



OWN MATTERS

Older job seekers. Closing the Gap. Amnesty PNG Report.
Sydney OWN IWD Event. Many Thanks. Theatre Group Report.
Congratulations. Knees Up, Mother Brown. Sensual Pleasures.
Bit by bit, Little by Little. Margaret Olley and the Bicycle Bell.



Margaret Olley in the frame

The artist had a clear message for one OWN member about her walking frame and what it needed!



Focus on older job seekers

Adele Horin writes on the challenges facing older women looking for work in the current job market.



HIPPY program expanding

More Aboriginal communities to receive schools program to support kids and their parents.



Amnesty looks at PNG camp

Report highlights what breaches in human rights have been found at refugee detention centre.



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

ABN: 36 992 030 904



CONTENTS

FEATURES

Adele Horin Writes	3
Closing the Gap	10
Amnesty Report	11
Sydney OWN IWD event	12
Theatre Group report	13
Knees Up	14
Sensual Pleasures	15
Bit by Bit	16
Margaret Olley	17

EVERY MONTH

Letters	4-5
Beyond the Rocks	6-7
Aboriginal Issues	8-9
Notices	18-19
Activities	19

Who Are We?

The Older Women's Network (OWN) NSW is the peak body for 18 groups and 6 Wellness Centres 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 \$30 and \$44 for organisations and includes GST.

Have your say

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.

**Send by email or mail marked
Attention – Editorial Team.**

**The email address is
newsletter@ownnsw.org.au.**

Please include contact details. Contributions must be received by the third Tuesday of each month.

The Team

Editorial Team

June West, Lorraine Inglis,
Anna Logan and Fran Weston.

Guest Editor: Dorothy Cora

Admin Support

Margaret Holland Margaret Kearney
and Beth Eldridge.

Layout and Design

Michelle Davies
Mishy Dee Creative Designs

Membership & Subscriptions

Chris Taylor

Mailout Team

Pat Rayne, Noel Carpenter, Veronica
Willis, Corinne Campbell, Wendy Brown,
Colleen Wellsmore.

More help always welcome!

OWN Office

From 10am-3pm the phone is answered by one of our friendly volunteers. Out of office hours, leave a message, with your contact number.

*Produced with the assistance
of the Australian Government
through Ageing Disability and
Home Care, Department of Family
and Community Services NSW,
with project funding from the
NSW Department of Health, and
assistance from the City of Sydney.*

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.*

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

Many women were present at the IWD Festival of Ideas. Adele Horin spoke very eloquently about older women trying to find work, and she is just as eloquent in this article

Discrimination against mature age job-seekers and workers is what makes me angry. Writing on my Coming of Age blog about this I've found few topics rouse such passion and heartbreak among readers. It's all very well for the Treasurer Mr Hockey to declare the "age of entitlement" over. But there are tens of thousands of job-seekers aged 45-plus, desperate to provide for themselves but stymied by attitudes of human resource personnel, employers and Job Services staff. They're forced to subsist on the Newstart Allowance of \$250 a week or to run down their savings.

It's tough for older men. But the situation for mature-age women is even worse. They're less likely to be employed when they want jobs, and if they have some work, they're more likely to be under-employed, that is, wanting more hours. And if they lose their jobs women aged 45 to 64 face a longer average period of unemployment – 44.8 weeks - compared to 39.5 for men.

I strongly believe mature-aged women are the nation's greatest untapped resource. The women



of my generation, the baby boomers, and the women who opened the doors before me, have in many ways been lucky.

We've lived through and helped transform the culture and society – attitudes to childcare, work, and sexuality. Many have barely emerged from the challenging job of juggling work and family responsibilities only to deal with managing care for ageing parents.

We've acquired so many skills and capabilities and have so much to give. Many of us, with children grown and parents no longer alive, are freer to throw ourselves into careers, grab long-delayed promotions, and go for it at last.

But now as older women in the Botox era we face another frontier: holding onto jobs as the public sector shrinks, or worse, looking for a job at a time of rising unemployment when cuts to social services, health and education are expected. The public sector, and industries where women predominate, are very likely to be hit.

We must be vigilant to monitor and broadcast what happens to women in the contracting economy. Their plight is often no less drastic just because they work for TAFE rather than make cars. Many mature-age women, single, divorced, are the breadwinner and we know their superannuation pots are inadequate.

Because of decisions they made through their life - decisions considered good and necessary - they became teachers, aged care workers, they worked part-time when their children were born. They have limited retirement savings. They need to work. We must keep this problem of age discrimination, and the lack of pathways back to decent jobs for mature-age workers, centre-stage.

Adele Horin



Letters

The letters page of this issue shows all the letters received from various readers of this magazine about an article about swearing written by Lorraine Inglis for *OWN Matters*

Bad Words

I laughed when I read the article about offensive language and the use thereof. In the area where I reside the most offensive words, as printed in the article, are in everyday use from children old enough to speak to all the adults. These words are now known as ‘Terms of Endearment’. It is such a shame that because these words are so frequently used, one is no longer shocked. Oh my, how the world has changed since I was a young ‘un in the East End of London.

