



OWN MATTERS

Newsletter of the Older Women's Network NSW

Vol.8 No.3 – April 2011



Big Changes not \$mall Change

Lorraine Inglis explores the people's revolutions that are impacting on all of us, and Brigid Sen focusses on our OWN role in International Women's Day 2011.

see *We are Mobilising* and *Our Day* pages 3 and 13



Don't Miss Out!

The OWN NSW Theatre Group have invited YOU to join them at Mott Hall for their limited season tour of the Village People Concert - and to join them for the after party!

see *Make a Day of It!* page 5



Our Friends in Japan

Haruyuki, a doctor, was working in Ishinomaki, a small city right in the middle of the affected area, when the earthquake struck. He was busy at the time, operating on a stomach cancer patient...

see *Atsuko's Story* page 10



We Miss You, Liz

We pay tribute to Liz Ireland, our friend and drumming tutor at Sydney, Bankstown and Sutherland OWN.

see *Vale Liz Ireland* pages 16-17

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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 newsletter 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.

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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@ownnsw.org.au

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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.*

We Are Mobilising!



It will never be finished

Our unions fought hard for the eight-hour day, but that has been weasled away by many employers. Government legislated for some rights, such as maternity leave, but many employers have made their work-force casual, to limit the rights of the workers. Even with laws and unions to protect them, many workers do not have the same rights and conditions of employment. Our First Australians have undergone shocking treatment by our Federal government even though some laws passed should protect them.

Some of us were part of the enquiry into a Human Rights Bill but the government decided it was too hard, partly because of the opposition from some parts of the community. We won't get such a bill, until we have enough community support to make it an election issue. And even if we had a human rights bill, to get the community to understand the rights of others and to abide by them would be a struggle.



To get our rights we first have to elect to parliament members who will legislate to protect those rights. And then we have to insist on those rights all the time. Those rights for ourselves and others. This is an on-going struggle. A struggle with our elected representatives, and with our public services and with members of the community. It doesn't come to an end. If you are concerned with such issues, you will never be able to sit down and know that you've achieved those rights for everyone.

Many are involved in such struggles. They might be concerned about the rights of people in other countries, such as the rights of Palestinians under occupation. They might be concerned about the war in Afghanistan and the people suffering in a conflict that seems to go on and on. They might be concerned about the Intervention and our government spending money on systems which ignore the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They might be concerned with the homeless, and the tendency to ignore the statistically negligible.

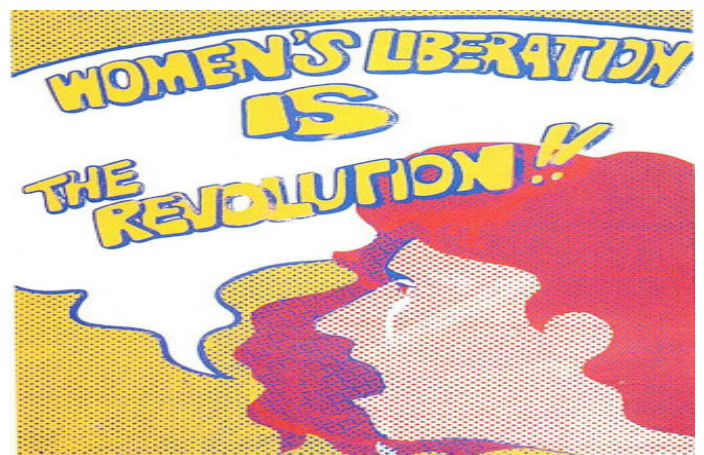
Right now many are concerned with our Federal Government's lack of support for an Australian citizen, Julian Assange. This lack of support and tendency to go along with the USA is not new. We have been there, with those Australian citizens who were held in Guantanamo. Many are concerned that the Federal Government lied to us about Wikileaks breaking the law and even being treasonous. Again, this is not new. We have been lied to before, for instance in the 'weapons of mass destruction' and 'throwing their children overboard'.

There are those on the cross-benches who are forcing changes. I hear there will be a law, before Julia faces re-election, that protects whistle blowers. But even after that law is passed, the struggle will be to prevent the black-listing of whistle blowers. Andrew Wilkie couldn't get a job in Tasmania after he spoke up about the lies that lead to our invasion of Iraq. That didn't stop the people electing him to parliament.

The internet is a problem to those in power all over the world. They worry about what is being said that they can't hear. On-line speakers vote, or join people power movements. Revolution is in the air, or on the net, or on the streets.

The struggle will never be finished.

Lorraine Inglis



Draft Constitution Special General Meeting

This meeting will be being held at OWN office on Thursday, 14 April, at 10.00 for 10.30.

We need delegates from each group, though only one vote is allowed by each OWN group. Could your group please let us know the name of your delegate. The delegate votes as instructed by their group.

On the day we need a quorum, at least half the number of possible voters, for the vote to take place. We have 18 groups, so we need at least 9 voting delegates. Then for the draft to be passed, at least 75% must be in favour. Although the new constitution will allow for postal voting/ teleconferencing, the old one did not, and the vote must take place according to the old constitution.

Please make sure that your group takes advantage of its democratic rights, registers its delegates, and sends them along to vote. We will provide lunch.

Lorraine Inglis

'Stop! I want to stop!' My voice was desperate. 'You can't stop on a freeway. You know that,' said Doug.

'I know. I know. But do you want your campervan upholstery ruined? I've got to go.'

'Hang on, it's only a couple of minutes to the Tuggerah turnoff. You'll be right, practise your pelvic floor exercises.'

There was silence for a while as I contracted my muscles, counted to ten and relaxed them. 'Oops'

'Here's the turn off,' cried Doug.

I carefully got out of the camper and then ran as fast as my 87-year-old legs would take me, and there was the sign for Ladies. Down the corridor I went and into the room. Oh no, a queue! and then I saw one open door. It's a miracle! Into the cubicle, down with my pants and I prepared to sit – down and down I went. Where was this damned seat? I finally got to a hard surface. At last!

