



OWN MATTERS

Standing Up For Those That Follow. Do We Need Technology?

Praise for Smart Technologies. Going Nowhere.

Random Thoughts. Tech Savvy Courses. Brain Fog.

Misogyny Is Alive And Well. P Is For Lesson Learned



The misogyny battle continues

All About Women Festival tackled a range of topics from misogyny to sexism, at the Opera House



New hotline tackles abuse

Call centre focusses on prevention, intervention and support for the elderly at risk in NSW



Technology - friend or foe?

From interactive games and grocery orders, to a very rude GPS - high tech is not always smooth sailing



Leading by her OWN example

We remember Noreen Hewett, a founder of OWN who was dedicated to giving older women a 'voice'



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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 newsletter 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.

Have your say

Members of OWN groups in NSW are encouraged to contribute to OWN Matters with items of interest to older women and Letters to the Editor.

Send by email or mail marked Attention – Editorial Team.

The email address is newsletter@ownnsw.org.au.

Please include contact details. Contributions must be received by the third Tuesday of each month.

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More help always welcome!

OWN Office

From 10am-3pm the phone is answered by one of our friendly volunteers. Out of office hours, you should leave a message, with your contact number.

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*“We are not just standing up for ourselves,
we are standing up for those that follow.”
In loving memory of Noreen Hewett*

When Noreen Hewett died on 26 February 2012 I was devastated. Noreen was my mother-in-law, and although I had long been divorced from her stepson, she and I were extremely close.

Unfortunately, I had a bad fall and was hospitalised when she died, eventually being assessed for transition as I was living alone. I had to prove I could care for myself or be admitted to care. Sadly, Noreen died while I was proving it, and I feel bad I wasn't around for her.

Losing Noreen has been a big loss to me, so to honour her memory I have had more copies reprinted of Dorothy Cora's Noreen Hewett: Portrait of a Grassroots Activist. The books are now available to members of OWN who may not have been able to purchase a copy when it was first published in May 2010. Any money raised will go into a publishing fund at OWN.

My song these days is *Don't get around much any more*. Gone in the feet and legs, but nevertheless spurred on by my lovely friend Lucy Porter to



attend the recent IWD forum at the Mechanics' Institute. It was a wonderful program – interesting and stimulating – and what a pleasure to catch up again with the old gang: Merle Highet, Joy Ross, Barbara Burnham and Lola Cummings. We had a lovely lunch together afterwards. Thanks to Lucy, who drove me to and from Randwick.

For new members, or old members with poor memories like mine, below are a few extracts from a review by the late Helen Young of Dorothy's book. "Noreen Hewett: Portrait of a Grassroots Activist, Dorothy's

pen portrait is of an amazing woman who, among many other achievements, midwifed OWN into life. Tired of being overlooked, invisible and ignored, she led a group of older women and project workers from the NSW Combined Pensioners Association in establishing a group focused solely on the needs and concerns of older women. And so the Older Women's Network came into being, in order to gain recognition for older women, and for our voices to be heard.

"We are not just standing up for ourselves", Noreen wrote, "we are standing up for those that follow. There can be no predictable future into the 21st century for older women unless it's a future we help to shape!"

If you would like to buy a copy of Noreen Hewett: Portrait of a Grassroots Activist, please phone the OWN office (02) 9247 7046 with your name, address and credit card details. (You can also pay by cheque or money order.) The full price, including postage is only \$15.

Peggy Hewett



Letters

Not NOW

The discussion around the name of OWN has surfaced at least three times a year since I joined the organisation over ten years ago.

At first I agreed that it was a hard name to 'market'. Many women felt so strongly about the name that they wouldn't even look at our aims or policies, and made it clear they did not want to be associated with the word 'older'.

I can only repeat what I have said before: if you cannot feel comfortable admitting you're older after the age of fifty, then OWN is probably not the organisation for you. At fifty, whether we like it or not, we are in the latter years of our lives unless we intend to sail on well past the hundred year mark.

At fifty we could admit that we are older and acknowledge that we have lived, and continue to live, a life that is full and rewarding. However, there are still many obstacles that need to be overcome if we, and the generations of women who follow us, are able to live the remaining years with our rights and dignity

intact. NOW is a great acronym and describes a Network of Women. But look around you – there are dozens of networks of women. Being a network of older women makes us unique.

To lose that uniqueness would mean vying for new members with all the other women's networks, and also competing for funding. As we are now, we are widely recognised as an organisation whose sole aim is to fight for the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women.

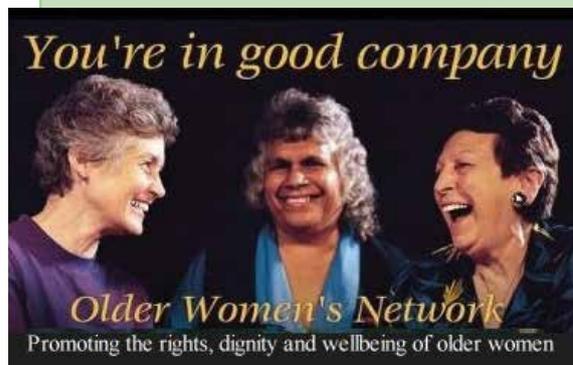
So, let's accept that we are not a network of women, we are the Older Women's Network.

