



The 3 R's Forum



OWN MATTERS

Newsletter of the Older Women's Network NSW

Vol.9 No.5 – June 2012

Rights, Roadblocks, Resilience

“We need positive steps to overcome discrimination in areas such as jobs, health, incomes, housing and community attitudes,” said Sonia Laverty, Chairperson of OWN NSW. “It is important to recognise the potential of older women to live active, creative lives.”

see *A Challenge to Ageism* and *Forum Notice* pages 2 and 3

Tickets Selling Fast!

An afternoon of entertainment celebrating the creativity of women... Come and join us and laugh and cheer our performance groups and see what talent there is in our OWN performance groups... Phoenix Theatre, Bridge Street, Coniston, Saturday, June 30. You'll have a ball!

see *Concert Women Centre Stage* pages 6 and 7

Plea for Self Determination

The Stronger Futures laws, currently before the Parliament, would extend the key Northern Territory intervention measures for another 10 years, in spite of widespread protests and increasing suicides and rising imprisonment rates. . .

see *A Plea from the Heart* and *letter* pages 10 and 12

OWN Explores the Arts

I was intoxicated by an afternoon of encountering two of Australia's finest cultural icons who have enriched my life so deeply. Once again, I reflected with some awe on the power of ideas to make or break our lives. . .

see *Bev Cameron's Home Grown Intoxication* page 8

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Who Are We?

The Older Women's Network (OWN) NSW is the peak body for 19 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 news-letter of the Older Women's Network NSW. It is published 11 times a year. The annual subscription for individuals is \$25 and \$45 for organisations and includes GST.

Members of OWN groups in NSW are encouraged to contribute to **OWN Matters** with items of interest to older women and Letters to the Editor. They can be sent by email or mail marked Attention – Editorial Team. Please include contact details. Contributions must be received by the second Tuesday of each month.

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ABN 36 992 030 904

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More help always welcome!

OWN Office



The phone hours at our OWN office are from 10:00 to 3:00.

If you call outside these hours you may get a recorded message.

Leave a message, with your contact number, and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Between 10:00 and 3:00 the phone will be answered by one of our friendly volunteers.

OWN Matters Direct!

We love to hear from you and publish what you have to say in our newsletter.



The best way, for you and us, is for you to email your letter or article.

We have an email address especially for your contributions.

The email address is newsletter@ownnsw.org.au

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Disclaimer : *The views expressed in OWN Matters are not necessarily those of the Older Women's Network NSW, and we do not guarantee the accuracy of the facts in articles supplied by members. The Older Women's Network NSW accepts no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting, or not acting, upon any material in OWN Matters.*

OWN Matters

You win some, you lose some.

First, we have had great positive feedback about the May issue, even though smaller in size. Now it's up to you, our readers, to write.

We had a major disaster on May 9, when the editorial team was working on the June newsletter. Unfortunately, the power supply failed and crashed the two computers containing the newsletter. Some women who sent articles might have to send them again. The editorial team went home early on May 9, but that meant working late on May 16. There will be more changes for the newsletter.

The cut-off date mentioned in the last issue has been changed. You need to have your writing in by the third Tuesday. This means the editorial team will still do its final proofreading on the third Wednesday. If you don't have your writing in by the third Tuesday, it will have to go in the following issue.

The second change is that we can't accept writing downloaded from the web. There are two reasons. One is that we don't want another disaster from viruses. The other is that it is a problem breaking copyright. We know you send things that tickle your funnybone, but we can't publish them without permission of the writer. Funny things happen to you, so write about them for the newsletter.

OWN NSW Management Team and OWN Matters Editorial Team

Hard Times

Recently Greens NSW Senator Lee Rhiannon has been raising the issue of older women not accumulating adequate super to support them through their later years. There also seems to be a dawning awareness of the rising poverty levels among Older Women.

To counter the Jo Hockey "End of the Age of Entitlement" line, Lee is looking for some real cases studies of older women who, through whatever reason, perhaps divorce, disease, mental illness, being a carer, addiction, have fallen on hard times "and are prepared to tell their stories.

If any members or friends of members of OWN NSW would be happy to participate in this project by being interviewed please contact Lesa de Leau, at Lee's office, **02 9211 9523** or by email lesa.deleau@aph.gov.au. Discretion, where necessary, can be assured but the main point is to demonstrate the different reasons why older women may find themselves needing support. To those of you of you brave enough and willing enough to speak out.

Dianne Hiles diannehiles@parliament.nsw.gov.au

A CHALLENGE TO AGEISM

NSW Parliament House Theatre.

Thursday 16 August 2012.

Older women are too often left out of the policy decisions that affect their lives, according to the organisers of a forum at NSW Parliament House on Thursday 16 August.

"We need positive steps to overcome discrimination in areas such as jobs, health, incomes housing and community attitudes," said Sonia Laverty, Chairperson of the Older Women's Network. "It is important to recognise the potential of older women to live active, creative lives."

The forum, **Rights, Roadblocks, Resilience**, will feature a top line-up of speakers, including:

- the Hon. Susan Ryan AO, Age Discrimination Commissioner;
- the Hon. Andrew Constance, MP, NSW Minister for Ageing;
- Professor Barbara Pocock of Adelaide;
- Elisabeth Wynhausen, journalist and researcher and
- Larke Riemer, Director, Women's Markets, Westpac Banking Corporation.

One of the forum organisers, Penny Nelson of Randwick, said the event was intended for women of all backgrounds, as well as policy makers and industry representatives.

A few facts about older women in NSW:

- Age discrimination starts as early as 45 in many jobs
- Many women who are single, older and private renters are at risk of homelessness
- Violence and emotional abuse affect a significant minority of older women but is rarely recognised
- Women's unpaid housework and caring are not counted in national economic data
- A majority of women aged over 65 have no superannuation – the age pension is their sole income.

