

OWN MATTERS



International Women's Day Forum. Special congratulations.

Get over it! NSW Wellness Centre research project.

Palliative care priority. Decisions, decisions. The little things.

Senior moments. Licensed to drive. Swimming with bunyips.



Join the fun at the Forum

International Women's Day will be celebrated with an array of speakers focussing on how to empower women



Driving the country road

Getting your licence was as easy as lending the car to the local policeman



Project focus on Wellness Centres

Feedback wanted to show how beneficial our programs have been for members



Care put on priority list

Palliative care set to top Government's health agenda after recommendations



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EVERY MONTH

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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.

Produced with the assistance of the Australian Government through Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services NSW, with project funding from the NSW Department of Health, and assistance from the City of Sydney.

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International Women's Day Forum

Empowering Women

Friday, March 8
10am to 12am

Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts
280 Pitt Street, Sydney

Your chance to celebrate our day in a
comfortable, easy-to-access location

This event is free, so you don't need to book

Simply come, join us and
listen to some great speakers

The subjects and speakers include

- Empowering Aboriginal women elders: Linda Burney
- Older Women and Work: Leanne Cutcher from Sydney Uni
- Dying with Dignity: Sarah Edelman
- Refugees: Diane Hiles from the Greens
- Women's Health: Mary Kierney
- Social Policies and Women: Ruth Phillips from Sydney Uni

This event is being run in a festival style, and each session will have three speakers from which you can choose. We can only guess which speaker will be the most popular on the day, but we do have the auditorium for a big group, and two smaller rooms.

At and Beyond the Rocks

Chaiya's Farewell

On the 27th of November nearly forty of our members gathered at the Jasmine Rice Thai Restaurant to say a special thank you to our most wonderful and generous friend Chaiya Noradechanunt.

We first met Chaiya on the 6th of September 2010 at our first birthday celebrations when he gave a demonstration of Thai Yoga prior to starting his research program into the Benefits of Thai Yoga to Older Persons with the School of Health Sciences at the University of Wollongong.

On the 13th of September he gave his first lesson at the Illawarra OWN Wellness Centre in Coniston. Chaiya's classes were popular from day one and have continued to grow in numbers and popularity from that day onward.

His gentleness and expertise are only surpassed by his generosity as he continued teaching us all throughout the rest of 2010, all of 2011 and up until the end of September 2012 free of charge, long after his research studies



Chaiya receives his 'Waterholes' painting from Barbara Malcolm

had ended. When the final assessments were made during 2011, all those who took part in the trial achieved a significant improvement in their fitness.

At this luncheon Chaiya told us more of the story of Thai Yoga, which is really a name he gave the art form that would give us some understanding of what the exercises were.

Chaiya also told us this was the first time this exercise form was shared with, or practiced by anyone outside Thailand. He told us we are true pioneers.

We discussed widely with members and friends of the Norandechanunt family to find a suitable present that would bring them happy memories of their time in Wollongong.

After much searching we found what we were searching for. An Aboriginal painting entitled "Waterholes", painted by artist Sarah Napurula White who comes from Yuemdumu in the Northern Territory.

It represents a lake or pool of water that is a gathering place. The circles represent ripples in the water that are caused by a single drop of water in the middle of the pool. As the ripples expand out they tell the story of how a slight disturbance can have a wide ranging effect.

We chose this painting as we feel Chaiya has caused a ripple in our meeting place. His gift of Thai Yoga to us will continue to lead us in a gentle manner towards our goal of attaining good health and wellbeing. It was given from a kind and generous heart and we are forever grateful for the way Chaiya has shared his knowledge and dedication.

We are so sad that his mission in Wollongong is coming to a close and he will soon be leaving us though he has promised that he will be visiting Wollongong many times and will not forget us. We wish Chaiya and his family every good wish for the future,



Barbara with her quilt and raffle organiser Pat Zinn

that it may be long and happy as they continue their incredible journey and hope that the ripples of knowledge that Chaiya has caused throughout our lives will continue to spread and his gift will continue to grow.

In 2013, Sue Noradechanunt will take Chaiya's place as instructor of our Thai Yoga class so the ripples will continue.

