



OWN MATTERS

Vale Helen Le Marne. Not Just A Local Hairdresser.

My Truly Horrible Week. Strutting Our Stuff In The Inner-West.

Flying High At The 'Y'. Oh, What A Finish! Armchair Travelling.

Bit By Bit and Little By Little. Vale Julia Freebury.



Conference is smooth sailing

OWN AGMs and conference were topped off with a fun harbour cruise for attending members



Strap in for armchair travel

Enjoying the wonders of the world from the comfort of your own living room with the help of technology



Last Aboriginal tracker retires

Lama Elder Barry Port, 71, has retired from the police service - the last to work solely as a tracker.



Dame, Queen and socialist

Poet and radical Mary Gilmore left a lasting legacy in both her writing and her activist work



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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 \$35 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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GOING OUT WITH A BANG!

- ✓ **End of Era**
- ✓ **End of Year**
- ✓ **End of November!**

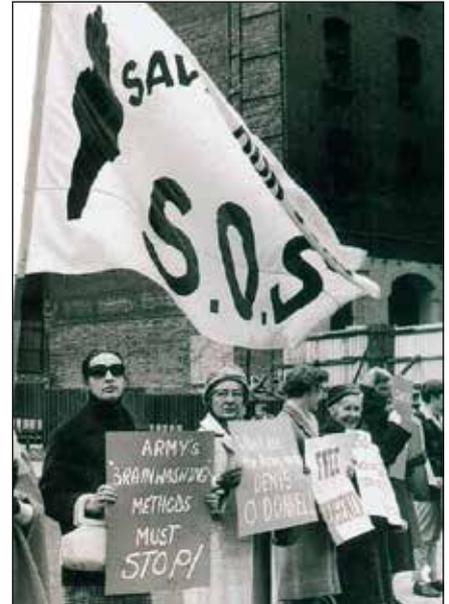
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27
at Mott Hall

10AM-3PM



Celebrate our past and the years OWN has been involved in Millers Point. A party for any member of OWN, past or present - from any OWN group

Letters



Australian Women's Peace Activism

It's NSW History Week in September and the theme is The Great War. The Library is participating with a forum facilitated by Dr Bev Kingston and Professor Emerita Jill Roe, both respected historians and authors.

The forum begins with the Boer War, gaining strength during World War I and continuing on through the 20th century, when small numbers of Australian women became involved in movements to resist war and work for peace. Not least among them was Jessie Street.

The forum will focus on some of the organisations and

individuals involved in anti-war and peace movements such as the Women's Peace Army, the anti-conscription movement, the World Peace Council and the Women's International Peace and Freedom League.

The forum will be held at the Ultimo Community Centre, 523-525 Harris Street, Ultimo and there will be an opportunity to view materials from the library's collection on this issue. See p18 for further details.



Ignoring climate change is dangerous

The absence of a real national debate about climate change has led the Victorian Women's Trust to take a leadership role on this

critical issue. They have initiated a Monster Climate Change Petition to present before the G20 conference in mid-November to show the world how much Australians care about reducing carbon emissions. Then they will present it to the national parliament.

The idea for a Monster Climate Petition was inspired by the actions of Victorian colonial women in 1891. They collected 30,000 signatures for a petition in support of voting rights for women – it became known as the Monster Petition – and presented it to the Parliament of Victoria. A decade later their petition played an important role in Australia becoming the first nation in

Mary Gilmore had her say...

**To the Editor, *The Herald*,
December 19, 1933**

Dear Sir,
Every now and then someone complains of the “inefficiency” of our Postal Service. Permit me in these days of distracting Christmas overwork to give a word of praise. A letter has just come to me addressed “Mrs. Mary Gilmore, Macquarle Street, Sydney.” There was no number, no identifying occupation given, and it is five years since I lived in Macquarle Street. Yet that letter came to me with only a day’s delay.

Another much derided office

is that of the Commissioner for Taxation. Once, writing that I had omitted, while Film Censor, to make a deduction allowed, the reply was that the Taxation Office had itself made the deduction before assessing the amount of tax to be paid.

To return to the postal service, a letter come to me once merely addressed “Mary Gilmore, Australia.” There was no trouble about it, and no delay. When I think of the hundreds of thousands of addresses to be considered, I am astounded and, more, I am grateful.

Mary Gilmore, King’s Cross



© Mylène Bressan

the world to give women the right to vote.

The Victorian Women’s Trust believes that huge numbers of Australian women, men and children are willing to express their concern for a safe climate by signing the Monster Climate Petition. If women in 1891 could get 30,000 signatures, surely we can get hundreds of thousands today!

