



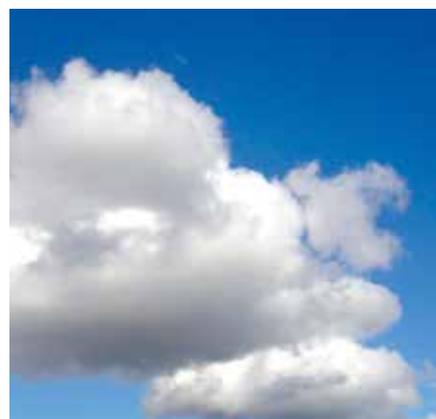
OWN MATTERS

Quarterly Meeting. Bit by Bit. Hour Out of Workday Time.
Feminism - What Went Wrong? Addressing Energy Poverty.
Plumb the Depths and Find Treasure. Theatre Group Report.
Speak Out About Racism. Recognise Us. Unexpected Outcomes.



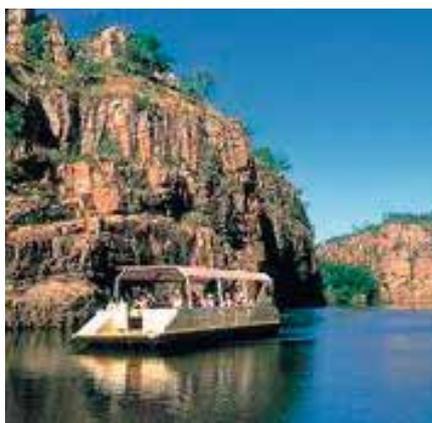
Ladies Lost in Art Space

Group visit to gallery
provides food for thought
as ladies face confronting
display of war themed art



Driver takes wrong turn

Racist comments by bus
driver offends OWN
members who demand
action from company



Weather inspires a good whinge

Poem expresses what many
people feel about the ever
changing weather conditions
and wanting something else!



Australia's leading lady

Vida Goldstein was the
country's first internationally
recognised suffragette
lobbying for change



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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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OWN NSW

QUARTERLY MEETING



All members of OWN NSW are invited to our next Quarterly Meeting, hosted by OWN Illawarra. Quarterly meetings are a great way to learn more about OWN NSW and meet other OWN Members!

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Redesign Your Future - Change your home and change your life
Public Transport - Driving you to distraction

DATE: THURSDAY MAY 15

Venue: Corrimal Community Centre
15 Short Street, Corrimal.
(Corrimal is a northern suburb of Wollongong)

TIME: 10.30 am
LUNCH PROVIDED!

TRANSPORT

Train leaves Central Station at 8.13am and arrives at Corrimal Station at 10.08am.
Corrimal Station is wheelchair accessible. Transport will be provided from
Corrimal Station to the Corrimal Community Centre.

REGISTRATION: You need to register to attend
Ring OWN NSW on 9247 7046 to book

Letters

Naughty and Nice

About the objections from members concerning the words on T-shirts and other printed words. May I suggest a sealed section as used in women's magazines to hide the naughty bits? The people who objected could remove the sealed section and only read the nice bits.

Josie Jackson



Frame of reference

Language is a very versatile and fluid medium. When we see words our frame of reference indicates how we view these words. Let's say that you come across words that would never escape your lips; do you assume the writer is not a nice person, or do you put these words under the heading, language? When a value judgement arises, then you need to consider the context that is being used. This article was in the context of language, not values.

Seeing such words that are not in our personal everyday language can be confronting. We each have our own boundary of language. I am aware that a letter sent and printed in the Older Women's

Network newsletter last month has more than ruffled feathers.

Historically the words come from Shakespeare's day. We can't all approve their usage of these fruity expressions, knowing that it is our choice to use or not. The fact that they are written doesn't mean you are expected to use them or approve of them. Free speech is an important right and one that we all give a place in our democracy, and also within the Older Women's Network.

Glenys Buselli



Clause 18C

Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act currently bans actions "reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate others because of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin".

After Andrew Bolte was done for his comments on radio, the media claimed he was denied the right of free speech. Should free speech give shock jocks the right to make racist remarks?

Australia's Commissioner for Human Rights, Tim Wilson,

supports this as part of the human right to freedom of speech but ignores the second article in the Declaration of Human Rights that everyone is entitled to "no distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, national origin...or any other status."

The change announced by Attorney General George Brandis, will be the removal of the words "offend, insult, humiliate", from clause 18c leaving only "intimidate".

Australia's Race Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Tim Soutphommasane, calls for the federal government to reverse its plans to repeal this section of the Racial Discrimination Act. The planned changes would mean it is OK to offend, insult or humiliate others because of their race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin.

Last month I wrote a letter about how demeaning the use of discriminatory words is, and included a list of them. No one complained about those words being in OWN Matters. Are discriminatory words less offensive than "swear" words?

Lorraine Inglis





A sad farewell to Wellness group

OWN Sydney's Wellness on Wednesday has folded after thirteen healthy years. Although we were never a large group, we were friendly, caring and very supportive of each other. Our wellness activities over the years included gentle exercise, tai chi, relaxation, meditation, drumming, and creative movement. And who could forget the connections we made and the stimulating conversations we enjoyed over morning tea and lunch!