Why was the toilet so low? I was in a very uncomfortable position with my knees up to my chin like a grasshopper – it was the children's! Almost at ground level! That explained the open door. I then turned my attention to pushing myself up. There was no handle to help me, so I tried pushing from the floor, from the walls, from my knees. No go! I was stuck! Should I shout? But how could anyone get in? I imagined a muscular man heaving his shoulder at the door as they do in TV, but he would land in my lap.

'One old lady squashed in the lavatory'. I sang that jingle to myself and then gave one more almighty push and I was on my feet, my legs wobbling, but oh! the relief was immense and I hugged everyone in the queue, telling them my story.

Back at the camper Doug was anxiously waiting. 'Crazy woman', he said, as he gave me a bear hug.

Joan Johns

Scams and Hoaxes

Some time ago I received a warning via the computer which sounded too fishy to be true, so I went online and discovered an informative site under the name of Hoax Slayer. It lists no fewer than 24 categories of scams and hoaxes, and includes the latest one circulating about mobile numbers being sold to telemarketing companies – all totally false. Check it out; it is really useful when you are uncertain of the veracity of a warning of any kind.

Brigid Sen



May Quarterly Meeting

We've been north and south and now we go west! Our May Quarterly meeting will take place at Blacktown, with Blacktown OWN group. We have been having the meetings on Thursdays, to fit in with our other meeting days but Blacktown don't have access to the hall on Thursdays, so the meeting will be on a day that suits our hosts, on Wednesday, 4 May at Rooty Hill Seniors Centre 34 A Rooty Hill Rd South, Rooty Hill. RSVP by Friday 22 April to:

Coral Littlewood, (Coord) 14 Valencia Cres, Toongabbie 2146 ph: 9631 3289

or email: ownblacktown@virginbroadband.com.au

They will feed us and their drummers will entertain us.

Set that date aside...Wednesday 4 May for the Quarterly meeting at Blacktown.

OWN NSW Theatre Group



Make a Day of It!

Mott Hall on 12 April. This will be one of our Events for OWN Sydney in 2011 under the auspices of the City of Sydney and the OWN YOUR VILLAGE Project, shared in this instance with the Village of The Rocks represented by the Henry Jensen Community Centre at Mott hall. The event will comprise a performance by the Theatre Group in their new Village People show and a bring-a-plate lunch afterwards. Please bring your contribution of food to share and leave it in OWN Office kitchen area before coming across to Mott Hall. The performance will begin at 11.15, so please be in your places by 11.00. When the performance is over, our guests from the Henry Jensen Centre will have their own lunch in their Centre while OWN members return to Lower Fort street to enjoy each other's company over theirs.

Brigid Sen

Belvoir Theatre

The Belvoir Theatre doesn't advertise freebies any more! Here are the dates for their free performances for those who are unwaged. The Box Office is open at 1 pm and the performance starts at 2pm.

Jack Charles and the Crown	14 April
The Business	26 May
The Seagull	14 July
Neighbourhood Watch	25 August
Human Interest Story	15 Sept
Summer of the 17th Doll	10 Nov

from Joy Ross

OWN THEATRE GROUP VILLAGE PEOPLE CONCERT

ALL OWN MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO
OUR PREMIERE 30 MINUTE
PERFORMANCE

TUESDAY, 12 APRIL

where we launch our

VILLAGE PEOPLE SERIES

at the ABRAHAM MOTT HALL

17 ARGYLE STREET, MILLERS POINT

(last stop on 433, 431 and 339 buses)

Please arrive around 11.00am for an
11.15am performance.

OWN members are welcome to **bring a plate** (with something delicious on it of course!) – just bring it early and leave it at OWN NSW 87 Lower Fort St and then **gather for lunch there** following the concert.

Centre Stage

by Dorothy Cora

\$15.00 plus \$7

Available from Older Women's
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admin@ownnsw.org.au

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Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

From Little Things Big Things Grow

The Museum of Sydney, corner Phillip and Bridge Streets, has an exhibition currently showing, featuring the lives of extraordinary Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists. Entitled *From Little Things Big Things Grow*, there are life-size images, photos, video footage, newspaper cuttings, documents and artefacts focussing on the years 1915-1970. There are profiles of William Cooper, Jack Patton, John Maynard, Pearl Gibbs, Faith Bandler, Pastor Doug Nicholls, Charles Perkins, Vincent Lingiari, Jessie Street, Jack and Jean Horner and many others, including German Jewish refugees who had had experience of racism and prejudice and who played an active part in the 1967 referendum.

The exhibition is on the 3rd floor, I urge everyone to see it. The Museum is open every day from 9.30am-5pm and entrance costs \$5 for seniors. Phone: 9251 5988

Before you leave, carry on to the opposite end of the floor where there is an exhibition of Eora people who were known to the first settlers. It includes an art work by Brenda Saunders, a member of our Aboriginal Support Circle, depicting a possum cloak with illustrations.

Pat Zinn



Sylvia Scott farewelled at a State funeral

Much-loved and respected, Sylvia Scott, (born Ingram), an elder of the Wiradjuri people, died on 11 February and is deeply mourned by her family and all who came in contact with her. She was born on 30 December, 1927 at Erambie Mission in rural Australia, the oldest child in a family of 11 children. The family lived in a bag and tin hut and suffered the racism and surveillance of the Aboriginal Welfare Board. She left there to go and live in Sydney as soon as she could and found work in Aboriginal Affairs, mainly in education and health.

At Sydney Children's Hospital she improved the health system's ability to assist Aboriginal mothers and their babies and her educational work assisted NSW Tafe, the Eora Centre and Tranby College. In the 70's she was involved in key Aboriginal organisations in the Block - the Black Theatre, the Aboriginal Children's Service and in particular, Murawina, the early childhood centre. When she retired, she played a key role in establishing the Silva centre and Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care.

She became well known throughout the community and soon stood on podiums with past and present Prime Ministers of Australia, the Dalai Lama, and 3 members of the British Royal Family, including Queen Elizabeth. Her story can be found in our book "Steppin' Out and Speakin' Up". The last time she was with our group was last year, and we shall always remember her as a strong, gracious lady, with many interesting stories to tell.

