



# OWN MATTERS

Newsletter of the Older Women's Network NSW

Vol.9 No.9 – October 2012

## Older Women not deemed High Risk?

*It is a truism that what gets measured gets attention. We know that there is a significant risk of social exclusion among older women...We have followed up this matter with Susan Ryan, who has written indicating that she shares our concerns.*

*see Maria Stafford's article page 3*

## Another Big Day for OWN Sydney

*On October 18, OWN Sydney will be holding their 2012 AGM and Annual Conference.*

*The conference is right in the middle of **Anti Poverty-Week**. Last year we had a **Bags of Change** event, and we are doing it this year as part of our conference.*

*see OWN Sydney Conference entry Lorraine Inglis page 4*

## Pat Zinn raises Indigenous Elder Abuse in NT

*In the Northern Territory, there are a high proportion of Aboriginal seniors...where aged care support services are often scarce. In these places older people are particularly vulnerable to alcohol-fuelled violence and abuse. Elders may not be aware of services, if there are any, or do not feel comfortable asking for help, for cultural reasons.*

*see Indigenous Elder Abuse & Neglect page 9*

## Vale Nora Huppert

*Nora thrived on company, socializing, travelling and the arts. She was also a networker par excellence, maintaining contact with literally hundreds of people from her various circles. She was persistent in keeping in touch personally, by letter, by phone and later by email. She was a great believer in education always urging people to study, to learn, to develop some more.*

*see Rebecca Silk's moving Tribute to her mum pages 10-11*

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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 \$44 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](mailto:newsletter@ownnsw.org.au)

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## Older Women not deemed High Risk by Australian Government's Social Inclusion Board

At our recent conference on Older Women Combating Ageism at NSW Parliament House an issue raised in response to Senator Susan Ryan's presentation on the rights of older women, was the Australian Government's Australian Social Inclusion Board's (ASIB) apparent lack of focus on the social exclusion risks faced by older women.

Since its establishment in 2006, ASIB's priorities up to this year have contained no reference to older women, or indeed older people in general, instead choosing to focus its priority areas on young families and indigenous people. This despite:

- the mounting evidence worldwide that the risk and drivers of social exclusion increase with age
- The UN's conclusion that older women are one of the most disadvantaged groups worldwide
- The UN's General Resolution 27, 2010, endorsed by the Australian Government, which declares:

*"States parties have an obligation to ensure the full development and advancement of women throughout their life cycle...States parties should therefore ensure that all legal provisions, policies and interventions aimed at the full development and advancement of women do not discriminate against older women."*

OWN is pleased to note that ASIB has made one positive change to its priorities this year, adding a new focus area relating to the provision of advice to Government on how it can best respond to the emerging issue of older women and homelessness. However, we continue to be concerned about the absence of any focus on older women as a priority group in its own right.

ASIB's recent report on Social Exclusion entitled "Social Inclusion – How Australia is faring" highlights this omission. In considering the prevalence of serious multiple disadvantage, ASIB limits its analysis to the population aged between 18 and 64. The report states both in its summary and in the body of the text "5% or 640,000 of the population experiences multiple disadvantage". It is only the fine print that reveals that this statistic refers to the 18-64 population, and not the total population!

Elsewhere in the report, ASIB acknowledges that:

- women are more likely to experience multiple disadvantage (in the areas of health, education, employment, income, family support, and safety);
- more likely to experience persistent multiple

disadvantage, and that –

- the gap between men and women is wider the longer the disadvantage persists.

The report also states that:

- people living alone constitute a third of those with multiple disadvantage, and
- these disadvantages are likely to persist.

Yet the report fails to draw the appropriate conclusions in terms of the increasing impact of these factors on the potential social exclusion of older women.

Of course we also know from the ABS Census statistics that:

- Women live longer than men and there are more older women than men;
- Women are more likely to live alone;
- Women are disadvantaged in terms of education and employment;
- Women are more likely to suffer financial stress than men.

It is a truism that what gets measured gets attention. We know that there is a significant risk of social exclusion among older women, and we believe it is imperative that better ABS statistics are made available, and that ASIB extend its priority focus areas to include this vulnerable sector.

We have followed up this matter with Susan Ryan, who has written indicating that she shares our concerns. She has urged us to make contact with the Minister for Ageing, Mark Butler, and with Lyn Hadfield Dodds, the Chair of ASIB, to seek their support and help to redress these oversights, in line with mounting research evidence worldwide.

Watch this space!

*Maria Stafford*



Susan Ryan and Sonia Laverty at 3Rs Forum

# At and Beyond the Rocks



## OWN Sydney Conference

On October 18, OWN Sydney will be holding their 2012 AGM and Annual Conference at Mott Hall, Millers' Point, starting at 10.30am.

The conference is right in the middle of **Anti Poverty-Week**. Last year we had a **Bags of Change** event, and we are doing it this year as part of our conference.

We ask everyone to throw all their small change each day into an old bag, and bring their Bags of Change to the conference. We old bags want change for older women, in this case older women escaping violence. We donate any money raised to Rosalie House, the only refuge for older women and will take it down to the bank to Commonwealth Bank in Pitt St..

The theme of the conference is **Communication**. The **Bags of Change** event communicates the need for change. After the AGM we have two workshops:

One is **Card-making**. We all know how much we like to communicate with friends and family by sending cards. In this workshop you will have the chance to make your own. Bring along any lace/ribbon/ photos/pictures you think you could use. We will have good cardboard, glue and envelopes - your chance to be creative.

The second workshop is **Letter-writing**. We have all thought we would like to write to an MP about an issue we think important. We are asking everyone in this group to write letters there and then. The issues could be homelessness, indigenous issues, the refugee question or whatever. We'll have a list of the names and addresses of ministers, shadow ministers, both state and federal. We want this to appear an individual effort, so bring along all your old writing paper and envelopes. We'll have some ideas and guides because it is important to have letters that are slightly different.

If you are coming to the conference, please book by October 12, you can phone Lorraine on 9569 0051.