Josie Jackson



Objections

Dear Editor, I write to voice my disappointment and objection to the article, on page 15, of the last *OWN Matters* (March 2014).

On receiving this copy I was delighted to see the interesting cover, the amount of colour, particularly with the event calendar, and the insert on the book launch. I look forward, as do many members, to receiving the newsletter. However, I was shocked to see the photo with the offensive T-shirt, the latter part of the left side of the page and,

appalled with the boxed section, “Offensive language warning!”

Some may argue that the ‘warning’ was sufficient not to read on, however, as stated in the article, “Who decides which words are offensive?” Why not simply add a link to the contents of the boxed section and give readers the opportunity to choose for themselves.

I am disappointed for those women I know, who have joined OWN because they have found the newsletter to be of interest to them. We say OWN is for all older women, from all walks of life - women who come with differing political viewpoints and alliances, and with differing levels of tolerance.

Editorial policy, if we have one, needs to be cognisant of these differences, as well as to be aware of the damage that may be caused to our future funding prospects. It is time to review our editorial policy and, if we don’t have one, set about establishing one, one which considers the diversity of the membership and the readers.

Unfortunately with IWD and the upcoming seniors’ week, many opportunities will be lost by our

members not wishing to hand this newsletter to others as an invitation to join OWN.

Aloma Fennell
OWN Sydney



Interesting and hilarious

For what it’s worth I thought the swearing article was interesting as well as hilarious, and I suspect lots of women felt the same...all about growing old disgracefully!!
Go Lorraine!

Jenny Onyx



Locked up for swearing

Dear Lorraine, thank you for bringing swearing and offensive language to our attention. We all swear, it’s a human condition, and I’m not ashamed of swearing - it’s great for relieving tension, but I swear to myself when I’m impatient, or I’ve done something stupid, not to people.

The British Film Board’s list, however, contains words that are offensive, demeaning and humiliating, even the very mild ones. As you so rightly say, who decides which words are

offensive? I do know that already Aboriginal people are locked up by police for swearing.

If, as you so rightly say, those targeted will probably be minority groups such as Aboriginal and young people, they will probably be unable to pay the fine, which means imprisonment. It seems, once again, that poor people are to be victimised for being poor.

Pat Zinn



Protest against offensive language

I am really appalled by parts of the article and the photo submitted by Lorraine Inglis and printed on page 15 of the March edition of *OWN Matters*.

Lorraine has never shrunk from airing her concerns and we applaud her for that, so for her to look carefully at the potential for the misuse of power and bring it to our attention, is nothing less than we expect from all our members. *OWN Matters* is the perfect medium for us to be able to do that.

However, I strongly object to our newsletter containing the photo of a man wearing a very offensive tee shirt that shows complete disrespect to our Prime Minister and printing the full list of the words, together with how they rate in the offensive scale by the British Film board, was a serious error of judgement that will offend many of our readers. I for one am very offended.



At the IWD forum held at the Mechanics Institute on the 7th of March we were urged to spread our message around by leaving copies of *OWN Matters* in places like our local library or doctor's surgery. This is one copy I will not be showing to anybody, which is a shame as it contained some very good articles.

Barbara Malcolm



Offensive Language

That some women believe that the March issue of *OWN Matters* can't be shown to other women, because of the article I wrote about swearing, is

regrettable. That women won't read some excellent articles by other writers, because of an article written by me, is regrettable. To the writers whose work won't be read and the women who are offended by my article, I apologise.

I tried to say how difficult it will be for the law about swearing to be enacted justly. Some people will be fined and fight it, some will be fined and pay it, some will be fined and not be able to pay it, some will be gaoled. Which words are the ones people should be fined for using was also up for question. I'm sorry that seeing, in print, the words that might bring fines has offended some of our readers.

But what about discriminatory words? The British Film Board either ranked them as only mild or moderate, or didn't include them. The film board didn't consider them particularly offensive.

How should we rank; abo, boong, camel jockey, chink, coon, dago, gin, lebbo, nigger, paki, pommie, rag head, refo, seppo, slant-eye, slope, towel head, wog, wop, yid? How should we rank; cripple, dweeb, dyke, idiot, loser, moron, meathead poofter, ocker, retard, scumbag, spastic?

Such words are sometimes used by people about themselves, sometimes almost affectionately to others. What about when they are used to abuse people, to demean them, to humiliate them?

Lorraine Inglis



At and Beyond the Rocks

Liberian women prosper with newfound skills

About 600 women have been trained in literacy, entrepreneurship and other skills to enhance their physical and economic security.

“My whole life I never spoke English. Now, at my age, I can write my name and I know my ABCs and 123s,” - recipient of UN Women-sponsored training in literacy, leadership and economic skills - Bopulu, Liberia.

150 women met with New York delegates in Bopulu, a town in Liberia’s northern Gharpolu County, to share stories on how they have benefited from training under a UN Women project that teaches them literacy and economic skills. Since 2012, around 600 women have been trained in literacy, entrepreneurship, leadership and other economic skills. These skills are particularly important to empower women in post-conflict societies.