For more information about this forum, call the **Older Women's Network** on 9247 7046 or visit www.ownnsw.org.au



OLDER WOMEN CHALLENGE AGEISM

RIGHTS ROADBLOCKS RESILIENCE

Speakers at this one-day forum will identify the negative impact of ageism and recognise the potential of older women to live active, creative lives. The emphasis will be on resilience; positive steps to overcome discrimination and achieve change in areas such as jobs, health, incomes and community attitudes. The Older Women's Network NSW invites you to be part of this important milestone in ageing policy. **This is one day you can't afford to miss.** Speakers and panellists will be –

THE HON. ANDREW CONSTANCE MP
NSW Minister for Ageing

THE HON SUSAN RYAN AO,
Age Discrimination Commissioner

PROFESSOR BARBARA POOCOCK,
Director,
Centre for Work and Life,
University of South Australia

ELISABETH WYNHAUSEN,
Journalist, author & action researcher

LARKE RIEMER
Director,
Women's Markets,
Westpac Banking Corporation

SUE CRIPPS,
Director, Homelessness,
Mental Health & Disability,
Catholic Community Care Services
NSW/ACT

LUDO MCFERRAN,
Investigator, Australian Family &
Domestic Violence Clearinghouse,
University New South Wales

CHRISTINE STURGESS,
Group Recruitment Manager,
Bunnings Group Ltd.

DENELE CROZIER,
Executive Officer,
Women's Health, NSW

NSW Parliament House Theatre.

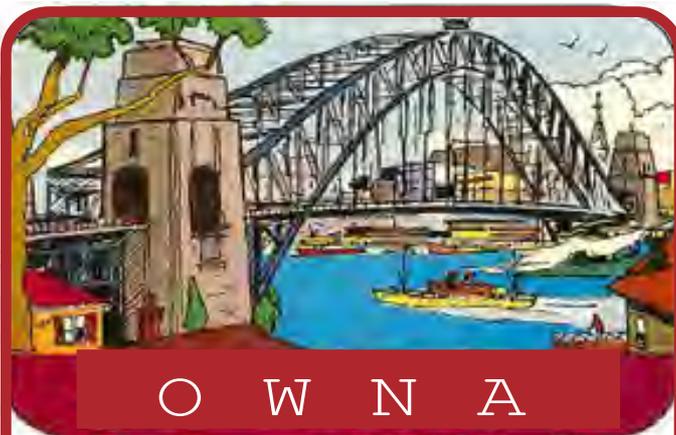
Thursday 16 August 2012.

registration forms: www.ownsw.org.au or 9247 7046



The 3 R's Forum

It's All Happening!



O W N A

2012

OWN Australia Conference Wednesday, 15 August 2012, Sydney

Planning is underway for this event, to encourage delegate participation in the 3Rs Forum the following day.

A registration flyer has been included in this newsletter.

Contact Cate Turner for details: 9428 2965

cturne@ozemail.com.au



OWN NSW 2012 AGM Thursday, 27 September

It isn't a year since the last conference, but the time for it is coming closer. Our Conference/AGM is booked for Thursday, September 27, and it will be held in the newly renovated Mott Hall. We've booked our keynote speaker, Meg Small and are arranging the workshops. You will be able to do the Rocks walk, whether you did it last time or not, and we're all in training for it.

Lorraine will be taking a Beading workshop, teaching participants the basics of making earrings and necklaces. For this, put together a collection of beads to bring, whether an old necklace pulled apart or new beads. You will need a pair of small narrow pointed pliers, but they are cheap at the discount shops.

Of course it wouldn't be a conference without one of Barbara Malcolm's magnificent Conference Quilts to raffle, so call the office and order your books. Just imagine winning this beautiful treasure! (pictured below)

Any questions?

info@ownnsw.org.au or ph: 9247 7046



You Are Welcome!

The OWN NSW Quarterly Meeting will be hosted by OWN Sutherland on Friday 29 June

10.30 am to 1.00pm

The meeting will be held at the Southern United Services Club, 7 East Pde. Its a 5 minute walk from Sutherland train station.

Guest Speaker: Dr Mary Kearney

Older Women's Right to Health Screening. We will also have a pharmacist to talk to us about **Mixing Medications**, and the **DAMES** will entertain us.

A light lunch will be provided for OWN Members.

RSVP essential by 20 June to Pat Donaghy

9526 5746 or 0431 036 127

or email pdonaghy@aapt.net.au

At and Beyond the Rocks

SHOWN 10th Anniversary: How time flies!

It is now ten years since Southern Highlands Older Women's Network began - ten great years for our group. We started with seventeen members at our first meeting in May 2002 and we now have a membership of ninety-nine (although nearly thirty have yet to pay their 2012 subs). Our membership is strong in spite of there being a large number of organisations in our area that older women can join.

Our monthly meetings have from thirty to fifty women present, depending on the topic. These meetings have helped us meet our objective of helping older women to be well informed on health issues. Our other objective is to encourage older women to keep active; we achieve this through our weekly Tai Chi class and through promoting various exercise groups through our newsletter. We also have theatre parties, workshop days, health forums and train trips, so SHOWN members lead busy lives with plenty of opportunities for social contact.

To celebrate the passing of ten years and the success of our organisation, seventy women came to our 10th Anniversary Party on Thursday 3 May at Mittagong RSL. As well as our SHOWN members we were honoured to share the day with Cate Turner, Beth Eldridge, seven women from Macarthur OWN, five from Wollondilly OWN and six local visitors. To mark the occasion, we had a cake cutting ceremony with a beautiful cake made by Committee member, Shirley Richards followed by brief speeches from Cate and Beth. There was great entertainment from Mittagong Public School's Junior Choir and Guitar Trio; the WENCHes and Lily Hopher; good food; raffles and lots of friendship. All in all it was a most enjoyable day and the best of ways to celebrate ten years! Thank you everyone.

Robyn Smith: SHOWN Coordinator



Some of Barbara's Drummers at OWN NSW Conference

Concert Women Centre Stage

To wind up the OWN Australia Conference in Perth last year the OWN performance groups attending the conference were joined by other local groups for a concert which was held at the Don Russell Performing Arts Centre. After performing in such a lovely theatre we were inspired to work towards holding something similar when we returned home, and have since been working towards that aim. In the past, concerts have been run in various Sydney suburbs, the last being in Mott Hall and they have always been heaps of fun.

Here we are to tell you about the next one, so have a look at our advertisement which will give all the details. Make it a day out, come down from Sydney by train to Coniston. The trip is magical, with views of many beautiful beaches on the left hand side and the ancient Illawarra Escarpment on the right. When you leave the train, the Coniston the Hotel is opposite the station and has a nice lunch menu. So come and join us and laugh and cheer our performance groups and see what talent there is in our OWN performance groups as well as other talented women's groups from the Illawarra. You'll have a ball.