Pat Zinn



Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Unearthing Lost Aboriginal Art from Western NSW

Rare surviving photographs of traditional carved trees from western NSW will go on public display for the first time at the State Library of NSW from 18 April.

Ronald Briggs, exhibition curator and a Gamilaroi man [from Moree, NSW], is hoping to renew interest in the carvings because "they remain as tangible evidence of our past, and that has changed so much over time."

"The process of Aboriginal people being removed from their land and their culture was sudden and devastating for many groups in NSW, which affected the continuation of their traditions and cultural activities, like carving trees," says Ronald.

Intricate patterns were carved into trees by the Wiradjuri, mostly to mark the burial sites of significant people. Further north, trees were also carved at sites where boys were initiated into manhood.



Only a handful of the trees remain at their original site. Unknown hundreds have been destroyed by farming, fires and forestry. During the 1930s and 40s many anthropologists campaigned to save the remaining trees, by collecting and sending them to museums like the Australian Museum in Sydney.

Passionate amateur anthropologists of the time, like Clifton Cappie Towle and Lindsay and Russell Black, were determined to conserve and document the Indigenous heritage in central and north-western NSW.

Carved Trees: Aboriginal cultures of central NSW will present an inspiring selection of photographs from 1920s to 1940s, drawn from the State Library's extensive Clifton Cappie Towle collection of over 1000 images of Aboriginal objects and sites in NSW.

"These photographs are among few surviving records of this beautiful and forgotten art form," says Ronald.

"We're calling on communities out west - where a lot of the carvings were photographed by Lindsay Black - to send us images of any existing carved trees in their area, and share any information about their history."

If you would like more information about the State Library's *Carved Trees* exhibition (18 April to 26 June 2011), or have information you would like to share about carved trees in your community, please contact Ronald Briggs on Ph. (02) 9273 1577 or rbriggs@sl.nsw.gov.au.

Good News for Boomalli

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative now has a permanent home at 55-59 Flood Street Leichardt thanks to The Aboriginal Land Corporation, which is transferring the title of the premises to the Cooperative. After near-insolvency in 2009 and losing all its funding, the gallery has been kept going by volunteers. Next year will be Boomalli's 25th anniversary and volunteers are putting all their efforts into fund-raising.

Their present exhibition, called *Pink Sunrise* opened on the 11 March and continues until 11 April. The gallery is open from Tuesday-Sunday from 11am-4pm. We wish Boomalli a long, successful enterprise and hope it continues to showcase NSW Aboriginal artists for many years to come.

Pat Zinn



At and Beyond the Rocks



OWN Sydney committee met on 18 March with Sandra Windsor present to take the Minutes for us, an offer we greatly appreciated. Meeting on the third Friday of the month has posed problems with deadlines for *OWN Matters* and we decided in Committee to move our monthly meeting to the second Friday each month; our next meeting will therefore be on 8 April, 10.00 a.m. in Windmill Street. We are still looking for people to come forward to assist in making OWN Sydney a viable and lively part of the organisation, so please do consider joining the committee. Six committee members are too few to carry the responsibility for a membership of 283, don't you agree?

Our Wellness groups have new members, with an average of 12 participants in each group. The facilitators have been with Wellness since it started in 1993, and so it is with enormous sadness that we heard of the sudden and shocking death of our Liz Ireland, drummer extraordinaire, and this issue of *OWN Matters* illustrates her great contribution to OWN Wellness through her weekly drumming tutorials, and the love and respect felt for her as a teacher and a friend. Liz will be greatly missed. Please see tributes pp16-17.

The drummers are planning to 'keep on drumming'. Each week of the school term, 12.15 to 1.30, we will be practising and jamming, and we hope to find a new tutor.

To keep OWN Sydney separate from OWN NSW we now use Windmill Street for our meetings but this poses a problem with phoning in, as there is usually no-one there to take calls nor check the answerphone for messages. Committee members are accessible via email ownsydney@hotmail.com and I am prepared to

take non-urgent calls on my phone: 9665 1345, on a trial basis only! Messages can also be left in the Office in WRITTEN form and marked OWN Sydney as neither Kris nor Beth should be burdened with OWN Sydney matters, please.

Is there anyone among our membership who has some expertise in creating a website? We desperately need a good site in these days of on-line communication, and someone with an understanding of the principles and organisation of OWN would be invaluable. Or maybe you know of someone who would be interested in creating the website? In either case, do please come forward if you can help us in this important and urgent project.

Brigid Sen

Jumbulla Anyone?

Barbara Malcolm has passed on a leaflet about **Jumbulla Indigenous Culture - Discover and Experience** www.jumbulla.com.au and urges us to consider a group outing there, as the Centre is struggling to keep its workers on due to poor patronage. Would OWN Sydney members be interested in such an outing? The committee will look into costs and dates, but some feedback would be appreciated if we are to put time and effort into this.

Brigid Sen 9665 1345 OWN Sydney

At and Beyond the Rocks

Illawarra OWN

Have you ever sat in a crowded room for five hours with the occasional break to stretch your legs or have lunch, and come away feeling you've had the greatest workout ever?

If you were at the first birthday party of Illawarra OWN's Wellness Centre on 6 September, you will know what I mean. What a day!

Demonstrations of all present and some future activities were inspiring. Thai chi, gentle, and some not-so-gentle exercises, Argentinian drumming, happiness therapy, International dancing, stick dancing and Thai Yoga all introduced most ably by the compere, Margaret de Vere.

The ambassador for aging, Noeline Brown, she of stage, screen and radio, was guest of honour and showed by her address that she knows all the ups and downs of aging. The story of her friend Maureen was quite remarkable and showed what can be achieved despite adversity. Maureen was dyslexic and all her life had very low self-esteem. Later in life she volunteered at a nursing home and achieved wonderful results by bringing much happiness to the residents and bringing out some of their latent skills. She later went on to write a book. How did she do that? She learned to use a computer and put the spell check to very good use. A remarkable achievement, making her a very happy and talented woman.