Send the website link <http://monsterclimatepetition.com.au> to everyone you know. Photocopy the petition and give it to friends who aren’t on the Internet. Start collecting signatures yourself. Let’s make our voices heard.

Dorothy Cora



**To the Editor, *The Herald*
March 15, 1927**

Dear Sir,
I have to thank Mr. Theo Hill for the publicity I was half afraid my letter on child endowment would not get. But, as he made it appear that I have said things I have neither said, implied, nor reached out after, perhaps I had better re-state what I did say, asking Mr. Hill to quote the sentences I wrote on which he bases what he accuses me of putting forward.

I said: “Child endowment is the civilised equivalent for the child’s natural right in the land which civilised usage (and law) has taken from him. Civilisation has alienated the land, killed the animals, and destroyed the forest without giving him anything in return. The child, as the

dispossessed, had to live upon its parent’s wages; but wages are not paid to or for the child, but to the workman for work done.

The child has no claim on the wages paid; no employer can be compelled to pay to a child any part of its father’s wages, because the child has no existence in relation to wages as an expression of employment.”

Where, in that, is there anything at all like that of which Mr. Hill accuses me? Will someone tell me? Can Mr. Hill himself tell me? For the rest, I can remember that courtesy is better than cursing, and I do not regret that I have given Mr. Hill a degree of courtesy he has not given me.”

Mary Gilmore

At and Beyond the Rocks

Hastings OWN

Hastings OWN was established in 2004 and is situated in the mid North Coast. Most members reside in Port Macquarie or Wauchope, about 20 minutes from Port Macquarie. Our members range in age from early-mid seventies to ninety.

We have had four stories in one of our free papers *Port Macquarie Independent* promoting our group and six new members joined us this year through that. Our members care about each other and when they are concerned about a member they either phone them or visit.

Our Charity is still Hastings Headway, which supports people with acquired brain injury. Our generous members have donated more than \$1,000 in the last twelve months. A few of us attend Hastings Headway about four times a year to present a cheque and catch up with clients and staff and they enjoy our company.

For our general meetings I have been able to source many of the speakers our group were

interested in hearing. Some of our guest speakers this year included Naturopath, Australian Hearing, visually impaired (a blind woman and her guide dog), Men's Shed, and Home Modification/ Maintenance.

After our meetings we enjoyed lunches out at different venues. We enjoy our annual bus trip in the north coast area and we have been to some out-of-the-way places, with good food and company.

Pam Kenyon



Macarthur OWN

Our venue is still Campbelltown Bowling Club. Macarthur's membership is now at 47, with numbers averaging 25 women each meeting, and this year we have gained five new members.

We meet every Wednesday – almost a religious occasion for some of us - our vital chance to catch up with coffee and a chat.

The third Wednesday is reserved for our guest speakers. It never ceases to amaze me the variety of

people you can get to talk to your group on interesting subjects, pro bono. Macarthur makes a \$50 donation to speakers if we are suitably impressed!

Together with representatives from other OWN groups in our region, we took part in a Western Sydney Disability and Ageing Forum with Minister Ajaka.

Our fourth and fifth Wednesdays are reserved for more coffee and catch ups, although we save our pennies so that we can afford a bus trip every three months.

This year, Macarthur's intrepid travellers have been to Kiama, Gosford, Katoomba – who knows where we will go next?

Glenda Laird



Newcastle OWN

We have settled in to our new venue - the Adamstown Club. Its big pluses are; five bus services, free car parking and a good dining room. The majority of members now stay for lunch. Monthly coffee mornings have had fluctuating support.

Guest Speakers included **Jude Conway** - who spoke on issues facing women in Timor Leste. Jude also showed handcrafts made by those women and accepted donations from members.

Getting to know you - three members spoke for ten minutes on aspects of their lives; **Feet and the Older Generation, Songs Old and New**; and **Ovarian Cancer Research** - We made a donation of \$100 to this project.

Social Activities have included lunches, coffee mornings, a bus trip and a train-ferry trip to the Zoo and another train/bus trip to Sculptures by the Sea, public bus trips to Nelson Bay, Raymond Terrace and Swansea.

These are simple to organise as no booking or pre-payment is required. May Birthday Lunch at Agosti's was very well supported.

Joan Lambert



OWN Bankstown Wellness Centre

Our Wellness program Bankstown Wellness Centre, with its 213 members continues to offer a diverse range of activities which we believe meet the needs of women over the age of 50 years who live in this area.