Barbara Malcolm



WOMEN CENTRE STAGE

An afternoon of entertainment celebrating the creativity of women



ACTS: Chooks on a Hot Tin Roof - Ukulele Group
D.A.M.E.S
Older Women's Theatre Group
Cinnamon Twist - Belly Dance
Tribal Jewels - Tribal Style Belly Dance Troupe
Silver Belles - Tap Dance

TIME: Saturday 30th June 1 pm.

WHERE: Phoenix Theatre, Bridge Street, Coniston

COST: \$10 per ticket, available through O.W.N Groups.
Order early, Numbers limited.

CONTACT: Barbara on 4229 9504 for tickets or information

Presented by **The Older Women's Network NSW**

OWN Explores the Arts

Storm Approaching Wangi - Dobell 1948



Home Grown Intoxication

Ever since I first learnt how to read Australian author Patrick White's novels and plays – and realised that insight required first reading another book about Jungian psychoanalysis and how to apply that to White's world view, I have found great satisfaction in that pursuit. His writing, though usually acerbic when portraying people and their relationships, is profoundly powerful when describing our Australian landscape and harsh conditions. The paradox is that though he was an Anglophile and very critical of our way of life, his writing betrays how much a part of him this dry, brown land had become.

Recently, his Nobel prize winning work, *The Eye of the Storm* was made into a movie. Sadly I missed seeing it, and not having read the book either soon obtained a copy and was once more engrossed in his way of seeing things. As it happens, May this year is the centenary of his birth and to mark the event ABC Radio National, has been presenting a series of his plays starting with *The Ham Funeral*, another of his works I had not read. I made a mental note to remind me to listen.

Dobell is another famous Australian whose work has been part of my life for many, many years starting with my parents' purchase of a print of the then controversial 1948 Archibald Portrait prize winning depiction of fellow artist, Margaret Olley and including a print of his 1948 Wynne Prize for Landscape painting, *Storm Approaching Wangi*. I had long wanted to see where Dobell found his inspiration for his work and to experience that atmosphere. Our visit gave me more than I had hoped for.

While there, I listened to a CD of an ABC interview Dobell gave back in 1963, in which he discussed his life as an artist, the influences on him and the people he met. While in his 'London' period, he was living in inner London next door to a family in which the death of the old father occurred. It was the practice in those days to lay out

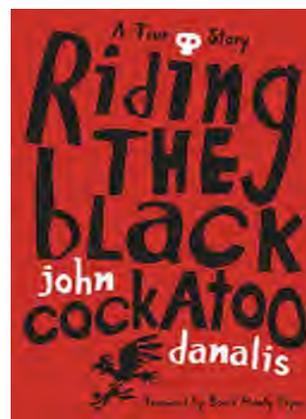
the body in the front parlour and leave it there for a week. Dobell desired to make a drawing and perhaps a painting of this scene – his work often started with sketches which were almost caricatures until he painted over them. In this case however, he did not get around to it, but did tell his Australian writer friend, Patrick White, all about the event. Patrick White took up the story and turned it into 'The Ham Funeral.'

I could hardly believe such an extraordinary coincidence! It was almost time for the broadcast of the play. I switched on the radio, and with my new and richer perspective, listened engrossed to the typically White-style presentation of a very human situation. In it, the apparently monstrously self-interested wife of a long-suffering and gentle husband complains loud and long to her young poet lodger living in the room upstairs. When the husband dies suddenly, still sitting in his chair, the wife expresses herself in a paroxysm of grief and rage while in between these angry words, describing with glee the fancy 'ham' funeral she will arrange. There will be more than mere sausages for her 'Will!' The young poet is appalled at her apparent superficiality. [True to White's talent for describing characters as both weak and strong, lovable yet hideous, the story unfolds in the final episode and persuades the reader to see both sides and to refrain from judgement.]

By the end of the broadcast, we had reached our destination. I was intoxicated by an afternoon of encountering two of Australia's finest cultural icons who have enriched my life so deeply. Once again, I reflected with some awe on the power of ideas to make or break our lives.

Bev Cameron

Patrick White: Fiction and the Unconscious by David J Tacey Oxford University Press 1988



Books - Three highly Recommended

Riding the Black Cockatoo - (2009) An oldie but a goodie, John Danalis, Allen & Unwin, Foreword by Boori Monty Pryor. A compelling true story of Reconciliation, of one man's courage to do what he believes to be right, by returning the Aboriginal

skeletal remains that had been on his family's mantelpiece, since childhood to their rightful place in Wamba Wamba (Wemba Wemba) country, Victoria.

OWN Explores the Arts

Southerly Volume 71 - Number 2 - 2011 - *A Handful of Sand: words to the frontline*. The Journal of the English Assoc, Sydney University, Brandl & Schlesinger. This issue of *Southerly*, brings to the reader a rich tapestry of writing from Australia's First Peoples, ranging in age from teenagers to respected Elders from various language groups and communities throughout the country. Poetry, fiction, essays, memoir. You name it, it's in this collection. A valuable resource those wanting to learn more about their Country and the 'voices' within.

Childless - Reflections on Life's Longing for Itself. (2012), Gillian Guthrie. Short Stop Press. *Childless* is a tender exploration of a taboo topic, both personal and political. Forget the labels of selfish, ambitious, uncaring and tough. This book is about longing, loss, grief and resilience, and much more. At the time of writing the author is old enough to be a grandmother but she's rocked by the realisation that without children of her own, there'll be no grandchildren either "it's a lifelong condition. Guthrie sets out to explore the lives and loves of other childless women, aged between forty and ninety. This is a beautifully-written, compassionate book about the quarter to one third of Australian women who are, and will most likely remain childless.

Lorraine McGee-Sippel

International Crime Fiction

I am addicted to crime and mystery novels in which I can travel the world. Why crime novels? An aspect of this genre is the very good sense of place. Any crime writer has to include the setting for both the crime and the investigation. So whether the crime happens in Paris or Shanghai or Istanbul, as a reader I learn a lot about the place, the society and the people who are part of it. As more writers are translated into English, as more writers can write in English about places with which they are familiar, so we international crime readers can travel further.

One destination I have enjoyed, as a crime novel traveller, is that incredible city, Istanbul.

My favourite writers of crime novels set in Turkey are Barbara Nadel, Jason Goodwin, and Mehmet Murat Somer.