Liberia emerged from over a decade of civil war in 2003 with



Some of the Liberian woman that have been helped

much of its infrastructure and social fabric in tatters. Women and girls were particularly affected by the conflict, suffering extreme hardship and high incidence of sexual violence. When women have better economic skills and their safety is assured in post-conflict societies, they are more able to participate in politics and post-conflict restructuring and have a greater role to play in their communities.

With the economic skills taught by the UN Women funded program, women’s businesses are taking off thanks to a village savings and loan programme. A key product in this business is dried fruits and spices. By controlling the production and sale of these goods, the women of Gharpolu County have their own income and means to support their families. They also have a greater role to play in their families and communities.

“Now the men are running to us to ask us what we want, since we have our own money and our own security”.

The training has also enabled the women to form a special bond and support network with each other, especially during challenging times. A woman in their network was about to be left destitute after her husband decided to leave her and their children. The other women barricaded him in his house, forcing him to leave money for his wife and children. The wife was able to continue to send her children to school.

As the women of Bopulu can attest, having economic skills and an independent income has enabled them to stand up for their rights and support their families and communities.

Hastings OWN





Pat Donaghy, Local Senior of the Year, receives her award

Pat Donaghy's award

Dear Patricia, Thank you for joining us at the office opening yesterday. It was a pleasure to meet you. The Seniors Week Local Achievement Awards are presented by Members of Parliament to seniors in their electorates who have made an exceptional contribution to life in their respective communities.

I therefore feel the "Local Senior of the Year" award is very deserving recognition of the outstanding support you've provided to your fellow seniors over many years. I was delighted you were able to attend and accept your award in person from the Premier and the Minister for Ageing.

My congratulations once again and very best wishes for your future volunteer work.

**Mark Speakman SC MP
Member for Cronulla**



Reach Program

Older Women's Network is proud to be part of the REACH Wellbeing program designed by the Black Dog Institute. The principles behind the REACH Support program are to live with hope of change for a better life when you live with depression and bi polar disorder.

Hope, however, is not enough to make changes; it means taking an active approach, being motivated, learning new skills and making positive connections along the way.

Through this REACH journey you will have the opportunity to find out what your strengths really are, learn to deal with loss and grief, identify things that may stop your journey moving forward and develop your own plan for a better life. There are a variety of skills you will pick up along the way to help with stress management, developing good

patterns of your health and self esteem, finding your support networks and moving forward with your own Wellbeing plan.

The REACH program will run in Bankstown every Tuesday morning for 9 weeks from April 29 to June 24, from 10am to 12pm. Anyone interested in joining the program can contact Diane on 9708 2245 to obtain more information.

Diane Brooks



Wellness Sydney

An anonymous contribution of \$500 has been made to OWN for the specific purpose of keeping the WELLNESS SYDNEY programme going this year.

Sisters, this is such a wonderful programme, it would be great to see more of you enjoying it.

There's an hour of gentle exercise every Wednesday morning from 9.30 to 10.30, then an hour of Tai Chi from 10.45 till 11.45.

Our numbers have dropped over the last year; we need to increase them to keep these robust and sociable classes going.

Come along and at least give one of the classes a try. The cost is \$7 for each class, but lack of money shouldn't keep you away. We can subsidise as necessary.

**Anna Logan
Sydney OWN**





Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Parramatta Girls Training School

The Royal Commission on Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is at present investigating Parramatta Girls Training School and also the Hay Institution for Girls. In 1844 the former was the first orphanage for Catholic girls and it is estimated that 30,000 women, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, passed through between 1887 and 1974, when it was shut down. Those giving evidence have told about being dehumanised, being known by numbers, not names, of being humiliated, suffering from harsh discipline, of beatings and sexual assaults. Some of the girls had run away from home and were sent to Parramatta because it was considered that they were in “moral danger”. Instead, they were subjected to vaginal examinations by a doctor before being admitted, only to find that they were to suffer “state-sponsored rape” perpetrated by



The old Parramatta Girls Training School



doctors, supervising staff and other inmates once they were incarcerated.

Punishments included being kept in isolation (in a room which they named “the dungeon”) and having to scrub the courtyard with a toothbrush. Some of the girls stole pins and needles from the sewing room to self-harm. Those girls considered intractable were sent to Hay, which was run like a concentration camp. The girls had to march with their eyes on the ground, and weren’t allowed to talk to each other except for brief periods when they did needlework. They were only allowed to go to the toilet at

designated times, and toilet paper and sanitary pads were strictly doled out. Is it any wonder that there were difficulties in finding work, suicide attempts, mental illness, marriage breakdowns and ongoing health problems once the girls left the premises.

Bonney Djuric, sent to Parramatta in 1970, founded a support group, “Parragirls” in 2006 and is campaigning for the site, which is now a children’s garden, to be accredited as an international “site of conscience”. Interim findings from the present investigations are due to be published at the end of June on case studies heard to date, not only from the Parramatta Girls Training School, but from other institutions.





WA Native Title Claims

The government of Western Australia has released a draft bill recognising Noongar people as the traditional owners of Perth and the south-west of Western Australia. This is the centrepiece of a \$1.3 billion settlement of native title claims, the biggest in Australian history. The proposed settlement, negotiated with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) over four years, would consolidate seven separate native council claims.

