



OWN MATTERS

The Commission of Audit - Death Knell for Public Services?

What Women are Worth. Champagne start. Being Family.

Catching up with Germaine. Tour of Wharf Theatre.

Victims of History. Norphan on the move. Love is for Sharing.



Boys' stories to be told

25 men are to record their stories of living at Kinchela Aboriginal Boys' Training home from 1924-1970



Will report be death knell?

Fears that the Commission of Audit report will result in cuts to public and community services



Family takes care of its own

One member of the clan is not happy about the family's annual holiday. Snowy's all in a spin about the move.



Women step up for wellness

New activities at Bankstown OWN and Wellness Centre have members putting their best foot forward



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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

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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.

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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.*

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International Women's Day 2014

Festival of Ideas

“I Protest”

Friday March 7
9:30am-1pm

Where: SMSA, Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

Amazing speakers include Meredith Burgmann,
Lee Rhiannon, Adele Horin, Irina Dunn, Eva Cox,
Wendy Bacon and more...feisty older women all

Entrance: Gold coin donation

This is a free event but we need to know numbers so RSVP please

There are 3 ways to book:

1. Email sydneyown@gmail.com and write IWD, your name and email address.
2. If you can't email, ring Lorraine Inglis on 0403 154 945 and leave a text message with name and phone number.
3. Go to eventbrite.com.au. Search for Festival of Ideas. This will open the registration page and you can book in, giving your name and email address.

Letters

Booking for IWD

The ad for the Sydney OWN International Womens Day is in this issue (p3). Although the festival is free, we would like to make sure that we have space for OWN members. We are asking you to book, but you can't do it through the office.

This is a Sydney OWN event so we have to handle the booking. We have created a new Sydney OWN email address.

To book you can do one of the following:

- Email us at sydneyown@gmail.com. You will need to write IWD and give your name and your email address.
- If you can't do this ring me at 0403 154 945, and send a text message which says IWD and gives your name and phone number.
- Go to eventbrite.com search for festival of ideas and fill in the booking details

The IWD festival is open to other women, and the ad is going out to other contacts so please book by February 28.

Lorraine Inglis



OWN MATTERS Schedule 2014

In order to get for the editorial team to put our magazine together we have to coordinate dates - these are the dates for 2014.

DEADLINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

January 28
February 18
March 18
April 15
May 20
June 10
July 15
August 19
September 16
October 14
November 18

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

January 22 and 29
February 12 and 19
March 14 and 21
April 9 and 16
May 14 and 21
June 4 and 11
July 9 and 16
August 13 and 20
September 10 and 17
October 8 and 15
November 12 and 19

MAIL OUT DAYS

February 12
March 5
April 2
May 7
June 4
June 25
August 6
September 3
October 8
November 5
December 3

Thinktwiceonline.com

Why have I launched a website? I wanted to support people who live with disabilities and people experiencing change in their lives.

This includes pretty much everybody and especially older women who are living single. There are also other people who are more isolated and it is my hope that this website will reach them as well.

Personally I didn't want to be a bystander watching the Information Technology grow and not be a part of this change in our society. It can be a valuable resource, and I have noticed that many services for people living with disabilities are in there and becoming much more visible and stronger by using this technology.

Thinktwiceonline.com is an inclusive and adaptable website which supports and will meet the needs of the whole community.

Adapting to the needs of prospective participants is the core of my service.

What have I discovered?

Applying myself to learning to use the internet competently, and a website embedded in Word press is quite a leap. The challenge is there to be embraced. The internet is chock full of information and websites, but the ones that are really helpful sometimes takes a lot of looking.

Many other older citizens are also taking up this mentally invigorating, and at times frustrating exercise. The more time I spend the better it gets. There is now less hesitation and more, 'what will I learn today' feeling.

New skills

I had to learn to write authentically and spontaneously. Initially the idea of learning something entirely new was at times daunting. I have become less fearful of making mistakes and enjoying them instead. The Internet is the virtual school room, and my grand daughters are now using it at their school. I don't want to be on the back foot with this quite exciting communication revolution.

Thinktwiceonline.com is in four parts:

- Narrative of people facing changes in their lives
- Exploring imaginatively the issues
- Read the supplied websites
- Write two to three sentences to create a positive outcome to the needs of the characters.

How will my website support the Older Women's Network?

The Older Women's Network will be promoted on the website to raise the profile of an excellent organisation. The newsletter is also an important resource which I would like to publicise. I would like to include articles from the newsletter in my blog with appropriate accreditation.