Barbara Nadel, although English, has written a series of modern-day police procedurals about Cetin Ikmen, a detective on the Istanbul police force, and his colleagues.

Jason Goodwin is the author of a series of historical mysteries involving a Turkish eunuch detective, Yashim, who lives and works in 19th century Istanbul.

Mehmet Murat Somer is the Turkish author of crime fiction, and his best known is his Hop-Ciki-Yaya series set in Istanbul, and featuring an unnamed transvestite amateur detective. Although all set in the same city, they are about very different people and times, but all provide wonderful insight into the society and people of Turkey and Istanbul.

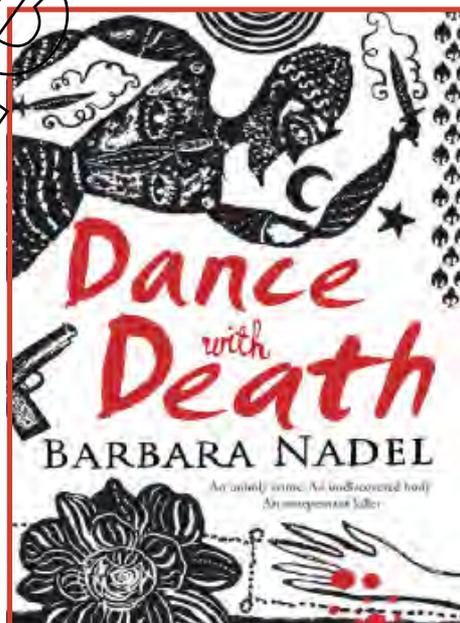
Stuart M. Kaminsky was an American mystery writer and of his books what I really enjoy is his picture of Russia, through his series about Porfiry Petrovich Rostkinov, a Moscow police inspector and his fellow policemen, set in the period between about 1985 and 2010, a time of big changes in Russian society.

Qiu Xiaolong was born in Shanghai, but has lived in America for about thirty years. He has written a series of crime / mystery novels set in Shanghai from 1990 on, as The People's Republic of China underwent huge changes. His books feature Chief Inspector Chen Cao, a poetry-quoting policeman. They are police procedurals but the main feature of the books is modern-day China itself.

Colin Cotterill has dual English and Australian citizenship, but has spent much of his life in South Asia. He received the Crime Writers' Association Award for being "the author of crime fiction whose work is currently giving the greatest enjoyment to library users" in 2009. I think you would have to be either English or Australian to appreciate the sardonic wit which graces his books, set mainly in Laos, featuring coroner Dr Siri Paiboun. These books give you a very inside picture of South-East Asia, during momentous changes, some still happening in the societies there.

These are just a few of the places I travel, and the writers who take me there, but I'll write another time about others I love.

Lorraine Inglis



Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

A Plea from the Heart

The Stronger Futures laws, currently before the Parliament, would extend the key Northern Territory intervention measures for another 10 years, in spite of widespread protests and increasing suicides and rising imprisonment rates. The following plea, by Yolngu leader Dhalulu Ganambarr-Stubbs, surely expresses the hurt and despair of his people:

“Today, in 2012, the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory are suffering. Our health is the worst of any indigenous group in the world. The education of our children has been neglected and our traditional law has been undermined. For years we have been asking for help to tackle these problems.

In 2007, the Australian Government launched the Northern Territory Intervention to try and help us. Without any consultation, our lands were seized. Our councils and community services were shut down. Those on welfare were put on income management and extra police were sent into our communities. We were made to feel like criminals in our own land and we lost all control over our lives.

If policies are ever going to work for my people, we need to be involved in creating them. We have been asking for so long that our own elected leaders be listened to, that our languages and culture be incorporated into the teaching of our children, that we be supported to live and thrive on our own homelands and that we are given the human rights to control our own futures. And now the Stronger Futures legislation has been proposed in Parliament. How is it fair and respectful? Would you let this happen to your own communities, to your own families?

We, the First Peoples of Australia, demand the right to control our own futures. I am asking you the people of Australia, our brothers, our sisters to help us stop this legislation, to tell the Government that freedom is the right of all Australians.”

Dhalulu Ganambarr-Stubbs

Pat Zinn

If you would like to write a letter of support for the issues expressed in Dhalulu Ganambarr-Stubbs statement above, you will find a template on page 12 of this newsletter. eds

Justice Reinvestment Campaign in NSW

Earlier this month, NSW Governor Marie Bashir launched the Justice Reinvestment Campaign for young Aboriginal people in NSW, after many years of campaigning by activists. During the past decade, Aboriginal imprisonment rates across Australia have skyrocketed by more than 50 per cent! Our juvenile detention centres have become learning centres for a cycle of offending and imprisonment.

Justice reinvestment is about prevention rather than cure - about creating alternative pathways to tackle this problem. Locking up people is an expensive way of dealing with crime; it costs \$230 thousand per person per year and does not work. It is known that 70 per cent of people who have been imprisoned re-offend. Under justice reinvestment, funds are diverted away from prison into prevention programs that address the underlying causes of crimes in communities and the emphasis is on rehabilitation and mentoring, including continuing education, supported housing, better coordinating of substance abuse and mental health, and transition to employment. There is tremendous support from different organisations and prominent people, both black and white, from different walks of life, and a Justice Investment Advisory Group is to be established.

There is evidence that a large number of young offenders often come from a relatively small number of disadvantaged communities. Demographic mapping will determine the regions that will benefit the most from investment in early prevention programs. Priorities and needs should be identified in consultation with communities. A reasonable starting



Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

point would be in diverting ten per cent of funds to justice reinvestment, mostly from the Justice Department, which alone has an estimated budget for juvenile offenders of \$200 million in 2011-2012. At last, the Justice Department has realised that "a tough on crime approach can degenerate into war against its most disadvantaged."

Pat Zinn

New Research into Rock Art in Western Australia

The Dampier Archipelago in Western Australia is on the National Heritage List but is listed as one of the 100 most endangered Heritage places on earth. It has the largest concentration of rock art in the world, with an estimated one million petroglyphs (carvings). There are probably several million motifs across the region, some before and some after the last sea level rise. Of the latter, there are pictures of fish, turtles and other marine subjects and lots of human figures. Before the last sea level rise (approximately 15,000 years ago) there are pictures of land animals, including big kangaroos and thylacines, which became extinct on the mainland at least 4,000 years ago, probably when dingoes were introduced.