Under the package, \$600 million would be paid into the Noongar Boodja Trust in instalments over 12 years; \$120 million would go towards administration and up to 320,000 hectares from the Crown Estate would be transferred to the Trust in multiple parcels. There would also be new programs to assist housing, community and economic development, and joint management partnership with the Department of Parks and Wildlife. SWALSC has been given six months to decide whether to accept the bill.

The Noongar Tent Embassy has refused to consider the offer, saying that sovereignty has never been ceded. It says that the offer breaches cultural protocols, as it does not support “our inherent

HIPPY Program Expanding

HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) is a two-year home-based program that works with parents and children, funded by the Federal Government and managed by the charity, the Brotherhood of St. Lawrence. It starts working with children and parents from the year before the child commences school and continues into the first year of formal teaching.

It gives parents and carers the confidence to be their child’s first teacher and to be engaged in their children’s learning by means of building a sense of belonging for parents and children and to actively equip parents to support their children and other parents.

There are 50 programs throughout Australia, including La Perouse, which are now to be expanded in 2015 to 25

right to self-determination, as agreed by the Australian Government in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous



Geraldine Stewart and Sarah Carmody travelled from Alice Springs for the launch of the HIPPY site in Albury

more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Disadvantage and population and community needs are the criteria for setting up these programs which help over 1500 families per year.

It has been shown that children involved in HIPPY generally begin the program with numeracy and literacy skills well behind the Australian average but after two years on the program, they catch up. Most importantly, it empowers parents and carers to understand the crucial role they play in developing their child’s readiness to learn.



Peoples, nor does it support the survival of our lands”.

All stories by Pat Zinn



Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration of Human Rights, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Closing the Gap: we know what works, so why don't we use it?

The disappointing data that regularly appears in Closing the Gap reports should raise serious questions about policy development and funding processes. The assumption of media stories is that it's too hard because of faults of the Indigenous targets.

There is a much more mundane explanation: poor outcomes could be the result of flaws in how officials devise and deliver programs and funding. Multiple agencies monitor the effectiveness of government programs. The last of these is a particularly significant source of data: the official Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

Reports on programs delivered are based on analysis of multiple publications. These reports clearly extract data on what works and what does not work in general and in particular program areas. Another reputable advisory body, the Productivity Commission, extensively quotes these reports in its series of publications on Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) collection, and the related papers from 2009 onwards, offer a range of painstakingly rigorous findings of what worked and didn't work. Their brief criteria summaries emphasise the



importance of good processes in decision-making.

What works - The Clearinghouse has continued to find that there are high-level principles and practices that underpin successful programs for Indigenous Australians. These include:

- Flexibility in design and delivery so that local needs and contexts are taken into account;
- Community involvement and engagement in development and delivery of programs;

- A focus on building trust and relationships;
- A well-trained and well-resourced workforce, with an emphasis on retention of staff;
- Continuity and coordination of services.

What doesn't work:

- "One size fits all" approaches;
- Lack of collaboration and poor access to services;
- External authorities imposing change and reporting requirements;
- Interventions without local Indigenous community control and culturally appropriate adaptation;
- Short-term, one-off funding, piecemeal interventions, provision of services in isolation and failure to develop Indigenous capacity to provide services.

Despite the data from AIHW and their use by the Productivity Commission, the service delivery sections of government and their political masters show few signs that many were taking the criteria seriously. If they had, they would have changed

their top-down, culturally inappropriate design, delivery and funding processes. In an effort to publicise these flawed processes, I am collating a range of quotes from mainly federal agency reports that list the reasons for successes and failures of Indigenous policy programs. The extracts from about 30 diverse reports on specific programs confirm the repeating problems of flawed processes of design. In particular, there are consistent failures to consult communities before decisions are taken, to engage locally and to make decisions with, and not for, local groups.

Eva Cox



Amnesty International Report

Results are back on the Amnesty International Report on Human Rights Violations at Australia's Asylum Seeker Centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. The combination of detention practices, the many unknowns about the Refugee Status Determination process and timetable, and the lack of real options for meaningful integration into Papua New Guinea society combine to create a serious risk of refoulement, the return of individuals to places where their lives or freedom is likely to be threatened or where they are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Asylum seekers are detained in the absence of any individualised assessment of the need for detention, with no definite date for their release, apparently without any framework in Papua New Guinea law for their detention, and no clear means to seek review of the lawfulness of their detention. The result is arbitrary detention, prohibited by customary international law and treaties to which both Australia and Papua New Guinea are party.

Contrary to international law, the Regional Resettlement Arrangement with Papua New Guinea discriminates against asylum seekers on the basis of their means and date of arrival, treats as suspect all asylum seekers who arrive by boat, and penalises



them for their manner of arrival. The marked inadequacies of Papua New Guinea's Refugee Status Determination processes are such that they fail to afford asylum seekers the procedural protections that are required under international law.

