



# graduate women



JULY 2011 ISSUE 155



# GRADUATE WOMEN

## President's letter



Since the last issue of Graduate Women we have had the Triennial Conference of IFUW in Mexico with the election of new officers including Jennifer Strauss as the first board member from Australia in nearly 60 years, and Michelle Imison (Projects Convener), Tricia Blombery (Finance) and Marion Jones (Fellowships) to important committees. How lucky we are to have members prepared to serve at the international level! A further boost to our image in Geneva comes from the excellent reports sent by Daina Jacobs, our Co-ordinator for International Relations (CIR), about the actions we are taking on resolutions of IFUW, advocacy at the local level, and the monies we are distributing in scholarships and prizes. A summary of these reports is included in this journal.

All this is a matter for pride, but in February this year anxiety about falling membership persuaded your Council there was a need for a workshop focusing on renewal and a new drive for membership. Many have responded to the challenge and have recruited at least one new or lapsed member but there is still much more to be done.

**History and future** Last year we had a birthday cake for the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of IFUW in Mexico City – next year marks the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of AFGW, amalgamating all the pre-existing groups of graduate women in Australia. We hope to celebrate this important occasion at the triennial conference in Brisbane. However, for that to happen every member has to help in the AFGW renewal programme described in the following pages or we shall instead be embarking on closure proceedings rather than celebrating. I am so grateful to Kathy Mumford (Tas and VWA), Kathryn Seymour (Qld) and Michelle Imison (NSW) who facilitated the workshop in February and to the three of them and all who have helped in the process so far. The Hunter Valley Branch of AFGW-NSW completed 50 years of activity last year and Gaynor Reeves interesting account of the Branch History gives us all a picture of how a regional branch can succeed over such a long period.

**UN DPI-NGO Conference in Melbourne.** For the first time this annual meeting was held in Australia. We were delighted to enable Dr Rhoda Ila, a young paediatrician from PNG who was in Brisbane as a post graduate student in public health at Queensland University, to attend as an IFUW delegate and her report is included. Unfortunately we had to exclude many of her photographs

**The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** This commission meets each year at the United Nations in New York in February/March to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. In 2011 the theme was "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work", a theme which could almost be adopted as our purpose. Not surprisingly, IFUW planned to have a high profile and we were lucky to have Helen Forgasz (Vic) and Madeleine Laming (Vic) included in their delegation and Elaine Butler (SA) representing Economic Security for Women (eSAW) as an NGO representative of the Australian Government delegation. The meeting is huge so, as everyone who attends has a different perspective, reports from each of them are included as well as a summary of what we need to do about the outcomes.

Daphne Elliott (SA) contributed a valuable paper on the topic of Education in Science and Technology and attended a summit in Australia on the subject and a report from her is included. Helen Forgasz and her team at Monash have researched the results in the NAPLAN tests in mathematics for boys and girls behind in numeracy well before university and employment.

While writing of IFUW and the UN many of you will have been saddened to learn of the death of Conchita Poncini Jiminez. She was IFUW representative to ECOSOC and ILO in Geneva from 1994 and to the CEDAW committee from 2007 when the UN moved its CEDAW operations from New York to Geneva. She was also head of the IFUW delegation to the Human Rights Council. In her memory IFUW is establishing the Conchita Poncini Jimenez International Human Rights Fellowship which will be more substantial than those normally offered by IFUW. The goal is to raise CHF 20,000 for the award. AFGW members who wish to contribute may do so using the link: [www.ifuw.org/fellowships/poncini-donor-form.shtml](http://www.ifuw.org/fellowships/poncini-donor-form.shtml)

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**Cover: Photos clockwise from top right:**  
*Conference Hotel and El Caballito, Mexico A B Baker; UN Building UN Photos; Hoar frost-High St Oxford and Magdalen Tower A B Baker; UN General Assembly Hall under wrap UN Photos; Blue Mosque, Istanbul A B Baker; Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford. Museum Photos; Fritillaries May Magdalen A B Baker; Rosie the Graduate Heike Mumford.*

**Members Rebuilding AFGW**  
**Will you help us to save AFGW?**

Fallacious have been developed from two sources: one the common sense of business men.

Following her graduation she worked for two years as an associate for Justice Alan Gorboberg, a highly respected member of the Federal Court of Australia. Her project is a study of the debate over judicial activism in Australia. Tanya's work has parallels with the public discourse of Australian neoconservatism, which has drawn on American precedents. Tanya has explored its earlier use, with a quite different valency, by the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and his relations with Justice Felix Frankfurter of the US Supreme Court. That in turn has taken her to the role played by Owen Dixon, a member of the High Court of Australia who was head of the Australian delegation in the United States during the Second World War. Dixon's position is still commonly the point of reference for Australian critics of judicial activism. It is for this reason that Tanya wishes to pursue her research in the United States. She has arranged to work on Schlesinger papers in the New York Public Library, and has arranged interviews with members of the American Constitutional Society, which has been closely involved in the American debate on judicial activism. She has also secured admission to New York University in its Global Fellows Doctoral Researcher Program, where she will work with Professor Barry Friedman.

We do however lack a complete follow up of the career of award winners so it was a delight this year to hear that Rebecca Richards, an Australia-at-large Rhodes Scholar for 2011, and the very first Indigenous Rhodes Scholar, was helped in her academic career by the award of the Padnendadlu scholarship from AFUW SA. Rebecca is headed for Magdalen College Oxford – the justification for that part of the collage

**Turkey – IFUW Conference 2013** This issue of Graduate Women is a bit later than usual because dialled in Turkey discovering among other joys the delights of Istanbul, the city hosting the 2013 IFUW Triennial Conference. This is to explain the minarets of the Blue Mosque in the cover collage and to encourage you all in the renewal programme so that as many members as possible get to see the [www.ifuw.org/2013-conference](http://www.ifuw.org/2013-conference)

Dr. Leonid Danilov

AEGW INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011



The AGM will be held on **Saturday Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011** at the YWCA Wentworth Avenue Sydney at 3.30 pm following the October Council Meeting.