Tens of thousands of these rock art treasures are to be researched, catalogued and promoted under a new agreement between the University of Western Australia and mining giant Rio Tinto. This rock art takes in part of the Burrup Peninsula where mining companies own some of the land, and where some of the rocks have been destroyed. Some of the Burrup is in a conservation estate and some land was heritage-listed in 2007.

The University will work with local Aboriginal people to develop an understanding of the information and will provide training opportunities for rangers, educators and interpreters.

Pat Zinn

Ghost Nets Australia Art Project

Ghost nets are fishing nets that are lost or abandoned at sea, and are a major threat to sea animals as well as causing ongoing problems for Indigenous salt water communities around the top end. The Ghost Nets Australia Arts Project sponsors workshops facilitated by contemporary artists in engaging community members to create art, crafts and functional pieces from ghost nets, which are then marketed through various galleries. Many remote Indigenous communities across the top end of Australia have hosted Ghost Nets Project workshops and are now going to workshops, conferences and festivals in Geelong, Hobart and Canberra.

Works are now appearing in major art institutions here and in the British Museum, providing income for the artists and raising public awareness of the ghost net menace. The project has won the 2012 Creative Arts Award presented by the World Wildlife Fund.

Pat Zinn

Stolen Generations

In 2009 - twenty-eight to thirty members of the Stolen Generations were consulted/interviewed for this project.

Interviews were conducted throughout Australia - which has resulted in this DVD/Doco - it was officially launched by Jenny Macklin, in Canberra, in February, and a smaller launch took place in Sydney on 25 May - the day before 'Sorry Day'.

Anyhow, here's the website: www.stolengenerationstestimonies.com - Stolen Generations Testimonies - which contains information about this project - and it is fabulous!

All our stories are different, as you will see.

*Cheers,
Lorraine
McGee-Sippel*



OWN Offers a Template

Attention:

The Hon Jenny Macklin MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

*You can use this text as a
template for your own letter.*

23rd May 2012 (*insert send date*)

Dear Minister

I would like to support the plea of Dhalulu Ganambarr-Stubbs who expresses the hurt and despair of his people concerning the *Stronger Futures* laws currently before Parliament. If policies are going to succeed, the Aboriginal people need to be involved in creating them. I ask that:

- Their elected leaders be listened to,
- Their languages and culture be incorporated into the teaching of their children,
- They be supported to live and thrive on their homelands,
- That they be accorded the human rights to determine their futures.

The First Peoples of Australia deserve this acknowledgement and respect. Freedom and dignity should be rights for all Australians.

Yours faithfully,

Louise West (insert your own name)



Healthy Literacy

'Health Literacy is described as the degree to which individuals can obtain, process and understand the basic health information and services they need to make appropriate health decisions,' (Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care).'

Recently I attended an all-day seminar on health literacy which featured an international health literacy expert from Harvard medical School, Dr. Rima Rudd. Dr Rudd has developed a guide for hospitals and health centres to assess their own health literacy environment.

The seminar objective was to promote strategies to break down literacy barriers in health services and to build health literacy: including addressing indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community needs and the needs of people with limited health literacy.

Dr. Rudd said that 55% of Australians had low health literacy while 20% had high health literacy. This is a serious safety issue. For example, Dr. Rudd says that she would wipe out patients being asked by health professionals 'Do you understand?' People always say yes. They should be asked a question that requires an answer such as 'What do you understand?' She also says that people should not be told to look up information on the net rather than giving them written or verbal information.

There is a Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit available at <http://www.ahrg.gov/qual/literacy/>. While the toolkit was developed for the United States health context and has a primary health care focus, it provides valuable information that can be applied throughout settings in the Australian healthcare environment.

Betty Johnson

eHealth Record

I recently attended a Super-Summit on eHealth organised by the National eHealth Transition Authority (NEHTA)

This summit presented a summary of key concerns, issues and suggestions that were raised

at a Pre-Summit Consumer workshop. The aim of the day was to provide an opportunity for consumer organisations to enhance their understanding of eHealth.

Carol Bennett, CEO of the Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) said the eHealth Record will enhance safety and its all about empowering consumers in their health care, putting the emphasis more on consumer own care.

I agree with the CHF that the system should be opt-out rather than opt-in. It seems to me that the process of 'registering' is complicated and people will need to give much information to persuade them to opt-in. The Summit tended to concentrate on the technology rather than the people who will be using it. I hope this can be rectified when the publicity begins. July 1 is the beginning of this new, interesting health process.

Betty Johnson

Patient - Centred Care

The Ministry of Health is promoting widely the concept of Patient-Centred Care. 'Patient-Centred Care is an approach to the planning, delivery and evaluation of health care that is grounded in mutually beneficial partnership among health-care providers, patients and their families.'

(Patient-Centred care: Improving quality and safety through partnerships with patients and consumers. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Healthcare Sydney)

Eight dimensions have been identified by the Picker Institute 1993:

- respect for patients' preferences and values
- emotional support
- physical comfort
- information, communication and education
- continuity and transition
- coordination of care

continues next page



Letters to the Editor

from previous page

- involvement of family and friends
- access to care

I believe the implementation of this concept of care is vital for consumers. Ask the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Healthcare for a copy yourself.

Betty Johnson



Asset Development

A friend was talking to her granddaughter who was excited as she had just got \$3 from the tooth fairy for the loss of her first tooth.

Later the little ones mother told her that the family were exploring the possibility of having a swimming pool installed by next summer and the little girl was getting very excited at the prospect. To head off a future disappointment it was explained that they may not be able to get the pool as they cost a lot of money and Mummy and Daddy may not have enough. "We can get some more," the parents were told, "I've got a lot more teeth."

Mum and Dad were a bit disturbed to later see their daughter peering into the one year old's mouth.

Barbara Malcolm



Thank You

A big thank you to all those signing the petition (re genital mutilation) I presented (every one helps). The appeal (for both sides) will be on 13 April. I will be in Sydney for the event.

Thank you again

Carolyn De Waegenaire

Where are we all now?

Merle, dear old friend. Reading your letter in the Newsletter I marvelled at your attitude to having your leg amputated. So brave and lacking in self pity. I remember the days when we danced at Ellen's creative dance sessions which were for me the best day of the week. Such fun. Where are we all now?