Aspects of detention on Manus Island violate the obligation to treat all persons in detention humanely. The combined effect of the conditions of detention on Manus Island, the open-ended nature of that detention, and the uncertainty about their fates to which detainees are subjected amounts to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment. Moreover, some conditions of detention, particularly the housing of detainees in P Dorm, on their own violate the prohibition on torture and other ill-treatment.

Australia is responsible for these violations because it has effective power and control over the detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island. Its authorities intercept and apprehend asylum seekers who arrive in Australia by boat. These asylum seekers are detained on Australian territory before they are transferred to Papua New Guinea by security guards acting under the direction of DIBP. DIBP contracts the security guards, health providers, and other service providers who work in the Manus Island Regional Processing Centre. In fact, under the terms of the agreement between Australia and Papua New Guinea, Australia bears all the costs of implementing the Regional Resettlement Arrangement in Papua New Guinea.

**Refoulement - the expulsion of persons who have the right to be recognized as refugees.*

(DIBP - Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection)



Be it a Festival of Ideas or a National Folk Festival, OWN is out there participating and promoting the rights of older women and giving them a chance to speak out.

Congratulations

Congratulations on a really good event for International Women's Day on Friday. The speakers were well chosen and it was all very interesting. Thanks very much. How many people? Several people commented to me that there were a lot of new faces.

Betty Johnson

.....

Excellent speakers

Congratulations for organising a most enlightening and enjoyable IWD event on 7 March. The choice of speakers was excellent and their topics very relevant. Everyone I talked to afterwards felt they had many things to think about after attending various sessions: Australia's treatment of Asylum seekers, the continuing inequalities women face, the future of feminism, and women behind bars. Pity we couldn't have attended them all! I'm looking forward to next year's event which will surely be of the same high standard.

Helen Poole

.....

Many thanks

Many thanks Sydney OWN, for a great IWD morning last Friday. I enjoyed it a lot, so thanks for all the effort you put into it.

Gail Hewison

.....

Sydney OWN IWD Event

This was the second year that Sydney OWN members have convened a Festival of Ideas under the banner "I Protest".

The first floor of Sydney Mechanics School of Arts was crowded with older women by the 9.30am start and remained so until the finish at 1pm. Women attending this year represented more than .25% increase on last year, with well over 100 participants. On such occasions and with so many talented and experienced women speakers it was hard to choose between them.

I want to report on just two speakers.

Firstly, Wendy Bacon's message about women prisoners struck a chord and reminded me of the many horrific stories I have heard over the years about women in prisons. Wendy talked briefly about the organisation "Sisters Inside" whose website reveals some shocking statistics of women in prison, for example:

- Over a third of women in Queensland prisons are Indigenous – in North Qld. 80% are aboriginal women
- Over 50% of the women were themselves on child protection orders as children
- More than 85% have experienced childhood sexual abuse
- 98% have experienced violence as an adult.

The Sisters Inside article points out that as well as the 'fences and cages and guards who have power over your life and decisions', for women in prison there 'are other barriers harder to see but they have

Continued Page 13

Theatre Group Report

This year promises to be a very busy year for the Theatre Group, with five performances already booked for March and April and three different programs to rehearse and perform. Since each program usually contains at least fifteen items, we have to remember the words, music and movements for at least thirty items! Pretty good training for keeping memories active. Our performances over the next two months will take us to Burwood, Canterbury, Cabramatta and Canberra before we come right back here to Sydney's Mott Hall.

Currently, the performance of *Don't Knock Your Granny* in April for the National Folk Festival takes precedence in rehearsal time because Brigid Sen who has taken over the responsibility as rehearsal director for this show, leaves for overseas on 18 March and we need every second of her valuable attention.

Travelling to and staying in Canberra means a lot of planning ahead. It is an honour that we have been selected to perform at the National Folk festival at the Trocadero venue which is in the heart of the exhibition grounds. We will perform there on Friday 18 and Saturday 19 April. Our performances will be followed by Q&A sessions about elder abuse, under the guidance of community workers from Canberra. We will also have to provide publicity posters for the show if we want audiences to attend since



there is fierce competition for audiences with the presence of famous folk bands, musicians, poets, dance groups, choirs and even circus performers.

Meanwhile another Theatre Group member, Denise Miel, has been putting together a light-hearted show comprising some of our audiences' favourite songs and skits as well as some newly learnt items. This show has the working title, *Cabaret*. This will fill the need when sponsors request a program of entertainment. The messages of OWN will still get through in the items and we still get the chance to introduce OWN to new audiences.

Finally our third programme is of course on the issue of housing, *Ma, Its Time to Move*, performed for the first time in October at the National Conference in Brisbane. There is a lot of work to be done on this programme to get it up to show standard again.

We have all been happily welcoming the contributions to the writing of some items from Janice Beavan, our pianist. Janice has seen us struggling with songs on too many occasions!

Joan Modder



an impact just as shattering on these women's lives'. Any readers interested in following up on this issue will find the Sisters Inside website useful. (Please also note the research information on Gender, Blame and Violence in this issue of *OWN Matters*).

