

NEWSLETTER



2/07

June, 2007

AFUW is the voice of graduate women promoting advancement of women worldwide and their equality of opportunity through initiatives in education, friendship and peace.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to All Members

A vast network of women exists 'out there somewhere' that is linked to AFUW through our Awards programmes. It would be an excellent project for someone to research and write a 'where are they now?' story.

For example, an email arrived in my box with the subject 'a very belated thank you' from Dr Kerrie Bigsworth, Director, Office for Women, Premier's Department. Kerrie wrote: *I was an extremely lucky and grateful recipient of an AFUW NSW scholarship in 1976. It paid for my first 6 months of study towards a PhD at Cambridge Uni.... But 27 years later I think it is ABOUT TIME that I said a proper thank you.*

It turns out AFUW-VIC sponsored Kerrie, not NSW, but the gratitude towards our Federation is alive and well. She signed off with: *Many thanks for being there and continuing to support women in education.*

As I carry out my duties and present awards to women, gratitude from the recipients is such that I do believe it has a positive impact on their lives. What we do is worthwhile and we need to do all we can to grow this facet of our organisation.

Our membership is ageing so a concerted effort is required to increase our numbers. My thought is even though many professional women are very busy and unable to play an active role by attending meetings and functions or holding office, they can make a valuable contribution through their annual subscription and support women worldwide.

Awards It is the popular time for graduation ceremonies and we have had the pleasure of presenting awards to women at University of Sydney, University of NSW, Macquarie University and the University of Wollongong.

Tempe Mann Another worthy recipient, Dr Negin Amanat, was chosen by the Education Trust and has been presented with her award in a hastily arranged ceremony before she flew out to Ulm in Germany at the end of May to pursue her post-doctoral research. The Trust has also announced the winners of the Jamieson awards which will be presented at an afternoon tea hosted by the City Branch on Thursday, 19th July, at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts. More details of the awardees are presented elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Minister for Women Tricia Blombery, AFUW-NSW representative for the Office for Women Peak Women's Organisation, and I had the pleasure to meet Verity Firth, the new Minister for Women in the State Government. It was a vibrant meeting where Verity asked representatives of the numerous organisations in attendance to share with her three things that are important to their organisation. A summary will be sent to us. I trust her enthusiasm lasts sufficiently to have a positive impact on women's issues in NSW.

Advocacy National President, Jenny Strauss, has written to the Treasurer, Peter Costello, plus other ministers, re an anomaly in the recent tax act which does not recognise masters and doctoral studies as education and therefore does not allow tax deductibility for donations to Scholarship Funds.

Let me know if you would like a copy of Jenny's letter so you can write to your local member requesting action on this matter.

Dr Minna Shaw-Smith A luncheon to acknowledge the great contribution to AFUW-NSW by Dr Minna Shaw-Smith will be held after the Central Committee meeting on Tuesday, 3rd July, on Level 1 of the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts. I hope that many of you will be able to be present to honour her.

IFUW Special Projects Committee It is with pleasure that I advise the nomination of member Michelle Imison for this committee. Michelle already helps the Bina Roy Partners in Development (BRPIDA) Convener, Shirley Randell, by culling the numerous applications for assistance under this programme so is well positioned for the role.

A Marketing Person In view of the dire membership situation, we are currently advertising for a person with primarily marketing skills to fill the clerical role in our office. I'm pleased to advise that Sue Ewin, our current clerical officer, has secured other employment. I'm sure you join with me in expressing our thanks to Sue and our best wishes for her future.

Vale It is with sorrow that I advise the loss of another long time and committed member, Dr Barbara Wright. Barbara was a member of Central West whose members will miss her companionship and valuable input to AFUW. An initial tribute is included in the Branch Reports.

On behalf of the membership, condolences were sent to Dr Jan Milburn, a former president of AFUW-NSW, on the death of her husband, Dr Kelvin Grose. Kelvin, academic, historian and author, was a great support to Jan throughout her several years on the AFUW-NSW Central Committee and was responsible for the historical research concerning Sophia Holland, the mother of Margery Murray.

Congratulations On a brighter note....Member Anne Smith and former member, Dr Isobel Bennett, were recently honoured by The Manly Daily with a Centenary Medal to celebrate its 100 years of publishing. Anne was honoured for her contribution to the Arts for her work with the Manly Art Gallery and Manly Warringah Pittwater Historical Society. Isobel was recognised for her environment work as a marine biologist.

Congratulations also to Central West member, Sally Delaney, who has earned a prestigious 2006 Premier's Teacher award, the TAFE English Literature, Language and Communication Scholarship, to the value of \$10,000. The scholarships enable NSW teachers to undertake study tours, visiting international schools and education centres. Sally is travelling in the United States, visiting distance education centres and the equivalent of TAFE campuses and looking at e-learning techniques, on-line studying and video conferencing.

Membership numbers may be down but we still have much to celebrate!

- Ivy Edwards

BREAKING NEWS MORE TO CELEBRATE!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT, DR JENNIFER STRAUSS AM.

As we go to print we have learnt of Jenny's award in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

The citation in the SM Herald states that it is for her contribution "to the field of education as an academic and scholar in the field of Australian literature and poetry and to a range of organisations involved in women's issues and industrial relations".

**The Australian Federation of University Women – NSW
City Branch**

Thursday 21 June 2007 at 11.15 for 11.30 am

Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, Level 1, 280 Pitt St

Invites you and your friends to a presentation by

Ivy Edwards AFUW-NSW President

Bombed out in Beirut: From Joy to Fear

Ivy will share her experience of a holiday that ended in a war zone when Israel bombed Lebanon. Ivy, her husband Peter and sister Audette's exciting holiday was brought to an abrupt end by the Israeli bombs that destroyed the airport and stranded 1.5 million tourists.