Our program focuses on the nine exercise activities and the six or seven therapeutic



Photo exhibition

activities available each week including gentle exercise, strength and balance, relaxation plus, drumming, Let's Talk About (including discussion), international dance, tai chi, gentle yoga and guided relaxation.

Cultural diversity is very evident in our region and we are aware that our programs must reflect this need. We aim to offer an inclusive and welcoming place of friendship and personal growth to women of all cultures.

We now offer the REACH program, which runs for 9 weeks in Bankstown. For women living with depression or bipolar disorder, the principles behind the REACH Support program, designed by the Black Dog Institute, are to live with hope of change for a better life.

Due to the success of a ClubsNSW grant application, we received \$5000 to establish a photography project.

For the women working together on this project it encouraged and empowered their self worth and awareness of their cultural identity as well as their ability to learn the skills of photography.

Diane Brooks



Penrith OWN

We are into our twentieth Year for Penrith Group this year and we are planning a celebration in February 2015.

For Christmas we decided to have it catered for and the seniors' ukulele group entertained us. We had a very friendly and enjoyable time without breaking our bank.

Once again we joined in with Blacktown OWN for their "feel good" day. We also attended the CWA International Day and various community activities.

All of our weekly activities, Yoga, Tai Chi, Aqua Aerobics and International Dance, are going well. Our social meeting on the third Saturday of each month is still being held.

Our Aqua instructor has obtained other employment after being with us for five years. Fortunately it only took one week this time before a suitable new instructor was found.

We appreciate the instructors of our weekly activities but would make special mention of our OWN member, Myrtle Smith, who takes the Yoga Group. Myrtle has been doing this for over twelve years and at no cost to the Group.

That sure is dedication!

Thelma Anderson





Aboriginal Support Circle Issues



Last Aboriginal Police Tracker Retires

Lama Elder Barry Port, aged 71, from Coen in Cape York, described as a living legend, has recently retired from his job as an Aboriginal police tracker, the last of his line.

Since about 1885, trackers have helped police by finding stolen horses, cattle, people lost in the bush and escaped criminals. Aboriginal trackers have been employed in every state and territory except Tasmania and were involved in tracking down Ned Kelly.

Barry learned his skills while droving on cattle stations in the region as a young man. He received a citation for his work in 1984 when he and his partner tracked a stolen car over rough



terrain and not only found the thieves, but also a large cannabis crop. He is also able to determine exactly how a car accident occurred by looking at markings on the road.

Barry is the last person to have worked solely as a tracker. But Aboriginal police liaison officers have used his skills, which continue to be used by police, and he has offered to help the police out if they need a hand in the future.



Possum Skin Cloaks

Possum fur is extremely warm and has a hollow

hair structure that traps warmth, so that it does not freeze even in extreme cold conditions. The skins were made into cloaks and were only worn in cold areas of Australia. When worn as a cloak for warmth they allowed rain to slide off.

Babies could be wrapped in fur and an early photo shows a mother, Nahraminyeri, who came from South Australia, with a possum skin pocket sewn into her cloak to house her baby on her shoulders.

Cloaks could also be used as blankets and worn for ceremonial purposes. There are very few traditional skin cloaks left, most being located



in museums within Australia as well as overseas. However, the making of cloaks has been revived and Elders wore possum skin cloaks as part of the 2006 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony and, later, in Canberra, the day the federal government apologised to members of the 'Stolen Generations'.

A possum skin cloak could be created when a child was born and would be added to, pelt by pelt, as the child grew older. A full cloak could hold many pelts, taking a year to collect.

The skins were scraped clean using sharp stones or shells and were tanned by stretching and hanging near a fire. Skins would then be rubbed with fat to keep them pliable. They were attached to each other by making a series

of holes and were sewn together using a pointed bone needle and kangaroo sinew.

Cloaks were engraved by scraping with shell and could show a child's totem, moiety, clan and nation affiliations so that, as the child grew, each newly added piece would record their life journey. So no two cloaks were the same. There are records of Aboriginal people being buried in their cloaks.

Government and missionary policies made it a crime to transmit culture, and as a way of forcing assimilation on Aboriginal people, an emphasis on clothing them and removing cultural affiliations was seen as crucial to the colonisation of Australia.

Blankets were handed out during this time and caused much sickness as they absorbed water and did not retain warmth.

There are historical records of a kangaroo pelt being seen around the shoulders of an older man in Sydney and also wallaby and

platypus pelts used in colder areas of Australia, as well as possum skin cloaks.