Glenys Buselli

B.A. Adult Education UTS



Thank you Wendy

In November 2013 OWN NSW was the grateful recipient of a bequest of \$5,000 from the Estate of the late Wendy Kerr, for which OWN NSW is truly grateful.

OWN NSW



© Mylène Bressan

Thank you

Thank you so much for your thoughts and wonderful card following Enid's death. Thanks also for copies of Dorothy's tribute. I sent this to several of Enid's pals.

It is so wonderful to read how highly Enid was regarded at OWN both in your card and in Dorothy's piece.

Enid has been one of the joys of my life. At our Christmas Day party next week we will raise our glasses to Enid. She will be missed but also celebrated.

All the best to you and your friends and families for the festivities.

From Ross (Enid Harrison's very proud nephew)

At and Beyond the Rocks

Hastings OWN

Hi everyone, I hope you have all had a great Christmas & New Year and 2014 is a healthy and happy year. We have a few, including myself, who haven't been well in 2013.

One of our committee, Zoe, went down hill after her husband died and went into Hostel Care but is now in a Nursing Home. Her daughter told me she has early stages of dementia. A couple of us have called in and our group kept in touch with cards because she doesn't like the phone.

I think it is important to keep an eye on members who may not be well. We have one of our great committee members Bridget who sends Birthday and Get Well cards. She also sends a Thinking of You card if a member is just not doing really well.

We had a great Christmas lunch at a club out of Port Macquarie we exchanged gifts via secret Santa, had some lucky door prizes and good company. Thank you members for participating. We also had a bus trip to Nahiack



Hastings OWN at work

to a great restaurant, Greenhouse Café, with a gift shop. There were necklaces of good quality for \$5 and another gift shop next door with reasonable prices. Our women had a great shopping time.

We chose Hastings Headway as our charity because it is one that goes under the radar. Hastings Headway takes care of adults with brain acquired head injury. We are very fond of them and six of us went for morning tea with them for Christmas. Joy presented a cheque for \$305, a great effort for a small group. We also collected from anyone who wanted to donate and gave the guys Sanity vouchers worth \$110 as they love music.

Our next outing after our boat cruise in January is IWD. We will be having a luncheon hoping

to get a woman to speak at the lunch and I will check if I can get a small grant to be able to invite outside women.

Cheers until next time

Pam Kenyon



Watch yourself

After fifteen years my nephew was ending his stint as a breakfast announcer at the ABC. A celebration was planned to mark the occasion after his last show on 6 December, and his mum, Elizabeth, and I had been invited.

Elizabeth and I had arranged to meet at the ABC in Harris Street at 5am in time for his 5.30am show. To avoid a very early start from my home in Wollongong I stayed the night at my daughter's home in Balmain.

After dinner with the family we sat around talking. When I went to bed my watch showed midnight. I couldn't believe we had talked so late and hoped I would wake in time. I did, and at twenty to five rang for a cab, which promptly arrived. As the driver dropped me at the ABC entrance he asked whether

I was going to work. I told him no, I was going to a party. He was very surprised and said he had often driven



passengers home from a party that early but had never taken anyone to a party at that time. I told him the party didn't start till five thirty but I wanted to be there a little early.

After waiting at the door for a few minutes a security guard came out and asked if she could help. I said I was meeting my sister at five to five and we were going to Adam's final show. She looked puzzled and asked, "But what are you doing here now?" I repeated that my sister was coming on a bus that would arrive at five to five and that I was there to meet her. She repeated, "But what are you doing here now?"

Wondering what she was on about, and to make the point, I waved my watch in front of her and told her it's just five to five now and the bus would be here any moment. Whereupon she waved her watch at me and said, "It's only ten to three." My watch was two hours fast!

It's first message to me was at 'midnight' saying, "I'm dying, better get yourself a new watch", and I hadn't paid attention!

Barbara Malcolm
Bankstown OWN



Bankstown OWN

Bankstown Older Women's Network and Wellness Centre members really looking forward to an exciting start to 2014 with quite a few new program activities starting in Term 1.

We have started our Photography classes with a professional photographer teaching the skills and secrets of taking a good shot with any camera including your



Bankstown women get fit

mobile, iPad or camera. This 10 week program will finish with a display event and will reflect the many different cultures within the Bankstown area.

Tai Chi takes on a fresh, new style with our new Wellness Trainer who speaks Cantonese, Mandarin and English. Serene's language skills give us an opportunity to attract Chinese speaking women to our group.

This is been a noticeable gap in our service, as the Chinese languages are widely spoken in our area and we now will have two bilingual Wellness Trainers.

We will also be offering a REACH program for women with bi polar disorder and depression. This is a proactive program designed by the Black Dog Institute and it supports resilience and skill development to encourage people to take control of the well being.