Joy Ross

Disability and Discrimination

Some of us may have heard abusive or negative stereotypes such as "retard", "spas" meaning spastic, "four eyes" describing someone with glasses, "deaf as a post" to indicate hearing loss. All are examples of thoughtless terms to foster prejudicial treatment against an individual, often to exclude that person from a dominant group.

Words have power, and can cause deep psychological pain, but dismissive, nonverbal communication can also aim to diminish someone else. Intentional naming to exclude others from opportunities, or privileges available to others is based on arbitrary, illogical or irrational behaviour and decision making. The United Nations

states that "Discriminatory behaviours take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection."

Disability is caused by physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional or developmental impairment, or some combination of these which may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime. Unfairly stigmatising some individuals for inability to live up to standards which confer inclusion and prestige status often results in exclusion from public life.

It is often a deliberate strategy by an individual or group to maintain dominance, influence and power and is frequently based on fear, ignorance and insecurity. Food for thought?

Lyn Maciver



Sticks and Stones

My parents moved to a new suburb in Cape Town in 1942 when I was twelve years old and I had to go to a new high school. There were several Jewish girls in the class whose parents had managed to escape from Europe and they were "different" from the rest of us Anglo girls. Our class teacher was anti-Semitic and, as such, picked on them with snide remarks. As a Jewish girl myself, I felt demeaned, insulted and fearful by what she said. I can't remember the actual words, I just remember the way they affected me.

For the rest of that year, I kept a low profile, hoping that she wouldn't attack me. The worst feeling was that of inferiority. I never mentioned these incidents to my parents.

However, these and other incidents, such as neighbours not allowing their children to play with my children, helped me to understand how demeaning it must have been for the Black and Coloured population in South Africa to be continually portrayed as "inferior".

Later on, when I moved to Australia, I recognised the same treatment was being meted out to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Australians as well as refugees. Being told you are inferior can lead to psychological problems and ill health. "Sticks and stones may hurt my bones," but believe me, words do hurt.

Pat Zinn



At and Beyond the Rocks

Seniors Week

Seniors Week was huge and very full on. First we celebrated by having Open Days on both the Monday and Tuesday of that week. Guests were invited to join us for morning tea and to take part or watch the activities we were doing. The dancers put on a lovely display of International Folk Dancing and were happy to see a couple of our guests getting into the spirit by hitting the dance floor and enjoying strutting their stuff with the rest of us.

Wednesday that same week found some of our members staffing a table at the Seniors Health Expo at Ribbonwood, where much networking was done. Info on OWN, both Wellness and the group, was shared and Newsletters and brochures were handed out.

Again our drummers performed, were well received and invited back to do it again next year. Thursday the drummers were off again to perform at the Bankstown OWN Wellness Centre's Seniors Week Open Day.



The drummers who volunteered to man the expo table at Ribbonwood in Seniors' week. They are, left to right; Lily Galuti, Meredith Hood, Jo Brindley, Robina Baird (Guest Speaker on the day), Barbara Malcolm and Nali Kitulagodage.

It was good to visit Bankstown and learn a little about their very multi cultural membership. We were treated to a nice lunch as we sat and listened to the multitude of languages spoken by the many women who attended the day.

Illawarra OWN Wellness Centre



Such a brave Molly

My dog Molly (also known as Molls) and I decided to spend a couple of hours in the garden together. It was warm and sunny and perfect for just sitting. As we turned around the corner of the steps we saw a big tabby cat with hackles raised.

Molly looked at me and thought, "I am dog and I am programmed to chase cats."

The cat looked at Molly and thought, "I am a cat and I am programmed to run away from dogs, especially big dogs." The cat ran towards the back fence and jumped over it. Molly chased the cat, barking loudly. The cat escaped, Molly had done her job and, all in all, the day turned into a success for both cat and dog.

Molly has not stopped telling the other dogs in the street that in future cats will not be welcome in Molly's domain. Such a brave Molly!!!

Josie Jackson



The Weather Whinge

The summer is almost too hot to bear
Oh how we wish for some cool fresh air
If only it would rain
And take away the heat and pain
Well autumn at last is here,
With cooler nights to bring us cheer,
But now it only rains
And rains some more
A sunny day would bring us joy,
Winter with its frosts and snow,
Is also the time when cold winds blow
We snuggle up to keep us warm,
And turn the electric heater on
We shiver when we have a shower
And wish for spring with all the flowers
Oh joy the spring has come at last
Leaving behind winters cold blast, but one day is hot
Next is cool what to wear?
Spring makes us a fool the flowers so pretty brightly bloom
But alas allergy fills the rooms I cough and wheeze and then
I begin to sneeze
The weather is so very dry,
Enough to make the farmers cry
It seems we're never satisfied
We either freeze
Or else we're fried, now I've had my weather whinge
I hope it didn't make you cringe

Gloria Sonter, Hastings OWN



Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Registrars Learn Skills

General Practise Education and Training (GPET) is an Australian Government company responsible for training medical registrars and at present 161 Indigenous doctors are undertaking training at Indigenous health training posts nationally, towards achieving the speciality of general practise.