*Sydney OWN Committee*

## Community Garden

If you have been in to the OWN office recently, you will have noticed the community garden being developed behind our office. OWN Sydney would like to give the growers a helping hand, and that doesn't mean we want you to dig and weed. If you have a packet of vegetable seeds (preferably within the use-by date) which you could donate to the local growers please bring it to the OWN Sydney Conference, October 18, or drop it in to the office.

Millers Point Community Garden Project

## Bags of Change

We have decided to continue with our Anti-Poverty Week fund-raising initiative – **Bags of Change**, to raise money for **Rosalie House**, which is a refuge for older women. The basic idea is to get your group to gather some old handbags, into which members collect up mountains of small change, notes are OK too! The aim is to make the deposits directly into the Commonwealth Bank account of **Rosalie House** over the course of Anti-Poverty Week, identifying them as “**Bags of Change**”. We will have registered this as our Anti-Poverty Week activity. The bank has many branches with automatic self-serve coin-counting machines, and they have agreed to assist us in our project – **Bags Of Change!** Just the thing for all that small change, and a bunch of old bags!

In August 2009 **Rosalie House** opened its doors to provide supported medium-term accommodation for women over 45 who are homeless and have left because of domestic violence. It is owned by the Sydney Archdiocese of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Women living in **Rosalie House** can stay for two years. It is hoped that having a safe place will allow the women to become more independent, concentrate on gaining skills, and work towards being able to move into the community.

**ANTI-POVERTY**  
**14 - 20 October 2012**  
**WEEK**



## Happy Campers Despite The Cold Weather

More than 40 brave women arrived at the Bankstown PCYC on Thursday 28 June to join the bus trip. It was cold, not just cold, but very, very cold! The bus from Punchbowl Bus Company arrived promptly at 8.45 am for us to board, when we were ready. Dixie was our driver and was introduced to us before we took off. Isn't it amazing how chatting and talking warms you up?

Our first stop was at the Blue Mountains Honey Company in Luddenham and by the time we arrived, more talking was had and friendships formed. We had morning tea first: scones with jam and cream and home-made biscuits, then tea or coffee. We then looked at the many things for sale in the honey shop where we were able to taste different types of honey before buying.

Later we learnt from the staff how the Queen Bee begins her life as just an ordinary bee and the routine that is needed to make her a Queen. We learnt how to handle bee hives and how not to handle bee stings! We learnt how long it takes the bees to produce honey.

The next stop was lunch at the Warragamba Workers and Sporting Club where we had a choice of chicken schnitzel or fish, plus fruit salad and ice cream, followed by coffee. Feeling full and contented, we then headed off for a sightseeing tour of the Warragamba Dam. It was a great day. Thanks to Shirley and the other volunteers for organising it for us.

**Mavis Rosenberg: Bankstown OWN Group**

## The Journey

*From Anxiety and Self-doubt to Confidence and Self-assurance*

A six session course providing techniques for seniors to cope with everyday frustrations and anxieties.

Date	Session	Leader
1	Wed 10 Oct	<b>Managing Stress</b> Aloma Fennell (BA, MA)
2	Wed 17 Oct	<b>Dietary Guidelines Foods to Lower Anxiety &amp; Improve Sleep</b> Katherine Rothwell (BA, Dip Nutrition)
3	Wed 24 Oct	<b>Relaxation &amp; Confidence Building Techniques</b> Aloma Fennell (BA, MA)
4	Wed 7 Nov	<b>Understanding Food Labels &amp; Nutrition Panels</b> Katherine Rothwell (BA, Dip Nutrition)
5	Wed 14 Nov	<b>Coping with Loss &amp; Grief &amp; Isolation</b> Maria Page (Reg, Psychologist)
6	Wed 21 Nov	<b>Communication &amp; Assertiveness Skills</b> Aloma Fennell (BA, MA)

**Where:** The Extension, Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor Street, Chatswood.

**Time** 11:15am–12:30pm (for all sessions)

**RSVP** Friday October 5, 2012

**Contact** Annette 9415 2474 or  
Dorothy 9419 6417



Donation \$5.00 per session or \$25.00 for six sessions

A Project of The Older Women's Network Northside and The Seniors Agenda Inc.

Funded by the Willoughby City Council

# OWN NSW Theatre Group



The OWN NSW Theatre Group

day there were very welcome wine and drinks, a hearty dinner; and music from a band of five musicians organised by Cate. They gave us music from the fifties, sixties and seventies which made it impossible to sit still. Dancing was marvelous fun at the close of an entertaining day.

**August 21 & 22 at Merriwa**, a small country town in the Upper Hunter, the OWN Theatre Group presented "Stayin Alive" to about 50 Merriwa country women. Unusually this was scheduled as an evening performance on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We had all started in the early hours of that morning and travelled by train to be picked up by cars at Merimbula and driven for about an hour to Merriwa.

The indefatigable Shirley Sharpe, clearly a town personality and the moving force behind our invitation to Merriwa, welcomed us to her hilltop home. It was delightful to come into her comfortable lounge room with all round country views, soup, sandwiches and a warm stove. The silence and space to see for miles was a striking reminder we were really in the country. No restful afternoon for us though, because pretty soon Director Uma had us rehearsing on Shirley's wide patio.

That evening at the local club we witnessed how much country women enjoy meeting to chat and share a meal. However they stopped in time to give us a huge welcome and loud appreciation of "Stayin Alive". Shirley Sharpe had seen our theatre group some years ago and she was confident that we would be very welcome in Merriwa. All of us were hosted overnight in Merriwa homes. We enjoyed the novelty of sharing someone's country home and learning a little of our hosts' lives. Our Sydney-centric views are challenged. Many Theatre Group members were horrified at the sight of enormous coal mines in the surrounding hills of Merriwa. We heard about some of the damaging effects the mines are having on local folk's lives. Learning of this at first hand rather than on a TV current affairs program makes it real. Our thanks to Merriwa, Shirley and her team.

To learn more from our country cousins we are hoping to be invited to perform in Scone next year at a meeting of rural women.