This will be the occasion for the formal induction of Dr Jennifer Strauss as the

First Member Entitled or AF-GW so a good attendance is anticipated.  
Please give an early indication of your attendance and send apologies to the  
Secretary at [afgwoz@bigpond.com](mailto:afgwoz@bigpond.com);  
Tel: (02) 9560 8070

women to take part in our work and activities.

If we value and care about AFGW we cannot ignore this situation, putting it to the side for our attention later. It needs our attention **NOW**. If we care about AFGW we must all do what we can, make that extra effort, perhaps do something or prioritise something differently. We need to work together to ...

Like Rosie the Riveter the iconic American WW2 image that entranced and inspired American women to enter the workforce, and still inspires women globally today, we hope that our very own Rosie the Graduate will entice and inspire you to join us in our campaign: **"Members Rebuilding AFGW"**.



WE CAN DO IT

## Members Rebuilding AFGW

### What is AFGW Council doing?

The AFGW Council knows that AFGW needs to change if it is to survive. To build a strong diverse membership AFGW must be self promoting, flexible, creative and encouraging. At the February 2011 Council Meeting the initiative "Members Rebuilding AFGW" was launched. We have nine priority areas for research and discussion. Work on the following three priorities has already commenced:

1. Rework purpose, refine, update AFGW goals and distinguish AFGW from other NGOs.
2. Target potential members.
3. Involve more members in leadership and decision making.

Work on the following six priority areas will commence as soon as possible:

1. Provide value for money.
2. Distil information relating to IFUW and pass it on to our members more effectively.
3. Raise public awareness through the media and other means.
4. Update the website.
5. Build relationships and personal contacts.
6. Examine our corporate culture.

Updates on progress will be provided through AFGW Council meetings, the AFGW and STA newsletters, the AFGW magazine 'Graduate Women' and the AFGW website.

### What can you do?

You can put your hands up to:

- Renew your membership.
- Become an AFGW ambassador and 'quietly' or 'loudly' tell your graduate women friends, colleagues and family members - young and older - about AFGW:
  - If you know women who used to be members encourage them to rejoin.
  - Recruit three new members - one by August, one by October and one by December 2011.
  - Share your ups and downs in helping to rebuild AFGW. Email your story to us.
  - Host a meeting of women - e.g. friends or colleagues - who are eligible to join and talk about what AFGW is doing or could do with their help as financial members.
  - Add your membership of AFGW and IFUW to your email signature.
  - Give AFGW membership as a gift to eligible women (e.g. daughters, cousins and friends).
  - Participate in your branch, STA, national or international activities, discussions and advocacy.
  - Join one of the challenge teams or become a facilitator. Give one evening or one hour of research or two hours documenting your thoughts on one of the membership priority areas. We need your ideas and energy. Any contribution, no matter how small will help.
  - Plan to come to the 35<sup>th</sup> AFGW triennial conference Brisbane, 22-25<sup>th</sup> November 2012.
- AFGW may not always be exactly the kind of organisation that you want it to be. Nor can it always achieve the heights of activity that you would like to see. But we would say to you that it takes many members - both active and inactive, younger and older - to achieve an active, diverse, inspired, energetic and forward thinking organisation. This is an exciting and challenging time to be a member because we all have this wonderful opportunity to influence, rebuild and make a real difference to the future and look of AFGW. We can rebuild AFGW to be a truly strong, diverse, inspired, energetic and forward thinking national voice of graduate women. If we want to see AFGW loudly promoting the advancement of women worldwide and their equity of opportunity through initiatives in Education, Friendship and Peace into the future then we all need to help.

For more information contact your STA representative (see back cover for contact details). If you want to join one of the teams listed above or be a facilitator contact Kathy Mumford (email: [kathleenmumford@yahoo.com.au](mailto:kathleenmumford@yahoo.com.au), ph: 0408 949 494, post: 33 David St, Launceston TAS 7250), Together We Can Do It!

Michelle Imlison, Kathy Mumford and Kathryn Seymour

## What AFGW means to me and why I joined

**Ivy Shiu** My work is predominantly in epidemiology and public health which I am passionate about. I've been lucky to be able to focus in these areas and to date have completed a migrant health cross-sectional study in Taiwan for my master's degree and have researched the epidemiology of stroke for my PhD at the University of Sydney. These interests have now led me to a postdoctoral fellowship in the Swedish Karolinska Institute where I am studying cardiovascular epidemiology.

I've been an independent member of IFUW since 2005. I joined because I believe that education is the key to improving society. In many societies men dominate and have greater access to education. I firmly believe this is why we need to encourage women and girls to be independent thinkers and to be brave to pursue the lives that they want and dream about.



I see myself being a life-long member of IFUW and wherever I go I intend to promote the education of women and girls. When I moved to Australia in 2008, IFUW suggested that I contact AFGW NSW to help me settle into life in Sydney so I joined! Although I'm no longer physically in AFGW because I am now living in Sweden and have joined KAF (the graduate women's group here) I have made many AFGW friends and I hope to keep these through IFUW.

There is no doubt that we need to stimulate more young women to join. I really enjoyed the informal activities run by the NSW young members. Some highlights of my time as a NSW young member were bush-walking in the north of Sydney, hanging out together over the weekends and sharing life experiences. I think one of the best things about IFUW is that it encourages international friendships, helps women share their stories and motivates young women around the world to face their lives with a positive attitude.