Admission: Free Lunch at Lebanese Restaurant at own expense

RSVP for lunch: Christine Hosking 9599 0186 Email: chosking@netspace.net.au

NATIONAL SECRETARIATS

An important feature of the participation of AFUW in the wider sphere of women's affairs is its involvement with the Secretariats of the Commonwealth Office for Women. Its website states the role of the **Four National Secretariats** is to:

- work collaboratively to provide informed and representative advice to government on policy issues, development and implementation relevant to the diverse views and circumstances of women;
- represent the diverse views of women through consultation with the women's sector, their own constituencies and other groups and organisations relevant to women's concerns;
- act as a conduit for the exchange information between government and the women's sector;
- undertake specific policy analysis on individual areas of organisational expertise and concern; and
- undertake and maintain effective governance structures to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of secretariats.

Security4Women Lifelong economic well-being and financial security for women is central to the achievement of equity for women. It aims to help raise community and government awareness about factors that affect women.

The WomenSpeak Network Its identified priorities are human rights; the involvement of young women and ensuring a youth voice in policy work and participation in policy issues as they arise. WomenSpeak recognises that its current participants do not reflect the full diversity of women in Australia and are actively seeking to strengthen the voice of Indigenous women, women with disabilities and women from culturally and linguistically diverse groups both within the network and the women's sector.

Australian Women's Coalition The National Council of Women of Australia instigated the formation of the Australian Women's Coalition by drawing together women's organisations which will work cooperatively together to establish priorities for women and to increase communication between Government and the women of Australia.

National Rural Women's Coalition The National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC) is a collaborative national voice for women living in rural, regional and remote Australia. Established in 2002, it seeks to ensure better social and economic outcomes for women in our rural townships and on farms.

Security4Women and WomenSpeak are the two secretariats in which AFUW participates. In order that you may be more aware of our role in these, the Newsletter will highlight their work, commencing with WomenSpeak. The following is based on a document which President, Dr Jenny Strauss, prepared for the AFUW National Council meeting in March.

WomenSpeak currently has 34 member organisations, mostly national, except that state organisations that identify with Womenspeak priorities can belong in the absence of a national body. Like the other Secretariats, Womenspeak undertakes projects and prepares regular consultative reports as approved by the Office for Women, and prepares input nationally for the government budget and internationally for Australia's contribution to UN CSW meetings and reports to the UN on progress with CEDAW. It also:

- offers small internal project grants, awarded after all members have had an opportunity to rank applications. An example is the grant to the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement in South Australia for a project to bring together young Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women to formulate policies for action in Indigenous communities.
- operates as an information network both nationally and locally
- offers opportunities to co-ordinate advocacy between interested members. WomenSpeak itself does not sign on to such advocacy, and signing on is not obligatory for all members, who are expected to act according to existing policy or through consultation with their membership.

An example of the above was the Women with Disabilities Australia appeal to join in a call for total prohibition of the sterilization of children in response to proposed legislation that would admit this in some circumstances. In the absence of AFUW policy, we consulted and decided not to join the action. We did, however, follow up a message from IFUW asking NFAs to urge their governments to sign the new UN Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of People with Disabilities.

Consultation on Key Issues Reports For the current round of these quarterly reports Womenspeak had nominated the topics of health, childcare, work/life balance and leadership. The latter was proposed for the May report when the secretariat project workers met with the Office for Women in November 2006. The Co-ordinator, Kathy Richards, reported after that meeting that the Office for Women is intent on 'providing reports which fit the Minister's stated priorities rather than taking on contributions from the secretariats on what we would like to report on'. She reported that Senator Bishop, as Minister, gave priority to Education, Leadership, Preventative Health, Safety, Financial Literacy and Employment. Womenspeak has been asked to report on the **Impact and Benefits of Women's Organisations on local and national communities. Lessons to be learned by sharing experiences, particularly related to cross-cultural exchanges.**

Feedback expressed concern about lack of clarity about possible outcomes of such a consultation, whether consultations were meant to be with member organisations or the broader community, and whether they were providing any benefit to member organisations. A plan was devised to try to meet these concerns, including consultation with focus groups and in-depth interviews with women leaders in the community sector rather than in business or the government sector, identifying the desired outcomes as a snapshot of positive outcomes of women's organisations, achievements and community impacts, successful models of grassroots organisations and sharing of learning between Indigenous, multicultural and other secretariat organisations.

AFUW – NSW AWARDS

DR NEGIN AMANAT was the recipient of the **TEMPE MANN AWARD** this year and the Education Trust members were extremely impressed by her qualifications. Originally gaining her degree in Mechanical Engineering, Negin switched to Biomedical Engineering as much more interesting and this area became the subject of her doctoral studies. Her current research is focused on understanding the medical consequences of pharmacological intervention, mainly anti-osteoporosis medication, in fracture repair in children and adults. Her referees readily acknowledge that she has already developed innovative techniques in this area and some of the key investigations which she has led have received international recognition.



Negin, which means precious stone in Persian, applied for the Tempe Mann in order to work at the University of Ulm in Germany for 3 months on computational biomechanics of fracture healing, an area for which they are renowned.

She spent some of her childhood in Germany and is therefore not unfamiliar with the language.

Negin has many publications and conference articles to her credit and the Trustees were also impressed at the clear and concise presentation of her research that she was able to give before leaving for Ulm. She has a warm and engaging personality and the Trustees were delighted to give the award to someone whose research promises to be of such tremendous benefit.