Tharawal Aboriginal Medical Service in south-west Sydney relies on its two General Practice registrars to run a new child and family health clinic which specialises in health checks for Aboriginal children and well as carrying out immunisations. The registrars also work with speech pathology and paediatric intervention services, seeing about 16 children every week.

Thirty new accredited Indigenous health training facilities have opened since the end of 2012, with a total of 242 operational by the end of December 2013. Hopefully this is one of the programs helping to “close the gap” in Indigenous health.



First Hand Markets

New markets have been set up at Bare Island, La Perouse the first Sunday of each month 9.30am- 4.30pm, to reinvigorate Aboriginal tourism in the area. The first market started in March this year.

Among stallholders are Laddie Timbery, aged 80, whose family have been selling artefacts from La Perouse for 188 years, and Kimberly Brown, grand-daughter of the original snake man, who has her own show. There are also stalls selling arts and crafts and food stalls with local flavours. A local Aboriginal-owned coffee business is to be set up as well as cultural workshops and tours.

We wish the enterprise great success.



Partnership to Benefit Pilbara Communities

The Karratha-based Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation has partnered with the Cleanaway Company, part of Transpacific Industries Group, to set up a \$17.5 million waste management facility on Aboriginal land. This will have the capacity to collect and process large commercial quantities of solid and liquid waste resulting from the Pilbara’s resource industries. This means that local construction and demolition waste can be processed closer to where it



is being generated, instead of transporting it to Perth, a journey of about 1,200km.

This 25-year commercial land use agreement has come about through negotiation between the business and the Ngarluma corporation and will create jobs, training and skills benefitting Pilbara Aboriginal communities.



Shiner of Light on a Stolen Generation



Doris Pilkington Garimara, fearless storyteller and author of “Follow the Rabbit- Proof Fence” has died. Her book was published in 1996, has been translated into 11 languages, and made into the film “Rabbit-Proof Fence.” The book tells the story of how her mother, Molly Craig, had escaped with her two sister/ cousins, Daisy and Gracie, from Moore River Native Settlement in Western Australia in 1931, and walked all the way back to Jigalong, to rejoin her family. The journey took them three months.

Once again, after her next baby was born, Mollie was interned

at Moore River, together with Doris and baby Annabelle. Once again, she escaped, taking the baby but leaving four-year-old Doris behind. At age 12, Doris was transferred to Roeland Mission where she was taught to believe that Aboriginal People were dirty and evil. After she married and had four children she decided to find her mother and was eventually reunited with her. She had been told that her mother gave her away because she didn’t want her.

Her first book, *Caprice, A Stockman’s Daughter* won the David Unaipon Award and *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* was her second book. After her third book, *Under the Wintamarra Tree* was published she was awarded the Red Ochre Award which is made to an Indigenous artist for their outstanding lifelong contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts at home and abroad.



Records of Indigenous Servicemen and Women

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island men and women have served with the Australian forces in every conflict they have been involved in since the Boer War, frequently hiding their ancestry to join up, as officially, they were not supposed to be accepted.



There has been very little documentation, so there has been little recognition of their service.

However, Professors John Maynard and Mick Dodson are part of a team of researchers at the National Centre for Indigenous Studies at the Australian National University at Canberra, about to begin the first comprehensive search for records of Indigenous service through servicemen and women, nurses, ancillary staff and peacekeepers from the Boer War to 2000. Letters, diaries, photographs, medals, memorabilia and oral histories will be scrutinised and compiled. It is estimated that 1,000 Indigenous men landed at Gallipoli, but this number could rise, through the research.

Unfortunately, service in the armed forces did not bring about any social changes but many ex-servicemen became involved in the political struggle for justice, which is still on-going.

All Stories by Pat Zinn



Vida Goldstein was Australia's first internationally known suffragette. Her supporter's testimonial was that she "offered to the people the wit and eloquence of an orator, the knowledge and foresight of a statesman, and the devotion and courage of a brave woman."

Bit by Bit and Little by Little

In this series I am writing the stories of Australian women who made a difference in the fight for equal rights.

Vida Goldstein
(1869-1949)

was born on 13 April, 1869 at Portland, Victoria. She began her public career about 1890 when she helped her mother collect signatures for the Women Suffrage Petition. She was involved in many social justice issues including helping to organize the Queen Victoria Hospital Appeal. She became an impressive speaker in packed halls around Australia, and eventually the United States and Europe, handling wittily even the worst hecklers.



In 1902 Vida travelled to the USA to speak at the International Women Suffrage Conference. She gave evidence to a committee of the US Congress. Australian women were "granted" the Federal vote in 1902 and Vida was one of the first women to stand for election to a national parliament. She made four more attempts to gain election to Federal parliament, always as an Independent Woman Candidate. In 1911 she visited England and her speeches drew huge crowds. Vida was Australia's first internationally known suffragette.

She lobbied politicians to urge amendments to

The issues that Vida lobbied for:

Vida lobbied for women's issues:

- Suffrage for women
- Equal rights
- Equal property rights for man and wife
- Improved provision of birth control.

She lobbied for social reforms such as:

- Decent standards of living for all
- Equal pay for equal work
- A system of children's courts
- Compulsory arbitration and conciliation.