Barbara Malcolm



NOW and then

At a recent meeting of the OWN group in Nowra, there was a lively discussion about some recent newspaper and journal articles, and especially an article in *OWN Matters* written by Glenys Buselli on Time to change from OWN to NOW.



The majority of our members agreed that it is time to change; that change is needed to boost our numbers and to raise our profile in the community. Some of our members had staffed a stall at the "Healthy Aging and More Expo" that was held on March 18 this year in the Nowra Entertainment Centre.

They had been pleased with the way their publicity was received but, they said, when people realised that OWN stood for the Older Women's Network, a wall came up and they drifted politely away – and these were women at an "Aging Expo"!

We can't avoid growing old, but there are many women who won't fancy joining a group that appears to be restricted to older women (however that is defined).

NOW, on the other hand, is immediate and interesting. It can

include every woman. Let's think about the options, and enjoy the discussion.

Janet Walsh (OWN, Nowra)



What do you think?

Two months ago we published a suggestion that we change the name of our organization from OWN to NOW (Network of Women). If you have an opinion, write a letter to OWN Matters, Editorial Committee.



Dying with Dignity NSW

At some stage of our lives all of us will be faced with the reality of our own impending death or the death of a loved one.

For most people this is a very difficult time, and it is particularly distressing when suffering is involved. Although modern medicine has improved care at the end of life, suffering cannot always be alleviated. Dying with Dignity NSW (DWDnsw) is a non-profit

organisation that is campaigning for law reform to enable individuals who face unrelievable suffering from terminal or severe, incurable illness to receive medical assistance to end their lives. We believe that the ability to choose a peaceful death in these circumstances should be a basic human right.

Our politicians have repeatedly voted down Bills that proposed to legalise assisted dying at the end of life. The political reality is that many MPs are intimidated by powerful interest groups, or vote in accordance with their own religious beliefs, rather than the wishes of their constituents.

DWDnsw engages in a number of lobbying activities and grass roots campaigns to draw attention to this very important issue.

We encourage our supporters to have conversations with friends and family about this issue, and when assisted dying is in the media, to call talkback radio stations, and write letters to newspapers. We also encourage members to let their MPs know that the current laws are unacceptable. We hope members of the Older Women's Network will support this very important

cause by joining DWDnsw (see website <http://www.dwdnsw.org.au>) and speaking out in support.

*Sarah Edelman
Dying with Dignity NSW*



Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill

Voluntary euthanasia legislation has high public support, with polls consistently putting it at over 70 percent. Many have seen friends and family suffer unnecessarily at the end of life. The Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill is due for debate in the NSW Legislative Council (Upper House) in less than six weeks, and you might be able to convince MPs to support it.

It could make a difference to the success of this campaign for MPs to hear directly from you about why voting for this Bill is the right thing to do.

You might describe the experience of a loved one who had a difficult death and who may have suffered less if this legislation was in place.

Write about it at <https://greencate.good.do>
You can read some of the stories already written at - www.dwdnsw.org.au/ves/index.php/stories/

*Cate Faehrmann
The Greens NSW*



At and Beyond the Rocks

March madness for the Theatre Group

This is always a busy time for the Theatre Group what with all the festivals and events in which we are asked to participate.

This year we performed at the IWD celebrations held by Ashfield Council in their renovated hall. It was a lovely event with delicious snacks including specially prepared cupcakes with green icing and purple bows.

We were thrilled to hear OWN Member Dorothy Buckland Fuller, a very famous senior who some of us have previously worked with, regale the audience with stories of her migration experience in the middle of last century and then her long career as a feminist, human rights advocate, migrant community advocate, peace activist and sociologist in Australia.

The Theatre Group's performance was very well received by the multicultural audience, and especially by a very enthusiastic group of girls from a local high



The Theatre Group treads the boards

school. It turned out our Rita had worked there in the past. These young women are very keen to have us perform at the school sometime soon.

Two days later we were in Arncliffe, at Coronation Hall. The audience was predominantly culturally and linguistically diverse and though many of them may not have understood all of the words – there were a few younger audience members busily translating throughout the performance. They also clapped loudly and enthusiastically between numbers. Then we all received wonderful free arm and back massages from the masseuse from one of the stalls at the event.

A fortnight later, after more

rehearsals, it was off to Marana Auditorium in Hurstville, to perform at a combined Seniors Week event organised by Kogarah, Hurstville and Rockdale Councils. With an audience of almost 300 people, it was one of our biggest gigs for a while.

As the auditorium is very large and the audience was seated at a large round table spread throughout the whole hall, the Theatre Group had its work cut out trying to ensure they were able to reach people at the back.