Negin Amanat receiving her award from President, Ivy Edwards

JAMIESON AWARDS

Five awards have been made. They will be presented on Thursday, 19th July.

Amanda Lauren

Bachelor of Exercise Science (Hons 1) and University Medal at Australian Catholic University in 2006.

In addition Amanda was awarded her Faculty Medal and received an award from Zonta North Sydney. She is involved with many extra curricular University activities assisting and training students and researchers.

In addition to working in the community, notably with the YMCA developing and planning their end of year gymnastics displays and fundraising activities, she also does voluntary work in a retirement village.

Catherine Alston

Bachelor of Applied Science (Physiotherapy) Sydney University

Catherine has been awarded a Senate Scholarship and Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship. She has a Sydney University "Blue" in Hockey.

Her extra Curricular activities include participating in Sydney University hockey Metro 1, S.U. Eastern University Games (Hockey) Australian University Games 2004. She was a participant in Australian University Games "Green & Gold Australian Team" 2004. Community activities include coaching hockey Sancta Sophia College 2006 and NSW hockey rep (under16-under 21 level) 2006.

Isabelle Sophie Kremer

Bachelor of Arts (Advanced) Sydney University

Scholarships include University Academic scholarship 2005, French scholarship 2004, St. Andrews College Scholarships 2003-4, International Politics Prize 2005, Dean's meritorious list 2004. She was President of the Sydney University Languages Society 2003-4, Marketing Executive United Nations Society, 2006 and represented her University at three Asia-Pacific model United Nations conferences 2003-5.

Community activities include working as a volunteer at the Australian Institute for International Affairs, a development project in Ecuador 2005, English teacher in Guatemala 2004, volunteering at different times with Unifem Australia, the Salvation Army, Amnesty International, as well as Guides Australia for many years, in addition to her fundraising activities for various charities.

JAMIESON AWARDEES

Lidia Matesic

Bachelor of Medicinal Chemistry (Honours 1) University of Wollongong

Lidia is the recipient of a University Postgraduate Award from the Science Faculty and is an active member of the UOW Chemistry Society. During her undergraduate years she tutored high school maths.

Elizabeth O'Donoghue

Elizabeth graduated as Bachelor Visual Arts and Design at the Australian Catholic University and has received the "Acquisition Award" from ACU. As a mature age student Elizabeth has many duties and responsibilities concerning her children and other family members but finds time to do volunteer work at local schools as well as assisting with Art exhibitions and functions at the ACU gallery, including helping with their fund-raising.

At its March meeting the City Branch members decided to make contact with the co-ordinators of the Tertiary Preparation Course (TPC) at Ultimo TAFE and Bankstown TAFE with a view to presenting \$500 each to a selected student who had successfully completed the course in 2006 and proceeded to university in 2007.

Fereshteh Eslamizadeh is the young woman who received the City Branch award at Bankstown TAFE.

She has written the following letter to the Branch:



My name is Fereshteh Eslamizadeh and I am originally from Iran and I came to Australia when I was 16. I was asked to write a paragraph about myself describing my current situation. Recently I was awarded with Certificate IV for completing Tertiary studies. For me it was a major accomplishment because prior to that I knew exactly what I am interested at and where I wanted to be in future, but I didn't know how to get there.

Because of so many horrible events in my life I was not able to achieve a reasonable mark at the end of year 12 to get into university.

I was disappointed and became unmotivated, but at back of my mind I always searched for a way to fulfill my dream of becoming a university student and to study my dream subject, Psychology. In the midst of confusion and frustration I decided to study at TAFE hoping this would lead me in the right direction to my goals and target. I tried very hard not only to my best of abilities but beyond. I knew if I miss this opportunity the next one may never come along. In 2006 I completed the course but I had to wait for a letter from a

university to see if I had been accepted.

The day came and for me that was the judgment day because I would find out if my hard works were good enough. And yes they were, because I was accepted into Macquarie University to study Bachelor of Psychology and Bachelor of Health.

For me, it meant more than words can explain, because I proved to myself that when there is will there is a way. Sometimes life seems difficult and goals seem so out of reach but with persistence nothing is impossible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank AFUW-NSW for their generosity in giving me an amount of \$500. Your kindness is much appreciated.

Best Regards

Fereshteh Eslamizadeh

THE BITTER AND THE SWEET

In her President's Message Ivy commented on the fact that Peace Convenor in AFUW-NSW, Michelle Imison, works with Dr Shirley Randell with the IFUW Program BRPIDA. Shirley who has been Convenor, IFUW Projects Development Committee, 2004-7, works predominantly in international development assistance in the Pacific, Asia and Africa. She is now working in Rwanda where she is currently Senior Advisor, Governance and Gender, SNV Rwanda, East and Southern African Region. She describes her work as supporting local capacity builders in production, income and employment for the poor, government processes of basic service delivery and engendering the Economic Development Poverty Reduction Strategy for the country. She helped establish and is Secretary General of the Rwanda Association of University Women. She has been nominated by the Uganda Association of University Women for the position of Vice President on the IFUW Board of Officers at the coming elections.

Shirley, whose initial academic background and IFUW affiliation was in Australia, is well-known to a great many AFUW Inc member and we have used material in the Newsletter from her earlier reports. Members who attended the Melbourne Triennial Conference will have met Shirley through her involvement with the Pacific Graduate Women's Network. She was Projects Convener, Vanuatu Association of University Women in 2000-2003 while she was involved in a number of consultancy projects in Vanuatu, especially in her main field of work, Public Sector Reform. In 2004-5 she was in Bangladesh as a Program Implementation Specialist for UNDP and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, promoting gender responsive governance, and developing a Gender Training Manual for senior public servants.