She wrote and spoke about political issues:

- Production for use not profit
- Redistribution of the country's wealth
- Disarmament and opposition to war.

proposed legislation and influenced many Acts of Parliament. She helped draft the Children's Court Act which passed into law in 1906. She supported women's organisations including the National Council of Women and the Women's Public Servants' Association. She was involved in the organisation of a women's unemployment bureau.

Vida wrote for many papers and magazines. In 1907 she wrote an article *Socialism of today - An Australian view in Nineteenth Century and After*, which included cost-of-living tables, her findings on the lowest wage that a man and his family needed to survive. It's claimed that this information influenced Justice Higgins in his Harvester Judgment, which established the legislative concept of a basic wage.

Although press reports called her a socialist she described herself as a democrat with a vision of society which would enable the complete equality of women with men and a decent standard of living for all.

Her supporters' testimonial was that she "offered to the people the wit and eloquence of an orator, the knowledge and foresight of a statesman, and the devotion and courage of a brave woman".

Lorraine Inglis



Feminism: what went wrong?



Speaker Eva Cox

Feminism: "Some people are against it because they don't know what it means. Some people are against it because they do know what it means."

Gloria Steinem

At the International Women's Day forum, organised by Sydney OWN in March, Eva Cox spoke persuasively about the failure of feminism to change the social system that keeps women's inequality alive.

She reminded us that feminist actions in the '70s included the removal of legal barriers to women's participation in employment, equal pay, affordable childcare, sex discrimination and the legalisation of abortion.

Today feminists continue to demand solutions to violence against women, better access to childcare, an end to poverty and homelessness, equal pay, improved media images, and lack of representation

in public life. Eva suggested that the struggles for major gender changes are not succeeding because they are seen as "women's issues", not general problems that need to be solved.

Feminists have, she suggested, underestimated both the power of sexism and our capacity to abolish or reduce it. The real problem is the gendered distribution of power and influence and an over-emphasis on the market economy.

"Feminists need to lead so that we can counter the bad policies of the major political parties: low welfare payments, bad indigenous programs, overlong working hours, too many market-based, not community-based, services.

"We live in a society, not an economy, and this requires feminist leadership and perspectives that puts gender equity high on the agenda. This requires us all to engage in working out what changes we want, how to shape them and what strategies we need to get there. Current protest activism needs to offer alternatives that create optimism and solutions."

In other words, Eva wants more action around devising solutions rather than just organising protest campaigns.

Eva also appealed to feminists to: "Encourage women to take more risks, deal with disapproval, cope with anger and conflict and offer better support to colleagues who may be pushy. We need to support and encourage argument and debate as a means of finding best solutions."

Her talk was both stimulating and challenging. It was also quite concentrated and not easy to take in on the day. Luckily, most of her ideas are included in an article written for the newly published and progressive newspaper – *The Saturday Paper* and in an expanded article she wrote for OWN following her talk.

If you would like a copy of the article written for OWN please contact the Editor of *OWN Matters*.

Dorothy Cora



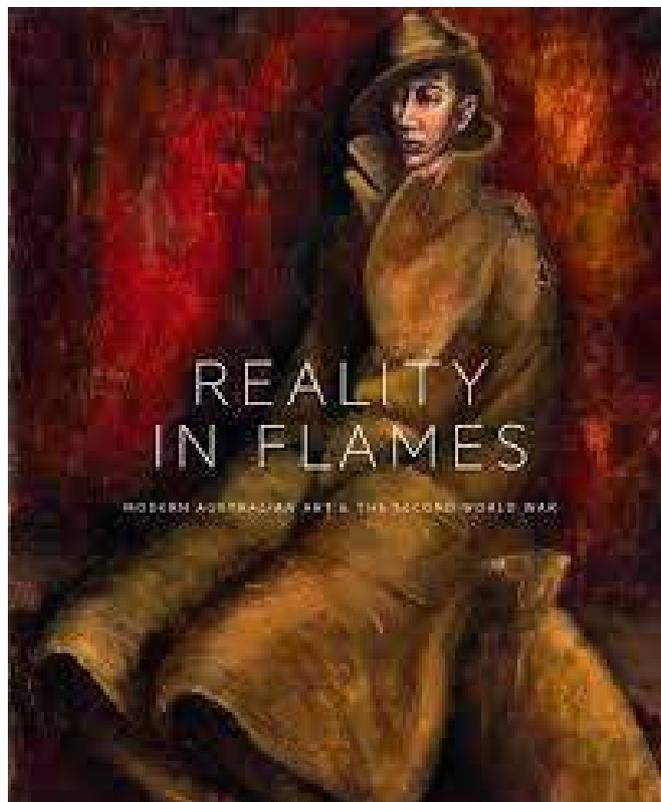
'Reality in Flames, Modern Australian Art and the Second World War' is beginning its year long journey around the country to mark the centenary of the start of WWI. This exhibition is on loan from the National War Memorial.