The first series will run for 9 weeks in Term 2.

Looks like we are gong to be quite busy in 2014.

Diane Brooks
Coordinator
Bankstown
Wellness Centre





Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

2014 - A Year of Cutbacks and Changes

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs faces a challenging year fighting against the Federal Government's proposed cuts in funding to the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) nationwide and to the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, as well as making changes to the national schools curriculum.

\$43.1 million dollars are to be slashed from the ALS, which means a huge loss of frontline services, leading to even higher incarceration rates of Indigenous people than are present now. Instead, the Government should be increasing legal assistance and investing in justice reinvestment. It is less expensive to invest in diversionary programs, which are proving to be successful in reducing the rates of imprisonment.

The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples was

established as an independent company owned and operated by Indigenous people, aiming to secure economic, political, social, cultural and environmental futures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Since its inception it has been working towards these objectives as well as growing membership and establishing a financial base, but the proposed loss of \$15 million dollars will severely affect its operations.

The Federal Government has established an Indigenous advisory body, appointing Warren Mundine as key advisor, who has said that Indigenous affairs cannot be immune from budget cuts but it appears that he is more a defender of the Government than an advocate for Indigenous people.

Education Minister Christopher Pyne is questioning the need for the "Indigenous Australia" theme in the current National schools curriculum, labelling it a "Black Arm Band" view of

Australian history. It seems that the Coalition Government is determined to impose its political views on our children.

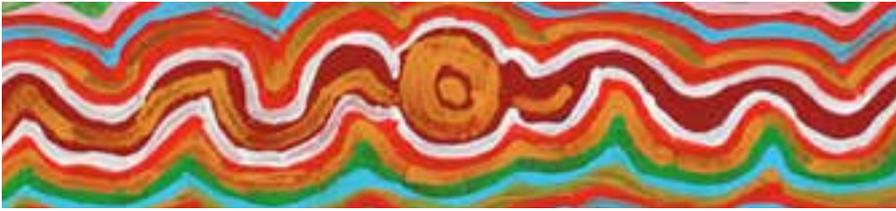


Kinchela Stories to be Told

ANSW Government reunion grant of \$28,000 is enabling 25 men to record their stories of living at Kinchela Aboriginal Boys' Training Home, near Kempsey in NSW.

About 500 boys and a small number of girls were removed from their families to this state-run "training farm" between 1924 and 1970. Many were subjected to poor treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse, humiliation, and were stripped of their names, being called by number.

One of the worst punishments, mostly for bed-wetting, was having to go "down the line". A manager would order all the boys, as many as 60, to form



Some of the Kinchela boys with a gate from the home

a single row from oldest to youngest. A boy, deemed to have offended, would go “down the line” and be punched by each boy in turn. No one dared not to deliver his punch, or he, too would be sent down the line.

Another brutal punishment, even for children as young as seven, was being chained at night to a fig tree with a metal loop and having to endure the darkness and isolation until the next day.

All were barefoot, even in winter. They were forbidden to speak their languages and told they were white, but when they came out they found that they didn’t belong anywhere. Only in the 1960’s were the boys allowed to attend Kinchela Primary School and Kempsey High School, and allowed to play sport.

When the home was closed, it passed into the ownership of the Kempsey Local Aboriginal Land

Council. A reunion was held in 2002, when the Deputy Premier of NSW formally apologised for what had gone on in the past. The Kinchela Boys’ Home Aboriginal Corporation, formed at that time, is producing professionally made video interviews with text and pictures, and three films are due to be released soon.

That 25 men will finally tell their stories is a testament to their resilience. Today, the home is the Benelong’s Haven Family and Rehabilitation Centre for Indigenous people with alcohol or drug dependence. www.kinchelaboyshome.org.au

On the 14th February 2012 the Kinchela Aboriginal Boys’ Training Home, together with Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home and Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls’ Training Home were added to the NSW State Heritage Register.



Strategies to Improve School Attendance Rates in Indigenous Communities

A recent Council of Australian Governments report on Indigenous school attendance shows that there has been no improvement in the rate of Indigenous school attendance over the past 5 years, going backwards in some areas.

A two-year strategy funded by \$28.4m has been developed, funding the employment of School Attendance Supervisors to manage and develop up to 5 Attendance Officers, initially in each of 40 communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, NSW, South Australia and Queensland; most of which have had attendance rates below 70%, some even below 50%.

Attendance officers and supervisors with training certificates relevant to working with children will visit houses where students have not attended school, to get them there every day. The employment arrangements are tailored to suit the needs of each community. The funding will also include school uniforms, vehicles and office space.