I noticed in the Feb Newsletter where Dorothy Cox will be 90 in May. Another old friend. Cheers and champers.

Joan Johns



New tributes for Noreen

Huge thanks to those who have continued to contribute to the *Noreen Hewett Tribute Fund*. Proceeds of these donations, and the on-going sales of Dorothy Cora's *Noreen Hewett: Portrait of a Grassroots Activist (2010)* have been sparked by the Sydney Morning Herald's beautiful obituary:

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/obituaries/spirited-activist-never-gave-up-fight-20120423-1xh5e.html>

These donations will help support projects of OWN NSW and OWN Sutherland.

New donations have been received from:

- Richard Walsham
- John Hird
- Valda Snell

Many thanks from OWN



Merle dancing at OWN
20th Birthday 2007

Summer Harvest

National Folk Festival 2012

I'm going to try to do something impossible. To describe in a short article what takes place at the annual NFF held in Canberra for four days EVERY EASTER. It is hugely popular with all ages and has been going for 46 years. It is about folk and folk related music, contemporary and traditional. It shows off international acts, Australian top lining groups and the best acts reflecting the cultural diversity of Australia. It includes Dance, Choirs, Master classes, Workshops, a Kids' Festival, a Circus, and some of the most interesting craft, food, clothes and jewelry.

This year there were 200 acts and 1,500 performers in 8 venues set across the 70 hectares of Exhibition Park. The NFF is a celebration of what 1,300 dedicated volunteers, supported by four full time and six part time staff, can do. The Festival is organised with due regard for Health and Safety laws, security, transport within the grounds, medical help, Easter services, lost property, licensed bars, parking of bikes and cars, accommodation in tents and caravans for performers and others. Enormous effort is placed on recycling, with labeled bins and collection sites everywhere. Each year the record for recycling has gone up.

Each venue can show up to 12 acts on any one day and each venue has a compere, designers, technical set up team, cleaners etc. Yet, there is a laid back feeling about the gaily decorated Festival, with its winding streets of bunting and colourful shops, bars, cafes with "busk stops" where kids and street performers add to the lively scene. This year the 73 page programme contained information and pictures about each act, easy schedules of acts for each day, so you can select in a few moments what next to go to.

A ticket either for the whole show or for a day entitles you to a shower proof wrist band, which is your entrance to any Act or venue. I always start the day in the *Poets Breakfast* tent, where the humour of country Australia inspires many rhymes. I know that I will only be able to sample a fraction of what's on offer and I will drop in and out of many acts, while getting in early for my favourites. This year these included the perfect percussionists "Circle of Rhythm"; the Mongolian Throat Singer, "Bukhchuluunn Garburged"; the acappella comedy of WA's "Ballpoint Penguins"; Tasmania's "Zulya and the Children of the Underground"; and the laugh out loud "Storytellers Guide to the World"

I never miss the *Union Concert*, a two hour celebration of singers and interviews from the history of the Australian Union movement. This year there were 9 Union Choirs who then combined in their colourful red, black and yellow uniforms to sing spirited songs of unity and protest.

The colours of autumn surround the Exhibition Park which is ten minutes from the city. Often the Canberra evenings are cool. So then great drums of burning logs dot the grounds and cider and hot mulled wine are popular with young and older people.

After several years of attending the National Folk Festival, I realise that it celebrates values we older women particularly hold dear – harmony, family, laughter and feeling free, respect for all cultures, practical organisation and music, music, music.

Check the website: www.folkfestival.org.au

Joan Modder

Watermelons

I have really enjoyed Bob Brown in parliament, as a voice of calmness and balance, whatever his political stance. I was a little sad when he announced his retirement, even as I appreciated his wish to enjoy a life outside politics. He has certainly taken the Greens a long way from the days of his campaign to save the Franklin River. This term in Parliament, as part of a minority government, has given the Greens a real chance to influence decision making and legislation. And the Greens have certainly annoyed many on the far right of the political spectrum.

The question is, just who are the Greens? I have worked for the Greens, on the booths for every council, state and federal election, for about twenty years. I didn't defect from the Labour Party. The Labour Party defected from me. I believed in the Greens' attempts to limit the power of big capital to destroy much of our environment. Along with many other voters, I believed the Greens had policies which considered the rights of people and the need for social justice. I also believed that their growing support provided the best chance for those rights to be considered. The Greens were given the left side of politics, by default.

So I am really amazed by the big fuss made by commentators supporting the two right wing parties, the Liberal and the Labour parties, since Bob Brown retired. Watermelons indeed! Green on the outside and red on the inside! Everyone has known that many have considered the Greens their only possible alternative. The two major parties have done little to convince people of conscience that they deserve their vote.

I say to the major parties, "Get Over It!"

I am hoping that watermelons eventually grow all over both houses of State and Federal Parliament, and that their fruit is sweet.

Lorraine Inglis

Our OWN Writers

Tying up Loose Ends and Moving On

Sixty rich, full years have flown since I last entered my late grandparents' home, an old Victorian terrace house in Hamilton, Newcastle. Sixty rich, full years have flown since I last set eyes on cousins, a sister (81) and brother (79) who now occupy the former home of our mutual grandparents. As we converse, previously forgotten details of family relationships spring to mind to tie us together once more as family members. For a delightful hour or two, while noting inevitable changes in both cousins, early memories of days of long ago are recalled and news of relatives scattered interstate.

At some deep level, I know I am unlikely to be here again given the rushing tide of ordinary life sweeping us along in our individual directions. Such an awareness makes me deeply grateful to be tying up some loose ends of my life before it is too late.

I visit other haunts of childhood holidays in Newcastle with my grandmother. The city looks very different to my adult eyes and indeed, is still changing in many ways, some pleasing, some disheartening. There remains sufficient of the old in the carefully restored foreshore heritage buildings, the busy harbour and the golden beaches, to satisfy other nostalgia-laden longings that rise to the surface of my mind.

In a sense, my short revisiting of significant childhood places, though revealing that much has changed, has nevertheless not spoil the delightful memories which remain the same. Like a good housekeeper, I have swept away the dust of years. I am now putting the precious images away in memory boxes tied with pretty ribbons of good feeling to store them safely, perhaps to be brought out sometime and reviewed once more with tenderness.