Plumbing the Depths and finding treasure

Last day of Summer term; last meeting at OWN's familiar Windmill Street premises; brief return of a much-loved group member and a day of birthday celebrations for another member and myself. For OWN'S 'Lost Ladies' there was much happening on this sunny, humid autumn morning. Thanks to leader and group 'mother,' Annette Butterfield, we rejoiced in birthday celebrations before making our way to the S.H. Ervin gallery on nearby Observatory Hill, a favourite haunt of our group. There, our mood sobered...

Around the gallery walls exhibits in the *Reality in Flames, Modern Australian Art and the Second World War* awaited us. A young guide introduced us to works by artists before leaving us to discern for ourselves what meaning they may have. All of us, under Annette's professional art historian guidance, were already familiar with other works by these artists. But this exhibition's war-time theme conveyed in works on loan from the National War Memorial soon had us reflecting not only on the obvious and often gruesome events of the time but also recalling our own memories of these significant war years, for nearly all of us had been young girls at that time. This exhibition is beginning its year-long journey around the country to mark the centenary of the start of WWI.

A break for lunch allowed a little respite around the gallery café's lunch table. Noisy, cheerful conversation contained references to our just-



aroused memories, while quaffed wine and affectionate birthday rituals strengthened the bonds of friendship. But my mind remained captive to the art works in the adjoining gallery.

Returning to a poignant depiction of six very young aircrew, one British, five Australian - *Bomber Crew* by Stella Bowen - I paused, trying not to dwell on current global tensions and the continuing need to send young Australians off to possibly dreadful fates. Another woman, unknown to me, spoke quietly of her own experiences of the dislocation and losses of war that she had known personally. We were soon in deep sharing of the times and their effects on following generations. . . .

Dragging myself away from the gallery at last, I knew that the emotional tumult stirred up by such overt demonstration of fellow feeling and human connection, at first from the 'Lost Ladies' and

later through experiencing World War II, through the eyes of the artists, would take a little time to integrate. I was relieved to find myself alone on reaching home where I could reflect quietly on the spiritual treasures I had found in the depths of the day's encounters and accept with gratitude life's unpredictable and extraordinary reality.

Bev Cameron



Addressing energy poverty

A new ACOSS report details how current energy concessions don't adequately protect people on low incomes from disconnection and hardship. A quarter of people relying on Newstart are unable to pay their electricity bill on time and face possible disconnection.

"The 12.8 per cent of people (or 2.2 million) in our community experiencing poverty continue to struggle with energy costs. This might mean going without hot water, heating or lighting. Many energy concession schemes are poorly targeted and actually fail the people they're designed to help, leaving them in the grips of energy poverty," Dr Goldie said.

In regional areas, low-income households are paying more, but only get the same rebate, even when they use the same amount of electricity. The report recommends some states improve concessions, so that those on lowest incomes receive enough help. It sets a goal of moving to a national concession framework that protects low-income households from energy poverty.



Theatre Group Report

This year some of our members have caught the travel bug. This involves much swapping of roles, which is not easy as we

are currently juggling three separate shows. As someone once said, "If you are not flexible now you soon will be."



Theatre Group: Above, Janice and Norma, and below, Rita and Ruth

On March 7 we went to Burwood to the lovely old home of Woodstock, now a community centre. We performed *Don't Knock Your*



Granny as part of their International Women's Day celebration for the migrant community. Although English was not the first language of most of the audience they appreciated the show and got the message. Indeed one little boy enjoyed it so much he almost joined the troupe, clapping and bouncing to the music.

March 13 saw us at the palatial Canterbury Leagues Club to again perform *Granny*, this time as part of the council's Seniors' Week program. Once again the message was well received.

By the time you read this we will have performed for the launch of Dorothy Cora's book. We are now busily rehearsing for our scheduled performances at the National Folk Festival in Canberra at Easter.

Just a reminder – we are offering an opportunity for a person (maybe you) to become our singing coach/musical director. This is a chance to practise your skills, give something back to OWN and the community and have fun. We also have an opening for a 'back up' pianist in case our regular accompanist is not available. So if you, or someone you know, fits the bill the person to contact is Ruth Thompson: rThompson2@me.com or phone 9251 5015.

Halcyon Evans



With the proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act, will the actions of the man in this story be OK in the future. Closing the Gap? The gap can only widen if bigotry and racism are allowed under the banner of free speech.