Great news for Kool Kids



In July I had a very excited phone call from Lucy - she had received the wonderful news that a benefactor has donated \$100,000 to the Kool Kids Club!

This means that it will be able to continue functioning for another year. There is still a waiting list of children who want to join and if there was more funding this could happen, but at least the Club is still functioning, thanks to the donors and dedicated tutors who put in huge efforts to engage with the children.

Stories by Pat Zinn



We say farewell to many wonderful women we have known, women who were friends and members of OWN, and women we have admired for the way they fought for social justice

**Vale Helen Le Marne (nee Vincent)
1945 – 2014**

Helen died suddenly on 30 June. Those of us who knew her at the Older Women's Network remember her as a warm intelligent woman who faced the challenge of Parkinson's Disease, diagnosed in 2004, with equanimity, optimism and grace.

After resigning from the Department of Community Services, where she had worked for many years licensing childcare centres, Helen joined the Older Women's Network. She soon became a valued member of the *OWN Matters* Editorial Team and despite episodic bouts of ill health maintained her commitment on and off for over eight years.

It was on the Editorial Team that Helen met Daphne Lera, who became a close personal friend. Both born on the west coast of the USA, they had much in common. Helen was delighted to find that Daphne was familiar with Helen's distinguished family and the many world famous musicians who had visited them in Los Angeles. The influence of Helen's childhood associations with opera and classical music remained a joy throughout her life.

Louise Bentley, who was also a member of the Editorial Team, became another valued friend. In 2012, with characteristic determination not to be controlled by her Parkinson's, Helen joined Louise on a holiday to Perth on the Indian Pacific. On their return Helen submitted a story to *OWN Matters* – as told to another good friend, Morna Staunton –

describing details of their wonderful journey. As her stepdaughter said at her funeral: "Greater than the sadness of Helen's death is the joy she spread in her life. We will miss her warmth, her generous spirit, her love and her intellect."

We will indeed.

Dorothy Cora



**Vale Julia Freebury
1923 - 2014**

Julia Freebury, who died on 19 July, was a feisty feminist who spent her life as an advocate for social justice and civil liberties.

I met Julia briefly when she was president of the Abortion Law Reform and secretary the NSW Abortion Law Repeal Association. She had an intelligent and commanding presence, a beautiful deep voice and a great sense of humour.

Between 1971-1975 illegal and expensive medical and backyard abortions were flourishing in NSW under the watch of Premier Robert Askin. Julia devoted years of her life to lobbying parliamentarians, doctors, academics, the church, the media, and other abortion rights organisations to support free abortion on request. She spoke at national and international conferences, and wrote numerous papers and books on the issue. Only when abortion became quasi-legal in NSW in 1973 and the Preterm Foundation was established as a non-profit clinic in 1974 (I worked there for a number of years in the mid-seventies), did Julia



© Sarah Klockars-Clauser

turn her mind to other issues. Forced adoption was one of these issues. Later on, environment and peace campaigns were high on her agenda.

In later life she became involved in the voluntary euthanasia movement through Dying With Dignity. As one of hundreds of ambassadors associated with Your Last Right, she continued to energetically lobby for the legal right to request and obtain medical assistance to end their lives with dignity.

Julia was an extraordinary woman – definitely one of a kind.

Dorothy Cora



Not just a local hairdresser!

It's worth a few bucks a week! Not just a hair-do but a passing parade, book discussions, colourful eccentrics, glimpses into client and staff lives, a social network which spills over from business to become a referral centre, shopping service, counselling, and an information exchange.

The passing parade? Well, there's conservative Elaine whose determination to preserve the tight curl perm of the fifties defies attempted style changes by Donita. Elaine, propelled into a hostel through problems in unit living, enquires after other 'clients' whose faces are missing – one in a

nursing home far away but near her son, another on the Central Coast near her daughter, both too frail to continue living alone, but not forgotten within our local salon.

Others are sustained by off-the-cuff services. The young apprentice, Adam, is autocratically commissioned by Mrs. M. to do her shopping while she's under the dryer.

Irina strides, smoking, to a cuppa in a rear room, her husky voice carelessly flinging compliments or 'teasing' hairdressers and clients. She speaks several languages fluently. Between bouts of severe depression, her salon sorties are for social contact and an opportunity to speak in her native Italian. She is always made welcome. Someone wants a handyman and is referred to one through the network. Discussions on films, books, personal lives abound.

Salons are traditionally places of exchange of confidences, with the hairdresser expected to be sympathiser and even counsellor. What stresses does this place on staff-client relationships? Well, to a certain extent, it works both ways, but the heavy pressure is on the staff, particularly when their own private problems or health upsets are uppermost on their mind.