There was a large choir on before we performed and I happened to sit close to them. I was gratified to hear that they, like the rest of the audience, were enthusiastic about our show.

We've also welcomed back Meg and Ruth, who though winged (she fell and broke bones in her fingers) has bravely and with a matching purple sling, trod the boards with us. The Theatre Group has begun work on not one, but two scripts for productions in 2013/2014. So, if you've been thinking of joining us in our adventures, now is a very good time!

Uma Kali Shakti
Director



Oi!...Wanna jam!

In March the Sydney OWN drumming group reunited for a catch-up and jam session. It was two years ago (March 3) that our teacher Liz Ireland died in a traffic accident and Suzanne, an old friend of Liz, thought it appropriate to reunite the group.

On my way to Mott Hall, I passed the Aboriginal buskers who frequent an area near the MCA. The men were still setting up and as I passed through the crowd one approached me with a friendly, "Oi, wanna jam?"

He could hardly have missed the

African drum I was lugging, as it had a tribal motif for a cover. We got to talking and he asked where I was heading with my drum. I told him that a group of older women were having a practice session in a hall in the Rocks. He seemed quite interested to hear about our group and said, "You women should join us for a jam".

I laughed as I explained that we were a bit rusty after a long break and that we were not up for a live performance yet, but that maybe with a bit of practice we could join them sometime in the future.

I told my fellow drummers later of this invitation and I think the consensus was that we better start practising...seriously.

We decided to meet monthly with the next session on Wed, May 8. Bring along a drum or percussion instrument.

Everyone is welcome. We meet for lunch and a chat from 12pm with drumming from 12.30-1.30pm, at Abraham Mott Hall, Argyle Street, Millers Point. Call Suzanne on 0425 346 927.

Corinne Campbell



Seniors Week

This Seniors Week, I attended two local events. One was on technology at a local retirement village. About a hundred people attended this excellent two-hour presentation. The topics covered were Facebook, Skype and Twitter. The man leading the presentation came well prepared. He showed us his own Facebook page and made phone calls to friends thereby demonstrating what he was talking about.

The second event was advertised for people who had never picked up a ukulele but were promised they could borrow an instrument for the morning. After receiving my instrument I looked around and found people with very fancy instruments in fancy cases. There were teenagers and children in the group, which was not how I had expected a seniors' first off players' group to look like.

The whole event had wonderful strummers having a great time but people like me were left bewildered. After 40 minutes I got up and left.

What I did learn was that my arthritic fingers were not having a good time and I wouldn't be bothering to go to another ukulele class – ever.

Noel Carpenter





Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Clean Slate Without Prejudice wins funds

Recently National Local Hero Shane Phillips expressed fears that this Redfern-based program would end because the State Government had cut further funding. Fortunately, publicity led to a grant of \$50,000 from the Federal Government and this, with anonymous donations, will keep it running for the next year.

This program has had huge success keeping young Kooris out of trouble. Programs include exercises and boxing classes, run by the police at 6am at the local gym; taking youngsters on cultural tours to Sydney's national parks to study sacred sites and rock carvings; and a family and culture day once a month. It has reduced the power of drug dealers who used to plague Redfern. Robbery rates have dropped by 82 percent.

Its success is due in part to the community taking responsibility for its implementation.

Pat Zinn



First Nations Australia Writers' Network

This organisation was founded in 2012 and is due to have its inaugural workshop in Brisbane in May. Aboriginal and Torres Strait writers are showing an extraordinary depth of talent and experience and have won some of the most prestigious literary awards in Australia.

Alexis Wright and Kim Scott are both Miles Franklin award winners, for *Carpentaria* (2007) and *That Deadman Dance* (2011) respectively. Dr. Anita Heiss has won numerous awards and our own Lorraine McGee-Sippel has won a Deadly Award for Outstanding Achievement in Literature for her book *Mum, what's a Half-Caste?* Herb Wharton achieved the 2012 Australia Council Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature.

National Coordinator Cathie Craigie has explained that a lot of the spotlight and resourcing in the arts has been directed to other art forms and literature has

been a poor cousin, hence the need for this network.

The vision of the group is "to foster a vibrant Indigenous writing sector that offers greater opportunities to participate in, share and strengthen the arts practice and to develop careers and business for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers."

Pat Zinn



Gardener's Lodge Cafe

The Aboriginal Support Circle met for lunch at this new Aboriginal run cafe on the 8th April and what started out as 18 members and friends swelled to 22.

The staff attended Yaama Dhiyaan, the hospitality training school run by Aunty Beryl van Oploo, and they did a grand job trying to cope with so many of us, but of course there were a few glitches which we laughed off.

There is a variety of dishes to choose from, many of them accompanied with native seeds



Gardener's Lodge Cafe in Victoria Park

and berries, and the kangaroo and stout pie, served with garlic mash and bush tomato sauce was a popular choice. Next time I'm determined to go earlier for breakfast so that I can try their buttermilk wattle seed pancakes.