Many congratulations to Barbara Malcolm and her excellent team for working so hard to make the first year such a huge success. Barbara's long held dream has finally come true.

Margaret Chadwick



Illawarra OWN Members

OWN Illawarra Current Affairs Group

In February 2004 Illawarra OWN increased its Interest Groups from one [The Silvertowns] to four. One of these was a Current Affairs group. Arlene Little was the convenor.

It has always been a lively group, at times up to 15 people attending. We discuss a wide range of topics. Participants are encouraged to bring newspaper articles which are then thrown open for discussion. Arlene was leader; we now we have a different leader each meeting whose task is to see that each member has a fair say. Between 10 and 12 people meet regularly once a month and after six years are still vitally interested in world affairs.

We met at Arlene's house, and when she died in December 2008 the group, knowing how passionately fond she was of "her" group, were determined to keep it going. So in the New Year of 2009 we began to meet in the Common Room at Towradgi Retirement Village. Three members of OWN, Kay Vilma and Joan are residents there. Over the six years there has been so much happening here in Australia and overseas. Our group was overjoyed to see the end of Howard and Bush and to finally have women leaders, a Prime Minister, a Premier, a State Governor and the Governor General. We have certainly much material for discussions.

Discussing current affairs is key to feeling part of the wider community and is a way of thinking and caring about people outside ourselves. We believe we are never too old to be aware of events that could have an impact on our lives or those of our descendants. Being aware, interested and concerned keeps one young, and being vocal helps get anger off your chest.

We recommend to OWN members, start a current affairs group among your members. It will keep you mentally active, more tolerant of other members' views and getting to know and love one another, we all have the common wish for things to be more equal, especially for women. We are not all talk - on several occasions we have written letters to our parliamentary representatives and have made our concerns public.

Joan Hilton

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS * NEWS FROM THE GROUPS * NEWS FROM THE GROUPS * NEWS FROM THE GROUPS * NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Falls

FALLS PREVENTION

Sydney South West Area Health Service is holding seven-week courses until October under the title of Stepping Up. City of Sydney residents are also eligible. Bookings essential.

Contact Mary Sarigiannis Co-ordinator, 9767 7815, or mary.sarigiannis@sswahs.nsw.gov.au

Pride Goes Before a Fall

I thought I'd been doing everything necessary to avoid the senior woman's hazard of falling. My daily yoga practice had been expanded to include extra balancing and strengthening exercises as advised by relevant health experts. 'No falling for me,' I crowed, optimistically.

But, despite all my precautions, I had two falls in 2009. Neither did any damage beyond dismaying and puzzling me. 'Oh, well, at least I bounced,' I reassured myself and promptly forgot about them. However, a fall down a couple of stairs this year followed by a sprained ankle while out walking, not only left me shocked, bruised and in some pain; I began to limp, to feel as though I was walking on stilts rather than leg bones and to be reluctant to pursue my favourite way of relaxing, walking. It was time to get some help.

My friendly physiotherapist not only gave me a soothing leg massage and a list of useful exercises. She gave some very good advice. I wear multifocal glasses and have gradually become accustomed to wearing them most of the time. My physio suggested I get used to going without them as often as possible and pointed to a chain she was wearing around her own neck on which were hanging her own multifocals. That way, she can find them quickly when she needs them. 'Multifocals,' she said, 'give the wearer a false impression of where they are in space and lead to misjudgement in the unconscious process of maintaining balance while moving. We may easily miscalculate or not even see small uneven patches on a pathway or the height of stair risers, judgements we would easily make when not wearing multifocals. As a consequence, we misjudge the true situation, lose our balance and fall.'

Within days of taking her advice and leaving my specs in my pocket when they were not essential, I found a new confidence in walking. Practising the exercises soon had my weakened leg muscles, though complaining a bit, operating more strongly.

Sometimes I murmur and mutter at the time that must be spent each day exercising, but the knowledge that I can again enjoy the pleasures of walking with a mind free to think of things other than watching my feet and staying upright is enough to keep me working at it enthusiastically.

Bev Cameron



Atsuko's story

My friend Atsuko lives in Kyoto, 220 km south of Tokyo, so she was not affected by the recent earthquake, but I was still relieved to have an email from her saying she was OK and had plenty of food and water. That was about all she said about herself... she was more interested in telling me what happened to her friends. Here's one of her stories:

Haruyuki, a doctor, was working in Ishinomaki, a small city right in the middle of the affected area, when the earthquake struck. He was busy at the time, operating on a stomach cancer patient on the 4th floor of the municipal hospital. He snatched a brief moment to phone his mother, but was unable to contact his girlfriend, Masami, a nurse in a nearby hospital.

Shortly afterwards he saw the tsunami waves coming; would he and his patient be safe or would the raging water engulf them, even on the 4th floor? The patient could not be safely moved to a higher level of the hospital at that stage, so for Haruyuki there was only one thing to do. He calmly continued with the operation, stitched it up and supervised the patient's removal to a higher floor. It was to be a three-day wait without food and water. It was to be three days before rescuers cleared the debris the tsunami had dumped up to the 3rd floor of the hospital.

In the waiting time, Haruyuki was still unable to contact his girlfriend, but it turned out that Masami, had been busy too. As the building swayed in the earthquake, a pregnant woman near her in the shelter went into labour. It was Masami who calmed and comforted the distressed woman, Masami's steady hands that guided a new life as he emerged into the chaos that surrounded him, and Masami's bright red scarf that was his swaddling cloth.

There must be thousands of stories like that, and thousands of reasons to praise the calm and stoicism of former enemies whom we see now simply as fellow human beings behaving admirably in their steadfast courage and selfless care for others.

After reading Atsuko's story I switched on the TV, to be confronted by a childish and spiteful display of petulance and vitriol by our leaders as they squabbled over an issue of no real importance. A dose of earthquake/tsunami/nuclear meltdown might help them to grow up.