Shirley's most recent letter came this week while she is currently on leave in Australia. An intensely "family person" Shirley's writings are an intriguing amalgam of the personal and the public, and in her Rwanda phase, a bizarre mixture of the delightful, as she writes of a visit of members of her family, to the horrific, as she writes of the horrors of genocide in that country. In April last year she wrote of her first experiences in Rwanda:

Eunice, introduced by a mutual friend from Bangladesh, who is still looking for work here and has some spare time, came to help me unpack. She has slept over for three nights and I have appreciated her company as we assembled bookshelves, put up pictures and sorted out photos. In addition to the goods in the container, I have been buying second hand furniture so the house is equipped with enough beds for the eight adults I am expecting in December/ January. Eight grandchildren will have to manage on floor mats. It will be exciting for the family to all be together for Christmas and the New Year again. We will track gorillas and visit the national parks here and in Uganda as well as enjoy being together as a family.

Eunice is a returned Rwandan refugee, brought up in Kenya, married to a UN diplomat with three children in Senegal, who is wanting to bring back her children for their final years of schooling rather than going on to the next appointment which could be in New York. At the end of a long day unpacking we had our first meal in the house, cooked by a PhD student from UK, Georgina, who will stay with me over the next three weeks. She is doing a very interesting study of TV and film portrayal of women in the Rwanda genocide – both before and after the terrible events that began on 7 April 1994 and lasted for 100 days when nearly one million people were killed.

Twelve years later the Rwandan community and friends across the world are remembering the victims. Friday was a public remembrance day and the beginning of a week of special ceremonies. Every year between April and June commemorations take place worldwide to pay respect to the millions of people who were affected by the massacres. The Rwandan genocide has shamed the world's powerful nations: *"The international community clearly had the capacity to prevent these events. But it lacked the will. Such crimes cannot be reversed. Such failures cannot be repaired."* The focus of *"Never forget"* underlines the importance of learning through a collective reflection, an opportunity to show support to ensure that such atrocities never happen again, anywhere. The American Club put on the film *"Shooting Dogs"* – like *"Hotel Rwanda"*, a controversial movie - but a must-see for people with an interest in the country and wanting to understand the depravity of which we seem to be capable as humans.

It was fascinating for me to be able to see other relevant Rwandan movies and some of the latest films from African directors during the recent Rwanda Film Festival. Another most profound experience in my first weeks here was visiting the genocide museum in Kigali where thousands are buried. I attended the remembrance ceremony for children at the genocide memorial on Saturday but became too upset to stay and left early. Tragic stories of whole families disappearing, photos of young children who were clubbed or slashed to death with machetes and people wailing and collapsing in trauma throughout the evening were impossible for me to sit through.

The accounts of what happened are horrifying. People do not talk about it much and I have been warned not to ask questions about who is Hutu and who is Tutsi, but I am given occasional glimpses by my colleagues who have the most painful stories. ... I get other occasional glimpses of what the genocide has meant to people and the effect it has had on the country's development. For example, I am currently working with women graduates to establish an association of university women. A Belgium diplomat told me that less than 0.5 percent of women are graduates compared with an average of over 4 percent in other sub-Saharan African countries. Hundreds of women graduates were raped and killed during the genocide.

The job is fascinating as I make contacts with people working on gender issues at national level. The recent local government elections saw women gain again in decision making – already 48.8 percent of national parliamentarians with now about 40 percent women councilors at district and local levels. The role of Rwandan women in decision making has not as yet translated into reducing maternal and infant mortality or lifting the majority out of poverty but we have a key opportunity to influence that as we work on the Economic Development Poverty Reduction Strategy over the next few weeks. ... African women are amazing, and I am meeting great ones – physically statuesque as well as mental giants – including the heads of the National Council of Women, Rwandan Women Leaders Caucus, Forum for Women Parliamentarians, Forum for African Women Educationalists and Rwandan Women's Community Development Network with whom we will closely work in capacity building over the next two years.

Later in 2006 she wrote: The genocide is not yet history and many of the architects and executors are still at large. Rwanda is the only country in the world that is attempting to bring about national reconciliation between the perpetrators and the victims of genocide - people living side by side who 12 years ago were killing each other. The scars of genocide are still real, so this process is quite remarkable. It is daunting to bring 80,000 individuals to justice and is taking a long time. The judicial infrastructure was destroyed in 1994 when most of the nation's judges and legal staff were killed or fled. Since last year grassroots courts known as Gacaca began hearings of genocide perpetrators. According to the UN refugee agency up to 20,000 of them, many from the Hutu ethnic group, have fled, citing persecution by Gacaca tribunals that were established to cut the backlog of cases handled by conventional courts. The Burundian government has turned down 95 percent of applications from these Rwandan asylum seekers.

A joint report of UNDP and the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States has categorized this unique Rwanda community-based justice system as among "just two of the pioneering democratic governance initiatives". The Gacaca court system, an innovative alternative to the delays of the formal justice structures, emphasizes public involvement in rendering justice to the accused. It provides a forum for witnesses, survivors and assumed perpetrators to debate about what happened during the genocide. The goal is to establish the truth and identify the victims and the guilty. The UN report also singles out roving judges in the Maldives as another indicator that the most vulnerable countries are leading the world in democratic innovation.