This sounds like a promising strategy, but it will depend on getting through to parents the value of education for kids.

All stories by Pat Zinn



What's needed from us to change government policies and decisions? Anger? Hope? Action? What are you going to do about it?

The Commission of Audit – Death Knell for Public and Community Services?

On the 28th of January, I attended a Parramatta meeting which was addressed by Ged Kearney, Australian Council of Trade Union President, and Mark Lennon, Secretary of Unions NSW (which sponsored this meeting). Their purpose was to awaken us to the dangers we could face in Australia once the Commission of Audit reports back.

Mark, just returned from the United States, reported on the virtual non-existence of community services in the USA. Their union strength is so low, and the American culture so skewed, that there is a whole class of working poor. He reminded us that it was the unions here that fought for Medicare, compulsory superannuation, professional affordable child care and other community supports.

Ged Kearney fears that the current federal Government is “coming through like a bulldozer”, apparently intent on re-structuring society for the benefit of the big end of town. She pointed out that the Commission of Audit is being carried out without any consultation with the workers, services or the general public – all behind closed doors.

Everything is “on the table”, starting from the premise that the Government overspends, and that it “doesn’t create jobs or wealth”. “Bunkum,” said Ged! Possible outcomes are the end of universal health coverage, privatisation of Australia Post, and



the slashing of ABC funding. Ged Kearney will be touring the country warning of a dire future if the expected report outcomes feed into the May budget, which of course is what P.M. Abbott is forecasting.

The union movement is asking each of us to make a submission to the Commission of Audit, which can be done at <http://www.australianunions.org.au/ourcommunity>. While this can involve some work on your part, is well worthwhile. Further, there is to be a rally to save Medicare on Saturday, 15th February at 1pm in front of Sydney Town Hall.

The Independent Teachers’ Association commented that this Government is already back-tracking on Gonski funding and on the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

A representative from the TAFE sector questioned the speakers about what action they should be taking. It was pointed out that in Victoria many people are suffering from the demise of TAFE, and the



unions will be campaigning heavily in Griffith on this issue as well as others.

The Combined Retired Unionists' Organisation has already passed a resolution against privatisation of community services. Their battle cry is Anger, Hope, Action There was an overflow crowd at this meeting, indicative of the concern among unionists about the direction of this Government. A rally in March was indicated.

ANGER HOPE ACTION

Anna Logan



What women are worth

In 1988 in New Zealand, Allen and Unwin published an important book. Activist, economist, environmentalist and politician, Marilyn Waring, wrote it. Her book was titled *Counting for Nothing: What men value and what women are worth*.

Waring's insightful analysis of the glaring lack of value attributed to women's work and her ability to simplify the basics of economic theory for those not trained in the discipline of Economics made her book a new benchmark and a challenge to the assumptions which have continued to guide and influence national Budgets and international economic decisions.

In writing this book, Waring removed Economics from the realm of the experts, mainly men, who have mostly ignored the contributions of women to The Economy, both national and international, in the developed and developing worlds alike.

In recent years, not only have most women's efforts both within and without the paid workforce continued to count for nothing, or for very much less than men's productivity in this country as elsewhere, but we now also have a deliberate and vindictive assault on "the ageing population", of all genders.



Little regard is given by economists and politicians to the ongoing unpaid efforts of older Australians as volunteers, and as backup services in caring, chauffeuring and tending to the needs of family members, especially the sick and disabled, and in particular grandchildren, as quasi childcare workers.

All mostly done with love and no expectation of remuneration, which of course counts for nothing in the Economics of Productivity. Love is not productive unless it adds to population growth it seems.

It is a mystery to me when my grandchildren go to pre-school and my daughter pays \$100 per day for the privilege, that the work of childcare within that context is counted as productivity, but if the same grandchild or grandchildren stay with me in my home and I am not paid, that same childcare is not counted as productivity.

I sincerely recommend that everyone reads *Counting for Nothing* and ask why, in 2014, more than a quarter of a century later, we are still not recognising the truths she enumerated then and now challenging the economic status quo, national accounting systems and political leadership which still rely on outmoded and unsophisticated Economic theory and inadequate and outmoded economic measurement.

Lyn MacIver

If you would like to read the full text of Lyn MacIver's insightful and stimulating article, contact her on lynmaciver@gmail.com



*Life is not only doom and gloom.
A bit more froth and bubble makes
us laugh and keeps us young.*

A champagne start to 2014 - the corks are popping

It was 10.30 am and the Abraham Mott Hall was abuzz as Theatre Group members came in and shared the best hugs in the world, on a day which just coincidentally happened to be National Hug Day.