Helen Young

Creative Genius

OWN NSW Annual Conference 28 July 2011

Barbara Malcolm created this beautiful quilt to raise money for the OWN NSW Annual Conference. Raffle tickets are available from the OWN NSW Office at 87 Lower Fort Street, \$2 each or three for \$5. The Winner of the gorgeous Japanese-inspired creation will be announced at our OWN NSW Annual Conference on 28 July, so don't miss out!



Contemporary Chinese Painting with an Australian Perspective

The Older Women's Network Northside, together with the Australian Chinese Painting Society, is running Chinese Painting classes on *Contemporary Chinese Painting with an Australian Perspective*

Classes, which started on 4 Feb 2011 are held at The Studio, Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood between 1 - 3pm, every Friday for 10 weeks.

Cost for tuition is \$150 for 10 weeks.

Places are limited. Please call 0416 166 789 for booking and enquiries.

Rhoda Sexton



Mother's Day Quilt

A candlewick quilt handmade by the Northside needlecraft members will be raffled for Mother's Day 2011.

Candlewicking is a traditional white on white embroidery, done on white linen or cotton fabric with heavy cotton threads used for making candle wicks. The stitches used were knots, both Colonial and French, as well as stem stitch. This very thick embroidery resembles white trapunto quilting when seen from any distance or in pictures. When such heavy threads and stitches are used over a vast area, the effect can be very elegant, where traditional whitework embroidery would be lost.

Raffle tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00 or 7 for \$10.00. The winning ticket will be drawn on Wednesday 4 May. The winner will be notified by phone.

If you would like to win, please contact Annette on 9415 2474 or Dorothy on 9419 6417 or join us any Wednesday between 10am to 3pm at The Annexe, Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood.

Regards
Rhoda

rhodasexton@gmail.com

Fitting in Families

No Rush Mum

Today my daughter started her new job. She was retrenched in November after 14 years and decided she would go to America to visit her sister in law. I missed her, until she came back.

She has been at home with me for the last six weeks. I looked after the dog creature, Moll, while she was gone. I fed the stupid cat and cleaned its box every day, it sleeps on my daughter's bed and took over my bed while she was away. Its name is Mingles, stupid name, stupid cat.

I have a set routine each day which went haywire while the daughter was home.

How can one person create so much mess. The travelling cases are still downstairs, OK, I can clean around them, the newspapers and magazines she bought are still on the table, OK, I can shift them to set the table, her laundry basket overflows with washing, there's no rush mum, she says, OK I reply with a grinding of the teeth. How long can I last? The phone rings incessantly, friends calling, I take my coffee outside. The computer spits out umpteen emails and the photos from her trip keep coming.

Then she gets a call from an agency to say the interview was great and can she start tomorrow. Yes of course you can Carole, don't worry about the mess. She has been gone all day at her new job, everything is back in its place, the washing is done and dry, she has phoned to say she had a good day and is on her way home and will be staying at this new job.

The dinner is cooking, the table is free of magazines and papers, the cases are upstairs and I am completely knackered, but life can be good. I decide that I still love my daughter and I realise there is a God!!!

Josie the Muvver

Grand Mansion or Personal Pad?

Our rented holiday house looked ordinary enough from the street. Inside, it was large enough to accommodate at least 10 people in comfort. Moving from the downstairs kitchen to the upstairs bedroom preferred by my Devoted Spouse was quite a trek. My long-held prejudice against large houses, derived from experience of earlier years of living and managing both a large house and large garden, reared its unwanted presence into my thoughts each time I had to go from one end of the house to the other. Only thoughts of our imminent return to the compact environment of our near-city townhouse allowed me to retain some serenity.

With the memory of this recent experience still fresh, I was thus more than ready to listen to an ABC RN radio program, 'By Design,' in which the topic under examination was our Australian preference for large homes. It seems we are building the largest homes in the world and that our preference arises from our awareness that as we live in a wide, open land, we feel we want to own a piece of it. In today's world, however, most of that piece of land – somewhat smaller than the traditional quarter acre block the way it used to be – is being almost entirely covered by the house and what yard space is left is scarcely used. What a strange and anomalous living choice we make for ourselves!

At the same time, however, it does appear that some change in preference is happening slowly. Young adults and older Australians are beginning to see the benefits of living in medium or even high density housing in city and near-city areas. Proximity to public transport with less need for car ownership, proximity to shops, cafes, entertainment centres and areas for social connection allow time for activities that responsibility for large homes in outer suburbs precludes and permit land to be freed up for other purposes.

On the whole, nevertheless, Australians remain reluctant to make inevitably painful changes. We don't see the value of following European or American practices of living more closely together in smaller homes. We don't subscribe wholeheartedly to using community spaces like parks, playgrounds and plazas and cling to the idea (if not the reality) that our socialising will happen in privately owned social spaces in our own homes.

From experience elsewhere in the world, it is clear such major shifts in preference can be made, although strong leadership is required. But, as the program speaker made clear, where local government is too small and therefore unable to bring about such a change – as is the case in this country – change cannot happen easily. Perhaps we need to take another look at our traditional rugged individualist perspective and ask ourselves what is ultimately in our best interests in term of our nation's triple bottom line – economic, social and environmental. Then we might see that pulling together as a community in the interests of all in our choice of housing would bring a better lifestyle for all than persisting with our rights as individuals to have what we want regardless of the consequences.

I know where my vote would go!

Bev Cameron

Letter to the Editor



We still have a way to go

Like Dorothy Cora, I have admired and enjoyed Enid Harrison's prodigious contributions to *OWN Matters* over the years.

Enid's writings have been challenging, often touching on things very relevant to me personally. Such as becoming a widow, learning to live alone after nearly 60 years and making life as meaningful and happy as possible. Why then was I seen as less a person, to be patted, called a 'poor thing' and generally patronised? For nearly two years I was able to manage our finances and care for my husband, nursing him physically for some months, dealing with doctors etc and all that entailed. When finally alone, there were still banks, solicitor and so on to be dealt with (family all in Northern Territory). I wondered 'Have I suddenly become stupid?' No! I was angry. The last person who came the 'poor thing' got very short shrift!