One day a murder takes place outside the bank next door. Staff are shocked and distressed, but over the next month are expected to describe the tragedy every day to clients hungry for drama.

An eight-year-old watches the construction of my hair-do and tells me, 'You look spunky'. I'm duly flattered. Amongst the older clients secret stares appraise colourful hairdos and shaved-head styles among the younger clients. Would we do this if we were younger?

At this salon they should by now be unshockable, but I'd love to see the reaction if we were to break out in red, green and purple. Who'd be game to try?

Noreen Hewett

From OWN Matters archives April 1996



Our OWN NSW and OWN Australia Conference was an opportunity for OWN members from city, country and interstate to gather together for information, inspiration and fellowship

My Truly Horrible week

Sunday night I went out to listen to some blues music to cheer me up after this truly horrible week. Sunday morning, pouring rain, and I found my toilet wouldn't flush. After the rest of the week I wasn't surprised

Saturday- I didn't go to gym. It was pouring rain. I was eating a strawberry and I bit on something hard: a porcelain filling from a front tooth. On a Saturday of course! But that's not why I decided that this weekend I would only eat fruit and smoothies. I have a very big plate of fruit in my fridge.

Friday - was mahjong. I was looking forward to it. I'd cut up the fruit for my fruit plate, covered it with glad wrap, and was ready to catch the bus to be there by 1pm. The address? On my computer. Oh, no! The internet wasn't working. The phone number only on my mobile, but the battery was flat. By the time my technology was working, it was 2pm. I just apologised, put the fruit in the fridge and ate some chocolate.

Thursday - Gym and two important OWN meetings. Wednesday night I found an email from my daughter - the twins were sick, so couldn't go to daycare. Her partner was in bed with flu, the other grandmother had a detached retina, and my daughter had already had five days off work. I was needed to look after the girls. I had to ring ten women to cancel the meetings. Most of their email addresses were on my computer, so I needed help to track down phone numbers. That meant a very late dinner on Thursday - no gym, no meetings.



*The editorial team's photograph - We were here!
Below: Useless technology!*



Wednesday - *OWN Matters* editorial team went in to the office. Not one emailed contribution was on the computer. All we did is take our photo and go home. Three women had taken an hour each to come in, another to go home. Six hours between us, only a photo to show we were there.

Tuesday - I missed gym because the surveyor was scheduled to come at 9.30am. (The survey had already been postponed a number of times.) The rain had stopped by 10am, so at 1pm I rang his office. He rang back later using rain as his excuse. I laughed when he promised to do it in two weeks' time, but it wasn't funny.

I'm buying a handbag-sized book for names, addresses and phone numbers, including a dentist, plumber and surveyor - one that needs no charging!

Lorraine Inglis



Flying high at the 'Y'

Eighty OWN members from a number of metropolitan areas, regions and interstate met at the YWCA to attend our annual conference, jointly organized by OWN Australia and OWN NSW. These events are always welcome opportunities to find out what is going on in our organisations, to be inspired by guest speakers, and to meet with each other in a productive and social environment.

Guest speakers were The Hon Susan Ryan AO, former Federal Cabinet Minister in the Hawke Government, and The Hon Anna Bligh, former Queensland Premier, who both have a strong and long history of activism on behalf of women and disadvantaged groups.

In their current roles respectively, Susan, as Age Discrimination Commissioner, and Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner, AHRC, with specific responsibilities for discrimination against older people, and Anna, Chief Executive of the YWCA, both continue to advocate for the rights of all women.

There was an awareness that older women have different issues to older men and that often a gender lens needs to be applied when formulating policies on areas such as health, housing and homelessness and poverty.

It was good to hear Susan Ryan saying that older people are the largest growing demographic, and to be reminded of the power that lies within us to achieve change. Specifically, Susan outlined



The Hon Susan Ryan AO, top left, and The Hon Anna Bligh, far right, both spoke at the conference

the interest demonstrated by some countries in a UN Convention for the Rights for Older Persons and why this is important. Her experience internationally in terms of her representation at the UN was informative for OWN members who are committed to ensuring that older women are on the international agenda, especially in the areas of violence, poverty, work rights, education etc.

So many important tips from Anna Bligh with messages of the value of perseverance, the importance of standing out in our campaigns so that we can be remembered, the pulling power of a handwritten letter and, above all, symbolism of dressing in purple, forming alliances with similar groups, anything that gets us noticed on the state, national and international circuits for achieving change.