Barbara Malcolm



When I get old

You aren't a member of OWN unless you are older, so all of OWN Sydney is older. What do all these Sydney older women do?

It seems that parties are big. We all enjoy a party. The 2012 Sydney Solstice Party was great. It was a chance to catch up with friends, including women from other OWN groups.

We talked a lot, ate lots of that fabulous food everyone contributed, and just enjoyed ourselves. To quote a long time member, "It was the best Solstice Party ever."

One of the highlights was the drawing of the raffle, which raises money for the Kool Kids Club in La Perouse. Everyone wanted to win the beautiful quilt that Barbara Malcolm had created. The raffle raised \$1028. The winner was June Goss, from Wyong OWN.

Earlier this year, OWN Sydney threw another party, the Octogenarian Extravaganza. This party brought a big number of long term members back to the Rocks. Many of them don't make it very often these days, and it was really good to see them having a good time.

I loved the idea that some women dressed up to "When I get old, I shall wear purple with a red hat that doesn't go." Everyone enjoyed seeing, and talking to women they had known for years, some right back to OWN's beginning.

Sydney OWN is organizing a different event for 2013. This will be a forum on March 8, International Women's Day, at Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts. You will have the opportunity to listen to six

speakers. It will be a morning event from 10am to 12pm. It is free, so no need to book. Please come along, and bring a friend.

OWN Sydney Committee



Theatre Group report

The Theatre Group was nominated for National Volunteer Awards of the Year in 2012. The awards were handed out in the Redfern Community Centre on the 5th of December. We received a Certificate of Appreciation for Australian Volunteers, as part of the National Volunteer Awards, which was hosted by the Federal Minister for Health, Tanya Plibersek. Brigid, Rita, Marjorie, Ilona and Uma attended.

We had a quick stop in a very well known cafe that has to be experienced to be believed. At the top of Chalmers Street, this cafe has the real essence of the Fifties, with waitresses in retro aprons. And the food is very good.

Our last gig of the year was fabulous, with a good mix of entertainment, songs, skits and Christmas Carols just perfect for the Glebe Community Centre Christmas Concert. This was in contrast to our previous gig at Jannali Neighbourhood Aid where the size of the venue and the seating arrangement just made it too difficult for us to connect as well as we'd have liked with the audience.

Glenys Buselli



Letters

Vale Trude Kallir

Many OWN members will be saddened to hear of Trude's recent death on the 10th December, 2012.

Fittingly, it was the International Day of Human Rights, and this is what Trude fought for, starting in her native Vienna. Her family managed to leave just before the war began in 1939. She had wanted to study medicine but this was not to be. She studied nursing and became a Foundation Fellow of the College of Nursing, NSW.

As a feisty activist, she was one of the 13 battlers for Kelly's Bush who successively fought to save 5 hectares of untouched bush land on the Parramatta River in 1971 and she became a member of the Ryde Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society.

Her activism extended to feminism, peace (as a passionate and committed member of WILPF (Women's International League of Peace and Freedom), nuclear disarmament, public education and Reconciliation.

She was a member of the OWN Health Group as well as being a

consumer representative for OWN, and a valued and active member of our Aboriginal Support Circle. She was the recipient of an Edna award and was awarded an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her service to the environment, to women, and to the community. It was a privilege to have known her and to be her friend.

Pat Zinn



Morgana Oliver Ayres

Morgana's short story was selected for the Ryde Year of Reading.

The idea was to publish 366 stories, one for every day of the year and her story was called 'Maggie's Song' (number 147).

I haven't been able to access Morgana's story but I'm sure we'd all like to read it.

Judith Daley



Guest Speaker

In March, Beth forwarded an email from Richard Mills, President of Dying With Dignity NSW, offering to provide a speaker from DWD at OWN meetings.

I contacted Richard and booked him to speak at our November meeting, which he did on the 1st November. Richard's presentation was excellent. As part of his presentation, Richard showed a video which some people found confronting but the issues raised were very important and all agreed that it was well worth hearing Richard and seeing the video.

