

Gleanings



Regional News

Wellington reports a well-attended meeting of over sixty women. The meeting arose from concern expressed by NCG that if the vacancies of two National Convenors could not be filled, the APW would be closed. An earlier arrangement of a visit from Mary McIntyre (UN Committee Convenor) was welcome so the meeting covered both issues.

Mary gave a very informative and passionate report of her attendance at United Nations in New York. Following discussion of the issues raised by Mary, the meeting, with Mary's facilitation, moved to consideration of the continuing existence of APW.

We focused upon the following question:

'Is there a danger as we age and recognize our lowering levels of energy, that we can lose the big picture of the importance of APW in both national and international scenes?'

In small groups, women considered the role of APW within PCANZ; wondered if there are new ways the responsibilities implicit in APW's aim can be realized in local APW's; thought of what they most valued in APW; and whether such assets depend on national organization and pondered the need to take some new directions. Group discussions were unanimous that APW should not close, and if it is to continue,

we need to have a vision; to aim for that vision and to work towards it as a group with leadership encompassing that vision. It was moved that Nan Burgess accept nomination for the position of Convenor of NCG. The motion was agreed.

Shirley Fraser & Hazel O'Brien



News from NCG

\$1,500.00 has been sent to Christian World Service from the Emergency Aid Fund for the Solomon Islands.

Mission: Included in the first Global Mission Gazette for 2007 is Kirsten Bevin's first report of her experiences teaching music in Onesua Presbyterian College in Vanuatu. Kirsten writes: "The students are a treat. Music is already a huge part of life in Vanuatu so the students are keen to learn and are very talented ... Irresistible is the only word to describe the young children I am leading in a choir for 5-11 year olds. Their enthusiasm and smiles are infectious ... I pray for understanding and guidance as I continue to learn how to live and teach here. I am blessed to have this opportunity and I look forward to the rest of the year".

The Gazette features reports of well-established mission work and new initiatives. Copies are available from Global Mission Office, 1/22 Station Rd., Otahuhu. Auckland 1062.

Or email

globalmanager@xtra.co.nz

I would encourage as many as possible to use the mission boxes – GLOBAL CENTS MAKES GLOBAL SENSE which are available from the office. It is a great way of working together in giving the proceeds to one of the many groups the GMO is promoting in many area of the world. Our individual gifts, when gathered together, can indeed make a real difference.

Alison Linscott

Bridgebuilders

Preparations for the 10th Anniversary Celebrations at the Retreat Centre, 50 Hillsborough Rd., Mt. Roskill are well under way for what looks like being a happy, interesting and challenging time. Cost to live-in from 11 May at 7.00 p.m. to 13 May at 2.30 p.m. is \$165 plus \$20.00 registration fee, which includes all meals. Attendance for Saturday only is the registration fee plus meal costs. If you are interested in attending please phone: Rose Taetule 09 2067945 or Lynne Milne 09 2676744. We hope we will meet you there.

Lynne Milne

Greetings to all readers, and please keep the news flowing of your activities

Nan Burgess

United Nations: The 51st Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was held in New York 26 February – 9 March 2007. The focus issue was ‘The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child’.

My experience of attending the CSW session was exciting and challenging, stimulating and demanding, invigorating and exhausting. I consider it a privilege to have been part of such a large group of people with a common cause of empowering women and girls through the elimination of discrimination and violence. I found it humbling

and powerful to hear and learn the experiences of women and men as they follow the path towards gender equality in their own countries and communities.

The main theme of the parallel events I attended was the involvement of men and boys in gender equality and the following comments highlight much of what I heard:

- men and boys need to be involved in the work of gender equality both for the sake of women and men
- understanding what it is to be manly and to be a man is a relearning process for many men

- men who are aware and sympathetic towards the gender equality issue are a positive force to influence both men and women

Thank you to APW for the opportunity to attend the CSW session, and I look forward to sharing more of the experience in the months ahead. I would encourage the use of the CSW website where so much information about the work of CSW is available, including the Agreed Conclusions from the 51st Session. www.un.org.womenwatch/daw/csw

Mary McIntyre

NCW - Women Influencing Policy

APW has been a member of the National Council of Women since 1965, and all Presbyterians can send a delegate to their local NCW Branch. This is an opportunity to influence or share knowledge on a wide range of topics. NCW is then able to bring together the views of a great number of women on various matters of national importance and to communicate these views to governments, commissions and official bodies. The on-going monitoring on these continues at every opportunity.

The Circular has been the NCW newsletter for nearly fifty years. Every Circular contains Action Items – these are matters on which the NCW Executive needs urgent feedback, so a submission or letter can be prepared. This year Action Items have included: Home Equity, Conversion Schemes, Standards of Literacy and Numeracy Amendment Bill, and the Establishment of Universities or Technology Amendment Bill. We are asking our delegates to NCW Branches around the country as much as they can. APW members can make their voice heard through NCW.

Lois Robertson

Thoughts for an Easter People to take beyond Easter into the rest of the year

Reader: Hear again these well-known verses from John 20:1-7

Narrator: The linen cloths were all that were found in the empty tomb. Did you know that in Jesus’ day, it was normal practice for a carpenter to place a folded cloth on his work to show it was completed? Here is a powerful symbol that the Carpenter of Galilee has completed his work.

Reader: We read on, John 20:8-11a

Narrator: Mary sees that the body of Jesus has gone. His life is ended. Her pain is great and she weeps.

Reader: We read verses 11b-12

Narrator: While Mary weeps, she stoops to look into the tomb. When something ends, maybe it is time to stoop and look back ... Like Mary we may get a glimpse of a transformation. Mary saw two angels and was drawn back into the story.

The Carpenter of Galilee has completed his life on earth, but God is about to do a new thing.

Reader: We read verses 13-15

Narrator: Mary didn’t recognize Jesus, but through her tears she responds and she listens

Reader: We read verse 16.

Narrator: It was when she heard her name that Mary turned. Her response was swift. She recognized and acknowledged her Lord. Her darkness was lifted. Her faith awakened. She became the first missionary.

We too need to listen. We, too, need to stay in the story so that we are alert to God’s call. Here in the Easter story, we are shown ways to look forward with hope.

Natalie Watkin

PLEASE NOTE

**National Meeting of APW
19 May 2007**

**St. Christopher’s, Seatoun,
Wellington**

9.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

Full details in last month’s letter from
Natalie & Mary

*Natalie and Mary share with you
all our expectations that a new
thing is about to happen in the
APW*