*Joan Modder*

## "STAYIN ALIVE" x 2

During August, the OWN Theatre Group twice performed their new show "Stayin Alive". Each audience was unique. One comprised mainly city folk and the other country people. "Stayin Alive" has fresh choreography devised by our Director Uma Kali Shakti and the main script writer is Ilona Lee, who linked some familiar numbers in an ingenious way themed on a well known musical line "we've got them on our list". The two performances were successful debuts for both Uma and Ilona.

**August 15, the AGM of OWN Australia** at the YWCA in Sydney, organized by our wonderful Cate Turner and OWN volunteers, was a stimulating, well run event. The Theatre Group members, with Janice Bevan our hardworking pianist, premiered "Stayin Alive" with conviction and energy. The OWN audience, including delegates from Perth, Queensland and Canberra, gave a rousing welcome to the new show. From their reaction "Stayin Alive" is stayin in our repertoire!

After a lively discussion following the AGM meeting itself, some members of the WA Theatre Group presented some highly entertaining songs and skits derived from the Golden Jubilee, celebrations held this year in London. Everyone enjoyed their fun and energy. To round off the

# All Those Ists

What kind of “*ist*” are you? How often do you deal with “*ists*”?

Apart from the ordinary GP, we all go to see dentists, optometrists, and pharmacists.

But when it comes to specialists the “*ists*” predominate: neurologist, pathologist, urologist, anaesthetist, psychiatrist, and podiatrist. Almost invariably, an “*ist*” makes money.

If you listen to music, the instrument played by the musician is not only obvious by the sound: saxophonist, guitarist, pianist, cellist and the rest. Even the drummer can be called a percussionist.

You don't read work by a “*writist*”. What you read could have been written by a novelist, journalist, columnist, essayist or even a dramatist.

Among the lords, we have feudalists, colonialists, pastoralists, royalists, industrialists, and general capitalists.

We serfs should honour those who have fought for our rights: the Abolitionists, Revolutionists, Chartists, Activists, Feminists, Unionists, Pacifists and the like.

How do you vote? When it comes to politics we have Socialists, Zionists, Communists, Fascists, and Liberalists. No Labourists, no Conservativists! No Greenists either, though they might be called Conservationists, or Environmentalists.

When it comes to belief systems, not all are “*ists*”: for instance Hindu, Christian or Jew. But we do have Atheists, Deists, Buddhists, Baptists, Islamists, Humanists, Evolutionists, and Creationists. Among many religions we have Evangelists and Fundamentalists.

Some might be philanthropists or altruists but we also have ageists, racists, sexists, chauvinists, egotists, masochists, and sadists.

How do you approach your life? As a purist, idealist, nihilist, pragmatist, realist, optimist, pessimist, defeatist, and conformist, or nonconformist?

What am I? Realist? Atheist? Unionist? Humanist? Conservationist? Pacifist? Feminist? and Nonconformist? A whole lot of “*ists*”

And what “*ists*” are you?

*Lorraine Inglis*



## Age Pension up \$8.55 a week!

Figures for pension and allowance increases reveal that single pensioners will receive an increase of \$8.55 per week from 20 September 2012. Singles receiving Newstart are set to receive a pitiful increase of just \$1.45 a week.

This is yet another stark reminder of just how poor the indexing system is, with the gap between the Age Pension and Newstart widening from \$133 per week to \$140 per week.

Newstart, which currently stands at half the Henderson Poverty Line, does not allow people to pay for essentials such as adequate housing, food, transport, electricity and medicines. The dire level of the payment is particularly problematic for people over 50, who spend an average of 70 weeks on the payment, double that of their younger counterparts.

There are over 90,000 long-term unemployed people who are over 50 years of age on Newstart with little hope of finding adequate employment and these people often struggle to pay for essentials as well as the higher costs that can come with ageing. They are unable to buffer any unforeseen adverse circumstances and are forced to run down any modest savings.

*Amelia Christie, Research/Policy Officer*



# Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

## New Approach for Toomelah: Building Leadership in North West NSW

Those of us who viewed the recent film *Toomelah* were horrified at its depiction of a dysfunctional community with shocking and heartbreaking social issues.

NSW Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Victor Dominello, is taking action. Family and Community Services have completed culturally sensitive assessments and safety checks on children and young people reported to be at risk of significant harm. They are working with other providers to carry out casework and case management of children and their carers or families identified as being at greatest risk. Work is already underway to fix and repair urgent basic plumbing and electrical problems, such as hot water systems and fixtures in kitchens and bathrooms - after seventy four

houses were surveyed. Repairs to street lighting and boarding up of unsafe and derelict houses have commenced, employing 16 community members. Registered housing provider, Gunida Ganyah Aboriginal Corporation, is now managing all the properties, handling repairs and general maintenance. There is to be a police Youth Liaison Officer for Toomelah and nearby Boggabilla, while NSW Police, Health and other agencies are working on measures to address alcohol-related crime and associated health issues. The schools are to act as community hubs for a range of health and community services. It is hoped to form a local leadership group.

What I would like to know is, why nothing was done about these devastating conditions before the film was released, and how many other communities there are not only in NSW but in Australia with similar conditions?!

Minister Dominello has also announced a new project designed to build leadership capabilities of young Aboriginal people in North West NSW, whereby more than 100 youngsters will benefit from \$30,000 in funding for *Lighting the Fire* program. This is an initiative of the Northern Regional Alliance of Local Aboriginal Land Councils. Training is to be provided in areas such as: responsibility in Aboriginal culture, public speaking, strategic planning by means of peer support, mentoring, hands-on experience and workshops. *Lighting the Fire* is to be aligned closely with the Taskforce on Aboriginal affairs which aims to support young people to make successful transitions from school to jobs and beyond.

Finally, we seem to have an enlightened Minister in Victor Dominello, who has stated that paternalism, dependency on welfare, programs-for-programs' sake and bureaucracy, in place of real community, are things of the past. He has stated "we must establish a future built on believing in Aboriginal people and genuinely partnering with them."

**Pat Zinn**



# Aboriginal Support Circle Issues



## Xmas Raffle

A raffle for the Kool Kids Club - La Perouse After School and Holiday Programs for Children 7-13 years.