The feedback from the Conference was very positive, indicating how impressed members were with the speakers and the issues raised. OWN Australia will work on advancing knowledge about the Convention and I'm sure Sonia and Aloma will continue their advocacy across a wide range of areas, informing and involving us all.

And I heard the sun did shine for those lucky enough to enjoy sailing around the Harbour, the following day, with good food, companionship and interesting conversation.

Rita Tratt



Mary Gilmore, campaigner for justice, fighter, writer, socialist, feminist, a Dame and a Queen

Bit by Bit and Little by Little

By Women For Women

MARY GILMORE
1865-1962

Mary Gilmore was a wild one, a socialist, who campaigned all her long and sometimes controversial life to achieve social justice for all.

In her early life her father's itinerant work took her around southwestern New South Wales, giving her a very interrupted education. She left school at 14 to become a trainee-teacher. She took up a position in 1885 at Silverton, near Broken Hill, and developed her socialist views while teaching there.

She transferred to Stanmore Public School in 1891. Living in Sydney during the tumultuous 1890s increased her desire for social reform but she wrote under pen names to protect her position as a teacher. In 1894 William Lane took a group of idealists to Paraguay to establish a communal settlement, believing this was the way to achieve justice. Mary Gilmore resigned from teaching in 1896 to join the community, where she married William Gilmore and where her son was born. By 1900 the communal experiment had failed.

William worked at shearing, and Mary teaching English, to pay their fares back to Australia in 1902. They took up farming in Casterton. Mary became



Women's Editor of *The Worker*, the newspaper of the Australian Workers' Union in 1908. Over the years she campaigned for many social reforms: better conditions for working women, children's welfare, old-age and invalid pensions, for the poor and disadvantaged and especially for indigenous Australians. By 1931 her views had become too radical for the AWU. She regularly wrote letters to *The Herald* (see our Letters page) and later a column for *The Tribune*, newspaper of the Australian Communist Party.

When Mary moved to Sydney in 1912, she became involved with literary activities. She was a founding member of the Fellowship of Australian Writers. Her volume of poetry, *The Passionate Heart*, showed her reaction to World War 1, the royalties going to soldiers blinded in the war. She wrote six volumes of poetry before 1940 and her poem *No Foe Shall Gather Our Harvest* captured the hearts of Australians. Her later memoirs tell us much about her life, about the literary and political circles of Sydney in the 1890s, through the depression and world wars, and about the great writers of that time.

In spite of her radical views she became Dame Mary Gilmore in 1937 for her contribution to Australian literature. At the Art Gallery of New South Wales you can see her portrait (above), painted by William Dobell in 1957.

In 1962 the Australian Trade Unions crowned her May Queen for the May Day procession to honour her contribution to the labour movement. Mary Gilmore, writer, socialist, feminist, unionist, a Dame and a queen.

Lorraine Inglis



Oh, what a finish!

As we checked out of the Y Hotel following our conference on the Wednesday, we were a bit sceptical, when Carlos, our host, said he had ordered a perfect day for our cruise.

The previous few days had been wind, torrential rain, cyclonic winds and the coldest Sydney weather I could remember. Laughing, we set off for Circular Quay in the light drizzle, thinking of Carlos's words and determined to enjoy the day no matter what. By the time we reached the Quay we were all beginning to realize that Carlos may have connections on High. Maybe working for the Y (Young Women's CHRISTIAN Association) brings blessings. It did on that Thursday.

We arrived at the Quay in sunshine and waited for the Captain Cook Cruise boat to arrive. When it did, a beautifully turned out crew welcomed us aboard and I think I am speaking for everyone

when I say we were all impressed by the whole concept. Tables for eight with white linen tablecloths and napkins were set up for lunch and as we pulled away from the shore, the sun shone more brightly and it was a very happy bunch of women from OWN who settled down to enjoy the day on the harbour.

After settling in and watching the bridge and opera house sail smoothly by, we put on the dance music and a few brave souls got up to dance. That was interesting! Luckily there were two poles in the middle of the dance floor and occasionally many of us considered ourselves pole dancers as the swell put a bit more rock and roll into our dances than we had intended. Cate Turner and I led the way and our lovely ladies from the OWN Bankstown Greek group joined in. Lily and the drummers from Illawarra also showed a great deal of improvisation.

The time flew and it seemed no time before lunch was served. Sonia L had chosen that cruise on the strength of the quality of their menu. Well done, Sonia. A nicer lunch for the occasion could not have been chosen. Those with special diets were looked after like the stars they are.