We have just celebrated 100 years since the first Women's Day March, but we still have a way to go before women are accepted as not only equal to men in the workplace but as strong and independent in their own right.

Nancy Brown



What a celebration it was! We marched, we shouted our slogans, we carried our banners with pride – stopping for photo opportunities every so often. All the traffic along George Street to Martin Place via King Street stopped for us – perforce. Those held up in their taxi didn't look too happy but everyone else got into the spirit of the march and the mood was great, upbeat and LOUD, a clarion call to equality in pay for all women.

Did you enjoy your pedapod ride? The last I saw of the Podders was Dorothy Cox looking quite regal in her Chariot, the Queen of Pedapods, and Mavis, our newest and possibly oldest member at 92, ensconced in hers. I hear there was a glitsch that delayed their departure and lost them their designated place at the head of the march. Ah well, the best laid plans...gang off a-gley and this year's experience could pave the way for next year's glitsch-free ride.

For OWN members the day began with breakfast in New York Metro Café near the cascade in Town Hall Square. There must have been twenty to thirty of us assembled to enjoy a jolly good breakfast as well as the chance to meet and catch up with old friends. As usual, we "arranged" the tables to accommodate people as they wandered in to join us. Now, I'm not altogether sure that the woman serving was happy with these changed table layouts but she could hardly complain: the café must have taken as much in a couple of hours as they normally do in a whole morning. But maybe, just maybe, we could make it a later start and call it Morning Tea? Or Late Breakfast? 9.30 was a bit early to gather for an official start at 11.45, so what do you think, OWN women? How about 10.00 instead, or even 10.30?

The organisers of this year's special 100th year celebration of IWD are to be congratulated on many aspects of the day, though definitely not on the sound system chosen. The music in Martin Place was good, with some spontaneous dancing to Latin American singing while I was there. The Memory Tent was informative and well visited; I saw Beth, resplendent in her hat, giving an interview there; Barbara Malcolm's unusual and beautiful quilt aroused plenty of interest from visitors to the tent – how ironic, yet appropriate that its theme should be Japanese, in view of all that has happened in that country in the past days. But, if we have a chance to provide feedback to the organisers, I would urge that the speeches before the march be abandoned. The audio system was totally inadequate for the task so that only those in the first couple of rows at the Town Hall steps could hear what was being said; the rest of us stood in hot sun, just waiting to march, legs growing tired, backs starting to complain. It seemed to last forever. And besides, all those listening already knew why we were marching. Could they perhaps be included at the final venue in Martin Place, after the march itself?

But a rousing success it was, a day to remember, a march so long that in King Street you couldn't see either end of it – success indeed! Our thanks should go to all who laboured long and hard to make it so, the master minds as well as those who just came and did what they could to be useful. They also serve who only come and march (with apologies to Milton).

Brigid Sen



NSW Whooping Cough Outbreak

Whooping cough, also known as pertussis, can cause severe health problems in young babies, including pneumonia, seizures and has the potential to cause permanent disability or death.

Whooping cough epidemics occur every few years with the last severe outbreak in 2004 and with infection rates on the rise, 2011 is shaping up as another outbreak year.

Whooping cough is a notifiable disease in all Australian States and Territories. This means that doctors, hospitals and laboratories are required by law to let the local public health unit know about each new case that is diagnosed. Information is collected about each case and this is entered onto a confidential database to enable health departments to track how whooping cough is moving through the community.

You can find out more at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/data/diseases/pertussis.asp>

As many cases never see a doctor or are never tested for whooping cough, health departments only see the tip of the iceberg! So there are many more cases in the community that are officially captured in the cases reported.

What we do know is that whooping cough is always around in the community and we know that it's often under-recognised in adults and in older children.

Highly-skilled public health workers track how whooping cough infection is spreading through the population and can pick out significant changes, for example if there is a large increase in numbers of cases, or if new age groups are being infected more frequently or if the infection is taking hold in somewhere in the State.

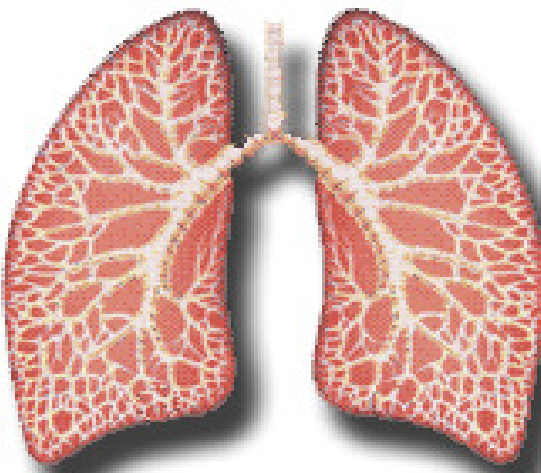
The last big outbreak in NSW was in 2008/09 and saw over 20,000 cases reported to NSW public health units. The numbers of cases are rising rapidly again and NSW is now seeing significant whooping cough in school aged children, especially in primary schools.

If you care for children, or have frequent contact with children or grandchildren, you may be at an increased risk, and should discuss a booster vaccination with your GP.



- People of all ages can get whooping cough and spread it to infants.
- Adults and children may have a mild cough that lingers.
- Ensure you have had an adult dTpa (whooping cough) vaccine.
- Immunity fades. You can still get whooping cough even if you've been immunised.
- See a GP or staff health promptly if you have a new or persistent cough, and stay away from social gatherings.
- Early detection and treatment helps to prevent spread to others.

from NSW Health



**Asthma
or
other Respiratory Problems?**

• In relation to a meeting she attended with experts on the subject, Betty Johnson would like to hear from OWN Members who have asthma or other respiratory problems.

• Please contact Betty on bettyj@optusnet.com.au or leave a WRITTEN message for her, with your contact details, in the office at OWN NSW: 87 Lower Fort Street Millers Point NSW 2000



Take with a dose of Caution

Whenever I get emails from anyone with advice that sounds a bit too good to be true, I worry about their validity.