Rwanda is also making a great contribution towards domestic reconciliation and peace in the troubled Great Lakes region and in Darfur, Sudan. Over 2000 Rwandese troops are in the African Union Mission in Darfur. Another unique community initiative in Rwanda is the Umuganda day, the last Saturday of each month, when the people take part in activities aimed at benefiting the community, bringing in the harvest, helping the sick and older people, planting trees, collecting rubbish and tidying the streets. After Bangladesh I find Rwanda extraordinarily clean.

At weekends I continue to fit in some sight seeing in this beautiful country. I visited the Volcanoes National Park for the 2006 naming of 12 new baby gorillas - a marvellous program of traditional dancing in fantastic scenery. The UK and US ambassadors gave the names Big Ben and Liberty to two gorillas. The President of the Senate and the First Lady named two babies Urumuli (light) and Agaseke (decorated basket). The beautiful peace baskets of Rwanda, most of them made by genocide widows, opened a global market for women artisans. For this, Federated Department Stores, parent company of Macy's, a key US partner of the Rwanda Path to Peace project, received UNIFEM's first Global Championship Award.

March 2007: Rwanda was on the world stage last week when it hosted the International Women Parliamentarians Conference for 400 participants with world class speakers. I did my best to attract women from the Pacific – Dame Carol Kidu had to apologise when Parliament was called in PNG, and a breakdown in travel arrangements prevented Minister Isabelle Donald from Vanuatu attending, but Minister Ngamau from the Cook Islands made the long journey to represent her region. President Ellen Sirleaf from Liberia joined President Kagame in speaking inspirationally at opening and closing ceremonies, and Cherie Blair gave an excellent speech on women and violence. Two weeks before the conference I was asked by the parliamentarians to write a 50-page overview on Rwanda's progress towards a gender equitable society – a huge, time-consuming challenge, but very satisfying and the publication was well received. The only continent not represented at the conference was South America – unfortunate given the progress women politicians are making there.

June 2007: Rwanda is planning to limit the number of children to be born in each family to three, which could make it the first country in Africa to restrict the number of births as a measure for economic growth. A 2002 census estimated Rwanda's population at 8.2 million people, most of whom are subsistence farmers, and it was expected to reach 9.3 million by 2007. At current fertility rates of 6 children per woman, Rwanda's population will double by 2030. Since the genocide, this tiny central African state's population has seen a very sharp rise, growing at an average of 3.3 percent per year. It is the most densely populated country on the African continent at 343 people per square kilometre. AIDS epidemic: Declines in infection rates are being observed in some countries such as Rwanda, as well as positive trends in young people's sexual behaviours. In Rwanda the HIV prevalence rate is 4 percent in rural areas and 11 percent in urban. Three percent of Rwandans aged between 19 and 49 are HIV infected. The biological vulnerability of women to HIV infection is made worse by poverty. As in most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Rwandese women continue to be more likely than men to be infected with HIV and also more likely to be the ones caring for people infected with HIV.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES

CITY Members were saddened to learn of the death early in the year of City Branch member Margaret Maxwell. Margaret was a valued member of City Branch having joined almost as soon as the Branch was inaugurated. Margaret's wisdom, knowledge and support of the Branch in its infancy to the time of her death was valued and much appreciated.

The first guest speaker for the year was Nikki Deery who completed her degree of B. Applied Chemistry in Forensic Science at UTS. Now working as a customer service engineer, Nikki develops analytical equipment for pharmacists, chemistry laboratories, agriculture and forensic departments. Nikki spoke of her passion for chemistry, outlined her path to university, her work experiences and the additional training involved in her transition from scientist to engineer.

Vaucluse House was the venue for the March meeting at which it was agreed that contact be made with the co-ordinators of the Tertiary Preparation Course (TPC) at Ultimo TAFE and Bankstown TAFE with a view to presenting \$500 each to a selected student who had successfully completed the course in 2006 and proceeded to university in 2007. It was agreed that the HSC Award traditionally awarded by the Inner West Branch be continued for this year, the school chosen being Sydney Girls' High School. Lunch at the tea-house set in the grounds was followed by a tour of this very historical building.

A visit to the Great Synagogue in Sydney was the activity for the April meeting. A sound and light show was presented which outlined the history and traditions of Judaism in Australia. Whilst Jews first arrived in Sydney as convicts on the first Fleet in 1788, it took several decades for a Jewish community to emerge - the first congregation being held in 1817.

During the visit Branch members took the opportunity to view the stained glass windows, the internal architecture and the Ark, which is the focal point. The Synagogue has stood on its present site in Elizabeth St since 1878. After the tour members met for a business lunch at Buena Vista Café on the top floor of the Law Courts Building in the city. We were pleased to have two visitors join us on the day.

Members travelled to La Perouse for the May meeting which included a visit to the La Perouse museum situated in Botany Bay National Park. On this occasion we were delighted to have AFUW member, Carol Quinn from Armidale, and other visitors join us. The museum provided a wonderful account of the landing of the French explorer, Comte de Laperouse, at Botany Bay. The First Fleet of British convicts and settlers had already arrived in Botany Bay in January when they were joined by Jean-Francois de Galaup, Comte de Laperouse, who arrived shortly afterwards.

After the British Fleet had left for Port Jackson Laperouse stayed in Botany Bay for six weeks building an observatory, stockade and garden on La Perouse Peninsula. He then continued on to the Solomon Islands where he and his crew perished. Pictures, maps, letters and diary accounts give a detailed picture of this, a most significant event in the colonial history of Botany Bay.

