrapped gift, value up to \$10, to exchange. Guest Speaker at midday.

Contact Annette Butterfield: 9665 5369 email (changed) : abutterfield_852@hotmail.com

Film Discussion group

You are invited to join us on **Tuesday 14 December**, to see *Fair Game*. Recommended for viewing are: *The Messenger* and *Winter's Bone*. Please ring Yetty on **9665 2050** to check details.

OWN NSW Office Holiday Closure

The OWN NSW Office will be closed from 17 December 2010, and will reopen on Monday 17 January 2011. OWN NSW Management, staff and our volunteers thank you all for your energy, support and enthusiasm in delivering another spectacular year, and wish you as much fun as you can get, tempered with ample quantities of good friends, food, family and fine wine!

Book Club

13 December 12.30-2.30 pm at 87 Lower Fort Street. This month's book is: *The Well* by Elizabeth Jolley. Come at 12 and bring a sandwich for lunch at midday. Any questions, phone Anne Marie on 9622 0717. Note: Book to be discussed at the January 17 meeting is *The First Stone* by Helen Garner.

Aboriginal Support Circle

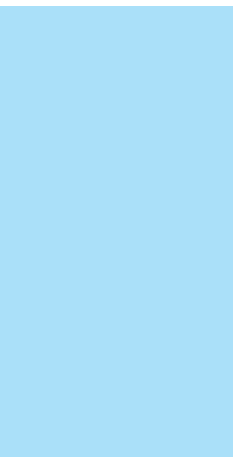
8 November 10.30 am Monday. End of year party. Please bring some party food to share. Confirm all details with Pat Zinn: 9389 1090 or email patzinn@hotmail.com

Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point

We meet at 10.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon *End of Party* at Birkenhead Café, 1st floor Birkenhead Shopping Complex. Contacts: Nora Huppert 9181 3918 and Bev Cameron 9957 5367. Please phone to find out about dates over the Dec-Jan period.

**IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:
Older Women's Network NSW Inc.
87 Lower Fort Street
Millers Point NSW 2000**

OWN Matters



**PRINT
POST
PP239337/00007**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**