The day passed so quickly, yet it all felt leisurely. The sunshine, the harbour, the sights, the company and the food, nothing seemed hurried. As we said our goodbyes, I could not help thinking, what a great way to end a Conference.

Barbara Malcolm



You too can be an armchair traveller: very cheap, no stress, no passports or visas, no packing. You can see the world as you eat your lunch in the comfort of your own home

Armchair travelling

It's not at all difficult to be an armchair traveller. In fact, there are quite a few advantages. It costs little, doesn't require much energy. You don't have to pack and unpack, which is perhaps the greatest advantage of all. No waiting for delayed planes, no jet lag. Nor do you have to worry about passports, visas, or getting your laundry done.

I travel every day, not always from my armchair, more often from my bed, when I read the morning paper. For instance, one morning I was entranced to read about 'Ireland's Historic Book of Kells', which is coming to Australia. It is described as one of the most beautiful books in the world. The article said it was drawn up by Columbian monks and contains wonderful calligraphy on every page.

The weekend papers have huge travel sections, which give you inside information as well as pictures regarding all the wondrous places you can visit if you so wish.

On the Internet, travel is effortless. You can visit the Sistine Chapel, the New York Museum of Contemporary Art, the Tate Gallery, the museums in Florence, Amsterdam, London, anywhere you want, just with a click of the mouse. Even Buckingham Palace, as there is now a website for the Royal family.

I have a CD-ROM of the Musee D'Orsay in Paris, which shows in detail so many wonderful paintings and sculptures. I have the Encarta Encyclopaedia



on CD-ROM, so you can travel anywhere you want in the world and learn about it, or even back in time. You can look around all the historic places in England, visit Shakespeare's birthplace, the Tower of London, Loch Ness, many more.

You can go to Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Centre, Hollywood, Grand Canyon, Rome, Hong Kong, and much more. And you can be eating your lunch at home at the same time. You have the comfort of knowing you'll be sleeping in your own bed that night, however far you've travelled that day.

Actually, I've been in person to a lot of places overseas, and I must admit it was perhaps much better being there in person, but it's not so tiring doing it from home. I like it! I have lots of memories, and the movies we took of the places



we visited twenty-odd years ago. I have my diaries of the things that happened, some of them quite strange and funny, so armchair travelling is OK for me nowadays. I have no desire to do anything more strenuous.

*From the archives - June 1999
by Renee Simons*



Strutting our Stuff In the Inner-West

The Hannaford Centre in Darling Street, Rozelle, is the home of Leichhardt Council's Over 55s programs, which focus on healthy and productive ageing; with a range of activities covering tai-chi, gentle exercise, yoga and zumba gold. It also provides a social and educational role and we were delighted to be asked to perform

there as part of their healthy ageing strategy – a day long event of talks, demonstrations and fun.

Our show *Cabaret* was the first item on the after lunch menu, and seriously folks, we and they were so engaged with each other, that both performers and audience were transported to another plane. It was a bit like having our own Tardis, without Dr Who piloting the ship.

The senior executive of Leichhardt Council, responsible for cultural programs, told me that starting the show with Itojo's marvellous rendition of *Cabaret* was inspirational. In this number Itojo does a solo in top hat, sitting on a chair, and is later joined by the rest of the group.

We did our old favourite *When I'm 64* as an encore. Thank you, director Denise.

The following day we performed the same show, for the Cliff Noble Centre at Alexandria. This was our third 'Christmas in July' performance for them, and I think maybe our best. We knew our audience well, and were used to the space and the sorts of skits and songs that appealed to them. The coordinator, Maria Sanna, always does a wonderful job in preparing the centre, organizing a raffle, where nearly everyone seems to win a prize and creating good will and harmony.

Over the years we have performed at many community centres and we salute the coordinators, staff and volunteers who have gone out of their way to accommodate our needs and those of their members. It's been great to be part of their communities.

Rita Tratt



Notices

End of an Era party

Put the date in your diary. OWN has been moved out of Windmill St and the Rocks will be undergoing major changes. New accommodation will be needed. I don't believe we should go out with a whimper, but with a bang, A BIG BANG. So the Sydney OWN party will be a little earlier, on Thursday, November 27, in Mott Hall. END OF NOVEMBER, END OF THE YEAR, END OF AN ERA PARTY! More details next month

Lorraine Inglis
Chair Sydney OWN



Jessie St Library Lunch Hour Talk

September 12, 12-1.30pm, Ultimo Community Centre. The theme for NSW History Week is The Great War. The Library is hosting a forum on Australian Women's Peace Activism, facilitated by Dr Bev Kingston and Professor Emerita Jill Roe. Cost \$16 for Library members and \$22 for non-members, including a sandwich lunch. Payment at the door. Book by noon of Monday Sept 8 on 9571 5359 or email: info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au



OWN Book Club List

Mon, Sept 15: *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd. The story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around a blurred memory of the afternoon her Mother was killed.

