



News from NCG

Heather sends warmest greetings and thanks for your support. "I am very glad to take up the position of National Convener, but a little overwhelmed. As the P & A group meet together and the NCG meet in October, we seek your prayers for direction.

Marjorie writes: "Thank you for placing your confidence in me to be your Deputy Convener. My vision for APW is to consolidate our valued membership, harnessing their wisdom to promote the APW ministry to all women of the church. We will be people friendly to all Presbyterian members. I would like to see an APW input to sPanz. I will work to seed programmes suitable for women's growth, especially in the realm of parenthood. My prayer is that the ministry of APW will continue to inspire our mission initiatives. The Holy Spirit is our prime resource and may we recognize its promptings and respond in a God-like manner. Blessings.
Marjorie Empsom

Notes from the Treasurer:

Diane Croft ... Please use Commemorative stamps whenever possible. Funds are added to Mission Birthday Gifts for distribution (see Annual Report for details)

Totals to date: Stamps \$1007; Special Project \$5716; Mission Birthday \$4582; Turakina \$1732.

Reminder

Please send your group's evaluation of Gleanings as soon as possible. Our next issue will be two A4 pages so if you have an article please send it along.

United Nations Committee: We met in Christchurch in May to discuss the Commission on the Status of Women Report following the session in New York earlier in the year, and to set out the UN Committee programme for the coming year.

The main outcome was that contact would be made with the Ministry of Social Development to investigate how APW can best input to the Taskforce for Action on Violence within families. This follows on from the CSW session which focused on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

The Campaign to Change Attitudes and Behaviour to Prevent Family Violence is a project under the Taskforce and this is to be the area of main focus. Already there are several streams of work underway in this campaign under the strands of community action, communication and research.

Once this initiative is underway, the APW UN Committee undertakes to distribute information to all APW groups, parishes and inter-denominational groups in New Zealand.

Mary McIntyre

"Just how BIG is our God?"

On my fridge I have this quote which not only inspires me, but empowers me.

'Instead of telling God the size of your storm, tell the storm the size of your God'

For me these words say that my loving God will give me peace and hope and provide all the strength, wisdom and grace to ride out the 'storm'. For times of personal reassurance of my faith and to offer praise, I often look through Leslie Brandt's book, *Psalms Now*. You may wish to reflect on some excerpts from Psalm 18:

How great and all-powerful is my God! The quaking of the earth, the shaking of the mountains, the blackness of the night, the beauty of the heavens, the lightning that criss-crosses the skies, the oceans that lash against the shores, this and much more bears witness to the majesty of my God. And this is the God who is concerned about me ..

He surrounds me with his strength and clothes me with His grace ... He entrusts me with human abilities and enables me to carry them out. He ordains me as His child and servant destined to accomplish His purposes among the peoples of this world. Thus I celebrate God's presence in my life and world

Blessings, Heather Tate

Do you find it difficult to get Office Bearers?

Hawke's Bay Presbyterial has the following pattern and it is working for us. We have a parish responsible for a calendar year. The parish provides a President and Minute Secretary. The parish is also responsible for providing a speaker or entertainment for each meeting. The President and Secretary do not need to be the same person for each meeting. We have an elected Treasurer, Correspondence Secretary and Information Officer. We feel this structure provides the opportunity for more people to be involved and has brought an increase in numbers at our meetings. If you would like more details please contact Dot McLeod, dotmcleod@paradise.net.nz Ph. 06 8441211

Regional News

Greetings from Ohai Ladies Fellowship

Our July meeting was lunch at Taylor's Tavern, our local hotel. We were served a scrumptious three course lunch. We invited our husbands, as well as three other women connected to the church. After lunch we held our meeting whilst the men had a chat session round the fire in the bar, and then joined us for afternoon tea. All who attended enjoyed a day of fellowship and the hospitality of the hosts.

Betty Mouat

Hawke's Bay Presbyterian ...

Recent meetings have focused on this year's project. A Field Officer from the local Stroke Foundation spoke on the causes of strokes and the help available. This was followed by a talk from a 'stroke victim' who shared with us the ups and downs of everyday life following a stroke. St. Frances, Clive, a co-operating parish was the venue for our most recent meeting, and we were thrilled to have 42 folk attend. Our guest speaker was a retired surgeon from Napier who was part of a medical team assigned to the armed forces in East Timor. Although they were there to cater for injuries sustained by the 'forces', they had in fact only one minor casualty – burns from an exploded gas bottle. So they found time to help the local folk and had an opportunity to be taken to the mountain villages for a day where medical help was given. Some of these casualties were horrific. To hear of the work done by the 'forces' and medical staff was indeed informative – a real eye opener.

Dot McLeod

Regional News continued

St. David's, Palmerston North APW Night Owls resourced the APW Mission material for an activity. Each word of the 'Effects of a Stroke' and 'Prevention of a Stroke' transcript was cut up individually. The transcript was read to the members who were divided into two groups and asked to put the puzzles together. This hands-on team building activity was greatly enjoyed. Later eight members led the Sunday worship reading Elisabeth Elliffe's poem, compiling the prayers and sermon. Other members shared in the liturgy, and at the conclusion of the service an enlarged map of East Timor was placed in front of the Communion Table. The congregation were then invited to make donations – over \$500 was contributed.

Marjory Empsom

Bridgebuilders 10th Anniversary Celebrations 2007

was a time of happy fellowship. Bible studies challenged the gathering to plant new seeds of endeavour and to take up more responsibilities. Information from visiting refugee and migrant family speakers 'opened our eyes and hearts to the difficulties experienced by people of other cultures trying to settle in NZ. The lack of simple neighbourliness in our cities had been a shock to many new arrivals'.

Speakers and videos focused attention on issues of physical and psychological violence. Also the NZ Peace Foundation's educational programme called *Roots of Empathy* which is currently being trialled in some Auckland Schools, was presented.

Bridgebuilders Trust's future emphases will be *Keeping children safe from all violence; Strengthening family group; Sharing and building Christian faith; Supporting migrants and refugees; Enlarging our international relationships; Nurturing our environment.*

Lynne Milne

Some thoughts to share:

We have now experienced the new APW structure so how do we take off and fly?

- We must be led by the Spirit of God. What does God want of NZ Presbyterian women for the 21st century? Perhaps our first challenge is to reclaim the voice of all Presbyterian women, diverse as that might be.
- Let us explore how we can make our aims and activities relevant and communicated easily and appropriately across the generations. What do we have in common with those women born after the 1960's who are not part of APW? Much! They too love God and choose to follow Jesus Christ. These women have had different opportunities to acquire new skills and technologies. We need new strategies to bring them on board.
- Some of the largest congregations are Pacific Island and Korean. How do we include the women of these churches and our own indigenous Maori women?

Can APW take off and fly? With the guidance of God's Spirit, of course we can.

Heather Tate.

Looking for an informative and absorbing read?

Try two novels based in Afghanistan which present human values and corruption set in the troubled political world of this country. They are:

The Kite Runner and

A Thousand Splendid Suns

written by Khaled Hosseini.