The final panel of speakers for the morning included Eva Cox (see her article on Page 10), Wendy Bacon, and Meredith Burgmann with Irina Dunn chairing. The topic was misogyny. The position put by Eva was that 'we should move on'

from the Gillard experience of misogyny. I'm not exactly sure what Eva meant by this but Meredith had some good examples and helped to refocus on the Gillard experience.

Anne Summers, in her book 'The Misogyny Factor' provides numerous reasons why women should not 'move on' as it is an example of the undermining of the Human Rights of women to work in whatever position they are qualified to do.

Sonia Laverty



Walking can give pleasure to us all; to walk and revel in our surroundings, to walk challenging ourselves, to walk and push ourselves despite difficulties.

Knees up, Mother Brown

Last week I went to RPA, my alma mater of two knee replacements thirteen years ago, to have what they call a “knee revision” done. This involved re-opening the knee and replacing a badly deteriorated piece of plastic in the prosthetic. The surgeon reassured me that he’d added a new knee cap while he was in there, in order to give me a major tune-up!

I can’t speak highly enough of the care I received in the Orthopaedic Unit there. The nurses were all kind, helpful and professional. The Unit Manager came by every morning to see if we had any special needs. My own surgeon visited daily, as did other doctors and, eventually, the physiotherapist.

I was in RPA only four days, though a registrar there told me they are unusual in keeping their patients in for that long! I recently met a woman who’d be in and out of a private hospital in just two days, for a complete knee replacement. It seems most hospitals get you out as quickly as possible, even going to the extent of filling your wound with anaesthetic to stave off the pain.

They obviously did an excellent job with the operation, as I’m walking around in the house without a cane, and have taken a walk around the block, cane and companion in hand, every



day since my return from hospital. Nowadays it seems that operations involve one’s needing to have an injection of a warfarin-type medication (to prevent blood clots) called Clexane. The patient can inject themselves with the needle, or even have someone in the home do it.

No way was I going to have a non-professional stick a needle in me! It took some negotiating but we were able to arrange for a locum doctor to

come in and administer the Clexane for the first two days, after which the community nurse took over.

From ten years ago, when the community nurse helped with both my late husband and Mother, I have very fond memories of their sense of responsibility and efficiency. Hopefully none of that has changed, but I was horrified to discover that my nurse worked for a private health service, not for the NSW Department of Health. Worse information was to come. She doesn’t even have an office to work out of, as she’s a SUB-CONTRACTOR!

I was warned I’d be out of commission for some six weeks, but I’m already plotting the use of the local bus to a train station with a lift, and getting to a few upcoming events by hook or by crook.

You can’t keep an Older Woman down!

Anna Logan



Sensual Pleasures

“Oh, yuk!” I muttered to my Devoted Spouse as I plucked from my face and hair the spider’s web I’d just walked into. “I’d forgotten it’s spider web time.”

It was early on a dewy fresh Saturday morning. I’d persuaded my reluctant spouse to leave the comfort of his sleep-in and accompany me to the sculpture exhibition in Sawmillers Reserve, a harbourside park about 30 minutes’ walk from home. Early morning birdsong, which on ordinary mornings we hardly notice, was serenading all who had ears to hear. We paused to absorb the sweet sounds reverberating in the quiet air. . .

Even in our inner city locality where private gardens are small and often neglected, late-blooming gardenias and luxuriant frangipani trees offered their perfume. Ancient Fig and Plane trees arched gracefully overhead and brownish-pink flowering grass begged this passer-by to run her fingers around them, marvelling at their feathery softness . . .

We drew near the Reserve, noticing others going in our direction. DS and I reached the first exhibit, several bundles of black iron rods welded to form ‘Haystacks’. Moving on slowly, for there was much to see, we experienced by turns surprise, deja vue, boredom, curiosity and admiration.

My favourite, black granite shaped into a smooth and subtly erotic shape invited caress; another, a timber and steel male figure tugging at a similarly constructed female figure, apparently coming to pieces under his forceful grip, spoke volumes to my feminist consciousness.

Even though still not 9am many more were strolling in the beauty of the reserve enjoying harbour waters lapping gently on sandstone retaining walls, fine old trees rustling in gentle breezes and a pervasive



atmosphere of quiet welcome inviting reflection and peace.

DS and I, having reached the final exhibit, stopped to talk to an exhibition organiser. Having noticed three matching and very costly items, I enquired if their price covered all three or was per item. I was not really surprised that each item was separately priced and grimaced, raising my eyebrows in disbelieving silence. She laughed, understanding...

We walked home. The day was now much warmer and more humid. DS muttered about aching joints and my feet were ready for a rest. Within minutes of arriving home and through practised routine, we had breakfast ready. With relief we sat, savouring the thirst-quenching sensation of sweet and juicy chilled rockmelon, the aroma of fresh brewed coffee and the tangy taste and satisfaction of hot marmalade toast. In unspoken gratitude, we reflected on the pleasures of so much simple sensuality so easily available and our capacity to enjoy it still.

Bev Cameron



Many strong women have gone before the older women of today. Harriet Dugdale, feminist and suffragette, set the pattern for demands for female rights. Margaret Olley lived a wonderful life, her way, immersed in her art.