We also had a short presentation from Ian Wood, Co-founder of Christians Supporting Choice in Voluntary Euthanasia, who gave his views why assisted dying was good and not against Christian belief. The end of the meeting was given over to questions from members – giving rise to a lot of interesting questions and comments.

If your group hasn't addressed the issue of whether or not individuals want to be allowed to die if they are suffering badly

and, indeed, whether they should legally be able to be assisted to die, I suggest that you contact Dying With Dignity and ask for a guest speaker.

Robyn Smith
SHOWN Coordinator



Save CountryLink Trains

Ageing CountryLink trains are now past their use-by-date, built to last for 25 years, however many have been running for over 30 years.

CountryLink rail services play a critical role in reducing some of the transport disadvantage experienced in regional NSW.

It's important that much needed upgrades take place to keep CountryLink rail services running and that it remains in public hands. Any privatisation will undoubtedly lead to a dramatic rise in fares making it simply unaffordable for pensioners and others on low incomes.

Given that the Government recently found \$1 billion it is feasible that half this money could go towards replacing

NSW's ageing CountryLink trains. This would still allow for the Budget to remain in surplus.

Amelia Christie
CPSA Research/Policy Officer



International Women's Day

Where did it come from? What are we celebrating? On 28 February 1909, the first National Women's Day was observed in the United States, following a declaration by the Socialist Party of America.

In August 1910, at a socialist International Women's Conference an annual 'International Woman's Day' was proposed. One hundred women delegates from 17 countries agreed with the idea as a strategy to promote equal rights, including suffrage, for women.

On 18 March 1911, IWD was celebrated for the first time. Women demanded the right to vote and to hold public office and protested against employment sex discrimination.

Russian women observed their first IWD in 1913. From its official adoption in Russia in



1917, the holiday was mainly celebrated in communist and socialist countries.

In the West, International Women's Day was only really celebrated after the United Nations General Assembly invited member states to proclaim March 8 as the UN Day for women's rights and world peace in 1977.

International Women's Day is marked on March 8 every year. In some places, the focus is no longer political, but in other countries, the focus is still the struggles of women worldwide, and their human rights. So what does International Women's Day mean to the Older Women's Network? It's more than a march down George St.

It reflects the struggle of OWN to advocate for the rights of older women. This year OWN Sydney is inviting you to attend our forum on International Women's Day on Friday, March 8.

Lorraine Inglis





Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Shane Phillips named NSW Local Hero

Aboriginal leader, Shane Phillips has been named NSW Local Hero 2013. Many of us know him for his involvement in the Tribal Warrior Association, a non-profit organisation run by Aboriginal people that offers training for employment in the maritime industry.

Using the gaff-rigged ketch *Tribal Warrior* and the *Deerubbin*, Aboriginal young people are trained to achieve qualifications including Master Class V commercial maritime certificates and the Radar and Marine Engineer certificates. These vessels also provide regular cultural harbour tours highlighting Aboriginal history and traditions.

Shane is also involved in issues including juvenile justice and Aboriginal deaths in custody and helps with emergency relief for struggling families. He also operates a mentoring program for young Indigenous people.



National Indigenous Television Service started 12th December, 2012

This service on SBS Channel 4 is free to air and will help to challenge stereotypes of Indigenous people. It empowers Indigenous voices and is playing an important role in safeguarding Indigenous culture and language and promoting the rights of Indigenous people. A long time coming, it's finally here!



Huge National Indigenous Youth Incarceration Rate

The national rate of Indigenous juveniles in prison is now thirty one times the rate of non-Indigenous juveniles, and most of them are male.

Western Australia and the Northern Territory have the highest numbers and the situation is getting worse. The situation is being called a “national crisis” and a “ticking time bomb.”

A Senate inquiry into “Justice Reinvestment”, whereby taxpayer’s dollars are spent on prevention rather than detention, was announced in November 2012, with a report due this May. The rate of return to prison is at a higher rate than youths being retained in high school and going on to university.

National leadership is needed and the Council of Australian Governments needs to take up the issue. More Indigenous children are being removed from their families than during the worst decades of the Stolen Generations and youth suicides are out of control. Those of us concerned with reconciliation need to make a concerted effort to make our voices heard and support organisations like ANTaR to insist on swift and positive action.