What a lovely feeling it is to come back to rehearsals, as we have two new shows in the offing and our beloved *Don't Knock Your Granny* on track for 2014. Work has been done on our show *Ma it's time to Move*, around the issues facing older women and accommodation and also a show to replace *Stayin Alive*, that will contain humorous skits, songs and political satire.

After going through scripts and movements we broke for lunch and cake, chocolates and champers to celebrate the birthdays of two of our members, Norma and Denise, who had their feast days in the holidays. It's one of the things that I've always enjoyed as I'm sure do other OWN groups, this coming together over food, a cuppa and lively chatter.

In April, at Easter Time we're scheduled to perform at the National Folk Festival in Canberra, where 200 acts will come together over 5 days. To perform there has been the long-held dream of Joan Modder, a driving force behind *Don't Knock your Granny* and her dream became contagious.

Whilst there, we will promote OWN NSW and OWN Australia, after conferring with Aloma



The Theatre Group perform with puppets

Fennell, the President of our national body. As the words of one of our songs conveys we'll be making whoopee and carrying the banner for older women everywhere. Happy New Year!

Rita Tratt



Catching up with Germaine

For most of January I was holidaying 'in the bush' in the Northern Rivers region on family property. I'd stocked up on books to read and one of them was *White Beech, the rainforest years* by Germaine Greer.

I was inspired to buy this book because I had no idea of this aspect of Germaine's life (as a property owner in south eastern Queensland) and because she describes herself, on the cover, 'as an old dog who succeeded in learning a load of new tricks, inspired and rejuvenated by her passionate love of

Australia and of Earth, most exuberant of small planets’

The book records the learning curve with all the challenges, successes and botanical names of trees and other vegetation that Germaine had to grapple with during the years she worked on restoring part of an ancient rainforest. She has now handed over the land to Friends of Gondwana Rainforest, an Australian not-for-profit company that Germaine established for the purpose of taking over the property.

This is not an easy read, but worth it especially if you’re interested in ‘the bush’ and the history of that part of Australia, and catching a glimpse of another Germaine.

*Sonia Laverty
On holidays*



Tour of Wharf Theatre

One morning recently several of us from the Theatre Group went on a conducted tour of the Wharf Theatre, headquarters of the Sydney Theatre Co. We were joined by an OWN person from Wellness on Wednesdays, a woman from Melbourne and a local man.

Our guide showed us behind the scenes where the sets are constructed and scenery painted. We saw their extensive and extraordinary collection of ‘props’, everything it seemed from an old bedpan to a beautiful, antique chandelier and including



Wharf Theatre

dozens of old chairs, prams, ornaments and just about anything else you can think of. We were also shown how imitation fruit and vegetables are made from foam plastic and painted to look very realistic.

Next was the large rehearsal room, where tiny models of the sets are made, and the wardrobe department where I was surprised to see rows and rows of men’s shoes as well as the expected skirts, trousers, blouses, hats, etc.

The most spectacular on display were the elaborate Elizabethan clothes used for a recent production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*.

We had been told at the start how the theatre and all its various rooms and corridors had been converted from the old wharf and how some of the original timbers had been retained. It is full of nooks and crannies and certainly has atmosphere.

This tour was arranged by the Harry Jensen Centre but anyone is able to go. See the Theatre Company’s website for information on this tour. You will need to be aware however, that the tour involves a good many steps. It cost us \$10 each and is an interesting way to spend an hour or two.

Halcyon Evans



Our families, we love them, but they have their own lives. But with maturity, women find great pleasure in the company of other women. Friendship groups give us support, enjoyment, ideas and interests that we never expected.

Being Family

“**T**he cat’s just pee’d in the car. We’ll be a bit later than I’d planned. Is that O.K.?” Trying not to laugh at my son’s frustration, because I knew he was stressed getting organised on time for his family’s departure for Europe the next day, I expressed sympathy. Shortly afterwards, a flustered family of three plus chirruping budgie and freaked out cat, in a cardboard box sealed with packing tape, greeted me at the door.

Charlie the budgie, was quickly installed. Snowie the cat was still in her box. Ilana (11) and I wrestled with the sticky packing tape, until it finally yielded. Snowie shot out like a bullet from a gun and dived in behind the washing machine. We set up her equipment and returned to my son.

“The cat pee has soaked through the car seat covers,” he said sadly. His car is his pride and joy. Urine-soaked merino wool seat covers were not his idea of immaculate. I offered to wash them and set about filling the wash tub. My son continued with other last minute requests while his daughters helped themselves to drinks and biscuits. We relaxed together, Lucy resting her now very feminine figure on the lounge and regaling us with tales of her teenage activities.