With a fresh set of vivid images of family members and familiar places as they are now to add to the treasured memories of yesteryear, I have a more complete picture of my life's trajectory. That gives impetus to move on, savouring every moment. It is like coming to the penultimate chapter of an absorbing novel which leaves the reader both wanting to know how it ends and yet aware that when the story concludes, there will be a moment of loss, a *frisson* of grief, a release into emptiness.

Bev Cameron



You expect Guarantees?

Very little in this world is guaranteed.

We've been told how good walking is for us: keeping us fit, giving us better-working lungs and hearts, keeping our bones stronger. But most of the fatalities on the roads are pedestrians. Understandable when you consider a collision between a person and a vehicle.

My brothers and sisters and I eat very differently, and some of them don't exercise. One sister, who carries more weight and never exercises, has had a stent put in. But we all have the same cholesterol levels.

High resistance exercise is supposed to build body muscle and thereby improve bone density. I started going to exercise classes at our local gym five years ago, for my bones. I have developed strong muscles, but a recent scan showed that the bone density in some parts of my body had decreased.

A friend has high blood pressure and was told to she had to lose weight. She has lost more than 20 kgs in weight. The result? Her blood pressure has gone up and her medication to reduce blood pressure has been increased.

Speaking of medications, none of them are guaranteed to cure what ails you. If you are on long-term medication, what **is** almost certainly guaranteed : side effects, some of which the doctor won't know about.

For everyone, only one guarantee : death. For most of us, two guarantees: old age, followed by death. So what do we do? In my opinion:

- Walk or go to exercise classes every day. **Fitness**, by far, is the greatest determinant of health.
- Be part of a group, with whom you can participate in an activity, regularly. This will provide you with **friendship** and support.
- Find many things to do which you can enjoy, which give you pleasure, satisfaction and **fun**.
- If there is a cause, or subject or project about which you are concerned get involved. It might give bring you satisfaction and friendship.
- Say to yourself, "Only death is guaranteed. So I am going to **enjoy** my life to the max!"

Lorraine Inglis

Our OWN Writers

Who Feels It, Knows It

She heard him say “*You are paralysed from the waist down...!*”

And suddenly, so she was. Try as she might she couldn't make her legs move. The audience shrieked with laughter. She learned forward and promptly fell over. The audience was howling. She slid her arms forward, up under her. Awkwardly she raised herself. She hated this feeling of helplessness. She remembered how Fiona, from work, had tried to caution her against volunteering, that she'd “*Only make a fool of herself*”, but she had felt an unexpected spurt of defiance.

The others in the office always saw her as a bit of a mouse. “*Poor Ranjini...*” she'd hear them whisper. She could guess the rest. She'd had to give up her flat and come back home to nurse her father. Her mother had been killed at a crossing by a hit and run. She seldom went out now-a-days. They'd been given free tickets and Fiona in her capable way had arranged a “baby sitter” for Pa – leaving Ranjini no excuses.

And here she was feeling murderous rage, how dare that Ferangi*, this blasted Gora** do this to her?! She propelled herself towards her goal, crawling along on her hands. Her lower half felt numb, a dead weight. She lolled from side to side like a giant snake. Reaching out at last she grabbed at the foot of a chair, accidentally clamping her fingers around the leg of another unfortunate participant.

She recognised those socks now, with their rude designs. This was the arrogant man who had swaggered forward all macho shoulders and wobbly belly, urged on by his drunken mates. He'd pushed passed her, ignoring the fact that he'd trodden on her toe. How she would welcome that pain now! He'd been adamant that he would not succumb. But look at him, just another in tormented fellowship. She didn't know what horror the poor bastard had been told, but he was screaming trying to scramble up on to his chair, tearing himself free of her hand.

Still the audience was rocking in careless mirth, Ranjini spotted the hypnotist. He had moved nearer her with another victim in tow, she felt immense satisfaction as her teeth sank into his exposed ankle. He frantically snapped his fingers releasing her from the spell.

Ranjini had been aware of only one person in the crowd, that woman had been completely still, totally unmoved by the immense sea of hilarity surrounding her. She'd stared straight ahead. Ranjini caught her eye and she felt herself drawn to her. She couldn't understand what made this woman different. Whatever it was, she realised that she was going to know her. She was the only one who had cared about her humiliation.

Ranjini's attention snapped back to the stage. She picked herself up off the floor with as much dignity as she could muster. Thank goodness she's worn a salwar kemise. She quickly dusted herself off. She ignored the hypnotist who was now moaning, clutching his ankle – her teeth marks clearly visible. “*Serves you right!*” she declared as she strode to the front of the stage.

The audience had finally recognised that something was wrong. A hush had descended. In total silence Ranjini walked down the steps holding her head high and her shoulders back. She knew exactly where she was going, to that pair of warm eyes and kindness. She marched down the aisle towards her. And there SHE was proud, and arresting in her gleaming wheelchair, a labryis dangling from one ear.

Uma Kali Shakti

Taamaki Makau Rau

*Ferangi – Hindi word for the British in India.

**Gora - whiteman



Glimpses of Christmas Eve Pambula Far South Coast NSW

We walked to midnight Mass below a sky trembling with stars, to an old stone church – small and spare. The air alive with the perfumes of the bush – the noisy gargling and cackling of kookaburras disturbed by the lights. Inside, the traditional statues of Christ and Mary and tall brass vases filled, not with the traditional Hydrangeas and Glads, but with long elegant rods of red and green Kangaroo Paws. The music and the entrance procession began and into this remote country church filled with descendants of Irish Australian farmers there appeared the priest – a gleaming ebony man from Nigeria who gave a new zest to the cream and gold vestments of the Church en fete. Far from his family he turned and greeted us, his Australian brothers and sisters. So the story of a bush Christmas continues to evolve and can have many versions.

Sandra McKirdy

Notices

Low Back Pain Study

If you have low back pain you can join a University study offering free back pain treatments.

If your back pain started less than 6 weeks ago, you could be part of a leading Australian research program investigating treatments for a new episode of low back pain. The PACE Study is funded by the Australian government and is the first study to measure how quickly people recover from a new episode of back pain when they receive the best available medical advice and paracetamol.

Participants will be assessed by a study doctor trained in treating back pain, given advice on how best to manage their back pain, and be provided with free medication.

Participant progress is carefully monitored by the researchers for 3 months.