AFUW – NSW INC

All members are formally advised that the **Annual General Meeting and Luncheon** will take place on

FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER, 2007

Level 1 Sydney Mechanics School of Arts 280 Pitt Street Sydney

**Education Trust AGM 9.30 am; AFUW-NSW AGM 10.30 am
followed by lunch 12.30pm and speaker 2pm**

Speaker: Alison Nicholls from CWA-NSW who will speak to us about problems facing country women and their families due to the prolonged drought.

The event will be hosted by the **River Branch**. **Cost: \$30.00**

Please make a note of the date. Full details and directions with a formal reply slip will accompany the Annual Report posted to you in September.

Nominations for elected positions and **notices of motions** should be in the hands of the Secretary by the appropriate date.

Only financial members will be eligible to vote.

Inquiries: Administrative matters Jane Baker Secretary 9743 0534 jane.baker@optusnet.com.au
Social matters Nada Taylor 9436 2889 nada-taylor@yahoo.com

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES

NORTH SHORE. On 5th March, 2007, we met at the Warrawee Bowling Club for the Autumn luncheon with special guests, Hilary Silbert, W.A.'s president and Queensland's president, Marion Jones. The guest speaker for the day was Mrs. Jo Harris, vice-president of the Kuring-gai Historical Society, specialising in genealogy. Not only was she most knowledgeable and enthusiastic about her subject, but, as well, her CV was extensive, including guiding, scouting, and pottery to mention a few of her passions and for which she holds a number of awards.

The topic for the day was Family History about which she is an expert. Most of those present are presently researching their family history which led to keen and enthusiastic exchanges. After gardening, Family History research is the most popular topic of research. Mrs. Harris advised us to start from the known and work back with old photos and documents being very valuable in the research. Apparently many researchers have difficulty in getting started. All agreed that there is no end to this kind of research as people marry and have children and so on. It was interesting to note that very few of the audience were not interested in knowing from where they came.

It should be remembered that, concerning the old original documents, that many people could not read or write, hence there is a great variation of the spelling of names; as well, bad writing is common, so that all information needs to be verified.

It was suggested that we form a group, share information and get it on to a tree to which information can be added as it becomes available. When photos are copied, it should be done in colour to get the best detail. Keep photos and documents in folders so that they are manageable. Do not transfer the information to the Family Tree until it has been checked, at, for instance, a Family History Centre. One such place can be found at the Old Gordon Public School, Pacific Highway, Gordon.

It was helpful to have so much research material brought to the meeting by the speaker, with special reference to books like 'The Founders of Australia' by Mollie Gillen. The audience was most appreciative of the guidance they were given by Mrs. Harris and pleased to have the opportunity to listen to such a knowledgeable person.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS It has been a beautiful autumn in the Highlands, and the Bowral Country Club has proven to be a popular venue. In March Mr David Cavanaugh, Editor of The Southern Highland News, gave the "other side of the story" regarding court reporting. Criticised for putting the families of those reported on to extreme embarrassment, Mr Cavanaugh gave some interesting anecdotal evidence.

It supported the notion that court reporting aids the justice system by providing one more deterrent to antisocial behaviour. There was a lively question session to follow.

In May we were delighted to welcome Jonquil Temple, a frequent visitor to our branch, and an outstanding actress in theatre of masks and puppets. She convinced us that once behind a mask, the personal identity of the actor is hidden and they are more likely to become absorbed in the character they are playing.

Jonquil had some very dramatic masks and several members of the audience took parts in a mime, and the effect was very diverting. A favourite aspect was a mask that could express two opposing characters, both shy and then belligerent, very convincingly. It was a wonderful night in every way.

We recently received a letter with photographs from our law student in Dili, East Timor. Ina de Rosa has been a top scholar in her year, attended an inter-Asia YWCA conference in Japan, and has even come through a bout of malaria, not to mention the political unrest and electoral passions being played out in the background! She is very worthy of our assistance.

CENTRAL WEST We have been deeply saddened by the death of our dear friend and colleague, Barbara Wright. Barbara had been a member of AFUW since 1966 and was an involved and committed member.

In the Central West when the branch, based in Orange, faced imminent folding, Barbara was central in transferring it to Cowra and leading it on to be the active and vital group that it is today. Barbara has been a long time committee member, including the roles of President and Vice President. We miss her calm and understated authority. An obituary will appear in the next AFUW-NSW Newsletter.

Our first function of the year was held at Cowra Golf Club on 17th March. Our guest speaker, a member, Uma Kumar, had the audience entranced with her presentation. Her husband, Dr Arcot Kumar, also contributed. Their topic was Indian culture, with an emphasis on Indian weddings.

She spoke about the traditions, the clothing and the ceremonies at the same time showing pictures of her son's recent Indian wedding. Traditionally marriages are arranged by the parents but Uma's son met his wife-to-be at Adelaide University. Dr Kumar gave us some real insights into religions of India.

At the dinner our scholarship for the 2006 HSC with the highest UAI was awarded to Rebecca Martin with a UAI of 99.05. An indigenous student, she was dux of Orange High School and is studying Law at Melbourne University. Her mother proudly received the award on her behalf.

Each year the Branch donates two prizes to students at Charles Sturt University. In Orange the award was given to Lauren Williams from Cudal in the Faculty of Rural Management for the "Most Meritorious Student". In Bathurst the prize was awarded to Jacqueline Barr who graduated with first class honours in her Bachelor of Education degree. Jacqui is also the official carer for her blind sister. Dr Sharynne McLeod, who nominated Jacqui, said "she is a person who was outstanding in her academic subjects and professional experience with international publications stemming from her undergraduate work. The AFUW prize will be important in Jacqui's future as a PhD student and potential academic".