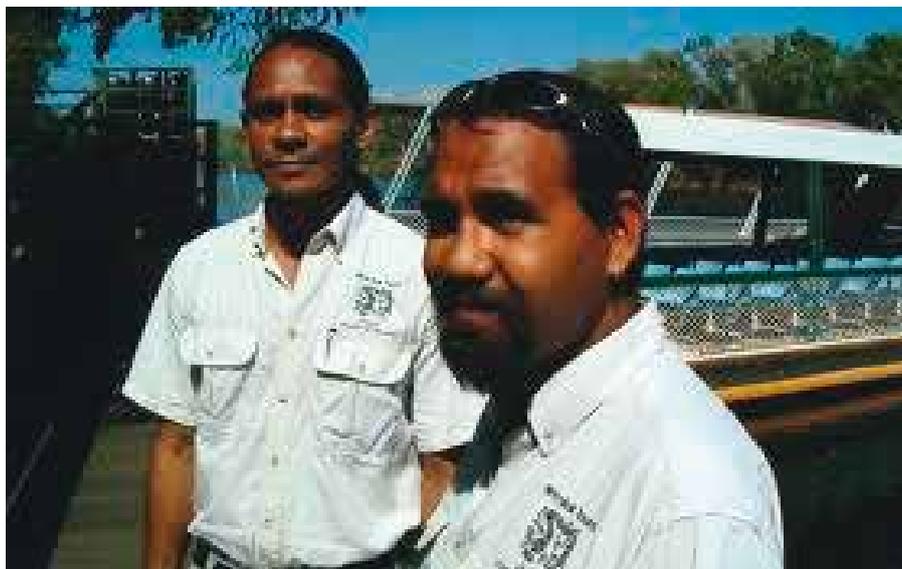
Speak out loud about Racism

For a long time I've wanted to travel on the Ghan train so, when the opportunity arose last November, I jumped at the chance. My sister Jenny, two friends and I flew to Darwin.

The food was good, the sunsets spectacular and the people friendly. We went on tours, one out to Kakadu and the other to Litchfield National Park. We were very impressed by our bus drivers and guides, who were young Aboriginal people. They were well informed, educated, humorous and well mannered. They explained the rock formations, the ancient rock art and the history of this remarkable land.

After four days we left for Adelaide and our first stop was Katherine, to visit Katherine Gorge. We were picked up by bus, our fellow passengers being overseas tourists and fellow Aussies. We were met at the river by a number of boats captained by young Aboriginal National Park Rangers. We had a pleasant cruise up to the Gorge with amusing, clever comments on all the features of the land.

Back at the bus, our driver started one of the worst racist tirades I've ever heard. He said that Aboriginal people were idle, lazy, unintelligent drunks. He said that the children were uneducated, wouldn't go to school and couldn't count, read or write. He then illustrated what they were saying with, "They can only count to two, and when a

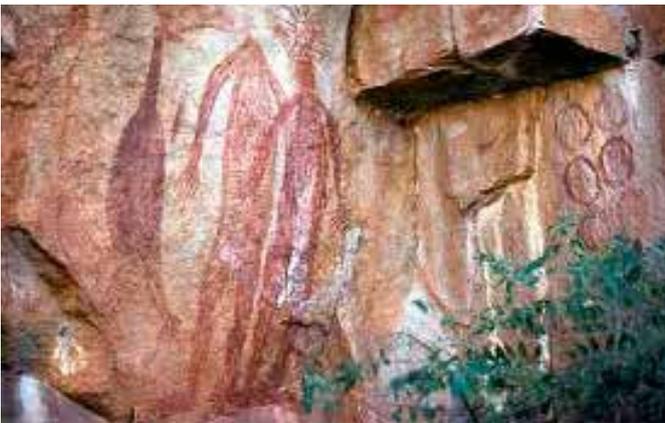


road train goes by they say 1,2, and then step on the road. SPLAT!! Road kill."

I was so shocked I couldn't speak for a moment. Then I shouted at him, "How dare you speak like that about Aboriginal people? Before white man invaded this land they had survived for well over 40,000 years. They were a strong, healthy people with their own culture, laws and language."

At the station my sister tore strips off him. On the train, Jenny contacted Nitmiluk Tours on her smart phone, and put the incident on their web site. She demanded they take action or she'd go to the media. Nitmiluk Tours called back to say they had sacked the driver.

I don't know how long this racist person has been employed by Nitmiluk, with his vicious dislike of Aboriginal people. Due to my sister's strong defence, and immediate action he has been dealt with. I urge everyone to speak up whenever racism raises its ugly head. I wonder, though, with the proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act,



will this man's actions be okay in the future. And what about Tony Abbott's big speech about "Closing the gap?" The gap can only widen if bigotry and racism are allowed, under the banner of free speech.

Lucy Porter



Unexpected Outcomes

In the early 1980s I was employed as a family support worker. On one occasion I was asked to visit a single parent to find out why her children were regularly missing school.

On my first visit to Mary (not her real name), I met

a plump woman in her thirties wearing baby-doll pyjamas and a big welcoming smile. It was 11am so we sat down for a cuppa. Before long three children aged between three and seven, and in various states of nakedness, were climbing all over me. It seemed futile asking why they weren't at school, so Mary and I chatted about the meaning of life, etc. in the kitchen and the kids went back to their television.

Mary told me she was on a pension and after buying food and paying market rental there was little money left over for clothes for the kids. This was a big factor in them not going to school. She also confessed that not having a washing machine meant the clothes they did have were usually dirty. Being a practical soul, I suggested we get the children off to school the following morning and then use my car to take clothes to the laundromat.

The owner's eyes popped as we hauled eight large garbage bags into his shop and asked to buy washing tokens. "There you are darling," he said, handing me some tokens. The third time he called me darling I calmly asked, "Can you please not call me darling?" Like a venomous snake, he lashed out: "Get the f...k out of my shop you sluts." He continued to scream obscenities as he threw the bags of dirty clothes onto the footpath.