Pat Zinn



Recognition Bill

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples Recognition Bill 2012 was introduced into



Federal Parliament. This bill was introduced into Federal Parliament on the 28th November 2012 in order to build the momentum needed for successful constitutional change.

Initially, the Federal Government pledged to have a referendum on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people this year, 2013, but a tremendous amount of work still has to be done to educate the Australian public about the necessity for this recognition and the referendum cannot be allowed to fail.

A joint parliamentary committee has been set up to examine the bill and report back towards the end of January 2013. This bill is a key building block in the journey to the referendum.

Pat Zinn



20th Anniversary of Paul Keating's Redfern Speech

On the 10th December 1992, then Prime Minister Paul Keating

addressed an expectant crowd at Redfern Park to mark 1993 as the United Nation's International year of the World's Indigenous People. He said: "If Australia could build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, couldn't it find just solutions to the problems which beset the First Australians - the people to whom the most injustice has been done?"

On Monday 10th December 2012, 20 years later, the Women's Reconciliation Network organized a gathering to remember his words and to ponder what has happened in the last 20 years to rectify these injustices.

It is worth quoting the following extract from this remarkable speech: "The starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians. It begins, I think, with that act of recognition. The recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of

life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers.

"We practised discrimination and exclusion. It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

"With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask - how would I feel if this was done to me? As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us."

Powerful words, which speak for themselves. Much has been achieved in the last 20 years but so much more remains to be done. The pace of change is slow.

At least the Federal Government intends to recognise Australia's First Peoples in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples Recognition Bill, which has bipartisan support, and which will help to build the momentum needed for successful constitutional change through the promised referendum.



From the impressive actions of one of our OWN to the unimpressive complaints of Australia's environmental profiteers

Special congratulations

Congratulations are in order for one of OWN's long standing members, Cate Turner. Cate has just received a 'Certificate of Congratulation' for being nominated as Senior Australian of the Year for 2013.

Letters from the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) supported the nomination. Cate served as Convenor of the Women's Electoral Lobby, and as Coordinator of the Women's Electoral Lobby, and as their Newsletter Editor. Cate also received an 'Edna's Award', several years ago, for all her dedicated work with WEL.

In support of her nomination, the then President of the Lions Club of Sydney had written of her work in fund raising with the Lions Club, over the past several years. Special mention was also made of her role as Project Officer. Each year, as Project Officer, Cate has organised the Centenarian's function at Government House, hosted by the Governor of New South Wales, for citizens who have reached their 100th birthday. And just this year Cate was herself elected President, of the Lions Club of Sydney.

The Co-Convenor of Lane Cove Residents for Reconciliation, in support of the Senior Australian of the Year nomination, outlined the years Cate has spent on their committee. She cited Cate's role as Treasurer for many years, in addition to her work and support with all LCRR activities, including being the LCRR representative on the committee of the Lane Cove Council's Cammeraygal Festival. This yearly festival also honours and celebrates the



Well done to long standing OWN member Cate Turner

Indigenous heritage of the Lane Cove area. Residents at the McIntyre Centre, where Cate lives, supported her nomination because of her fearless representation, on their behalf, as a member of the McIntyre Committee.

And members of OWN listed at length Cate's involvement since 1994 with their organisation, including service on the OWN NSW management team; the Sydney OWN management team, and the OWN Australia Council. At the wonderful age of 84 she is still treasurer for OWN Australia, and still busy organising functions and Conferences.

And that's not all! Cate last year completed ten years, weekly service, as a reader on radio 2RPH, the radio station for the Print Handicapped. In summary, all this dedication just highlights why her nominators felt it was such a well-earned and worthy nomination. Cate is an inspiration to us all: Congratulations Cate!!



Get Over it!

I'm not impressed by companies complaining that their profit is being reduced by the decisions made by governments in the countries in which they operate. I don't care whether they operate super trawlers, or mines or cut down our forests. I don't care whether they affect our farming land by fracking or use our river water on cotton farms or irrigation properties. I don't care whether they have businesses that endanger our forests or wildlife or coral reefs. Or should I say I do care. The people of our country, or any other country, have the right to expect our environment and our human rights to be protected by our elected governments.