RIVER Our main activities continue to be the regular discussion nights for the Book group members and the hugely popular theatre visits of the large Theatre group. Our major luncheons are in Autumn and in Spring and these continue to give us the revenue to support our Scholarships, VGIF and other donations.

In March our luncheon speaker was a local resident Peter Sloane, currently Honorary Consul to Mongolia. As an agricultural economist, he has worked at length in Afghanistan as well as in Mongolia, being involved with United Nations agricultural projects. He outlined for us his experiences with, and knowledge of the various races in Afghanistan and he patiently tried to answer our many questions.

HUNTER Our first two monthly dinner meetings, were both addressed by engineers, but with very different subjects. Both require solid scientific results to facilitate helpful changes in our environments. In February, 22 attended to hear member, Alice Howe, an environmental engineer, speak about her PhD thesis dealing with the link between hydraulics, sediment, vegetation and migratory shorebird life, some of which comes from Siberia.

In March, 27 attended to hear Emeritus Professor Adrian Page talk on "Hot House, Cool House", an account of his research which began in 2002. It has a theoretical and experimental strand including the construction and monitoring of four housing test modules on campus. With the increasing emphasis on green house gas emissions, global warming and energy efficiency, it is necessary to reduce the energy consumption of typical homes, 40% of which is in heating and cooling, by appropriate changes in design and construction materials.

Our April meeting was a fellowship get-together with members from Central Coast Branch. While the weather was less than promising, the event was enjoyable and interesting. The Education Officer from the Lake Macquarie Art Gallery was able to give the group some background to the current exhibition before our members viewed the works.

The exhibition called *Wirrkala, Paintings of the Sea Country* included works from eight different subregions of the Yolngu people. Each region has a particular way to illustrate their stories and our members were able to see the different methods demonstrated in the works on display. This was followed by a superb luncheon with exquisite views across Lake Macquarie.

We have not had news from the principal of the high school in East Timor where we sponsor three girls through years 11 and 12, as to whether the school is again functioning as a school and not as a shelter because of the current troubles.

AFUW Hunter committee and members were saddened to hear our President, Halina Turnbull, has recently lost her mother. We extend sympathy to Halina, Tony and family at this sad time.

CENTRAL COAST In February Jean Heath from the Australian Aid for Cambodia Fund spoke to us. Jean was involved in the selection of the two students whom AFUW-NSW is supporting. She spends a large part of the year at Maharishi Vedic University as a lecturer in the Business Faculty. Her talk was illustrated by scenes from the campus and we feel we have a better insight in to the life of "our" students.

In March we participated in some of the many events on the Central Coast to mark International Women's Day. The second volume of "Significant Women of the Central Coast" was launched in Wyong and two of our members were featured, Sondra Hopkins and Romaine Rutnam.

At our March meeting we remembered Women's History Month and were addressed by two members of the Indigenous Community to celebrate the 40 years of their franchise. Both women had inspiring stories. Omerah Edwards was one of the instigators of the movement to reunite with their families the children taken in infancy. She herself was in the Cootamundra Home and now runs her agency from her home on the Central Coast.

Faye Nelson was until recently the Director of the National Aboriginal and Islander Dance Academy (NAISDA). The Academy moved to the Mt Penang site in September last year and provides tuition and also on-campus accommodation to its first year students. The tuition is in Certificate 11,111 and 1V and Diploma. Two of our members attended the official opening on April 2. We anticipate a continued connection with the Academy through its Friends programme.

In April we combined with Hunter Branch to visit the Lake Macquarie Gallery, thanks to the efforts of their President, Halina's Turnbull. It was a very interesting and absorbing morning followed by an enjoyable lunch at Awaba House restaurant which is part of the campus. (See Hunter Valley report.)

CALENDAR

Members, prospective members and visitors are welcome at all activities.

All details are correct to the Editor's knowledge at the time of printing.

JUNE

- Thursday 14 **CENTRAL WEST** 6.30 for 7.00 pm Cowra Function Centre, Chardonnay Rd Cost: \$35.00
Speaker: John Lowther "Retracing Hannibal's Footsteps" Contact: Anne Holloway 6345 1819
- Thursday 21 **CITY** 10.30am Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney Branch meeting followed at 11.30am by guest speaker, Ivy Edwards, who will speak about her trip to Lebanon in 2006. Booking required for Lunch at Lebanese restaurant. Surry Hills
Contact: Christine Hosking 9599 0186
- Tuesday 26 **CENTRAL COAST** 12 noon at 3/9 Kirrang St, Shelley Beach
Annual General Meeting Cost: \$15.00 Contact: Joan Smith 4333 4020
- Wednesday 27 **HUNTER VALLEY** 6.30 for 7.00 pm Bimet Lodge, Union Street, Newcastle Dinner Meeting
Speaker: Professor Phillip Forman, University of Newcastle *Implementation of special education in schools* Cost: \$30.00 Bookings essential: Contact: Mary Kelly 4929 4019

JULY

- Monday 2 **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS** 6.30 for 7.00 pm Bowral Country Club, Dinner meeting
Speaker: Musician Extraordinaire, Mr Geoff Harvey Contact Sue Nagy 4841 0357
- Tuesday 3 **AFUW-NSW** 1.00 pm Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney
A luncheon to honour Minna Shaw-Smith's contribution to AFUW-NSW **Reply Coupon**
- Wednesday 11 **HUNTER VALLEY** Book Club John Boyne *Boy in Striped Pyjamas* Anne Evans 4943 1724
- Sunday 15 **RIVER** 11.00 am Venue TBA Annual General Meeting
Speaker: A specialist in the Visual Arts field of Indonesian Art Contact: Nada Taylor 9436 2889
- Thursday 19 **CITY** 1.30pm Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney Business meeting followed at 2.30pm by Jamieson Award presentation Speaker: 2006 Tempe Mann awardee, Kate Anderson
Afternoon Tea Cost: \$5.00 Contact: 'Tricia Blombery 9560 8070 **Reply Coupon**
- Wednesday 25 **HUNTER VALLEY** TBA Contact: Kay Bretreger 4958 5886 Mary Kelly 4929 4019