Aspirin is a blood thinning medication, and is effective in reducing a person's risk for heart disease. There are a lot of medical researches and articles that support this.

BUT ...

'Aspirin may well be one of the safest and most widely used drugs on the market today, but it also has some potentially serious side effects for those who cannot tolerate it. Aspirin can be hard on the stomach and cause nausea; it can aggravate gastric ulcers, and cause internal bleeding. It may increase the risk for stroke due to bleeding. Those who are allergic to aspirin can go into shock if they take it. And, aspirin is the trigger to a rare and sometimes fatal childhood disease, Reyes Syndrome, when taken following certain viral infections.'

According to snopes.com, the claim that 'You should take Aspirin at the first sign of Heart attack but don't lie down' is a mixture of accurate and inaccurate information. There are many variations to this claim and it has been circulating in the Internet since 2009. In summary, Aspirin does reduce the risk of heart attack, it can also counter the attack in progress, but you should only take it if you are not allergic to it. There is no supporting evidence that there is a difference between lying down and sitting up.

Please read:

<http://www.snopes.com/medical/drugs/aspirin.asp>

There are a lot of articles on the Internet on heart attacks, prevention, recognising the symptoms, how to survive it etc. etc. It is up to us to check their validity, and if in doubt, consult the doctor. Circular emails may not be the source for best advice.

Roda Sexton

Cause for Concern

In a recent broadcast of the ABC National's Health Report, Dr Norman Swan interviewed Dr Deborah Bateson, the Medical Director of Family Planning NSW. Their topic was the rise in the number of older women contracting sexual diseases.

Increasing numbers are actively seeking new partners, often when long-term marriages or relationships end in divorce or separation. At the same time, Deborah Bateson said that their Family Planning Clinics were seeing increasing numbers of women approaching them for tests for a sexually transmitted infection (STI), particularly Chlamydia. These women were in their 40s to 70s.

Anecdotally, it seemed that many had met partners through an internet dating service; so Family Planning New South Wales approached one service which readily agreed to distribute a survey to its older clients and also to younger clients. Within four hours they had almost 400 responses. The survey showed that older women had met just as many new sexual partners via the internet in the previous year as the younger women.

One of the most important questions was whether they would refuse sex with a new partner without a condom. In fact, the women 40 and above were actually riskier. Dr Swan thought the reasons could be a lack of confidence in saying no, not thinking about the risk of an STI and possibly the man worrying about his performance.

Family Planning New South Wales believes that the problem is serious enough to warrant a campaign to inform older women of the risks. Call them on: 1300 658 886, or contact the Sexual Health Infoline on: 1800 451 624

Below FPA UK campaign

June West



Vale Liz Ireland



cooler containers “because they have a good sound” and we just loved being so bold and making so much noise!

Our first performance was at the Grey Mardi Gras and we proudly marched through the city streets from Town Hall to Hyde Park with Liz’s coaching and shepherding. We all had a wonderful time and enjoyed the day very much.

Other doors opened for Liz when she was offered a slot at Sydney and Sutherland Wellness groups. Liz made a lot of women feel happy and she instilled the confidence needed to perform at the many functions to which the Tartz were invited.

My very favorite memory of Liz was her sense of humor. After a chat one day she finished off by telling me, she had to “drum” up some more business!

To all of you dear Tartz, I am so very sorry that you have to endure such a loss. My thoughts are with you, my feelings for you and my love and blessings to you, as you grieve for your dear teacher. I like to think that Liz is in a safe, warm and fuzzy place with no “drumming up” required of her and she can rest in peace.

Gabrielle Sneddon

Remembering Liz

Note: Liz Ireland, Drumming Facilitator for OWN Bankstown, Sutherland and Sydney Wellness groups, died tragically on March 3 in a road accident. Gabrielle Sneddon from OWN Bankstown shares her memories of Liz:

I was shattered when I heard the news of Liz Ireland’s death. It is still hard to believe that we will no longer have her with us nor see her lovely smile again.

My condolences go to Laura, Liz’s family and friends and especially the Jam Tartz Drumming Group at Bankstown.

It was at the Parramatta Women’s Health Centre that I first met Liz giving a drumming workshop. She had such an easygoing style of teaching and was such fun I wanted to ‘bags her’ for Bankstown Wellness. Julie, the Project Worker at Bankstown at the time, gave the nod that as we had received enough government funding, we could set up our own drumming group.

None of us had drums in those days, but Liz would bring a selection of drums to our class every week in her kombi van. She also provided the group with empty water



Vale Liz Ireland

ON PARTICIPATION

When Liz Ireland first began teaching the **Jam Tartz** drummers at Bankstown Wellness, she gave them these words of encouragement:

“There is an intrinsic value in doing something without being the best at it.”



“We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements in life, when all we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about.”



“Never forget that music is much too important to be left entirely in the hands of the professionals.”

*Contributed by one of the **Jam Tartz**, Elaine Hill, Bankstown Wellness.*

Special thanks to City of Sydney for the use of the Community bus to assist women attending the service and ceremonies, and to our OWN volunteer community bus driver, **Anne Hoberg**, for her cheerful and sober participation - bless you Anne!

Tiggers are Timeless

That was the proclamation on the program for the funeral service held for Liz at Rookwood on Friday 18 March 2011.

Hundreds of friends and family packed the chapel, spilled into the vestibule and filled a second overflow chapel, such was the extent of Liz’s impact upon the community.

For two hours those who were closest to her, spoke of their love and shock of having such a vibrant and irrepressible being taken so suddenly from their lives. They articulated the aching loss we all felt, struggling to reconcile feelings of anger, powerlessness and grief.

The service was beautiful, and the celebration that followed showed that Liz’s rhythms have been firmly planted, and like a heartbeat will continue on in all the women her life has touched.

The celebration reminded us that it was part of our human condition to miss the dead, but in letting them go physically, we are then free to hold them forever in our memories.

This poem was printed in the service program.