Tickets 1 for \$1 or 3 for \$2

First Prize a beautiful Handmade Quilt

Other prizes: Books, Scarves, Candles, etc

Prizes to be drawn at OWN Sydney's end-of-year party

## Indigenous Elder Abuse and Neglect Action Needed

As OWN members, we are all aware of elder abuse, which takes place all over the world. It is defined as any behaviour or action that harms an older person, including physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social abuse and neglect.

In the Northern Territory, there are a high proportion of Aboriginal seniors, many in remote and regional communities, where aged care support services are often scarce. In these places older people are particularly vulnerable to alcohol-fuelled violence and abuse. Elders may not be aware of services, if there are any, or do not feel comfortable asking for help, for cultural reasons.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Mick Gooda, addressed conferences in Alice Springs and Darwin on the 5th and 7th September on these issues. He spoke about lateral violence (internalised colonialism) which is described as harmful behaviour perpetrated within oppressed communities by members of that community. The theory behind it is that "when we are constantly oppressed, we live with anger and frustration about our situation and treatment and we often turn on those who are closest to us".

The conferences focussed on action needed to improve this tragic situation. Let us hope that there will be speedy action.

**Pat Zinn**

## Professional Development Needed by Teachers in Understanding Indigenous Cultures

New research has found that teachers' professional development in understanding Indigenous cultures and teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students needs to be greatly improved to meet new government standards.

Until now there has been little Indigenous involvement in decision making in the education system. Education administrators need to look at ways to address this issue by involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island education experts in the development of professional development programs and encouraging teachers to undertake training. Many teachers have either no knowledge of Indigenous culture or experience of teaching Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, so feel less inclined to undertake professional development in these areas.

Researchers recommend the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People be adopted as the guiding framework for the development of a rights-based approach to teacher professional development and that a reliable knowledge base be developed for teachers.

**Pat Zinn**

# Tribute

## NORA HUPPERT

17/06/1928 - 13/08/2012



Sometimes a person does an immense amount of good in their own segment of the world. They influence, they heal, they advise, they counsel, yet without any fanfare. They just get on with their life, despite everything. So it was for Nora Huppert.

Nora was born in Berlin on 17 June 1928 to parents Gunther Benjamin, a German Jewish left wing journalist and Anita Benjamin nee Davidovitz, a linguist, of Russian Jewish background. She had a younger brother Fredi. Her early life in Berlin was typical of the educated, modern 'freethinking', cultured Jewish middle class.

In 1933 as Nazism was on the rise, Gunther's paper *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* was closed down. Nora's father understood the threat and sent the family to Anita's people in Kowno Lithuania. Here Nora experienced a multi-generational household, kosher cooking, the religious rituals of Judaism and the company of first cousins Vera and Hans.

In 1937 the family sought safety in Prague, however not for long as war was closing in.

On 14 March 1939, Nora was on the first *Kindertransport* (a plane) arranged by Nicholas Winton and his co-workers. She farewelled her mother and brother who both perished in Auschwitz. In a matter of hours Nora was catapulted into an English, Christian family. It was the pivotal event of her life.

The McNair family were farmers and vegetable wholesalers in Kent. They were kindly and loving in a typically English way and Nora joined a more rustic, outdoorsy life in a spacious country home called Hockenden House. She attended school at Eltham, wore a uniform and set about trying to master English and fit in. During school holidays her McNair siblings Sheila, Mary, Duncan and Christine returned home. After war was declared Nora and the family spent many nights in the cellar

at Hockenden avoiding air raids. Nora remained in close contact with Mum Mac, Mr McNair their children and grandchildren throughout her life.

Nora's father, who escaped to England on 15 March 1939, was later interned as an enemy alien, lived in relative freedom in London helped by the Czech refugee trust fund and later supported himself as a freelance writer.

In 1942 Nora started training in dressmaking and pattern design at Barratt Street Technical College followed by an advanced course in London. In 1945 she moved to a hostel for Jewish students at 22 Holland Park while she worked for various wholesale dress manufacturers. She maintained a lifelong interest in fashion and always dressed impeccably.

Then she met an older refugee Peter Huppert who had escaped from Austria, served in the British army and was teaching biology, while working out how to re start his medical studies. This serious, shy, bookish man wooed Nora with stockings, chocolates and trips to Switzerland and they married in 1951. By this time Peter was a junior hospital doctor and was intending to specialize in psychiatry. Theirs was a volatile yet affectionate union.

In 1953 Nora's first daughter Rebecca was born. The joy of her first year surrounded by grandfather, Gunther and Peter's mother, Flora, was cut short by Nora contracting TB. Luckily it was diagnosed in the early stages and treated at the foremost TB hospital Brompton Park. Nevertheless Nora spent 12 months away from her daughter and paradoxically remained angry with the medical profession all her life. Her second daughter Mandy was born in 1956.

The deteriorating political situation in Europe and her husband's desire for career advancement saw Nora and Peter deciding on Australia (where her cousin Ruth was established and Peter had been interned as a Dunera Boy) rather than Israel as a destination for emigration. The family arrived in 1962 and after a couple of years in Tasmania settled in the leafy northern Sydney suburb of Beroft. With the children at school and Peter's psychiatry practice established, Nora entered the developing field of marriage guidance counselling. She worked firstly for the NSW Marriage Guidance Council, later Relationships Australia, and then for Unifam in a career spanning almost 30 years.

Later on Nora used her extensive knowledge of counselling as an educator at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. She is remembered by students for her great enthusiasm, experiential style, funny anecdotes and continuing interest in former students. There is a scholarship for Jewish students in her name at ACAP.

Volunteer work continued after Nora left paid employment. This was nowhere more apparent than her

# Tribute

work with B'nai B'rith's *Courage to Care* program, an educational program that teaches tolerance and anti-bullying using survivor and rescuer stories from the Holocaust. Until she became too ill Nora was a tireless volunteer for *Courage to Care* and travelled all over NSW with the exhibition, telling her story and facilitating discussion with the young participants.