To become involved contact the researchers on Phone: 8238 2412; SMS: 0406995987 or email: PACE@george.org.au

Amanda Hese

Women's Action & Information Group: WAIG

Womens' Discussion Group: Term 2, 2012

Meeting, Monday 10 am - 12 noon

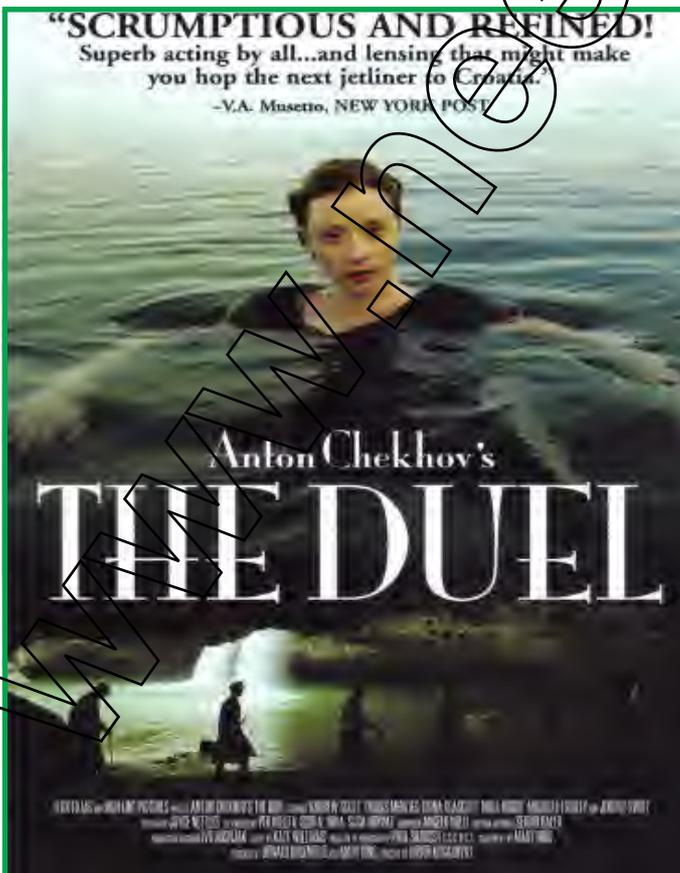
18 June: Come along to celebrate WAIG's 29th birthday celebration. Yes it's 29 years since WAIG started! Expect lots of discussion of past events and future plans. As always new members welcome.

25 June: Book Group • Last term we had as a speaker the inspiring Afghan refugee, Mahboba Rawi, speaking about her charity *Mahboba's Promise*: During this term as many of us as possible will try to read her book "*Mahboba's Promise*", available from most libraries, to allow for a more detailed discussion of the wonderful work that is being done for women and girls in Afghanistan by this not for profit charity. If you didn't hear Mahboba and haven't had a chance to read the book, please still come along and be inspired by what can be achieved by one woman of passion, determination and love.

All WAIG sessions are held at the Lane Cove Library, Longueville Rd, Lane Cove.

Cost of Monday's sessions: \$6 members / \$8 non-members

For Information see www.waig.org.au, email: waig@waig.org.au or ph: **0411 016 784**



Volunteer Rewards

The Older Women's Network has 10 double passes to a preview screening of the new film **Anton Chekhov's The Duel** for our June Volunteers.

The New York Times Critics' Pick ANTON CHEKHOV'S "THE DUEL" breathes new life into a classic Chekhovian tale. Set in a seaside resort in the Caucasus, the story centres on n'er do well, Laevsky (Andrew Scott) and his illicit relationship with his mistress Nadya (Fiona Glascott). Working with the master cinematographer Paul Sarossy (*The Sweet Hereafter*), director Dover Kosashvili (*Late Marriage*) has made a gorgeously cinematic and accessible movie that is sensuous, passionate, dramatic and peppered with delightful moments of levity inherent to the great novella.

The screening will take place on Monday 4 June at 6:30pm at Hoyts Cinema Paris.

Watch the Trailer at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op2Mewueijc&feature=youtu.be>

OWN Sydney Notices

WOW! Subscribe NOW!

Subscription to *OWN Matters* is \$25 per year, due every **JULY 1!**

Want to join **OWN Sydney** at the same time? We can fix this up in the same way, if you tick this box and include just another \$5

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I enclose a chq/money order for \$25 - covers to Jun30, 2013 made payable to OWNNSW **OR** Please debit the following credit card for \$25 (plus any donation)

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Members and friends are welcome to attend all activities

Wellness on Wednesdays - Important Changes

9.30am-1.30 pm every Wednesday
Now back in Mott Hall, Argyle St.

Contact Lola : 9665 8741 or Joy 9698 5205

9.30 - 10.30 Gentle Exercise, \$5 per session.

10.45 - 11.45 Tai Chi, \$5 per session.

Lost Ladies

10.00am every Wednesday during school terms, exploring various locations or topics of interest. Please note this group is now full and cannot accept new enrolments at this stage.

Contact Annette Butterfield: 9665 5369 email:

abutterfield_852@hotmail.com

Film Discussion group

You are invited to join us on **Tuesday 12 June** to see *Five Year Engagement*. Recommended for viewing is *Chinese Take-Away*.

Please ring Yetty on **9665 2050** to check details of films.

Bondi Junction Coffee and Gossip Group

30 June 11am The Coffee Shop,
Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club.

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

Book Club

18 June 12.30-2.30 pm at 87 Lower Fort Street.

This month's books is: *Poisonwood Bible* by *Barbara Kingslover*. Come at 12 and bring a sandwich for lunch at midday.

Any questions, phone Anne Marie on **9622 0717**. Note: Book to be discussed at the **July** meeting is

The Happiest Refugee by *Anh Do*.

Aboriginal Support Circle

Monday 4 June 75 Windmill St, Millers Point.

Speaker **Dominic WY Kanak**, **Indigenous Green Councillor for Waverley**. Bring lunch to share.

Confirm all details with Pat Zinn: 9389 1090 or email patzinn@hotmail.com

Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point

We meet from 10.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon at Birkenhead Café, 1st floor Birkenhead Shopping Complex.

Contact: Bev Cameron on 9957 5367 or Meg Venning 9887 2386
Meeting on **9** and **23 June**.