AUGUST

- Monday 6 **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS** 6.00 pm Bowral Country Club, AGM then Dinner meeting
Speaker: Mr Barry Harper, Dean of Education at the University of Wollongong
Contact: Sue Nagy 4841 0357
- Wednesday **HUNTER VALLEY** Book Club Peter Temple *Broken Shore* led by Anne Drinkwater 4957 5740
- Thursday 16 **CITY** 11.00 am Margery Murray Room AGM followed by movie and lunch at Circular Quay.
Contact: Christine Hosking 9599 0186
- Sunday 19 **CENTRAL WEST** 12 noon Venue: TBA Annual General Meeting and Luncheon
Speaker: Ivy Edwards, President of AFUW-NSW Contact: Anne Holloway 6345 1819
- Wednesday 22 **HUNTER VALLEY** TBA Contact: Kay Bretreger 4958 5886 Mary Kelly 4929 4019
- Tuesday 28 **CENTRAL COAST** 11.00 am Gosford Regional Gallery to view the Gosford Art Prize, followed by lunch in the Brasserie Contact: Joan Smith 4333 4020

SEPTEMBER

- Monday 4 **NORTH SHORE** 11.00 am Warrawee Bowling Club Annual General Meeting
Speaker: TBA Contact: Dorothy Betty 9489 1142 Greta Recsei 9487 2061
- SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS** 6.30 for 7.00 pm Bowral Country Club Dinner Meeting
Speaker: Jocelyn Murphy, CEO of the YWCA, Sydney Contact: Sue Nagy 4841 0357
- Wednesday 6 **RIVER** 12.00 midday Greenwich Sailing Club Spring Luncheon Cost: \$35.00
Speaker from the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Contact: Nada Taylor 9436 2889
- Thursday 20 **CITY** 11.00 am at 191 Copeland Rd, Beecroft
"Spring in Beecroft" Business meeting and lunch Contact: Christine Hosking 9599 0186
- Tuesday 25 **CENTRAL COAST** 7.30 pm Meeting Central Coast Leagues Club
Contact: Joan Smith 4333 4020 Speaker: Professor Julie Byles Women's Health, Newcastle Uni
- Wednesday 26 **HUNTER VALLEY** TBA Contact: Kay Bretreger 4958 5886 Mary Kelly 4929 4019

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN - NSW Inc.

Office and Margery Murray Room
Basement Level 280 – 282 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000

ABN 23 098 188 689

Office Hours: Tuesdays / Thursdays 8.30 am - 12.30 pm May be subject to alteration

Postal Address:

Phone/Fax: 02 9283 7878

Website: www.afuw NSW.org.au

P O Box A2231 Sydney South 1235

Email: afuw NSW@netspace.net.au

President	Ms Ivy Edwards	8 Roches Ave, Bayview 2104	9997 5238 ivyedw@optusnet.com.au
Vice Pres 1	Ms Rose Figtree	PO Box 419, Moss Vale 2577	4868 3888 rfigtree@bigpond.net.au
Vice Pres 2	Ms Lyn Thompson	PO Box 38, Woodford 2778	4758 6637 lkthom@bigpond.com
Secretary	Dr Jane Baker	PO Box 345, Concord West 2138	9743 0534 jane.baker@optusnet.com.au
Treasurer	Ms Tricia Blombery	11 Park Road, Marrickville 2204	9560 8070 stuart_tricia@bigpond.com.au
Co-ordinator for International Relations	Mrs Beverley Pavey	10 Pleasant Ave, Lindfield 2070	9416 8731 bevpaye@bigpond.net.au
Acting Co-ordinator	Ms Christine Hosking	19 Lloyd St, Bexley 2207	9599 0186 chosking@netspace.net.au

Newsletter Editor Ms Lyn Thompson PO Box 38, Woodford 2778 4758 6637

Material for the Newsletter may be faxed directly to 4758 7169 or Email: lkthom@bigpond.com ("l" as in lyn)

Deadline for next Newsletter – Annual Reports and Calendar 1st September, 2007

Convenors

Fellowships	Mrs Joan Smith	PO Box 4066, Bay Village 2261	4333 4020 jmsmi829@yahoo.com.au
Program for Action	Mrs Gaynor Reeves	53 Verulan Rd, Lambton 2299	4952 3174 greeves@mail.newcastle.edu.au
Education	Dr Stephanie Cunningham	193 Shannon Road, Armidale 2350	6775 1941 stephcunn@hotmail.com
Status of Women	Dr Celeste Rossetto	PO Box 87, Berrima 2577	4221 4103 celeste@uow.edu.au
Peace and Security	Ms Michelle Imison	10/27 Collingwood St, Drummoyn 2047	9181 5123 meimison@yahoo.com.au
Membership	Vacant		

NEW MEMBERS

Ms Kate Colleran	Randwick
Dr Carole Cusack	Lewisham
Ms Gemma Edgar	Bangor
Dr Kate Gleeson	Newtown
Ms Hae Seong Jang	Auburn
Ms Kate Rutherford	Barrengarry
Ms Maryanne Wanat-Robb	Central Coast