In 2003 Nora used her skills as a story teller to assist members of the Child Survivors of the Holocaust group in Sydney to write down their childhood memories. The compilation of these stories was an achievement in itself and was the impetus for the publication of many survivor stories. Nora's book *Home Without a Homeland* was released in February 2012 published by The Sydney Jewish Museum.

Nora thrived on company, socializing, travelling and the arts. She was also a networker par excellence, maintaining contact with literally hundreds of people from her various circles. She was persistent in keeping in touch personally, by letter, by phone and later by email. She was a great believer in education always urging people to study, to learn, to develop some more.



About her own emotional life she was intensely private, holding the belief that there was no help for the intense grief she had experienced. Her answer was simply to 'get on with it' to pack as much into living as she could and work to build bridges between people. She did this until the end of her battle with lung cancer- urging the family to look after one another and continue the work of 'tikun olam' - of improving the world.

Nora is survived by her daughters Rebecca and Mandy; her partner Max; cousins Vera and Hans, her cousin, Ruth's son Steven, nephews David and Patrick and their children; and her beloved grandchildren Ben and Sarah. She will be sadly missed by many.

*Rebecca Silk*



*Transport driver (Aircraftswoman Florence Miles) by Nora Heysen*

## Exciting Course:

### 'Women of Our Times'

Margaret McDonough-Glenn BA (Hons), Cert IV Training and Assessment

Study a variety of women from our times, from women of the Left, such as Helen Caldicott, to women of the right, such as Gina Rinehart and Tammy Fraser; from Muslim women of Afghanistan, such as Mahoba Rawi and Malalai Joya; to women war artists, such as Nora Heysen, first Australian woman appointed as an Official War Artist, to Wendy Sharpe, Australian Official Artist to East Timor. Also considered will be Christine Nixon, First Female Chief Police Commissioner.

Discuss and debate their lives and contribution to their field and society. Guest Speakers will attend. Dr Andrew Yip, Co-ordinator, Public Programmes, from Drawing and Painting Room, Art Gallery NSW, will address.

Also offered will be an exciting optional extra one-day tour to the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, with a talk about the two female war artists by Curators Alex Torrens and Warrick Heywood and will include viewings of their paintings. Tour costs to be advised during the course. All welcome!

Location: WEA House, 72 Bathurst Street Sydney every Wednesday, 10.15- 12.15pm, from 17 October to 5 December 2012. The optional bus day tour to Canberra is on the 6 December. For further details ring:

9264 2781

# Letters to the Editor



## Delightful Day

Dear OWN

Thank you for the very special day for 'over eighties' It had to be special to draw me to Miller's Point. I am still being surprised by the realities that ageing brings one face to face with. Gradual loss of confidence to get ones self about is not the least of these. But what rewards that small effort brought!

by those of the 'over eighties' you honoured that day.

Thanks to the happy occasion the pleasures of exchanged greetings were many. Again gathered around a table were members who had served many terms on the NSW Management Team.

## Octogenarian Party

On 6 September, OWN Sydney held a party for those of our members who are eighty or more, and all those who are thinking of making it. We wanted our elders to come, but we also wanted others to come to help them celebrate. We wanted to acknowledge their past achievements. We wanted old friends to get together.

Women had the opportunity to meet old friends not often seen, to remember past shared experiences and simply to enjoy themselves. After eating and drinking (a toast to our octogenarians) and making merry we had an open mike. Anyone could take the mike, tell others what OWN meant for them, and express their thoughts about being older women. It was a really positive and joyful speak-out. Bettina played piano, and the *really old* theatre group got up to sing together one more time. Now it was time for everyone to *get up and boogie*.

I think everyone enjoyed themselves. Speaking on their behalf, I would like to thank OWN Sydney who funded it. Beth and Elissa who helped organize it and all those members of OWN Sydney who worked to put it together. A great job!

Lorraine Inglis

The first and most rewarding of these was to meet those with the capable hands now piloting our ship. Those new signatures to exciting articles in *OWN Matters* had so far mostly been just names to me.

While reports on events like the Three R's Forum have been inspiring, now by putting some faces to those names, it has for me, further solidified my confidence in the future of OWN. Looking forward to a much strengthened organisation being so well built on the firm foundations that were, but sadly not fully, represented

How eager we were to share each other's current situation, well interspersed with 'remember whens!' Much empathy was expressed for those not traveling so well, also sadness for those that were missing. The pictures I have held in my very full album of memories are of these vigorous, enthusiastic and giving women who achieved and wanted to achieve much in the name of OWN.

I'm not sure I want to update those pictures, but rather add to them through the reports, news items and pictures in *OWN Matters*. OWN will continue to show the many women presently reaching their mature age, how much has been won, and how much is still to be aimed for.

Barbara Burnham



Lorraine Inglis &  
Sonia Laverty

## Dear Lorraine et al

What a great party you staged and what a brilliant idea Lorraine. I have to say my views on aging have changed since I joined OWN – I mean I did come from the generation who had the infamous lyrics "hope I die before I get old"

Hail to more parties, is what I say!

Mucho gracias

Rita Tratt

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## When Ere Spring Breaks Through Again

Joan Johns was one of the special friends I hoped to meet again at the Octogenarian Extravaganza. For years we would greet each other at the Contemporary Music movement class held by Ellen Tinsley every Thursday. In particular we greeted each other to the tune of *I'll See You Again* and *When 'ere Spring Breaks Through Again*.

She would travel all the way from Mackerel Beach, by car, train and bus, pushing her shopper, her face glowing with a broad smile. Few of us persisted with these exercises in expressive movement. It was a particular taste, a love of music, a willingness to let go and enjoy our adventures in bodily movement.

It is hard to realise we shall never feel inspired together again. But when the spring breaks through again, I shall still remember you, dear Joan.

*Margaret Sargent*



## Secrets of Successful Ageing

Many thanks to Lorraine for the idea, and to those who arranged the terrific over-eighties party at Mott Hall last week. Looking around, enjoying the music and dancing and hearing what all these gutsy women had to say, I realised that it's OWN that has helped us get this far.