I'm sure the mining companies will be pleased if the federal opposition gets in at the next election and repeals the carbon tax legislation and allows them to further increase global warming, but make greater profits. They will also be pleased if the mining tax is cancelled, even though it only operates on their profits. They are, after all, digging up our resources, and destroying the environment in the areas where they operate, to make their profits. It is our environment and they are our resources. If government decisions affect their profits I say, "Get Over It".

The company that operates the super trawler that came to Australia, to fish in our waters, was not impressed when the Australian

Government passed legislation to stop them fishing off Australia. The reason they came all the way to Australia is because our waters have not yet been overfished. Our environment and our resources must be protected. They complained that they had wasted money bringing their ship here. If they don't like this, I say, "Get Over It."

In many developing countries forests are being totally destroyed in the name of financial development. "Financial development" means money is being made, I know it won't be by the people whose forests are being destroyed. It took a lot of effort on the part of environmentalists to protect some of the Tasmanian forests, and the ancient trees in them, from being chopped down to make woodchips. It wasn't the Tasmanian government that wanted to interfere in the timber industry. It was concerned citizens and public opinion that forced the government to act. If timber companies don't like governments acting to preserve forests, I say, "Get Over It".

The Murray-Darling River System has been under stress because of the huge draw on this major water resource. There are many people along the rivers who have resisted attempts to reach an agreement about how much water has to go back into the river to keep the river system healthy. Many farmers felt threatened because their livelihoods depend on the river. The latest decision on water use and river flows has attempted to be fair and still have enough water in the river system. Although their water rights will be very little changed, irrigation channels and watering systems have to be more efficient. No matter which decision was made, people would object. To them I say, "Get Over It".

To all such companies, I say, "Get Over It!"
Lorraine Inglis



Research project is a chance for members to provide feedback on the positive impact Wellness Centres have on their lives

In 2012 NSW Health funded Older Women's Network (OWN) to research the impact the Wellness Centre program has on participant's health and wellbeing, with a focus on falls prevention.

The research is to provide information to feed into the key questions:

- Is the opportunity to participate in gender specific physical activities designed specifically for older women an incentive for them to join and remain in OWN Wellness Programs?
- In what ways does this contribute positively to preventing falls in this group and to enhancing their social connectedness and general wellbeing?

And also:

- To identify the activities that contribute to improved health outcomes of participants with a focus on falls prevention.
- To identify areas of improvement/new activities that would enable the wellness centres to increase impact on health outcomes/ falls prevention.

The Department of Health approached OWN to implement



© Michael Jastremski

this research. It is an exciting opportunity to demonstrate the impact that the OWN NSW Wellness program is having on your health and wellbeing.

It is hoped that the Department of Health will fund OWN NSW to undertake further research to see the impact of OWN programs over a longer time frame.

Gina Vizza and Deborah Sharp who both have experience in working in women's health, the NGO sector and government both in NSW and the UK have been contracted by OWN NSW to undertake the

research. The final report is due 1 June and Deborah and Gina will be interviewing Wellness Centre Coordinators, observing activities and talking to as many OWN members as possible. Gina and Deborah look forward to meeting you.

If you have any ideas or comments about your experience as a participant of OWN NSW, and specifically as a participant in the Wellness Program we would love to hear from you. You can contact Deborah and Gina: Deborah_sharp@yahoo.com.au Or even better, come and have a chat when we visit your centre.

Deborah Sharp



Government recommendations should see the nation's palliative care system being moved on to the priority list in new health reforms

Access to palliative care is to be improved as a result of the federal government's upper house recommendations to overhaul the nation's palliative care system.

The Senate's Community Affairs References Committee has issued its final report "Palliative Care in Australia", containing 38 far-reaching recommendations for improvements to the way palliative care is provided.

Senator Rachel Siewert, Greens MP and party spokesperson for ageing, and chair of the inquiry, is reported as saying: "Palliative care is about maintaining and improving on a quality of life that you and I would deem reasonable for ourselves and others that ensures comfort, dignity and freedom from preventable pain.")