The cafe, in Victoria Park on the corner of City and Parramatta Road, is open 7 days a week for breakfast and lunch and is included in the Aboriginal Employment strategy. At present there are 2 trainee chefs plus floor staff and baristas. Phone 96929778 to book. Enjoy!

Pat Zinn



Launch of dedicated Aboriginal Quitline service

Dr Tom Calma, national coordinator of Tackling Indigenous Smoking attended the launch of this program, which is already receiving many calls. Smoking rates in Aboriginal

communities are double the national average, due to a culture of smoking across many generations. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people find it more comforting speaking to another Indigenous person, hence the success of the Quitline.

In Redfern, Cherrie Frail, a Tobacco Action Worker from the Life Team at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, is establishing a pilot program aimed at getting Indigenous mothers, aunts and elders to quit or change their smoking habits.

She intends to sit down and talk with a group of women for a short time and then lead some gentle exercise to get their bodies moving. After this she and the group will have a yarn about meals which are tasty, nutritious and easy to make for the whole family. We wish her success!

Pat Zinn



New interactive resource to help small businesses

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people who want to establish a small business in rural and remote areas have a new recently launched interactive resource designed to break down barriers to entrepreneurship.

There are three elements building the resource. The first is a documentary following the journey of a Cairns-based Indigenous man, Brian Grey, establishing his business. The second is a 3D animation of Mr. Grey and his Indigenous mentor as they navigate their way through personal, family and cultural issues faced by Indigenous people starting their own businesses. The third element has interactive literacy, language and numeracy activities that support the building of knowledge and skills needed to establish a business. www.thelearningworkshop.com.au

An informative website for local Indigenous businesses is www.blackbiz.com.au and www.blackpages.com.au established by Paul Newman, managing director of Black Biz Indigenous Business.

Pat Zinn



Whether we now love it or hate it, learning more about how to use new technology can enrich our lives in more ways than we can now imagine

In praise of Smart technologies

I think it's a mistake to dwell on the negatives of using communication and information technologies (phones, tablets, GPS etc.) For sure we've all felt irritated by the intrusive behaviours of passengers on the bus or train who use their mobile phones publicly and LOUDLY.

We're miffed when our coffee drinking companion begins reading a text message AND replying, mid-conversation. We feel our privacy is infringed when we discover personal information or photographs have been posted on a social network site like Facebook without being asked first!

And what about having to pose for endless digital photographs at social gatherings? Not to mention the annoying robotic directions delivered by the GPS while travelling in your friend's car. Are there no protocols for using these devices? Have these technologies been introduced without an etiquette guide?

Some of us reject new technologies. Others are reluctant users. Frustration and annoyance are the most common experience of learning to use new technologies. However many of us are giving them a go. Let me introduce you to someone who loves her iPad.

A ninety three year old, living independently, this woman reports that she begins her day reading a digital copy of the newspaper and ends it playing a game of patience or a word game. In between, she stays in touch as she reads and send emails, takes a skype call from a travelling grandchild,

investigates some links to internet sites that have been recommended (Youtube is a favourite), checks the football app to see the draw, takes and saves some photos to an album, and checks the weather app before she ventures out.

She could also arrange for a delivery of groceries, play interactive scrabble with friends, download a novel (cheaper than a hard copy) or a free e-book from a digital library, pay her bills, check her bank account or Centrelink payments, use a public transport app to know how long before the next bus arrives, and store a collection of music and films. That's for starters...

An iPad (or tablet) is light and you can use it anywhere a mobile phone is used or where there is a wifi hotspot. The tablet is much easier to master than the steep learning curve of a computer. Dispensing with the mouse and those damn windows, you touch the screen and the interface is there. A tablet is an older-woman-friendly device. A patient teacher can have you up and running in a few minutes.

The best teacher is ideally a peer of a similar age or disposition – a friend who has recently learnt herself. If you're looking for one, you can get in touch with me through the newsletter.

Fran Weston



Do we really need new technology?

When I finally caved in and bought a Blackberry I thought about the



The new GPS might look smart but the lady giving directions is incredibly rude

business I had successfully run for 30 years – all without a mobile phone, let alone one that plays music, takes videos and photos, and communicates with Facebook and Twitter.

I signed up under duress for Twitter and Facebook, so my seven kids, their spouses and 13 grandkids could communicate with me in the modern way.

I figured I could handle something as simple as Twitter. That was before one of my grandkids hooked me up to Tweeter, Twitterfon, Tweetsville and Twitpix. These ‘apps’ send every message through the tweetisphere to my mobile phone and ‘allow’ me to view every message, every reply and everyone’s favourites.

My phone was beeping every three minutes with the details of everything except the bowel movements of the entire next generation.

I am not ready to live like this. I now keep my mobile phone in the garage in my golf bag.