Experts in gerontology recommend getting out and about with plenty of exercise; having fun and laughter; challenging our brains; and having a healthy diet. OWN's Wellness Centres certainly cater for the exercise bit as well as keeping us up to date on health, plus stimulating us and getting us out of the house.

*OWN Matters* is packed with interesting articles that make one think and over the years we have had, and still have, informative talks by interesting women covering everything from laughter to legal advice.

Our Theatre Group is not only entertaining and fun, but also tackles serious subjects like elder abuse. We are aware of, and care about, the world around us, so we go to the forums and rallies and write the letters. We are a friendly and loving bunch, and I love youse all.

*Pat Zinn*

## The Generation Gap

My Devoted Spouse, my former daughter-in-law and I were enjoying lunch together recently. These days I don't see much of her son, my only grandson J, aged 14 and commented, "J must be really shooting up now?" A look of shock spread on my daughter-in-law's face and for a moment, she said nothing.

DS, watching her, looked thoughtful, pondering before suddenly grinning broadly. "Think about what you just said," he suggested. Challenged and somewhat confused, I reflected on my words and in a moment, light dawned.

"Oh, my goodness! I was simply asking how tall J is now, but you thought I meant was he into drugs?" We laughed together as the tension dissipated, but I was privately aware that once again I had fallen into the chasm of the generation gap. How hard it is to keep up with the changes of contemporary life and that includes language!

*Bev Cameron*



# Judge Not?

## Topics of the Day

“An organisation in Sydney called the Feminist Club has passed a resolution urging that the jury system be altered to provide that every jury panel be comprised of an equal number of men and women. This Club, in conjunction with other female organisations, has decided to wait on the Minister for Justice, by deputation, to urge amendment of the Women’s Legal Status Act that will render women eligible to act as jurors upon the same conditions as men.

No one will envy the Minister when confronted by a deputation of this character. He will see advantages in having mixed juries in some cases and disadvantages in others, but we fancy the latter will outweigh the former.

Of course, there are some women robust enough in body and mind to enable them to perform most of the duties that the sterner sex discharge, but they are few and far between. The average woman is not endowed by Nature to stand the physical and mental strain needed in many walks of life, and her attendance on a jury would be one of them. And, besides, the average woman would naturally shrink from the ordeal.

It is questionable whether, in country districts, a sufficient number of women could be obtained to make up a mixed panel without the infliction of considerable hardship, with a possible disorganisation of home life.

There are many other serious objections to the suggested change in the jury system that need not be mentioned here, but they will loom up before the minds of men who have an intimate acquaintance with the working of our law courts. Women by no means suffer any injustice as the result of jury panels being composed wholly of males, and why there should be a movement to establish mixed juries is not at present clear to us.

We may be enlightened when the deputation states its case to the Minister for Justice.”

This is from *The Cumberland Argus and Fruit-growers’ Advocate*.

Published at Parramatta, December 12, 1923

All the best, keep up the good work!

*Morgana Oliver Ayers*

Women in Film & Television NSW presents  
**MISS REPRESENTATION**  
a documentary film by Jennifer Global Noveck

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WIFT NSW is celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year and we would love to share with you this momentous milestone in WIFT's history.

'Miss Representation' first premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. This film exposes how mainstream media contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence.

WIFT NSW was established in 1982 and is committed to improving the status of women, both on and off the screen. This event is being held in honour of WIFT NSW founders, supporters and members.

Tickets are available at [www.moshtix.com.au](http://www.moshtix.com.au) All Welcome!  
\$20 WIFT NSW Members | \$30 General | \$40 Special Pass (for you & a male guest)

## Singing My Song

Beijing tour guides, when informing their travel groups of the location of comfort stops, smilingly suggest where one can go to “sing one’s song”. It took me a while to interpret this subtle message just as it took me a while to accustom myself to the variety of lavatories I encountered in the cities of Nanjing, Shanghai, Beijing and their environs.

My first challenge happened at Guangzhou Airport. On entering the women’s toilet area, I glanced into an empty cubicle to see a toilet-bowl-shaped hole in the floor. However, the smiling Chinese attendant, noticing my disconcerted expression, smilingly pointed me to a special cubicle set apart for Western women containing a Western style pedestal. I was grateful, but became aware of what I may have to deal with in the coming 12 days.

To my relief, the Western style Nanjing hotel offered Western style lavatories, though the bowl was larger and in the shape of a pear halved lengthways and the water level was rather close to one’s seated posterior. Daunted at first, I gradually got used to what I later learnt is a standard American style pedestal. But it took me a while to understand why toilet attendants in public areas of Western style hotels offer you paper before you enter your cubicle. Once in there, you find no toilet rolls provided so you have to go in prepared. I imagine this saves paper overall and avoids having scrunched up paper all over the place in the cubicles as well.

My major ‘lavatorial’ culture shock arrived when we visited a large and beautiful public garden outside Nanjing. Needing a comfort stop while exploring the park, I spied a toilet block some 200 metres distant and hurried towards it. But long before I reached the toilet block, I was assaulted by the acrid stench of urine. I forced myself to continue, found an available cubicle and knew my real test had begun as I disregarded the signs of ‘misfiring’ all around the hole in the floor. Fortunately, my years of yoga practice enabled the necessary squatting posture, though for a scary moment I thought I might topple head first onto the floor. These holes are flushed by stepping on a button set in the concrete floor. The whole arrangement is cleaned by simply hosing the entire floor area of the toilet block.

That was the most testing experience of Chinese toilets I experienced. Hole-in-the-floor toilets I encountered after that were in much cleaner settings and I began to see their merits. I’m sure when all else concerning our China visit has faded from memory the images of Chinese lavatories will live on, providing wry laughter mixed with gratitude for the familiar comfort of what we have in Australia.

*Bev Cameron*

## Sharks and guppies

There’s a great big ocean out there, and developing a home based business is one way of finding out how wide it is. Why am I doing this? Well the concept won’t leave me alone. It’s stuck in my brain and I am going to follow it wherever. I think I have a good business mind and have so far, followed my instincts. So what have I learned so far?