**Daphne Elliott** I graduated with first class honours in science and a M.Sc. from Sydney University. In 1948 I was awarded a Science Research Scholarship by the Royal Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 and left Australia to complete a Ph.D. in plant biochemistry at Cambridge University. When I returned in 1957 I first lived in Canberra eventually moving to Adelaide where in 1967 I joined the School of Biological Sciences and began my long and rewarding connection with Flinders University. Since retiring I have been a Visiting Scholar. I was awarded an AM on Australia Day 2002 for service to the promotion of women's education and as an advocate for the status of women.

My involvement with AFUW (now AFGW) has been long. When I graduated I joined the Sydney University Women Graduates Association. Like many other young graduates, before and since, my first contact with AFUW and IFUW was through the scholarship program. AFUW has since satisfied different needs and interests throughout my life. While in Canberra, the meetings brought a welcome touch of adult company to life with a young family.

When we moved to Adelaide I continued to enjoy this social contact but also took a more active role, beginning my advocacy and NGO training. This training has included serving as State and National President, AFUW representative to regional and world education, science and technology conferences, Australian Delegate leader to IFUW conferences and member of the 1986-1989 IFUW Status of Women and Cultural Relations Committee.

During my involvement I've learnt to value the wider possibilities that membership offers – advocacy, scholarships and networking - here in Australia and internationally. I have witnessed the Federation and IFUW provide women graduates with a powerful voice. IFUW's consultative status with the UN gives us access to decision-making otherwise denied us. My experience has taught me that if we want to be effective we must make our views known. We need to encourage all members to speak up for equality, human rights and peace. By taking action, members gain personal confidence and leadership skills and AFGW gains new members attracted to an organisation with such clear commitments. My interests, nurtured and stimulated by my membership in AFGW, continue to this day.

**Nadine Eckert** I have a Bachelor of Business, International Business and Integrated Marketing Communication from the Queensland University of Technology. During my degree I spent time in China, undertaking research for the state government into vocational opportunities. I have since been fortunate to undertake further studies at Oxford University, taking a Foundation Certificate of English Language and Literature, and have recently been accepted by Regents Park College for their Masters of English.

After moving to the UK I worked at Lloyds TSB in a senior marketing role and for the Centre on Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS). One of the highpoints of my work with COMPAS was representing them on a House of Lords Committee into Migration issues. Since returning to Australia, I have worked for the Office for Women, as Media Advisor for a number of Queensland Government Ministers

I am very pleased to be a member of Graduate Women Queensland (GWQ) and to be part of an organisation which promotes graduate education for women. I joined GWQ this year and look forward to a long association. As one knows, education for women is key to economic independence. We have come so far in being able to access opportunities, but we need to support each other to reach even higher. I think AFGW excels in offering networking opportunities and supporting women financially to achieve their goals through scholarships and bursaries.

Recently I was asked to take on the role of Secretary for Graduate Women QLD and I said 'yes'. So I'm now a member of the Executive team and look forward to helping to grow our membership base, raise the profile of our organisation, fundraise and work with our committee to develop new networking and engagement opportunities for members.

**Christine Silvester** I have had a long and rewarding career in the Northern Territory. I particularly enjoyed my time as Ministerial Advisor on Women's Affairs and Equal Opportunity to several Territory Chief Ministers. Currently I am a manager in the NT Public Service.

I was aware of AFUW-NT since its inception in about 1984. When it was formed I attended its events as a non-member. At the time I was ineligible because my Diploma was not a university degree. I was interested in being involved because I could see that AFUW was recognized as an important advocacy group on women's and education issues and had international links through IFUW to the United Nations.

In 1989, soon after the NT Government established what is now known as the Charles Darwin University (CDU), I enrolled to study a Bachelor of Arts part-time, graduating in 1996 (Political Science major, Women's Studies minor). Once I graduated I was encouraged to join AFUW-NT and I have been active ever since. I became President for two years in 2000/2001 and I have remained Secretary/Treasurer since 2002.

AFUW-NT is a small association and we have recently concentrated our efforts on fundraising to support scholarships for students attending CDU and the National University Timor-Leste. It's very satisfying to meet scholarship recipients from all walks of life and disciplines and to know that since 1997 we have supported 29 undergraduates (including seven Indigenous Australians and eight Timorese) and 16 postgraduate students in achieving their education goals.

Through IFUW we are members of a global organisation, formed in 1920 by graduate women responding to the aftermath of WWI to promote peace, understanding and friendship among the women of the world regardless of race, religion and nationality and to promote the advancement of women and their equal opportunity. Each year, since 1986, to honour the UN International Day of Peace, the origins of IFUW and to foster interest in studying peace and conflict resolution, AFUW-NT donates books on peace to the CDU Library. I am proud to belong to AFGW. The connections and fellowship with like-minded members with similar passion and energy to achieve the goals of AFUW-NT is fantastic.

## History of the Hunter Valley Branch of AFGW NSW

Based on a speech given on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Hunter Valley Branch on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011 by Gaynor Reeves, Past President of AFUW NSW and past holder of every office within the Branch and many within the State and National Branches and first Member Emerita of AFGW NSW.

Over 50 years ago in April 1960 Dr. Joan Allsop who was then a lecturer in the University of Sydney Dept. of Tutorial Classes called a meeting which was held at Newcastle Girls High School to establish the Hunter Valley Branch of University Women Graduates. This Branch was to be affiliated with the NSW Branch, the National and the International Federation which was founded in 1920 and whose major aims were to promote understanding and friendship among university women and to further the development of education for women, to represent university women in international conferences and to encourage women to apply their knowledge and skills and to participate at all levels of public life. The early IFUW women were rare birds, as you can imagine, and we owe them much for their foresight and energy.