Representatives from key organisations including Palliative Care Australia and Catholic Health Australia, are quoted in this article as endorsing the Senate's report as both are aware that palliative care is not always available for those who need it.

Others who have expressed their

support for the recommendations include Shadow Minister for Ageing Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells and Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing who is quoted as saying that: "Palliative care is an important part of the government's commitment to a world-class health and aged care system".

Faced with the deficits that currently exist in the provision of palliative care, members of OWN concerned for themselves, family or friends might well ask, "What are we to do in the mean time?"

Where health professionals that you have spoken to about palliative care appear uninformed or unwilling to contribute to planning for palliative care, for yourself, friends or loved ones, the message in the report is that information should be sought from a number of sources. Palliative Care Australia is a good place to start.

Their website is:
www.palliativecare.org.au
Ph 02 6232 4433

Dr. Yvonne Luxford, CEO of Palliative Care Australia, and quoted in the Australian Ageing Agenda article, has



© Sarah Klockars-Clauser

strong expectations that the Senate's report will make a real difference. She is quoted as saying: "We look forward to seeing palliative care made a real priority in the current health reforms and recognised as an integral part of the health system" (www.australianageingagenda.com.au page 3)

Perhaps OWN members might consider contacting their local federal members of parliament and encourage them to support the recommendations in the report Palliative Care in Australia. This is one report that we do want action on!

Sonia Laverty

(Ref: www.australianageingagenda.com.au)



A whole lot of thinking going on! Deciding, remembering and not remembering. Memories and decisions might be shared, but contagious?

Decisions, decisions

Why am I finding this the hardest subject to write about? Some decisions are easy to make, and others take time. Occasionally someone else might make the decision for you and the outcomes may not be at all harmonious.

Do you adapt, disagree and ignore the end result, or get cranky when things change and you didn't make them happen? Perhaps you make decisions for others, but I think that the hardest position in which to find yourself is when you are unable to make a decision. The conundrum hangs around for weeks, and you stew about it, like Mr. Bean on the end of the diving board.

Horrible, until someone pushes you off. Thinking of the negative outcomes of making the choice keeps us in a quandary. I suppose there are some individuals who never make a decision, if that is possible.

Decisions can be made deliberately, or if you are an intuitive person you wait until you have more information and then make the choice with an open heart. Asking friends for advice isn't a good idea most of the time, unless they know you very well. Conferring higher ability onto others puts you into a position that isn't increasing your confidence or an independent stance.

Well meaning individuals may attempt to lighten your load by giving advice, and the relationship could falter and change in ways that you didn't

expect. Does basic education curriculum teach about this skill? Or is it something you learn at home? This may mean that we have to learn the difference between a thought and accompanying feelings.

Do our feelings hamper the ability to make sound decisions? This is a debatable question with as many ramifications as there are stars in the sky. I suppose it depends upon the depth of feeling to some degree.

Anger, envy, sadness and love can cause us to lose objectivity. This brings to mind the situation where a loved one needs more than home care.

If any of this has helped I will be pleased. Mostly we need someone to listen but not give us advice. It is our hearts that will help us come to the right decision.

Glenys Buselli



The little things

Some are better than others. I was speaking to a grandson on the phone when he suddenly remarked a fly had landed in his drink.

My mind shot back to a similar incident many years ago. I was attending a very boring evening, can't remember the occasion but it was somewhere posh.

Someone had left an empty glass on the table I was sitting at and a fly came hovering. Knowing it was heading for the glass I went to place a napkin over

it, when he beat me and flew in as the napkin came down. "You can stay there" I thought.

The evening got a bit more interesting after that as I watched the fly slowly get drunk on the dregs of whisky that were in the bottom of the glass. After an hour or so he started to climb up the glass and a friend asked me what I was doing so I told her I was watching a drunken fly crawl up the side of a glass.

She peered at it and remarked, "His willy's hanging out!" I looked and sure enough, it was.

Oh for the days when my eyesight was so good I could see a fly's willy.

Barbara Malcolm



Senior Moments

Three of us, quite sober, arrived mid-afternoon at a friend's townhouse for a game of mahjong. We'd all been there many times before, but this time we saw that a new security system had been installed. We had dealt with similar systems before, so one of us punched in the number of her unit and pressed a button. Nothing happened. Again, and again and again!