I was deeply shocked. So was Mary. His swearing wasn't the problem; she was shocked because she had never seen such extreme and irrational hatred triggered by a woman calmly speaking up for herself. "And he missed out on all that money we were going to spend," she said in disbelief. Years later she told me the seeds of feminism might have been sown in her that day.

Dorothy Cora



Will the Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People solve the real problems of today; the incarceration rate of Aborigines, funding cuts to the First People's Congress, the Northern Territory Invasion?

Recognition wanted in Constitution

I recently attended a panel discussion, "A Conversation on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples", at Ashfield.

It was sponsored by the Women's Reconciliation Network, ANTaR Inner West, Marrickville Residents for Reconciliation and Sutherland Shire ANTaR. There was an excellent turnout – probably 150 people – to listen to Kirsten Gray, Jeff McMullen, George Williams, and Nicole Watson.

Professor George Williams, Professor of Law at University of NSW (who, admirably, always leaves immediately in order to put his small children to bed) tried to answer the question, "Why change the Constitution?"

He pointed out that it's vitally important in our country's culture in that it sets up lines of power – e.g., on marriage, fair wages, who's important, who can be excluded. He feels it's set up to manage "the dying race".

Noel Pearson has said, "It was

drafted to fail." It proclaims our national aspirations, but is silent on issues of social justice.

Nicole Watson, researcher at Jumbunna, University of Technology, Sydney, reminded us that there are differences of opinion about the usefulness of Constitutional reform unless it leads to sovereignty for the First Peoples. She herself is ambivalent, but feels it would be sensible to reserve our judgment until we see the detail in the referendum question.

Constitutional recognition is not the same as self-determination, so a Treaty is wanted by many Aboriginal people. They point to the success of North American Aboriginal people who began to thrive in modern times once they gained self-determination.

George, however, reminds us that politicians on the whole are poisonously opposed to a treaty, so perhaps we should take the first step, first.

Nicole feels that discussion on a referendum creates a distraction from the real problems of today – the incarceration rate of Aborigines, funding cuts to the First People's Congress, the

Northern Territory Intervention.

Kirsten Gray is CEO of the NSW Reconciliation Council. Reconciliation has not been achieved by a walk across the Bridge and an apology, she feels. Any Constitutional change must lead to rights, fair relationships, and mutual respect.

Our Constitution is currently silent on the issue of recognition of the First Peoples. Since it is a nation-defining document respect could be engendered by inclusion of Aboriginal voices in the Constitution. Kirsten strongly advised us all to participate in this discussion by spreading the word that it's happening and, hopefully, joining the NSW Reconciliation Council, a people's movement.

Jeff McMullen, respected journalist and human rights campaigner, emphasised that our Constitution was drawn up on deceitful grounds, and is archaic.

Any changes should reflect what the First Peoples want, so we should not support any referendum that will not deliver legitimacy to the Indigenous people.

Anna Logan



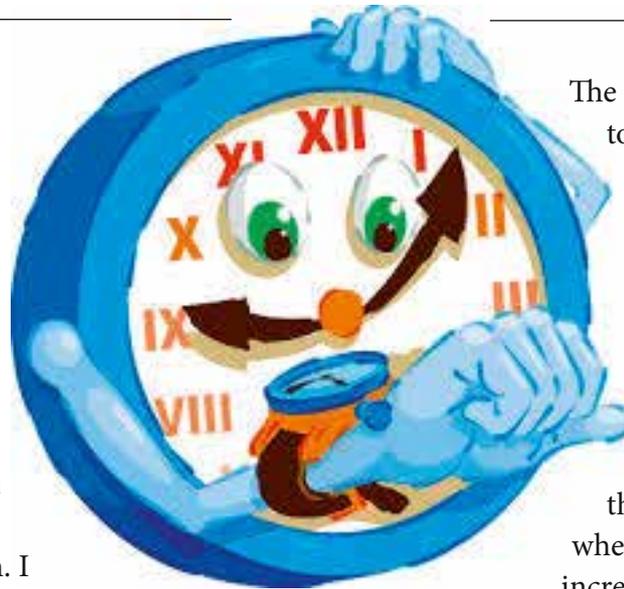
Hour Out of the Workday Time

Daylight Saving just finished, and I have my morning back. I am a daylight saving time atheist. During Daylight Savings Time, when I get up it might already be 7.30. This is not good enough. I am a busy retired woman with lots of things to do. I need more morning, not less.

I have a suggestion for an alternative to Daylight Savings Time. Take a mandatory hour out of the workday for every worker. Why take such a radical move to lower electricity usage? Just to please morning people?

How does daylight savings time affect workers? Bosses don't accept daylight savings time as an excuse for being late and expect them to make up the time. But they get home in the daylight, feeling as though they are getting home early. It's a con. They are getting home after the same hours at work, often more than eight hours.

In the last issue you might have



read the story of Henrietta Dugdale, who was agitating for the eight-hour day at the end of the 1800s. The eight-hour day was hard won, but it's now being lost. Many workers are now expected to work until some "job is done" regardless of hours.

Legislation would be needed to mandate taking an hour out of the workday but would also need to state that workers would not be expected to achieve the same in an hour less. They would get home earlier and they would be getting back the eight-hour day. This would mean that extra workers would be needed, another one for every eight, providing work for those now unemployed. Many people with part-time or casual jobs would get extra hours.