Lucy and Ilana, suddenly missing their more or less permanent electronic extensions, stood and headed out to their father’s car to get them, but Lucy returned alone. ‘Where is Ilana?’ I asked. ‘We had a fight. She’s still out there,’ Lucy muttered, an edge to her voice. At this poignant moment, my Devoted



I am going where? The cat is one family member who is often unhappy about ‘holidays’

Spouse entered the house, just back from a lunch date. I took the moment to go out to Ilana.

“Won’t you come back inside? We’re all missing you!” Smiling uncertainly, Ilana ran ahead, to see if her beloved cat had yet emerged. As Snowie was still huddled in a frightened ball, Ilana rejoined the others.

Once DS and I had given them more food, I returned to the laundry. The noise of rinsing water rushing into the tub forced the still terrified cat out into the open and into the arms of DS, already enamoured of her from a previous cat-minding experience. Snowie permitted his affection with obvious reluctance before jumping back to the floor and shooting up the stairs to find a better hiding place. I finished the washing and was relieved to put it out in the sun.

My son decided it was time to go. We wished them well for their adventures, exchanged affectionate



hugs and saw them off. I wondered with wry anticipation what kind of adventures we might have in their absence.

Bev Cameron



Victims of History

On trains and buses during my recent trip to western NSW, I noticed many Aboriginal families travelling to and from country for family celebrations. They travel back for special occasions in spite of the fact that they have been scattered far from country for so long.

I have learnt that in 1946 an Aboriginal Reserve was set aside in Bourke. A large number of different Aboriginal groups were brought from country to the Reserve. It's very hard to believe it was 'for their own good'. After all, wool was still king out there then, and Aboriginal country would have been on pastoral leases.

The Aboriginals were lumped together as one group. That they were from 21 language groups was ignored. A few of the Aboriginal people now in Bourke would have been small children when their families were moved. Many of them would have observed and felt the mourning and distress felt by their parents, aunties, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. The community is still in mourning.

I was horrified to observe the effects past policies had on Aboriginal people in Bourke. From my room in the Gidgee Guesthouse, around the corner from Central Park, I could see and hear Aboriginal

children out alone late at night and well into the morning. Whether the children were avoiding what was happening in their homes, whether they were hungry and stealing money for food, whether the main problem was that there was absolutely nothing for the kids to do, I did not know.

These are just symptoms, not really the problem.

One local woman thought that with local help a van in the park could at least offer the kids sausage sandwiches to help with hunger. Another thought that they needed volunteer coaches and umpires for the football or netball teams that no longer exist. Are these answers?

Can you engage the children if community members are not engaged? How do you sort out problems like mourning for country, social and economic disadvantage, stolen generations and land rights of 21 language groups, just for starters.

There are many services available in the main drag – during the day – and millions have been spent. The people who work in them are members of the Bourke community. I'm sure members of the Aboriginal community have been given some input into shaping their future, and I don't doubt the ideas put forward differ.

Is the problem engaging both the Aboriginal community and the white community? Do the experts, consultants and bureaucrats that make decisions take to heart what the Aboriginal community has had to say?

Lorraine Inglis



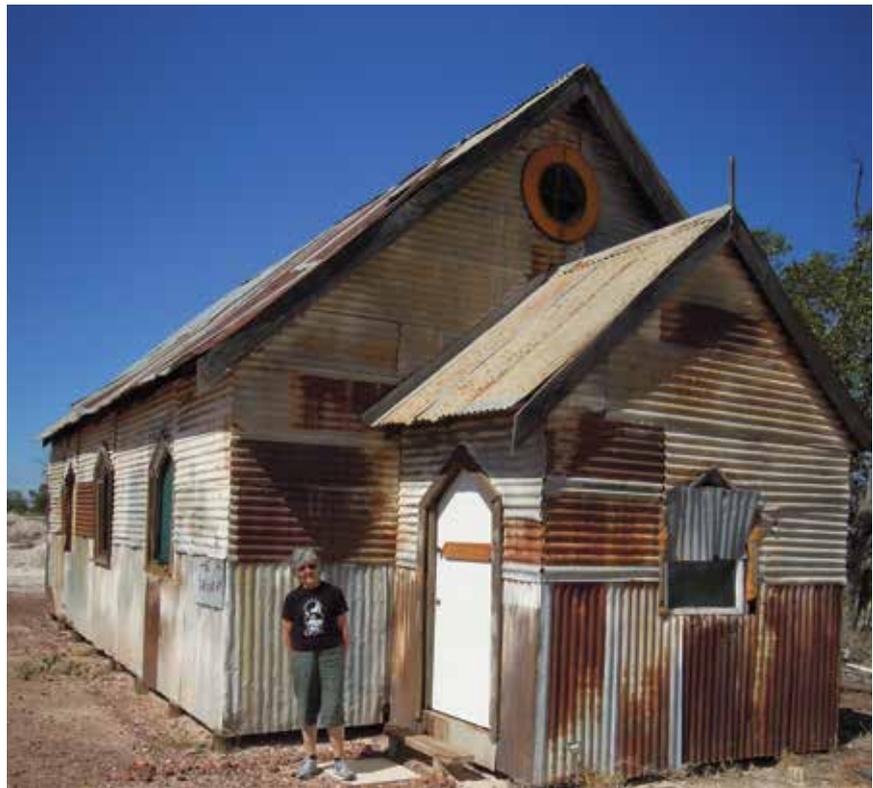
*Go west young man? What about older woman?
You can do it. Wherever you go you see the
signs of our history. Sometimes Australia's black
history is distressingly obvious.*