Let Me Go

*When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no rites in a gloom filled room
Why cry for a soul set free?
Miss me a little, but not for long
And not with your head bowed low
Remember the love that once we shared
Miss me, but let me go.
For this journey we all must take
And each must go alone.
It’s all part of the master plan
A step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick at heart
Go to the friends we know.
Laugh at all the things we used to do
Miss me, but let me go.*

Christina Rosetti

My Community

Call it a Tribe

Between political parties, between gangs and teams, between religious groups, we see what often amounts to no more than tribal warfare. Tribalism is very old, indeed might be part of human evolution. Humans are social animals and found survival easier as part of a group. As part of a tribe, humans had shared access to food. If a tribe united against an outside group and acted violently against that group, it possibly increased their survival chances because they had greater access to resources. Sharing and fighting over resources are part of our evolutionary history. A study by Robin Dunbar at the University of Liverpool indicates that “tribalism” is a fact of human neurology, that the human brain is not adapted to understanding a large number of people -- not more than 150 individuals. Humans have probably rejected those outside the ‘tribe’ through much of our evolutionary history.

But there is a wonderful, positive side to being in some tribe. Some ‘New Tribalists’ see the characteristics of tribal life as an ‘open, egalitarian, classless and cooperative community’, and insist that two million years of human evolution prove this is ‘the natural state of humanity’.

Tribes provide support for individuals in their community. I am not just talking about football teams and political parties here, but also book clubs, choirs, playgroups, bridge clubs. People who share a need or an interest hang out in groups which support them.

We are tribal animals. Tribes might be family, workmates, old friends, fellow club members, classmates, fellow volunteers, fellow party members ...whatever. In other words, they are fellow travellers, those who go the same way as us, for greater or lesser distances.

So do we only belong to one tribe? Probably not, because we lead complex lives, and share part of our lives with different groups. *OWN Matters* Editorial Team is a significant part of my life, but so is my family, my gym team, my mahjong group and my drumming class.

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

I can’t say I find a social network like facebook or twitter the answer, although many young people do. Groups that share time and effort are more likely to give you the chance to make friends. For me, this is what tribes do; they share the stuff of life. Our editorial team edits, proof reads and writes for the newsletter, but we also do a lot of talking. In our gym class we struggle together to get fit, but at coffee afterwards we share our ups and downs. Our mahjong group enjoys the challenge of the game, but we

have fun together, and not only with mahjong. Friends from your tribe are the ones who know about you selling your house, your medical problem, your new grandchild, your microwave dying. They will know about your joys and sorrows and share them. *Going tribal* is not what it sounds.

Lorraine Inglis

Heroines

I had a T shirt once that had the words, ‘I’m addicted to Heroines’ across it. Wore it with great pride.

People used to do a double take when they first read it though. Good fun, pity you can’t still get them!

So, here’s a ‘Heroine’ news item from ‘*The Week*’ 11 Feb 2011

The column: “*IT MUST BE TRUE... I read it in the news*” p 11

“A grandmother foiled an armed gang of would-be robbers by fighting them off with her handbag.

The six member gang, armed with sledgehammers, were trying to raid a jeweller’s shop in Northhampton, UK, when the pensioner ran across the road to confront them, beating them with her bag and knocking one off his moped. Five men were later arrested.”

Morgana Oliver-Ayers

Walking for Health

Here are the dates and locations for 2011.

- Saturday, **9 April**, North Arm Track, Mangrove Section, Castle Cove, When: 10am - 12:30pm, Grade: Medium (Some steep steps, please bring a walking stick.)
- Saturday, **7 May**, Where: Wilksch Walk, Artarmon, When: 10am - 12:30pm, Grade: Easy to medium

There is a courtesy bus at 9:30am to take you from Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood to the starting point of the walk and back.

Booking is essential, please phone 0416 166 789

Regards, Rhoda rhodasexton@gmail.com

OWN Sydney Notices

WOW! Subscribe NOW!

Subscription to *OWN Matters* is \$22 per year, due every JULY 1!
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With my best wishes!

Members and friends are welcome to attend all activities

Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am-1.30 pm every Wednesday

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

9.30 - 10.30 Gentle Exercise.

10.45 - 11.45 Tai Chi.

Drumming

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

\$8 per session. If you would like to drum please contact

Lorraine: 9569 0051 Please note there will be no drumming in

school holidays - 13 and 20 April.

Lost Ladies

10.00am every Wednesday during school terms, exploring various locations or topics of interest.

Contact Annette Butterfield: 9665 5369 email (changed) :

abutterfield_852@hotmail.com

Film Discussion group

You are invited to join us on **Tuesday 12 April**, to see *Never Let Me Go*. Please ring Yetty on **9665 2050** to check details.

Bondi Junction Coffee and Gossip Group

25 March 11am The Coffee Shop, Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club.

Last Friday of every month. Contact Yetty on **9665 2050** to

check details.

Book Club

18 April 12.30-2.30 pm at 87 Lower Fort Street. This month's book is: *On the Black Hills* by Bruce Chatwin. 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 May 20 meeting is *Mr Pip* by Lloyd Jones.

Aboriginal Support Circle

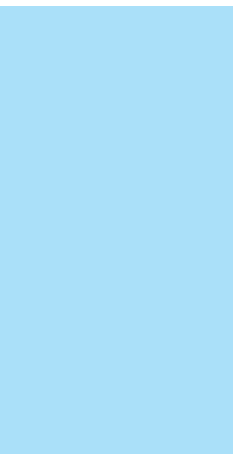
21 March 10.30 am Monday. Meeting with Aunty Elsie Heiss. Gather at Stand C, Eddy Ave, Central, 10.15 to catch 391 bus to LaPeruse. Confirm all details with Pat Zinn: 9389 1090 or email patzinn@hotmail.com

Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point

We meet from 10.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon at Birkenhead Café, 1st floor Birkenhead Shopping Complex. Contacts: Nora Huppert 9181 3918 and Bev Cameron 9957 5367. The dates are Saturdays 9 April, 23 April, 7 May and 21 May.

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

OWN Matters



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