Bit by bit, little by little

Achieving equal rights for women has been a slow process, bit by bit and little by little. Many Australian women have fought for our rights and are still fighting. In this series, I'll tell the stories of some of them.

Let me introduce you to Henrietta Dugdale, a member of a group of radical free-thinking women who believed in temperance, birth control and "applying the surgeon's knife to rapists". Bit radical?

Henrietta was born in 1826 in London and arrived in Melbourne in 1852. Besides taking an active role in public affairs, she married three times, and brought up three children. She was a vegetarian, grew her own vegetables and did carpentry. She made her own clothes, with a "rational" divided skirt, cut her hair short, and was a good chess player. A modern woman?

Her campaign for "equal justice for women" began in 1869. In 1884 she was president of the first Women's Suffrage Society in Victoria. She wrote and spoke



in the feminist cause and made known her strong beliefs, some of which were:

- The perfectability of mankind could only be achieved by reason, the co-operation and the equality of the sexes
- The brutality of her age was due to male ignorance, liquor and the illiteracy of the working classes
- By suffrage women could achieve equal legal, social and political privileges
- Women should discard their apathy and learn self-respect
- There should be amore equitable distribution of wealth for the working classes
- The eight hour day should be introduced
- The monarchy was a

reactionary institution

- Christianity was another despotism formed by men to humiliate women
- Most Christians were hypocrites
- Women's dress should be reformed
- Women must have a place in politics and the professions.

"She interested herself in various social reforms; on which question she was the most able writer of her day in Melbourne and, -although at times quite against policy, no editor ever refused her letters or made alterations. She was a trenchant and forceful writer relying upon the justice of all she advocated," - Obituary, Queenscliffe Sentinel.

Henrietta wrote, "Women's anger was compounded by the fact that those who inflicted violence upon women had a share in making the laws while their victims did not."

She met opposition from conservatives (ring a bell?), and had followers among radicals (hardly surprising). She set the pattern of demands for female rights. Because of her, many women took action to achieve their rights, among them access to the professions.

All this from a woman who lived through Victorian times, from 1827 to 1918! Maybe strong women live longer?

Lorraine Inglis



Margaret Olley and the Bicycle Bell

We of the Lost Ladies group have had a long standing love affair with all things Margaret Olley ever since we were fortunate enough to attend a luncheon in her honour, held at the SH Ervin Galley a few year ago.

Margaret was in very good form, sitting up on a platform, microphone in hand and enjoying chatting to us as much as we were enjoying listening to her memories of a wonderful life, immersed in art.

After lunch, people were milling around the table where she sat, signing copies of her then recent (2009) book *Margaret Olley Life's Journey*. I joined the queue, leaning on my trusty walking frame. When my turn came, I presented my copy for signing. Margaret was more interested in my walking frame. Her own frame was close by, with its bicycle bell attached.

The conversation went as follows:

Margaret: "You haven't got a bell".

Me: "No"

Margaret: "I've a bell".

Me: "Yes".



Artist Margaret Olley's message was as clear as a bell

Margaret: (firmly) "Get a bell! You RING the bell (demonstrating loudly), they all part and you walk through!"

Me: "That's a good idea".

Margaret: (in a loud voice and jabbing her finger at me) "GET A BELL!!"

Me: "Yes, Margaret, I will!"

I obtained my bicycle bell at the bike shop in Paddington and had it attached. The young man serving me was quite impressed – his first time attaching a bicycle bell to a walking frame for some old biddy! He thought his grandmother should have one.

Forward to the sad year Margaret left us for galleries unknown. I went along to a large retrospective of her work in a Woollahra gallery where she was sitting in the foyer, awaiting friends who were still enjoying the wonderful paintings on show, when the gentleman in charge noted that I had a bell

on my frame. I told him the above story. He chuckled and then said, "We've got her frame here..." I asked if I could possibly view this special frame. There I was, with two identical walking frames with bells! I asked if he wouldn't mind taking a photo of me with the two of them. A little reluctantly, he obliged, then quickly whipped Margaret's frame away.

The story of the bicycle bell has been told many times to interested parties. And it works!

I rang the bell outside the Drama Theatre at the Opera House during the Vivid Festival, when surrounded by people enjoying themselves at the bar. I rang the bell, everyone exclaimed "She's got a bell!" and then "Come through" as they parted and I walked to the door! Thank you, dear Margaret.

Carol Chirlian



Notices

New procedure for Application for Senior Citizens'Cards



The NSW Family & Community Services Department has advised that, effective immediately, an application for a NSW Seniors Card, i.e. statutory declaration, should no longer be witnessed by a JP. The procedure has been changed, with all applicants to be referred to the Department.

The Application Form has been outdated since October 2013, while the Kingsgrove postal address, still used by some applicants, ceased to exist five years ago. Applicants should now apply either online at www.seniorscard.nsw.gov.au or by telephone to 13 77 88 between

7am-7pm each day. They need only provide their Medicare Card details and the Seniors Card will be mailed to them after 14 days.



OWN Book club list

April 14th: Please note the changed date.

The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea by Randolph Stow.