'Norphan' on the move

To save me being a norphan on Xmas Day an old male friend was willing to go adventuring. The idea was to travel as far as possible in the scrub, by train, for as little as possible. I still had two of the four travel vouchers we get each year.

Off to Lightning Ridge, using one voucher, on Xmas Eve, with our Xmas dinner in an esky. On Xmas Day in the cabin at the caravan park we sat down to a delicious seafood dinner. No Boxing Day sales in Lightning Ridge. Nothing was open. Our landlady put us in touch with Peter who drove us around to see the sights. I couldn't afford the opals I liked.

Next day the bus from Lightning Ridge to Dubbo on a Countrylink ticket cost \$2.50. A taxi got us to the Western Plains Zoo. We had fun in one of those electric carts, a bit like a golf buggy. Old Dubbo Gaol was great, with performances through the day. The Bakery had better croissants than in Leichhardt. On December 30, using another voucher, we took the bus to



Lorraine on her Christmas travels

Broken Hill. Nine hours later we arrived at Klingy's, once a corner pub called the Pig and Whistle (still known as The Pig to local taxi drivers). Our hostess's pet python only ate live mice from the garden.

On New Year's Eve, we celebrated with a drink in the fabulous Palace Hotel, (from *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*) before dancing the night away in the Democratic Club. A hired car took us to attractions such as the old town of Silverton and the sculptures on the hill.

Our 2014 vouchers were available New Year's Day but no bus until January 3. So we caught the 3.45am coach to Bourke. The taxi was very busy. At 11.15am the bus dropped us in Nyngan to wait for the 4.15pm bus to Bourke. It was 42 degrees! I spent five hours reading in the RSL, drinking mineral water on ice.

In Bourke we were staying at the Gidgee Guesthouse which has cabins and facilities around grassed area where we sometimes saw the young red kangaroo joey, from WIRES. The Gidgee was

originally the London Bank, a lovely old building, from when Bourke was a thriving port on Darling River. I enjoyed walking to the historic buildings, to the Fred Hollows memorial and along the Darling River.

Another voucher got us back to Sydney. The cost of fourteen nights accommodation was that of sharing the cheapest rooms we could get – and accept.

Can't complain! I travelled all that distance for \$2.50.

Lorraine Inglis



Love is for Sharing

“I was wondering if you'd care to address our forthcoming World Community Day service for our local members of Australian Church Women Inc. I heard you speaking once before and you were inspiring.”

Flattered, but caught off guard by such an unexpected invitation, I could only exclaim, “My goodness! What was my topic?” “I can't remember now. All I

recall is liking what you'd said.” Suppressing my amusement at the unintended irony of her words, I asked what she was looking for as a topic. “Oh, anything you think would be suitable for such an occasion. I'll send you details if you are interested.”

Taking a deep breath, I crossed my fingers and accepted. It had been some time since I last addressed a church gathering. After this preliminary and unusual conversation, I considered possible topics and it occurred to me that, as the women who would be present were all likely to be older, I now had a fine opportunity to talk about OWN and to shape that story to fit the bible readings for the day on the topic of ‘Love is for Sharing.’

Armed with some back numbers of *Own Matters*, a few other publications and a brief address over which I had laboured to ensure I'd got my story correct, even if it was somewhat truncated and that it would fit the day's scriptural context, I arrived at the church.

As I anticipated, except for one man, older women made up the

audience. They were welcoming and friendly, a good start.