We read the instructions again: "Punch in the code and press the bell." We'd been doing that! One of us tried punching in our hostess's name and pushing the button marked 'Bell'. Nothing. What was wrong? By this time it was raining lightly and we were feeling agitated.



There is nothing more frustrating than technology that doesn't work, except, perhaps, when the fault lies with us instead

I said, "Let's ring her on a mobile." A mobile is at its most useful when you are 'mobile', but one of us had left her mobile at home, and another's battery was flat. I got mine out and finally found our hostess's number. No answer. We guessed she had left her mobile upstairs while she prepared for her guests.

There we were, standing in the rain, looking at one another. Someone said, "I have my diary here, and her landline number is in there." (Does this justify the pen and paper system?) I rang her landline number.

Our hostess let us in and expressed surprised that we had a problem. What was the problem? We had been pressing the wrong number for her townhouse! Again, and again and again! Can three senior moments happen at the same time? Maybe they're contagious!

Lorraine Inglis



Life in the country is as different to city life now as it was then - whether you're learning to drive or enjoying a swim with bunyips

Licensed to drive without any of the testing moments

Yesterday, October 25, while enjoying an evening meal with a dear friend, we began to talk about cars.

In a moment of reflection, he remembered: "We bought a Ford Mercury (straight six) and we bought it off two rabbit shooters. One drove and the other, whilst standing on the passenger seat in the front, stuck his head out of a huge hole they had cut in the roof, all the better to take aim!"

"We each chipped in one Pound, to the tune of ten Pounds and we began to drive! Average age was 12; children at home for the summer holidays. Some problems with this car were: radiator useless, oil system was non-functional. However, as luck would have it, we finally sold it to a farmer in Peak Hill NSW, for forty pounds just for the engine, which was pretty good once reconditioned (by the farmer)."

I wondered how he had obtained his driving licence, and the following story emerged. Paul began driving at 10 years old, but only in paddocks and things like that i.e. back dirt roads!

"Those paddocks were mostly only treed, not cultivated, but fun none the less. We were all having fun. We drove a Singer Utility with a rag top. There were about four of us as a group but there were always a couple of others who came around to drive in the paddock.



Around the trees and over the bumps. We got the petrol from one of the group's father who ran the local garage. By the time 16 years and 10 months rolled around, I was allowed to get a licence. So in my Ford Zephyr (thank you, granddad), I drove to the local police station.

It really only had one policeman and he was a sergeant. The police sergeant knew my grandfather who ran the local milk bar, and they enjoyed playing cards together. Kids in those days had enormous respect for the police. The Station was a simple brick building and inside there was a long wooden counter behind which the solitary policeman sat reading the paper."

"I went in and said, "I've come to apply for a licence," and he said, "Is your car outside?" Uh Oh, I'm in trouble because I have driven up here without a licence, and he'll want to take me for a test drive.

The next thing he asked me was, "Can I take the car for a drive?" I was left standing for the next 15 to 20 minutes. On his return he walked in up

the stone steps and around the counter and filled in the paperwork. No words were exchanged.

Once the paper work was filled in, I had to sign on the dotted line, when he basically said to me “You’ve got your licence”. No test, no theory, nothing, just a joy ride!”

Paul got his licence, and off he drove.

Where did all this happen? Narrowmine, NSW, only one sealed road leading from the golf course, through town and out to Dubbo. 1960 – seems like not so long ago.

Daphne Lera



Swimming with bunyips

Sixty years ago we lived on a farm; we all were poor but we didn’t know that. We had fun roaming the paddocks and hills and enjoying the sun. My brother and I saw lots of snakes, dingoes, roos, foxes and birds. We fished in the creek for fish, turtles and eels that we pulled to the shore.

One boiling hot day near the creek we stripped off and went into the water for some relief. The water was cool. In that lovely pool we paddled about and then said, “What’s this?” A strange creature swimming with us! We tore out of the water fit to bust. We both agreed it was a Bunyip.