May 19th: *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett

June 16th: *Burial Rites* – Hannah Kent

July 21st: *The Pure Gold Baby* by Margaret Drabble

August 18th: *The Little Old Lady Who Broke All The Rules* by Catharina Ingelman- Sundberg

September 15th: *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd.

If you can't get a specified book, please let me know.

Happy reading. Newcomers are welcome. Anne-Marie Kestle 0408740435.



Politics in the Pub

Harold Park Hotel, Thursdays, 6.30 to 8.15pm.

March 20: *The Greek Crisis - The Unworkable State.*

March 27: *Debt, fragility and stagnation: Capitalism's missing Engine.*

April 3: *The Murdoch Press and its*

influence on Australian, British and American politics.

April 10: *What's in store for the workplace under Abbott - and what can be done to fight back?*

May 1: *Repealing the Carbon Tax - What will be the consequences?*



Crime Reading Group

April 5: Crime against a backdrop of motors, engines or machiner.

May 3: The underbelly of gardening, horticulture, forestry or farming.

May 31: Crime amid a natural disaster.

June 28: Crime fiction from the decade or year you were born.

July 26: Isolation.

August 23: Comic or humorous crime fiction.

September 20: Architecture or buildings.

October 18: Crime writer with an interesting bio.



Gender, Blame and Violence research project

We are looking for participants for a study exploring defences to murder and social responses to common homicide cases. Murder is the most serious of all violent crimes, however there may be circumstances where

MEMBERS & FRIENDS
WELCOME TO ATTEND
ALL OUR ACTIVITIES

Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am–12.30pm every
Wed. Abraham Mott Hall,
Argyle Street, Millers Point.
Contact Lola 9665 8741 or
Joy 9698 5205.

Lost Ladies

10am every Wed (during
school terms), exploring
various locations or topics
of interest. Contact Annette
Butterfield 9665 5369.
Email: abutterfield_852@
hotmail.com

Film Discussion Group

You are invited on **Tues
April 8**. Contact Yetty
on 9665 2050 for more
information.

**Bondi Junction Coffee
and Gossip Group**

11am - last Friday in each
month. The Coffee Shop,
Eastern Suburbs Leagues
Club (enter from 93-98
Spring St. You must sign
in.) Contact Yetty 9665
2050 to check all details.

Book Club

87 Lower Fort St, 12.30pm -
Come at 12 with a sandwich
for lunch.
MON, APR 14 - *The Merry-
GO-Round in the Sea* by
Randolph Stow.

**Aboriginal Support
Circle**

Jo Parker-Brookes will be
guest speaker at our next
meeting on Monday, April
14, at Windmill Street, at
10.30am. Confirm with Pat
Zinn 9389 1090 or email
pattzinn1@hotmail.com

**Saturday Social Group
at Birkenhead Point**

Drummoyne Sailing Club,
next door to Birkenhead
Complex. Opens 10.30am,
coffee available 11. Contact
Bev Cameron on 9957 5367.

lethal violence may be partly or
wholly excusable, this is known
as a 'defence to murder'.

We invite you to discuss your
opinion on the use of lethal
violence and defences to murder
in different circumstances. We
will be considering scenarios
such as the recent alcohol related
'coward punch' cases, 'provoked
violence', domestic violence and
self-defence cases. Participants
must be 18 years of age or older.

This project will involve a focus
group of approximately an hour
and a half. All information you
provide will be anonymised.
Participants will receive \$25 as
reimbursement for their time.

This is a funded PhD project
through the University of
Western Sydney in the School of
Social Science and Psychology;
in partial fulfilment of a
Postgraduate research Degree.

For more information or to
participate please contact:
Ashlee Gore: a.gore@uws.edu.au.
This project has ethics approval
from the University of Western
Sydney Human Research Ethics
Committee. The approval
number is: H10424 13/01762



SUBSCRIBE NOW to OWN MATTERS

Subscription to OWN MATTERS
is just \$30 per year, due every July 1.

- Want to Join OWN Sydney at the
same time? Tick this box and include
another \$10 member's fee.
- Like to donate to OWN NSW?

\$.....

PAYMENT METHOD

- I enclose a chq/money order for \$30
(covers to June 30, 2013) plus \$10 for
membership made payable to:
OWN NSW **OR**
- Please debit my credit card for \$30
or \$40

Total Amount:

Card Type: _____

No: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____

Expiry Date: __/____

Name on card (Pls Print):

Signature: _____

Address: _____

State _____ Postcode _____

- I need the large print version (A3)
- I'd love it on email too
- Email Only - DON'T post
email address:

LOOKING FOR A GIFT IDEA?

Please send the above subscription to:
Name: _____

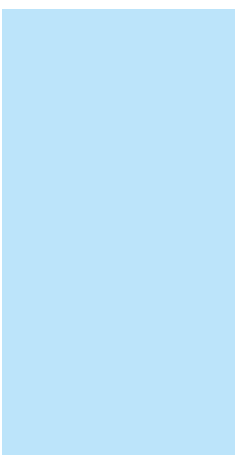
Signature: _____

Address: _____

State and Postcode:

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

OWN Matters



**PRINT
POST
PP2393337/00007**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**