The contrast of chalk and cheese comes to mind when I think of my experiences with my first choice of website designer and the professional I am now working with. The first choice I made in a hurry, and based on price rather than the quality, that I need to make my website look good and operational. So I kissed goodbye my outlay of dollars, and got on with the next choice which was helped enormously by a dear friend who recommended me to the website of a professional lady who trains people in Pastoral Care. That friend is now a volunteer listener to those who have lost their loved ones. Sure enough the designer not only could make beautiful, subtle, artistic websites but also gave me step by step instructions on how to put the foundations in place to support my endeavours. He put me in touch with a reputable host company, and told me how to get analytical support so I could see who was clicking in to the site. So much preparation was essential. And so far I haven’t been asked to pay up!!! And in contrast with the first web business person, communications have been patient, informative and supportive.

There is an awful lot of “stuff” to consider when developing a business – insurance, copyright, privacy, not to mention skills in filling in government forms online. I was just about to bang my head against the wall at one stage, and then of course realised that despite me filling in the basic information twice, they required that I do it again a third time before I could continue to the finish! I think so far I have spent twenty hours a week researching and working on my project. And enjoying the challenge!

My desire to teach online, through narrative is what drives this process and there is a lot of help out there. One good site is provided by the state government. Small business development has information, quizzes, and video presentations to help the guppies learn how to swim. There are also grants available and it would be my guess that the number of people developing businesses on line are in the thousands.

So here I am swimming in the sea of the amorphous internet world and I am doing it freestyle.

*Glenys Buselli*

# Minefield



The battle between international companies seeking to mine Australian coal and gas and those who are being immediately badly impacted – farmers, graziers and other primary producers – is not one which has gripped me in the past. But, since listening to Paul Cleary, senior writer for *'The Australian'* and author of the book, *'Minefield'*, I have become more aware of the wider ramifications of the conflict.

Cleary believes that the Federal Government is becoming too dependent on the income from natural resources. That income is now so vast that it could lead to inflation followed by deficit, a very vicious cycle for the national economy. Mining projects already provide 20% of Australia's GDP and there are more in the pipeline, mostly for coal and gas. Mining investment now overshadows all previous investment in Australia. Cleary's main concern is that the Government has no adequate mechanism to manage our resources boom.

Most of us will be aware of the existence of conflict over the appropriate use of prime agricultural land such as the Hunter River Valley in NSW and the Darling Downs in Queensland. In Queensland, 20,000 mining wells have already been approved leading to an enormous rate of drilling in agricultural areas, some of it the best in the country. We may know that mining companies are doing the right thing to protect native flora and fauna, but we may not be aware of the disdain with which they treat those who live in the resource rich areas and the ease with which they push such people out of their way. In the Hunter River Valley, where there is already a huge cluster of mines, the noise of blasting and the dust are forcing people to leave the area and governments do not intervene. We should get mining out of our food producing areas. If we trash that with coal seam gas and coal mining, we may not be able to supply our food needs in the long term.

Cleary sees a need for an independent regulator and

better regulations which should focus on mining's impact on people. Mining companies put a lot of effort into seeking initial mining approval and even file comprehensive follow-up reports, but governments simply file them away to gather dust even when companies are already exceeding their approved limits. When mining companies are challenged about this, they simply respond. There have been no complaints and we have not broken the law.'

In sum, Cleary asks, 'Is the Australian Government taking too much risk?' He says it is important that stronger regulation, such as provided for our banking system, should be set up. At present, neither government nor mining interests are concerned to protect people's health. Furthermore, about 80% of mining activity is in international hands. These overseas companies are responsible for misleading advertising concerning government attempts to tax their income and were responsible for the defeat of Kevin Rudd in 2010. It is up to our elected representatives to sort out the current mess, set up tighter regulation and perhaps ban mining altogether. Mining is not reliable for any economic benefit in the long term future, and when the mining boom is over, the country will face a very difficult situation.

I found this talk both sobering and challenging. It's only when enough Australian voters take notice of this issue and call for stronger government action to ensure the future economic, social and environmental health of Australia that we will get any changes.

*Bev Cameron*



# Body Issues

## Body Bits

Synthetic bits, as in hip or knee replacements, are very common, but human body bits? Some are donated, some from sales, some legal, some, illegal. Blood comes from regular donors, but until the 1970s you could sell your blood. Other body bits that can be used include corneas, kidneys, ligaments, bones, livers, hearts and skin. Organ donation is the donation of biological tissue or an organ of the human body, from a living or dead person to a living recipient in need of a transplantation. Transplantable organs and tissues are removed in a surgical procedure following a determination of which are suitable for transplantation. 'The Donor Register allows authorised medical staff, who have permission from the Australian Government, to check your donation decision anywhere in Australia, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can then give that information to your family if you die.' Australian Donor Register.

As we saw on Four Corners, money is being made by big businesses using human tissue taken from bodies in one country, processed in another, and sold to hospitals, usually in richer nations. While federal law prohibits most sales of body parts, it is legal to charge fees for handling, procuring, storing and processing human tissue. Thus an entire body, parceled out and delivered to the highest bidder, can fetch from \$5,000 to tens of thousands of dollars in so-called 'processing fees' - creating a powerful incentive for illegal sales. USA Today.

What about living donors? Most first-world nations have strict regulations for organ transplantation from living donors, but demand far outstrips supply and this has led to a black market. Some say those who can afford to buy organs are exploiting those who are desperate enough to sell their organs and this is caused by the growing inequality between the rich and the poor. Others say that the desperate should be allowed to sell their organs. Most of us remember a very wealthy Australian was 'given' a kidney by his chauffeur (thereby avoiding the 'waiting list') and subsequently the chauffeur received a 'gift' of money. Transplantations promote health, but the notion of "transplantation tourism" has the potential to violate human rights or exploit the poor; to have unintended health consequences; and to provide unequal access to services, all of which ultimately may cause harm. Regardless of the "gift of life", in the context of developing countries, this might be coercive. The practice of coercion could be considered exploitative of the poor population, violating basic human rights according to Articles 3 and 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. World Health Organization

A man from an eastern European country had advertised his kidney for sale. "When you need to put food on the table, selling a kidney doesn't seem like much of a sacrifice," he said he had no fear about an eventual operation or legal strictures forbidding organ sales. "It's my body, and I should be able to do what I want with it," he said.