Margaret Auchmuty

As I recall, there were about 20 women present including such well-known Newcastle women as Margaret Auchmuty, wife of the then Warden of Newcastle University College later to become first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Hilda Turner, Vice-Principal of Newcastle Teachers' College, Aileen Tredgown, Principal of what is now known as Hunter Girls High, and Joan Woodhill, head dietician of Royal Newcastle Hospital. At the meeting there was enthusiastic support for the formation of such a group and it was formally established.

I would like to pay tribute to other early members – women who were educated in the 30s and 40s and who, by their example, had been encouraging girls and young women to take up the challenge of further education and enter professions; women such as those I have already mentioned and other very loyal early members like Jess Dyc, Beryl Nashar, Joan Murray, Joyce Winney, Janet Wim and Mary Kane who later moved to Sydney and became President of AFUW and was also an invaluable NSW Treasurer. I would also like to pay tribute to the many former Presidents, other Office-Bearers and Members who have all made significant contributions over the past 50 years.

By the end of 1960 the numbers had swelled to about 100 and Dr. Allsop had moved to Sydney bringing about the need for a new President. This was Margaret Auchmuty, an American graduate cum laude of Vassar College (she actually received her degree from Franklin D. Roosevelt). Margaret was a social worker at Royal Newcastle Hospital and was also chauffeur to her husband, at that time Warden of Newcastle University College. She was very involved in assisting him very actively in duties relating to the University.

I cannot recollect how it came about but I became Secretary of that early group. I actually had to develop skills with an old typewriter. Accuracy was essential because mistakes necessitated using white Tippex (an early version of Liquid Paper), waiting for it to dry, and then correcting the carbon copy or copies beneath. It was a testing and sometimes infuriating task. The Tippex frequently got stuck in the typewriter keys and was not easily removed. Those who work on computers with spellcheckers nowadays and have not used the old typewriters do not realise how their tasks have been simplified. Furthermore, printing copies with methylated spirit smelling Gestetners was also a great hurdle. For me, the sending out of monthly notices always remained a great challenge. Scanners, photocopiers and printers have been a great boon.

Further changes in modes of communication over the 50 years have made life so much easier, especially for the organisation: from snailmail and relatively expensive timed trunk calls in the 60s to faxes in the earlier 80s – such a wondrous improvement then! In the 90s our late NSW Newsletter Editor Lynn Thompson began using email and by mid-2001 approximately 50% of the State Executive had email addresses. Now email is used to such great advantage and has made life so much easier.

In the 60s the membership ranged in age from approximately 26 to 50 years. There were professional single women and there were many mothers of young children who loved to have one evening when they could leave their husbands to look after the family and spend a pleasant time chatting over dinner and listening to a stimulating speaker (really quite a treat for the members and a very different occupation for many husbands of that time!). Most mothers were at home, a few worked part-time and a very, very few worked full-time. Margaret Auchmuty said it was one place where mothers did not have to discuss such mundane matters as tuckshops or sandwich fillings. At that time too there was no fundraising which was another appealing aspect of membership.

I should like to make further mention of our most outstanding President – Margaret Auchmuty. Margaret was not only President of our Branch from 1960–63 but she was also State President from 1965 -1967 and then National President from 1975–77. She was the first non-metropolitan member to become National President and I would be surprised if she does not still hold this record.

One very strong memory is of Margaret and me attending our first meeting in Sydney and proposing changes to the Constitution by suggesting that there should be a State Council with voting rights for all Branches and Groups according to membership. At that time AFUW NSW was run by the Central Committee in Sydney and our Branch felt it and other Branches should have a voice in decisions. I must say that some Sydney members were totally shocked by our temerity. However, changes did come about gradually and now all Branches have representation on the Central Committee.

At this juncture I would like to look back briefly at some aspects of education in Newcastle during this period – just to remind us what was happening in that field during the 50 years of the Hunter Valley Branch because many of the Hunter Valley Branch's activities are interwoven with them.

There were many changes in education in the Hunter Valley and elsewhere. In the 60s the Wyndham Scheme was implemented bringing about the introduction of comprehensive schools, an extra year at secondary school and considerable changes in curricula.

The Teachers' College in Union Street became a College of Advanced Education and broadened its offerings, later becoming the Hunter Institute of Higher Education. It moved onto the University Campus and finally in the 90s was amalgamated with the University.

In 1965 the University College broke its ties with the University of New South Wales and became autonomous. It also left the grounds of the Technical College where it had begun and moved to the bushland campus in what is now called Callaghan. Halls of Residence and a Great Hall were built and the number of Faculties and degrees grew enormously with resultant increasing numbers of students.

The introduction of free university education in the 70s had considerable impact. I believe it was of special benefit to women, particularly older women who did not have the chance or perhaps the desire to study at university when they were younger. At the University of Newcastle non-matriculants were also given the opportunity of upgrading secondary school skills and entering university.

Our local University has enabled thousands of men and women to gain degrees here. For most families in Newcastle, an industrial city, a university degree would have seemed an impossible dream. The cost of gaining a degree elsewhere would have been prohibitive. Many women on the administrative staff at the University were able to complete degrees part-time. Further they also encouraged their children to do so.

Some memorable highlights for the Branch over the first twenty or so years included the following : -

- \* Research into styles of accommodation for the University. Betty Archdale, (Principal of Women's College at the University of Sydney) and incidentally a former woman cricketer of some renown addressed us on the benefits of Women's College and its facilities.