Then the kids bought me a GPS for my last birthday because they say I get lost every now and then. The GPS looked pretty smart on the dashboard, but the lady inside was the rudest person. Every 10 minutes, she would sarcastically say, “Re-calc-u-lating”. It was like she could barely tolerate me. It was not a good relationship, so now I keep her in a box under my tool bench.

Now, when I get really lost, I call my wife and tell her the name of the cross streets and while she is starting to develop the same tone as the GPS lady, at least she loves me.

To be perfectly honest, I am still trying to learn how to use the cordless phones in our house. We have had them for four years now, but I still haven’t figured out how I can lose three phones all at once and have to run around digging under cushions and checking the dirty laundry basket whenever the phone rings.

We older people don’t need any more technology. To be honest, the TV remote and the garage door remote are just about all I can handle.

(Disclosure: This article was forwarded to me by email, with no acknowledgment of author.)

Dorothy Cora

Editor’s Question; Does the author stop and find one of those mythical phone boxes or does he take his golf bag in his car?



*Are we going? Going somewhere?
Going to classes? Going travelling?
Going nowhere? Are we there yet?*

Going nowhere

I've been asked how my house building is going. It is going nowhere. I had finally reached a possible plan for my house. The council called my shed a 'small freestanding cottage', and wouldn't allow its demolition as part of the Development Application. But there was an alternative.

I decided to demolish my shed before I put in the DA. I would live in a caravan on my land while the DA was before Leichhardt Council. A friend offered me the use of a caravan, but I would need to build an outside toilet, and shower at the gym.

I might be crazy, but demolishing my house before establishing a loan was a bit far out, even for me. I wanted to build two houses and sell one, but I needed to borrow the money to do it. The property would be the security, and I would have enough cash to make the payments while the houses were being built.

I consulted the bank's consultant about some credit, a short term loan which would be completely paid off when I sold one of the houses. I was devastated when he refused. The "bank policy" was that I couldn't use my capital to pay off a loan. I had to have an "income stream" and my pension was not enough income.

So I went to a 'credit consultant' at my credit union. She suggested that I lease out my house and live elsewhere. The combination of my pension and the rent would make the payments on the loan to build

one house. I could sell one then build one for me. Ye gods! I would have to make sure that the roof didn't leak, the windows could open and close, and that the door was secure. Even so, my shed wouldn't bring in much rent. When I did the maths, I realized that I would lose half my pension and that my 'income stream' probably wouldn't be enough, to qualify for the loan. So it's back to the drawing board, so to speak!

Lorraine Inglis



*Random thoughts from a
coach trip to South Australia*

South Australia is a very dry state with 80% considered to be above the 'Goyder Line', i.e. too dry to grow crops. Even in the south, where the countryside is green, the coastal lakes are ringed with salt, which is a worry.

Along the main highways are large red signs saying 'STOP CREEPING'. I had no idea what this meant but soon discovered it was aimed at drivers who gradually increase their speed without realising it.

In the 1850's the small heritage-listed town of Burra had one of the richest copper mines in the world, not because of size but because of the richness of the ore – approximately 60% copper. The miners were mostly Cornishmen from the UK and many lived in tiny dug-out homes along the eroded river bed. The old open-cut mine is now full of water and although a long way from the ocean, because of its depth it is used for training deep-sea divers.

There is a town called Dublin and one with the



unfortunate name of Dismal Swamp. Many of the houses are made from limestone blocks. There appeared to be more solar panels on roofs than there are in NSW.

In Port Lincoln we saw the gigantic super trawler which all the local fishermen hated because it affected their livelihood. And I discovered that Sydney is not the only place to have a Sculpture by the Sea exhibition. Elliston has Sculpture on the Cliffs and they leave some in place permanently.

Funny little incidents happen on coach tours like the time our hostess announced, as we waited in a pre-booked cafeteria, “Now that all the fish have got their lunch would the lambs please come forward.” And the time I asked at the bar if they had a house white and the barman answered laconically, “Yeah. Do you want sweet, dry or Chardonnay?”

There is a lot more for me to learn about South Australia but at least I know more than I did before.

Halcyon Evans



Tech Savvy Courses

It's becoming ever more important for us to be able to handle computers and other technology. Many seniors don't feel confident about this. Some classes are quite expensive, or not close to where seniors live. Affordable Tech Savvy computer classes are now at your local Community College, or a similar venue. Tech Savvy classes were set up to provide training for the many seniors, over the age of 65, who need help with using computers. Grants are going to providers to fund classes that

seniors could afford, and teach them the basics: using a computer, the internet, emails, buying on the web, online security. Tech Savvy courses are very cheap, and run in local colleges. It is hardly surprising classes have been so popular.

At www.ace.nsw.gov.au/tech-savvy-seniors-courses-for-2013/ is a list of the colleges and their phone numbers. This is the latest information.