Bunyips we had read about in the school magazine but it was something we had never seen. We rushed

home to dad to tell him our news. He laughed a lot and said, “There’s no such thing as a Bunyip. What you saw was a platypus.”

Brother Barney and I still think it was great that we swam with a Bunyip in our farm pool.

*Gloria Sonter
Hastings OWN*

BUNYIP FACT OR FANTASY?

A Bunyip is a legendary spirit or creature. Bunyips haunt rivers, swamps, creeks and billabongs and are renowned for their terrifying bellowing cries in the night. Some Indigenous Australians would not approach any water source where a Bunyip might be waiting to devour them.

Many white settlers reported seeing bunyips. It might be difficult for zoologists to find them because people do not all give the same description of the creature. Some say the Bunyip looks like a huge snake with a beard and a mane; others say it looks like a huge furry half-human beast with a long neck and a head like a bird. Most Australians now consider the existence of the Bunyip to be mythical. Some scientists believe the Bunyip was a real animal, the diprotodon, extinct now for some 20,000 years, which terrified the earliest people in Australia.

According to Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) in Stradbroke Dreamtime, the Bunyip is an evil or punishing spirit from the Aboriginal Dreamtime.



Notices

Become an Advocate for your OWN organization

All OWN members are invited to become part of the process for changing attitudes towards older women and actively engaging in issues that affect older women. The successful 3Rs Forum at Parliament House last year was the result of a group of advocates drawn together to present issues that affect all of us – housing, health care, superannuation and pensions.

To achieve change we need you to be involved in the process. If you are interested, and we hope you are, please contact Sonia Lavery or Rita Tratt.

Sonia Lavery (9519 3137),

sonialavery@optusnet.com.au

Rita Tratt (9692 0513) ritatratt@yahoo.com.au

We look forward to hearing from you.

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Sydney OWN 2013

We would like members to be part of a group attending various events this year. If you have ideas about which events, let us know. Some dates may need to be negotiated.

February

Margaret Olley exhibition.

February 28 NSW Quarterly Meeting at Abraham Mott Hall

March

March 8 International Women's Day forum
Griffin Theatre Dreams in White.

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OWN NSW

1st Quarterly Meeting

hosted by OWN Sydney

Thursday 28 February
10.30am - 1.30pm

Mott Hall
Argyle St, Millers Point.
Lunch will be provided

RSVP
by 21 February for catering
Ph 9247 7046
or Email Coordinator at:
info@ownnsw.org.au

IWD forum

Sydney OWN Forum, International Women's Day will be held on March 8, 10am to 12.00am at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney. Free, no booking needed, bring a friend.

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Positions Vacant

If you like working with words, or illustrating words, please consider joining the Editorial Team of OWN Matters.

We need volunteers with:

- Basic word-processing computer skills
- Proof-reading skills to work on the second and third Wednesday of each month,
- Drawing skills to illustrate articles and stories on the third Wednesday each month

If you want real job satisfaction and would like to work in a friendly and supportive team, then these jobs are for you! (Pedants and other obsessives welcome to apply!)

Contact Lorraine Inglis - louinglis@gmail.com

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

Send by email or mail marked: Attention – Editorial Team. The email address is: newsletter@ownnsw.org.au. Please include your contact details. Contributions must be received by the third Tuesday of each month.



MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WELCOME TO ATTEND ALL OUR ACTIVITIES

Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am–12.30pm every WED. Resumes JAN 23. 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 FEB 12. 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 FEB 12 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (Come at 12 with a sandwich for lunch.)
MON MARCH 11 - 12.30pm at 87 Lower Fort St. *Oranges are not the only fruit* by Jeanette Winterson. (Come at 12 with a sandwich for lunch.)

Aboriginal Support Circle

The first meeting for 2013 is February 12. Confirm details for 2013 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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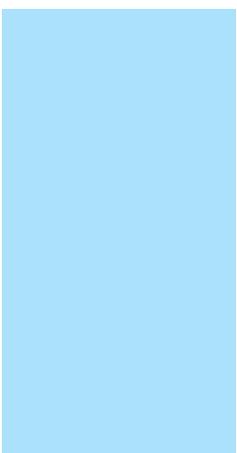
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