Remember too that this early period was very much a time of causes. We had many outstanding speakers among whom were:

- \* Faith Bardiller (activist on behalf of the Aborigines)

- \* A speaker from the Australian Consumers' Association (long before Choice came to be published)

- \* A speaker from CAMP Inc., the Campaign against Moral Persecution

- \* Margaret Valladian, now AO MBE, who was the first Aboriginal graduate in 1966 from the University of Queensland and later became the Director of the Centre for Indigenous Development, Education and Research at the University of Wollongong.

\* The surgeon, Max Lake, wine connoisseur and vigneron who owned Lake's Folly vineyards at Pokolbin. During the '60s Hunter Valley Branch undertook a number of projects.

One was a number of successful Saturday morning film shows at the University for primary children. This was in response to the National President's concern about the lack of appropriate and imaginative viewing for children. Mollie Stuckey was at that time a member of the Film Censorship Board. It would be interesting to see her reactions to children's viewing these days!

At the 1963 Conference in Armidale there were recommendations for measures to help women to return to full employment and to encourage those already in employment to take up further training for higher leadership positions – fairly radical ideas at that time

In 1964 Hunter Valley prepared a paper on "Special Problems facing Girls on Leaving School". This was presented by Margaret Auchmuty at the Hobart Conference.

The 70s was also a decade of causes: women's liberation, anti-discrimination, anti-war, anti-apartheid and many others. Women's groups became far more active. After all, Germaine Greer's challenging book "The Female Eunuch" had just been published. In the United States the magazine Ms was published with Gloria Steinem at the helm.

There were Conference resolutions that job advertisements be worded so as to avoid discrimination and that newspapers cease advertising positions vacant in separate columns headed Men and Boys and Women and Girls. The demeaning portrayal of women in TV programmes was deplored as was the sexism in textbooks.

In 1974 one of our longstanding members Professor Beryl Nashar was elected International President of Business and Professional Women – another very active group in support of women.

In 1976 some of us attended a National Conference with the theme of "Women as Agents for Change especially in cultural, scientific, medical, social and political spheres"

In 1979 there was a seminar on the advent of the silicon chip and its effect on employment – little did we realise the momentous changes this little chip was to bring about in all aspects of our lives!

You can see from the activities I have mentioned that the 1970s decade was a busy one for the Branch and for the Australian Federation. Remember too that Margaret Auchmuty was at the helm of the National body for three of these years and played a large part in driving matters forward.

In November 1981 the Friends of the University of Newcastle was formed. To show support the Hunter Valley Branch organised a huge Town and Gown Dinner (our biggest function ever) where all diners were requested to wear their academic gowns. Professor Ken Dutton gave a memorable address on "The History of the Academic Gown" which was later published with line drawings and a colourful cover. The proceeds of some \$2000 was donated to the Friends.

Since this occasion Women Grads have continued their support by providing sustenance to the volunteers at the Friends' Book Fair which is held every two years. I might add that one of our very loyal members, Lorna George, wife of the then Vice-Chancellor, Professor Don George, was instrumental in inaugurating the Book Fair. Unfortunately 26 years or so on many of us original volunteers are not as sprightly as then and we are very glad to have younger members joining us.

Sadly in the '80s there began a downward slide in membership, just as there was in other community groups. Professional, family and other commitments were taking their toll. However, the smaller group continued to function as previously.

Throughout the 90s there was also the usual participation in seminars. Financial support was given to the NSW Study and Action Programme to assist women students in Cambodia at the improbably sounding Maharsi Vedic University – the only rural university offering tertiary study to women. Shirley Manion, a very daring NSW Secretary, gave us a very diverting account of her precarious motorbike and Kombi ride to visit there.

Our Branch's attention was also turning towards helping other women overseas and in this first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Hunter Valley Branch initiated support of two girl students in East Timor. We were very proud of our member, Mary Kelly, who taught as a volunteer in Dili for a couple of months and since then we have continued our support and have interacted with other groups who are doing likewise.

Most of our current members have experienced the happenings in the last 10 years but I think it is important to look at these events as part of the 50 year context. The Book Group was formed and meets monthly in one member's home. As a result we have been reading more widely and have been introduced to genres which we otherwise may never have read. This group plus our dinner meetings have the added bonus of helping to strengthen friendships and consolidate the Branch.

In this decade too several members have opened their homes for very enjoyable fundraising functions:

- \* a Japanese Cultural day where we were given lessons in calligraphy, origami and where we enjoyed Japanese food served by Japanese students in beautiful kimonos
- \* an art and craft day with beautiful displays and with one local artist exhibiting her painting skills
- \* a day where one of our members who is a very talented quilter had an exhibition of her work.

Another activity for five members of the Branch for the last AFUW triennium was the AFUW Fellowship Committee where we met to discuss the applications for various fellowships from women undertaking postgraduate study. This was a great privilege and revealed the considerable range of research being undertaken by women. Here too, the internet was invaluable in publicising the availability of the fellowships and in receiving the applications.

This decade too we have had a name change from the Federation of University Women (a name which has often caused confusion because some women erroneously thought that the only women who could belong were members of an academic staff). The new name reflects the educational changes referred to earlier and the graduates resulting from tertiary institutions other than universities.

It is interesting to note the various venues in which we have held our dinners since 1960. Firstly at the Tighes Hill Union, then to the University Union when we had to move because the Union instigated a 9 p.m. curfew, then to the Cricketers Arms Hotel, then to the Belmet Lodge and finally to the beautiful Newcastle Club. We are very grateful to Robert Caddes, husband of our member Jocelyn, for organising our introduction. Until a few years ago it was a male bastion and I do not need to tell you that it was great and unprecedented progress for women to be able to enjoy its privileges. Now women can be full members.