It's my party and I'll cry if I want to? Would you?

*Lorraine Inglis*

## Some Thoughts On Feldenkrais

When you tell most people you go to Feldenkrais the reaction usually is, "What's that?" (My dad said it should be called something else " but that's another story.)

Feldenkrais was named after the man who invented it, Moshe Feldenkrais. Moshe had injured his knees playing soccer and was not happy with the treatment and operation recommended by his doctors. So, he decided to use his experience in physics and engineering to tackle the problem. Obviously Moshe was a brilliant man.

Feldenkrais is awareness through movement, but what is important to me, is the awareness. I used to think Feldenkrais was just lying on the floor, relaxing, letting go of the muscles that were hanging on and encouraging others to take over. Then shock, horror, I learnt that Feldenkrais can be done sitting or standing as well. How wrong I was! It is so much more.

Why do I like Feldenkrais? I think it has a lot to do with always being reminded by our Facilitator, Natalie, to go slower, do less; maybe do half as much; maybe do quarter as much. Never in my life have I been told to do less!

Of course this is now a lesson to learn, a challenge to master. It is about noticing how I do things, how I move and once I am aware of this, I have the choice to do things differently. This lesson can be useful in other areas of life too. I often find that speaking, without giving much thought at all as to what is going to come out of my mouth, is a BIG one for me. If I think before I speak or act, I can be more aware of my behaviours. Feldenkrais helps me to be aware of what I am about to do and hence be aware also of the likely consequences. This self-awareness can lead to changes in my behaviours.

Feldenkrais is about exploring and learning self-awareness. This can lead to an understanding that I do have choices. It has been said that Feldenkrais can make the impossible possible, the possible easy and the easy elegant.

Why not give it a go? Feldenkrais is on Mondays from 10-11 am in the small Meeting room at the Bankstown PCYC. Please be aware that as the room is small, we can only fit in 18 participants so get there a little early to ensure a spot!

*Vivian Manson*



# SPRING INTO ACTION



With the weather warming up our energy habits change. Keep comfortable this Spring and save power and \$\$\$.

Here are some energy-saving tips to reduce your power bills and still keep you cool during Spring:

- use a fan instead of an air conditioner – they use considerably less power
- block out the sun using curtains, blinds or awnings where possible
- take advantage of the sun by hanging washing on the clothes line instead of using a dryer
- use door snakes and window seals to stop hot air coming in and cool air getting out
- use a thermometer to monitor your indoor temperature and adjust your fridge and air conditioner accordingly.

Door snakes, window seals and a thermometer are provided **FREE** in the Home Power Savings Program Power Savings Kit.

Check out more free and low cost energy efficiency tips at [savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://savepower.nsw.gov.au)



Energy experts like Jim are trained to advise you on how to save power and \$\$\$



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The NSW Government's Home Power Savings Program offers lower income households **FREE** help to reduce their power use and save money on their power bills.



Eligible lower income households get:

- a **FREE** In-home Power Assessment by an energy expert,
- a **FREE** Power Savings Kit, plus
- a **FREE** Power Savings Action Plan.

**Call 1300 662 416 now to book a FREE In-home Power Assessment.**

Eligible households =

		
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		<input type="checkbox"/> OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Be on a hardship assistance plan with your energy retailer
Department of Veterans' Affairs (White) Repatriation Health Card	Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government or community housing tenant

Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet.  
59-61 Goulburn St, Sydney. Phone +61 2 9995 5000 (switch)  
Fax +61 2 9995 5999 TTY +61 2 9211 4723  
Email [powersavings@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:powersavings@environment.nsw.gov.au)  
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# OWN Sydney Notices

## WOW! Subscribe NOW!

- Subscription to *OWN Matters* is \$25 per year, due every **JULY 1!**
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With my best wishes!

## Members and friends are welcome to attend all activities

### Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am-1.30 pm every Wednesday  
Mott Hall, Argyle St Millers Point.

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](mailto:abutterfield_852@hotmail.com)

### Film Discussion group

You are invited to join us on **Tuesday 11 October** to see *Mental*. Recommended for viewing is *The Road*. *Solstice Party with Bondi Coffee group* **21 Dec** see below.

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

### Bondi Junction Coffee and Gossip Group

**26 October** 11am The Coffee Shop, Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club (enter from 93-97 Spring St, must sign in). Also early notice of **Christmas/Solstice Party**: 21 Dec - usual venue.

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

### Book Club

**15 October** 12.30-2.30 pm at 87 Lower Fort Street.

Unfortunately, we have had to make an emergency decision about our October scheduled book.

A number of people can't get *The Aunt's Story* by Patrick White so we have substituted *Brideshead Revisited* by Evelyn Waugh.

So, October 15, we will be discussing *Brideshead Revisited*. Remember, there are films and the TV series available if you cannot get the book)

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 **November** meeting is

*Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbury.

### Aboriginal Support Circle

Next meeting Monday **8 October** for a **Bush Tucker Tour** in the Botanical Gardens, Sydney. Confirm all details with Pat Zinn: 9389 1090 or email [patzinn@hotmail.com](mailto:patzinn@hotmail.com)

### Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point

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

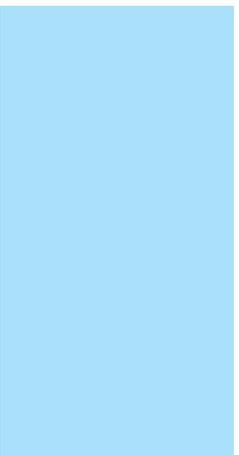
Contact: Bev Cameron on 9957 5367 or Meg Venning 9887 2386  
Meeting on **13th and 27th of October**; and **10th and 24th of November**.

IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:  
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