During my address, the gathering listened attentively as I regaled them with the story of OWN, lightened with appropriate quotes from Dorothy Cora's excellent book*. When I concluded with the words of the Theatre Group's ‘I was the very model of grandmotherly propriety,’ and closed with a triumphant uplifting of my arms, thumbs up, everyone burst into applause. This is not a usual response to church addresses . . . !

At the post-service luncheon, the women – and the lone man who declared himself to be sympathetic – showed great interest in OWN and its aims. Some took copies of *Own Matters* and one asked for the words of my closing poem. I departed with a pleasant sense of accomplishment, having satisfactorily managed to integrate the story of OWN into a context of ‘Love is for Sharing.’ There had been a lot of friendly love shared that morning!

Bev Cameron

* *Centre Stage* by Dorothy Cora, Older Women's Network 2009



Notices

Birkenhead Saturday Group

The group will try the Drummoyne Sailing Club immediately next door to the Birkenhead Shopping complex. The Sailing Club opens at 10.30am. but coffee is not available til 11.00am. Parking is available in both the Sailing Club grounds and in Birkenhead. Further details from Bev Cameron 9957 5367.



OWN book club list

February - Monday 19th Feb

The Golden Notebook by Doris Lessing

March - Monday 17th March

We Need to Talk About Kevin by Lionel Shriver

April - Monday 21st April

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

If you have any trouble getting the scheduled books, please let me know. Happy reading.

Anne-Marie Kestle 040 8740 435



National Disability Insurance Scheme

“The National Disability Insurance Scheme must support people with a disability to participate in the workforce.

Public Meeting

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS; REBUILD THE FIGHT

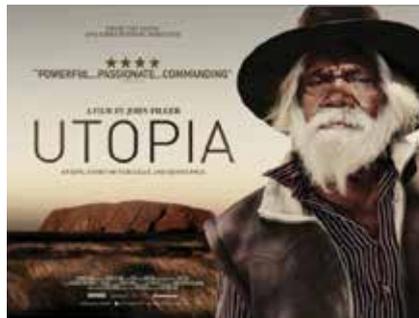
Marking the UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 21, 6.30 for 7 start

Redfern Town Hall

73 Pitt St, Redfern

Speakers include: Utopia film maker John Pilger, Nyoogar activist Marianne McKay, and Muckaty Traditional owner Diane Stokes



Otherwise cuts to the Disability Support Pension will only result in more people accessing the unemployment benefit and do nothing to reduce the number of welfare recipients”, said Senior Policy Advisor Charmaine Crowe.

“According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia has

one of the highest unemployment rates of people with a disability in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, falling behind the US, the UK and Mexico. Only 54% of people with a disability aged between 15 and 64 are in the workforce.”

“The announcement that the Disability Support Pension will

be targeted in an effort to reduce welfare spending comes off the back of suggestions made to the Commission of Audit to include the family home in the Age Pension means test.”

“CPSA calls on Prime Minister Tony Abbott to rule out means-testing the family home to put at ease the minds of almost two million pensioners who stand to be affected by such a proposal.”

Charmaine Crowe CPSA

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OWN NSW 1st Quarterly Meeting 2014

Hosted by OWN NSW

Thursday 27 Feb
10am (for 10.30) -2.00pm

Mott Hall, Argyle St,
Millers Point

*Barbara Malcolm &
Diane Brooks explain
Creative Ageing*

**Lunch provided
but RSVP by 20 Feb**

**9247 7046 or
info@ownnsw.org.au**

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 to join us
on **Tuesday, February 11.**
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
Come at 12 with a sandwich
for lunch.
MON, FEB 19 - 12.30pm at
87 Lower Fort St. *The Golden
Notebook* by Doris Lessing.
MON, MAR 17 - 12.30pm
at 87 Lower Fort St. *We need
to Talk about Kevin* by Lionel
Shriver.

Aboriginal Support Circle
Confirm details for first
meeting 2014 with Pat
Zinn on 9389 1090 or email
pattzinn1@hotmail.com

**Saturday Social Group
at Birkenhead Point**
Drummoyne Sailing Club,
next door to Birkenhead
Shopping Complex. Opens
10.30am. Details from Bev
Cameron on 9957 5367.

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: _____

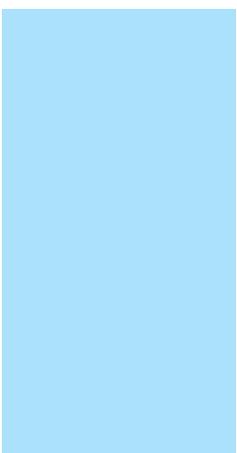
IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:

Older Women's Network NSW Inc.

87 Lower Fort Street

Millers Point NSW 2000

OWN Matters



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