Mon, Oct 20: *Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage* by Hazel Rowley. Rowley paints an interesting portrait of Franklin Delano and Eleanor Roosevelt's marriage. If you can't get a specified book, please let me know. Newcomers welcome. Anne-Marie Kestle 0408 740 435.



Wellness activities

OWN offers a number of affordable Wellness activities at various locations during school terms. Ring contact numbers.

BLACKTOWN: Rooty Hill Senior Citizens Centre, 34a Rooty Hill Road, Rooty Hill. **Tuesdays:** Hoy & Bingo, Gentle Exercise and Ukulele. **Wednesdays:** Drop in for a cuppa and Line Dancing. **Fridays:** Drumming & Tai Chi. Monthly bus trips & more! Ring Coral 96313289 or Pam 96757836.

SUTHERLAND: Pensioners Centre, 749a Old Princes Hwy.

Mondays: Tai Chi, Strengthening Ex, Meditation, Feldenkrais.
Wednesdays: Tai Chi, Gentle Exercise, Drumming & Book Club. Speakers, courses and more! Ring Noreen on 95453489.

ILLAWARRA: Coniston Community Hall, Bridge Street, Coniston (near train station & parking available). **Mondays:** Tai Chi, International Dancing, Drumming & Gentle Exercise. **Tuesdays:** Relaxation/Meditation, Thai Yoga & Ukulele. Ring Barbara on 0406 627 493 or Sheila on 4228 7840.

BANKSTOWN: Bankstown PCYC, Cnr French Ave & Meredith St. **Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.** Activities include: Gentle Yoga, Gent Exercise, Drumming, 'Let's Talk About' (Discussion), International Dancing, Guided Relaxation & more! Ring Diane on 9708 2245.

NORTHSIDE: The Annex, Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor St, Chatswood. **Tuesdays:** Mums with Drums. **Wednesdays:** Feldenkrais, Discussion, Book Club & Qi Gong. Ring: 9415 2474.



LOST LADIES

Sept 3: Powerhouse Museum, 10am. 3 exhibitions: Costumes from *Strictly Ballroom*, People Machines and Design. Also 25 historic restored cars. No charge for exhibition, Entry \$5.
Sept 10: Spring Lunch at Merle's, 357 Sailor's Bay Road, Northbridge, 12.30pm. Volunteers bring dessert.





Scrap Co-payment Levy

While CPSA is pleased that the Government might look at exemptions for the GP co-payment, the plan needs to be scrapped in its entirety.

There are plenty of people who may not qualify for a pension but whose health will be impacted if they can't afford the co-payment. For many a fee of \$7 will prevent them from seeking medical advice when required. The suggestion that a co-contribution payment will discourage people from making 'unnecessary' visits to their GP is appalling.

CPSA does not want to see a situation where a two-tiered Medicare system is created, to the detriment of the health of those with lower incomes. No income raised by the co-payment is set to go into the Medicare system.

CPSA calls on Australian Senators to block the dismantling of universal healthcare for all. Bulk billing is crucial to ensuring that everyone is able to access a doctor when they need it.

Amelia Christie
Manager,
Research and Advocacy



ACTIVITIES

MEMBERS & THEIR FRIENDS WELCOME TO ATTEND

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 **Tuesday, Sept 9**. 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 Street. You must sign in.)
Contact Yetty 9665 2050 to check all details.

Book Club

MON, SEPT 15 - *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd.
Come at 12 with a sandwich for lunch.

MON, OCT 20 - *Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage* by Hazel Rowley.
12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. Come at 12 with a sandwich for lunch.

Aboriginal Support Circle

Confirm details with Pat Zinn 9389 1090 or email pattzinn1@hotmail.com

SUBSCRIBE NOW to OWN MATTERS

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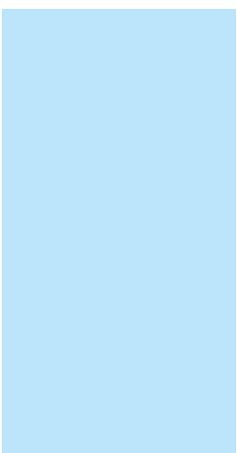
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