I'd like to end by saying "they lived happily ever after" but we know that is a fairy tale ending. However, what I do hope is that we can all feel that the Hunter Valley Branch and its members have made a positive contribution to society, in particular to raising the levels of expectation for women and girls and being supportive in all phases of women's education. Looking back, our Hunter Valley Branch has been very fortunate to have had so many loyal, talented and enthusiastic members who have created a legacy of strong friendship and dedication to the ideals established in 1920 when the International Federation was set up. The last 50 years may not have brought about the growth in membership which we would dearly have liked, but our current group is a strong one. Much has been achieved, but there is a big wide world outside with multitudes of women needing educational support. I hope that along with our current commitments one of our major future challenges will be in helping to provide this much needed support.

So to sum up, what the Branch is doing NOW. We continue our overseas support for our Timorese students and also for AF GW and IFUW commitments. We are funding our two local university scholarships in Education and Mathematics in remembrance of Margaret Auchmuty and Hulda Turner. We continue our support for that very hardworking and dedicated group The Friends of the University, both at the Biennial Book Fair and also at Lunch with a Writer. We still have our traditional monthly dinners on the 4th Wednesday and our Book Club. Most importantly we have our loyal, friendly and caring group.

## GENDER differences in NAPLAN numeracy results

### Research team:

A/Prof Helen Forgasz, Prof Gilah Leder, Janelle Hill  
(Faculty of Education, Monash University)

**Extracts from a refereed conference paper to be presented at AAMT/MERGA joint conference, Alice Springs, July 3-7, 2011. [The paper is being extended into a journal article: Grades 5 & 7 NAPLAN results will also be included.]**

### Extract 1

When considering all NAPLAN questions (all years and all grade levels) in which a difference existed in the percentage of females and males who correctly answered a particular question, there were fewer questions in which females performed better than males, with males outperforming females at all grade levels. The differences in favour of males were also much larger than those favouring females. Table 2 shows these performance differences for Grades 3 and 9.

Example to illustrate how to read the data in Table 2:

### For Grade 3, 2008:

- for 12 questions, there were between 1 and 9% more girls than boys who got the answers right
- there were no questions on which more than 10% more girls than boys got the answers right
- **overall, on 12 questions more girls than boys had correct answers**
- for 17 questions, there were between 1 and 9% more boys than girls who got the answers right
- for 1 question, there was greater than 10% more boys than girls who got the right answer
- **overall, on 18 questions more boys than girls had correct answers**
- there were 5 questions on which the same percentage of girls and boys got the right answers (ie. 0% difference between girls and boys)

Percentage difference in correct responses	Higher % GIRLS than boys			Higher % BOYS than girls			No difference
	>10% better	Total questions	1-9% better	Total questions	<10% better	Total questions	
Grade 3 2008	12 questions	0	12 questions	17 questions	1	18 questions	0*
Grade 3 2009	10	0	10	20	1	21	5
Grade 3 2010	12	0	12	20	0	20	4
Grade 9 No Calculator 2008	5	0	5	19	6	25	2
Grade 9 No Calculator 2009	6	0	6	19	1	20	5
Grade 9 No Calculator 2010	6	0	6	21	2	23	3
Grade 9 Calculator 2008	9	0	9	19	1	20	3
Grade 9 Calculator 2009	9	0	9	19	0	19	3
Grade 9 Calculator 2010	5	0	5	22	0	22	5

\* Questions for which females and males performed equally well.

NB. The total number of questions on the NAPLAN test papers varied from 31 to 35

Table 2. Number of questions with gender differences in percentage correct:  
NAPLAN, grades 3 and 9, 2008-2010

There were several questions for which between 1 and 9% more girls than boys had the correct answers; however 8% difference was the largest difference found in favour of girls across the grade levels for the years 2008-2010. In Table 2 it can be seen that there were several questions for which greater than 10% more boys than girls answered correctly.

**Extract 2:**  
Conclusion  
sectors, constituting just 22.3% in some disciplines. The issue is important in broadening opportunities for working women in Australia, but also critical to our national productivity, innovation and international competitiveness.

The outcomes of the summit were strengthened by the resolve of all the research leaders to take the UN Women's Empowerment Principles back to their organisations with a view to adopting them. Leaders from CSIRO, ANSTO, IBM, Cochlear, the ARC, the NHMRC, the Bureau of Meteorology and 30 other organisations took part in the Summit.

Some of the major commitments at the summit by research employers and research funders were:

CSIRO made commitments to remove barriers to the promotion of highly skilled women in Science and Engineering, to increase incentives to encourage women to return to the workforce after family-related career interruptions, and to report on gender participation within CSIRO.

The ARC and NHMRC agreed to changes in how they assess research publications in grant applications of those with interrupted careers. ARC will extend the period taken into account. NHMRC will consider any nominated five years of an applicant's career rather than the previous five years, and it has also agreed to monitor gender issues in general.

The Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS), Australia's peak body for science and technology, has undertaken to work with scientific societies Australia-wide to conduct an audit of practices with a view to increasing participation of women through best practice. FASTS will also gather examples of existing practices, programs and policies which have been successful and develop a toolkit by which the science and technology sector be guided.

## Research funders commit to boosting the number of women in science and technology

In the past twenty years, AFUW has been very active in promoting the advancement of women in science and technology.