Blacktown	8814 5711	5 x 3hr	\$50
Hurtsville/ Sutherland	9528 3344	6 x 2hr	\$5 each
Macarthur	9826 6455	5 x 1.5hr	Free
Kiama	4232 1050	6 x 1.5hr	Free
Central Coast	4434 4300	6 x 3hr	\$25
Rozelle	8752 7555	3 x 3.5hr	\$38
WEA Illawarra	4426 1622	3 x 3hr	Free
WEA Sydney	9264 2781	2 x 6hr	\$25
Katoomba Centre	4721 5368	8x 2hr	Free
Shoalhaven Bowlo	4232 1050	6 x 1.5hr	Free
Lady Denman Huskisson	4232 1050	6 x 1.5hr	Free

If you are interested, ring your local provider, usually your community college, to enrol.

Lorraine Inglis



Misogyny is alive and well and women must be bold in naming or combatting it, no matter what the location or culture

With a host of international and local panelists and discussion leaders, the “All About Women” festival at the Sydney Opera House, held on 7th April provoked some deep thinking as well as heated dialogue amongst the forward-thinking women of our city and beyond.

This festival followed the success of the feminism forum, F Word 2012, with more experts and controversial conversations than ever this year.

The topics up for debate ranged across leadership, the workforce and bravery to parenting, sexism, identity, misogyny and multiculturalism. In the final session that we attended Geraldine Doogue chaired a panel of five women on the topic, “M is for Misogyny”.

On the panel were brave African women, Leymah Gbowee, the joint Nobel Peace Prize Winner in 2011 for leading the Women of Liberia’s Mass Action for Peace that helped end the Second Liberian Civil war, and Ayyan Hirsi Ali, the Somali-Dutch author. With the latter, an outspoken critic of cultural practices such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation, the dichotomy between east and west was bound to emerge.

Western feminists on the panel were Liza Mundy, author, reporter for the Washington Post and a dedicated Hillary watcher; Julia Baird, Australian author, broadcaster and journalist, who took up the fight for women in the church; Brooke Maganti, scientific researcher, former sex-worker and author



The panel at the All About Women Festival

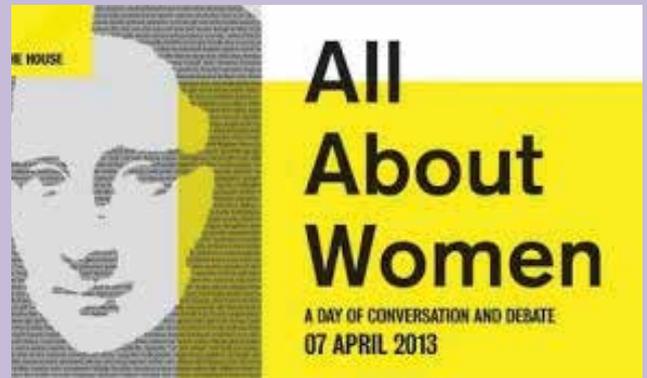
of “The Adventures of a London Call Girl”, who argues that one can be engaged in sex work and also be a feminist.

Geraldine Doogue offered the Oxford Dictionary’s definition of “misogyny”, which is simply stated as “hatred of women”. Is this definition too simplistic and why did it lose so much of the currency it enjoyed in the 60s, 70s and 80s. Did Julia Gillard’s impassioned speech strike a chord with women everywhere, and if so – why?

In exploring this topic Doogue posed the questions:

1. Have the panelists recently met misogyny in their personal lives?
 2. Have they observed it happening to others?
- Panelists struggled to think of recent examples, but the question of whether they had seen it was answered very strongly in the affirmative.

Identifying with the message of Gillard’s speech, Brooke Maganti talked about how soundly it resonated with women in Britain, and Liza Mundy reported she had witnessed misogyny in Hillary



Clinton’s presidential campaign. Julia Baird praised the Prime Minister for being bold and thought that all women should be bold. Leymah Gbowee pointed out that both women and men were responsible for encouraging sexist behaviours. Both she and Hirsi Ali felt that western women were very lucky to have negative cultural practices removed by law. Indeed, Hirsi Ali felt that all politicians, regardless of race, gender etc. take abuse as part of the job, implying that if you can’t deal with the heat, don’t get into the furnace. She was prepared, however, to agree that misogynist treatment of women was an unacceptable practice.

So, where did that leave us? We felt the panel agreed that misogyny is alive and well and women must be bold in naming and combatting it. However it was clear that misogyny means different things, depending on where you live and your cultural context.

When Julia Baird was questioned by one of the panelists about why she didn’t leave the Anglican Church after all the frustrations she had suffered trying to advance the ordination of women, she said that she felt she had to fight from within. Hirsi Ali felt that religion and religious thoughts should be kept out of politics entirely, a view that received much audience support. Leymah Gbowee said she believed women’s lives can only be improved if men are persuaded to join them in the struggle.

So much to ponder in so little time. We felt lucky hearing these discussions. We also felt challenged to think more objectively about issues other women face. Importantly, we were encouraged to be BOLD!