The government could afford to use the money they save to increase the miserly Newstart to pension rates for the other six months. Or they could use that money to give work to the unemployed, or underemployed improving the community in which they live. A better income, whether because of work or increased Newstart, would make paying for accommodation feasible. Less homeless people and less depression for those affected! Workers would have more time to relax, to spend with their family. They would be less tired, and have time for exercise. It might increase birth rates.

We morning people wouldn't lose our morning hours; the morning would begin when it should. Most workers would work less hours to get home in daylight. Less electricity would be used. Unemployment, homelessness and depression rates would be reduced. Community services would be improved.

Bring in Hour Out of the Workday Time, preferably for the whole year.

Lorraine Inglis



Notices



Drumming

Are you interested in learning to play the djembe, as part of a women's drumming group? I have contacted a drumming teacher who will teach a group in the Leichhardt or Ashfield area for \$100 per session. She can bring some drums to the classes. Each member of the group would pay their share of the lesson costs. If we have 5, it would cost \$20, if we have 8 it would cost \$12.50 each session. She can do Wednesday or Thursday, at 3pm.

I will approach Leichhardt Council to ask whether we could use one of their spaces, if we get enough women. Contact me for more information at louinglis@gmail.com and I will reply as soon as I can.

Lorraine Inglis

Do You Need the NSW Photo Identification Card?

The Photo ID card is worth 100

points of proof when proving your identity. If you order tickets by phone or the internet, you may be asked for Photo ID when you collect them. It is a good substitute for a driver's licence if you do not have one.

You can obtain a Photo ID Card from Roads and Maritime Services. Offices are located in North Sydney, Chatswood, near Central Station, in York Street near the entry to Wynyard Station. Photo ID Card is free for Seniors Card holders and pensioners but costs \$49 for other people. It is valid for five years. Further Information: Phone 132213 or www.rms.nsw.gov.au

OWN Book club list

May - Monday 19th May

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

June - Monday 16th June

Burial Rites by Hannah Kent

July - Monday 21st July

The Pure Gold Baby by Margaret

Drabble

August - Monday 18th August

The Little Old Lady Who Broke All

The Rules by Catharina Ingelman-

Sundberg

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

are welcome. Anne-Marie Kestle 0408740435.

RECOGNISE

At the Jessie Street Lunch on 11 April, the largest grant the Trust has ever made, \$10,000, was given to RECOGNISE, which is the people's movement to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Constitution.

The 2013 grant was used by Working Women's Legal Services NSW to design and print posters which advertise their services to assist women suffering harassment and/or discrimination in the workplace.

Anna Logan

SMSA Mystery and Crime Reading Group 2014

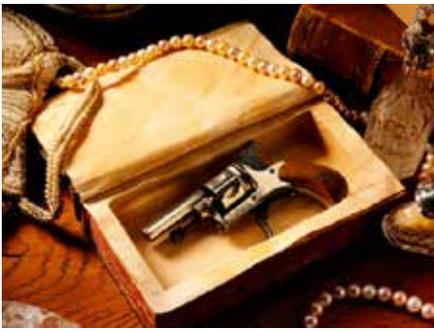
May 31 - Crime amid a natural disaster.

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.

November 15 - Psychopathology/medicine/dentistry.

December 6 - Christmas Meeting



Justice served in age discrimination case

An employee who was sacked because he turned 65 has won his age discrimination case after lodging a complaint with the Fair Work Ombudsman.

A long-serving restaurant employee was told that it was company policy to not employ staff once they reached the retirement age of 65. This is blatant age discrimination and Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association is pleased that the Federal Circuit Court in Brisbane agreed.

Governments expect people to work longer and most people want to work for as long as they can. But age discrimination must be stamped out if older workers are to get a fair go. CPSA applauds this employee for taking his case to the Ombudsman and calls on other workers to do the same if they feel they have been discriminated against on the basis of age.

Charmaine Crowe, CPSA



MEMBERS & FRIENDS WELCOME TO ATTEND ACTIVITIES

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 May 13** to see *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. 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

MON, MAY 19 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett.
MON, JUNE 16 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent. Come at 12 with a sandwich for lunch.

Aboriginal Support Circle

The next meeting will be on June 2 at the Aboriginal Catholic Church, La Perouse. Lucy Porter to talk about early days at La Perouse, women from 2 Women Dreaming invited. Confirm details with Pat Zinn 9389 1090 or email pattzinn1@hotmail.com

Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point

Drummoyne Sailing Club. The club opens at 10.30am but coffee is not available until 11am. Contact Bev Cameron on 9957 5367.

SUBSCRIBE NOW to OWN MATTERS

Subscription to OWN MATTERS is just \$35 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.

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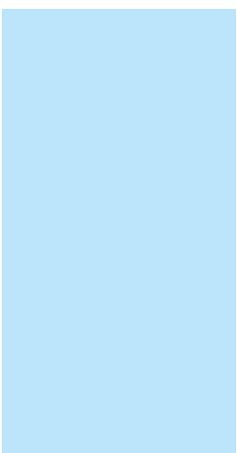
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