A Think-Tank on Women in Science and Technology was convened for the AFUW Conference, Queensland, September 1994, and a report sent to the Office of Chief Scientist, Prime Minister's Dept, for consideration by the WISET (Women in Science, Engineering and Technology) Advisory Group that had been set up by the government in 1993 to advise on strategies to improve women's participation in SET. In South Australia, a public forum was held with three members of the Advisory Group as speakers. AFUW then made a submission on the WISET Discussion paper to the WISET Advisory Group March, 1995.<sup>(1)</sup>

With a change of government the only response from the new Minister to the recommendations of the Advisory Group was a general statement declaring support "for a broad positive environment in which all Australians have the maximum opportunity to achieve their potential".

AFUW continued highlighting the marginalization of women in science in the later 1990s in papers presented in Tokyo<sup>(2)</sup>, Manila<sup>(3)</sup> and Sydney<sup>(4)</sup>.

In the 16 years since the Report to Government of the WISET Advisory Group in 1995, it is disappointing to note that there has been little action on the recommendations made in that report. In 2009, a report on Women in Science in Australia<sup>(5)</sup> showed the progress of women in senior positions has stalled despite encouraging improvements in participation at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The report found persistent structural barriers to women in senior positions in science and technology. Female scientists are clustered at the lower levels of responsibility, even in disciplines where they are well represented, such as biological sciences.

This report was addressed during the IFUW on-line discussion on Gender, Science and Technology last year ([www.ifuw.org/docs/science-technology-dDiscussion-deliot.pdf](http://www.ifuw.org/docs/science-technology-dDiscussion-deliot.pdf)).

Now a "Women in Science and Engineering Summit" has been held in Canberra, attended by Kate Ellis, Minister for the Status of Women, who emphasized the problem of low representation of women in these

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**Daphne Elliot**  
Past President

### Notes for Contributors:

Contributions are welcome from State and Territory Associations, Branches and individuals. Letters from members will be published if space permits.

Copy deadline for Issue 156: 15 May 2012  
Copy, preferably on disc or as email attachment, using Word format for articles,  
JPEG for photographs (300 dpi), should be forwarded to  
Jane Baker, PO Box 345, Concord West, NSW 2138 or  
[jane.baker1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jane.baker1@optusnet.com.au)

## Rhodes Scholarships

The Rhodes Scholarship, named after Cecil Rhodes, is an international postgraduate award for study at the University of Oxford. It was the first large-scale programme of international scholarships, and is widely considered the "world's most prestigious scholarship" by many public sources.

Rhodes Scholars may study any full-time postgraduate course offered by the University, whether a taught Master's programme, a research degree, or a second undergraduate degree (senior status). In the first instance, the scholarship is awarded for two years. However, it may also be held for one year or three years. Applications for a third year are considered during the course of the second year.

It has been said that for more than a century, Rhodes scholars have left Oxford with virtually any job available to them. For much of this time, they have overwhelmingly chosen paths in scholarship, teaching, writing, medicine, scientific research, law, the military and public service. They have reached the highest levels in virtually all fields.

The criteria for selection have been:

- Literary and scholastic attainments;
- Energy to use one's talents to the full, as exemplified by fondness for and success in sports;
- Truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindnessness, unselfishness and fellowship;
- Moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in one's fellow beings.

Since 1977 it has been recognised that young women may share these virtues and women have been selected as Rhodes Scholars. From Australia there has been at least one woman each year and a total to 2010 of 35, maybe more as some states list only initials not full names. These have been predominantly in the Australia-at-large group, rather than a first choice of a State. This year marks the first time that any Indigenous student has been selected and we offer our warmest congratulations to Rebecca Richards who is heading to Magdalen College to study anthropology, focussing on the Australian Aboriginal artefacts in the Pitt Rivers museum (pictured opposite). She is, in fact, the first Australian Indigenous woman to go to Oxford at all. We feel very proud that an AFGW award, the Padnendadlu scholarship from AFUW SA in 2008 has helped Rebecca during her studies. We hope to hear more of her journey across Russia by train to Oxford and her studies and future career. It would be good to read research about the subsequent careers of all the Women Rhodes Scholars one day.

(From AFGW SA Newsletter 2011)

### The role of the Padnendadlu bursary in helping Rebecca Richards to gain confidence to apply for other grants and scholarships.

Graduate Women – SA, formerly the SA Association of the Australian Federation of University Women, affiliated with the national now AFGW and the IFUW at Geneva congratulates Rebecca Richards who is the first Australian Indigenous woman to win the Rhodes Scholarship. She leaves for Oxford to undertake a Masters of Philosophy in September 2011 and hopes to proceed to a D Phil.

In an interview she spoke of how much she valued the Padnendadlu Undergraduate Bursary she won in 2008. A student at the University of Adelaide, before 2007 when she applied for it, Rebecca had not been aware of any organization willing to help with the cost of higher education for Indigenous women.

When she attended the annual dinner of the then AFUW-SA in 2008 to receive her cheque from trustees of the AFUW-SA Trust, she was impressed by the women she met. Applying for that bursary and winning it not only gave her some financial assistance and information for her CV, it gave her the confidence to apply for even more demanding bursaries or grants.

That confidence, that capacity and her desire to go as far as she could in her chosen career in anthropology, plus the support of family and other mentors, encouraged Rebecca to face the challenge of applying for and winning the Rhodes Scholarship. We congratulate her on that outstanding achievement.

One can never know what the result might be of early success, such as a Padnendadlu Bursary, might offer but one must take the opportunity when it presents itself.