Rita Tratt and Fran Weston



Brain Fag

When you put washing liquid into the pan
instead of oil,
Just before you fry your onions,
You’ve got Brain Fag.
The mirror speaks back to you and whispers you
are old,
And you didn’t even speak first!!
You’ve got Brain Fag!!!
The past looks better even when it was crap and
You wonder if you could have put up with that,
You’ve got Brain Fag.
Time has stopped existing, and the future looks
Bright and you just might take off to Tahiti,
You’ve got Brain Fag.
What to do, shuffle through the blues and write,
Record your bizarre dreams and schemes,
You’ve got Brain Fag.
Hell I must be feeling better
Time to write that letter,
And say goodbye to Brain Fag.

Glenys Buselli



P for lesson learned

Parading thoughts and memories
Perspective from an angle
Perpetual voyage of the mind
Passage of time – a life well lived
Perennial flowers of the garden of love:
Passions, tears, departures and encounters
Persistent waves eroding rocks
Pulchritude of a deserted beach
Peaceful solitude and contentment.

Beatriz Copello

*Sit back and rest your weary heads.
At last, a good night's sleep for Annette!
And now, a good day's rest for Brutus!*

A Bedtime Nightmare

I was in the market for a new mattress as the springs of my 20 year old one were digging into my back – not a good inducement to a comfortable sleep.

I often peruse the deals on the internet looking for restaurant specials. There, low and behold, was a special deal on a memory foam mattress - double bed size, for the amazing price of \$399 instead of over \$1000 which was the usual price I had been finding.

One of the trials of my life is turning the mattress every now and again, which one really should do a couple of times a year. But getting two or better still, three family members in the one place at the one time to do the job, is always difficult.

“Great”, I thought, “foam will be lighter”. And so the deal was done. The only stipulation was that they would not deliver to a post office box – duh!

Some weeks later I arrived home to find an eight foot, small diameter, grey cylinder leaning against my front door. Fortunately it had a handle on one end which allowed me to drag it down the hall and into the doorway of my study. “Wow”, I thought “I’ve really been done. This is going to be a very thin mattress”.

There being no instructions and without a thought,



I sliced from top to bottom with the handy Stanley knife. Well, the sound that issued was first like a very loud raspberry, then a sucking noise similar to a loud vacuum cleaner. I was gobsmacked as the roll exploded and magically doubled then tripled in size completely blocking the doorway to the study! I clambered over the mattress for two days until I got up the courage to hail a passing neighbour for help. With a wide smile he said, “Didn’t you know that they send them under compression so they can fit more easily into a container”.

I have a multitude of pieces of trivia stored in my brain but this item was not amongst them.

The good news is, it’s an excellent mattress - more dreams than nightmares from now on.

Annette Butterfield





A Day in my life

by Brutus Littlewood

OK my girl, out of bed, that's it... now come on I'll take you into the bathroom. I'm just sitting in front of you while you tell me what a beautiful boy I am. Sometimes you say I'm the best boy in the house and seeing as I have not seen another dog I am not too sure about that one.

Ok now out to the kitchen, I'll have toast. I do love my toast but the jam is the best... I like a bit of toast with my jam.

Righteo now into the bathroom again, this girl has far too many showers. Once in a blue moon is my feeling. Oh well, I'll just curl up on her dressing gown and keep guard again.

What's that... a car... I'll just do my scary growl and that will do the trick. Grggrgr there it works every time... that car has gone past I'm just so good at this guarding stuff. Out of the shower and into the bedroom. I'll just pop up onto the bed and supervise my girl getting dressed.

She always asks me "What do you think you are doing young man? Go out and catch a rabbit". Now I'm not too sure what a rabbit is but when I see one I'll give it a go. I wonder what you could do with one when you caught it.

There she goes off to the club... I'll just stand here and look very hang dog. She always tells me to be a good boy and she'll be back soon. I'll just sadly walk over to my box, I don't want her to know I am glad

to see her go off for a few hours so I can have some good shut eye, a fella's been on guard all night.

Here she comes home again, I'll just jump up and down and show her how much I've missed her. OH goodie groceries, I love poking my nose into the bags, there are some great smells in here.

What's to eat my girl? A bloke is starving hurry up with these groceries. It is time for food. Ah that's better, full tummy always makes me happy, come to think of it I'm always happy anyway.

Now I'll just follow my girl around while she gets her tea and then when she has finished up on the lap for a good time watching TV.

© Coral Littlewood





Elder Abuse Helpline

Minister for Ageing Andrew Constance said that the NSW Elder Abuse Helpline was a key priority identified in the NSW Ageing Strategy which focuses on prevention, early intervention and support for older people, their families and carers.

According to the Australian Institute of Criminology, 50,000 people aged 65 and over in NSW have experienced some form of abuse or neglect - physical, psychological or financial. The NSW Elder Abuse Helpline is a state-wide service, and is a free call to 1800 628 221.

Seniors are encouraged to call the Helpline about any concerns they have for themselves or someone they may know. Complaints about suspected abuse within a residential aged care facility should be directed to The Aged Care Complaints Scheme on 1800 550 552.



Notices

Mystery Reading Group

Sydney Mechanic's School of Arts.

6 April: *Framed!* A crime fiction in which windows, doorways, paintings, photographs or mirrors play a role.

4 May: *Not the usual suspects* – crime fact or fiction featuring eg archaeologist, doctor, plumber, geologist (professions or occupations other than police/lawyer/private investigator).

1 June: *Crime plus* – choose a crossover genre novel eg crime/fantasy, crime/horror.

29 June: *Calendar of crime* – centered around a season (eg winter), an equinox or a solstice.

27 July: *Debut crime novel.*
Group Coordinator Carole O'Brien - 9665 6639.



Politics in the Pub

Gaelic Club, Devonshire St.

May 3: *Privatisation of Government Assets – Is There Anything Left to Sell?*

● Joe Nagy, Finance and Economic Coach.

● Phillip Toner, Senior Research Fellow, Sydney Uni.

May 10: *Venezuela - A New Democracy or a Command Capitalist State?*

● Frederico Fuentes, author *Latin American Transitions*.

● Rodrigo Acuna, PhD candidate Latin American Affairs.



University Lectures

May 2: *Coal Seam Gas, Coal Mining, and Environmental Justice.*

Professor Linda Connor, Drew Hutton, Professor David Schlosberg, and Jeff Smith discuss the social and environmental justice implications of mining. 6-7:30pm. Law School Foyer, Eastern Avenue, University of Sydney. Cost: Free and open to all with registration requested.

May 7: *Hon Keith Mason on The Human Sides of Law.*

The Hon Keith Mason looks at how our common humanity affects what really happens when people, the law and justice intersect. 6-7:30pm. Tyree Room, John Niland Scientia Building, UNSW, Kensington Campus. Cost: Free.

May 16: *Pacific Climate Justice and Human Development*

Dr. Meredith Burgmann, talks about the challenges imposed there by climate change and how to respond. 6-8pm. Tutorial Room 360, Sydney University Carslaw Building. Cost: Free, Donations Accepted.

May 22: *Forgotten Plagues: In*

pursuit of Neglected Diseases.

Dr Richard Payne and Dr Matthew Todd discuss this international health crisis. 5:45pm-6:45pm. Eastern Avenue Auditorium, Eastern Avenue Road, The University of Sydney. Cost: Free.



OWN Book Club list

April-September 2013
MAY - Book for discussion 20 May: *Wolf Hall* – Hilary Mantel
JUNE - Book for discussion 17 June: *Frantic* - Katherine Howell.
JULY - Author to read 15 July. * Instead of a book, this time an author - Joyce Carol Oates. Your choice of book by this author – she has written a lot in various genres. Your library should have this author as she is very popular. Be prepared to share your reading with others. If you have any trouble getting the scheduled books, please let me know. Happy reading!
Anne-Marie Kestle - 0408740435



Saturday Social Group

Our Birkenhead group met last Saturday at Birkenhead as usual, but we learnt the café is moving to a different location in the same building. Renovations to the new site are going on now but I don't know when the switch will happen. We all decided we'd look for a new and more suitable venue in the meantime. I will let you know how things work out. May/June meeting dates are as follows: May 4, May 18, June 1.
Bev Cameron



MEMBERS & FRIENDS WELCOME TO ATTEND ALL OUR ACTIVITIES

Wellness on Wednesdays
9.30am–12.30pm every Wed. Abraham Mott Hall, Argyle Street, Millers Point. Contact Lola 9665 8741 or Joy 9698 5205

Lost Ladies
10am every Wed (during school terms), exploring various locations or topics of interest. Contact Annette Butterfield 9665 5369. Email: abutterfield_852@hotmail.com

Film Discussion Group
You are invited on **Tues May 14** to see *The Company You Keep*. Contact Yetty on 9665 2050 for more information.

Bondi Junction Coffee and Gossip Group
11am - last Friday in each month. The Coffee Shop, Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club (enter from 93-98 Spring St. You must sign in.) Contact Yetty 9665 2050 to check all details.

Book Club
MON, MAY 20 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel.
MON, JUNE 17 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *Frantic* by Katherine Howelle.

Aboriginal Support Circle
The next meeting for 2013 is June 10 at the Gardener's Lodge Cafe, Victoria Park. Confirm details with Pat Zinn 9389 1090 or email patzinn@hotmail.com

Saturday Social Group at Birkenhead Point
Birkenhead Café, 1st floor Birkenhead Shopping Complex. Contact Bev Cameron on 9957 5367 or Meg Venning on 9887 2386.

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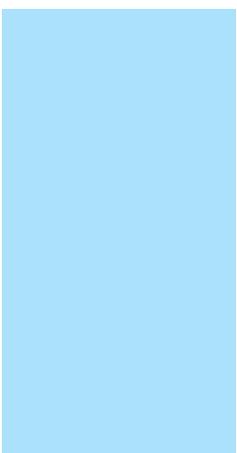
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