The Pitt Rivers Museum,  
Oxford

The history of the establishment of those bursaries is included in the hope that more Indigenous women will apply for them. It is important to note that the Padnendadlu Undergraduate bursary has been replaced by the Maria Lane Undergraduate Bursary in honour of the woman who provided so much support to Aboriginal and Torres Islander students for so many years at the University of South Australia. Of course, Indigenous women can also apply for the other AFUW-SA Trust bursaries on offer for students in South Australian universities and for any International, National and State Scholarships and Bursaries

**The story of scholarships specifically for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women established by the AFUW-SA Trust**

Following a suggestion made by Erica Jolly re the need for help for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate students, Australian Federation of University Women – South Australia (AFUW-SA) Inc. representatives took a resolution to the Sydney conference of AFUW in January 1997, recommending that all State and Territory Associations of AFUW find ways to assist Indigenous Australian women with their undergraduate or post-graduate study. A resolution was passed unanimously and, largely through the efforts of Brenda Nettle, the trustees of the AFUW-SA Inc. Trust Fund introduced the Padnendadlu Postgraduate Bursary just in time for inclusion in the 1997 round of bursaries. The bursary is for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women undertaking Masters degrees or Ph.Ds at South Australian Universities. The name of the bursary was chosen in consultation with a Kaurna elder. "Padnendadlu" is a Kaurna word meaning "walking together".

Padnendadlu Undergraduate Bursaries for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women undertaking the final year of Bachelor degrees or Honours years were introduced in 2003, and in 2004 the Padnendadlu Graduate Bursary was established for Indigenous women undertaking Graduate Diplomas or Graduate Certificates at South Australian universities. Following Maria Lane's death in 2008, her husband Joe asked if he could donate some money towards a bursary in her memory. As a result of correspondence with Joe, the trustees of the AFUW-SA Inc. Trust Fund established the Maria Lane Bursary to take the place of the Padnendadlu Undergraduate Bursary, with a higher value and broader eligibility criteria. Joe and others continue to donate money to the Maria Lane fund.

**Jane Baker and Erica Jolly**

## REPORT 63<sup>rd</sup> UN DPI-NGO Conference

### Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne 30 August – 01 September 2010.

#### Dr Rhoda Illa P/G Student in Public Health University of Queensland

The premier United Nations Department of Public Information Non Governmental Organisations (UN DPI-NGO) annual event – the Annual Conference – was held in Melbourne, Australia, from 30 August to 1 September 2010. Titled “Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs” it was the first time that Australia hosted this United Nations event. It was also only the third time that the UN DPI/NGO Conference was held outside United Nations Headquarters.

#### Pre-Conference Concert (29/08/2010)

I did not attend this concert since I was living a long way from Melbourne city. However, I was told that it was spectacular and a memorable one. The concert was a welcome for all NGO delegates to the Conference in Melbourne.

#### Opening Ceremony

On Monday morning, 09.00 - 30 August 2010, the opening ceremony for the 63rd Annual DPI-NGO Conference was held in the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. There were more than 1,600 participants attending, representing more than 350 NGOs from 70-plus countries. More than 650 were health specialists who represented more than 200 NGOs, and there were more than 100 media outlets in the arena. As the haunting music of didgeridoos filled the large conference hall, each speaker recognized the “original custodians of this land on which we stand, and all the elders past and present.”

The Opening Ceremony inspired passion toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The opening remarks by United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Kiyotaka Akasaka brought more flavour to the conference - Advance Global Health, Achieve the MDGs. The conference got more momentum when invited keynote speakers from the Australian Parliament, UNAIDS, an Aboriginal health advisor, and many more gave their speeches.

While the last four conferences were on human dignity and security, climate change, human rights, and nuclear disarmament, this year's conference was focussed on global health. The aim of the conference was to provide a venue for NGOs working on the MDGs to collaborate and be effective deliverers of global health programmes thus to reach the MDGs by 2015. Which was aimed at improving, preventing and achieving good and better health for every person living in the world? The projects of the NGOs presented were diverse and included chronic diseases, blindness, HIV/AIDS, drug use, migration, women empowerment, mental health, maternal and child health and indigenous health concerns.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce Child Mortality Rate
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

One of the favourite speakers during the opening ceremony was Michael Sidibe, the Executive Director of UNAIDS. He spoke of social justice as being an integral part of attending to any global health need. He also mentioned that the social movement to eradicate HIV/AIDS was the first of its kind; and suggested that this momentum needs to be continued for other diseases. His finishing talk reminded everyone that MDGs should be looked at as one and not individually as goal 1, goal 2 etc.

#### Workshops

Workshops were held after morning tea and after lunch. All workshops were very interesting and so exciting that I really never sat down in one particular workshop for the full sessions. I tried to attend all the workshops to learn as much as I could, as NGOs were very inspiring in the work they were doing to achieve the MDGs and working to sustain and promote good health globally.

There were three workshops I sat down for about half way through. First the Catholic Churches' work in the highlands of PNG; how the church is helping people in remote PNG to fight against HIV/AIDS. I truly admire what the church is doing in that part of the world. Other churches should look at the work the Catholic church is doing and do the same. What I learned from that workshop was that, in Migenide Hospital PNG, the sisters of the church set up men's clinic, where men go to discuss their problems and get their HIV/AIDS testing done.

The second inspiring workshop was Nyumbani (means home, in Kenya). This organisation was set up again by the Catholic Church to help children and families living with HIV/AIDS. This home was started in 1992 and has come a long way in helping the orphans www.nyumbani.org.

The third workshop was a touching and emotional one, “Slipping through the Crack: Women and Infectious Disease (TB & TB/HIV)”. The speaker was HIV positive and shared true life experiences. She is also part of the Kenyan AIDS Consortium. Women are vulnerable to any infectious disease and complications. Because of the traditional role they play as caregivers in the homes, they are often blamed for transmitting TB, and other diseases. TB treatment should be revised so it will be pleasant medication to take. The treatment for TB has not been revised since 1960s. Their message was, please revise the treatment regime for TB, and give more funds for TB.



Sr Kiyunga and another Sr from Migenide Hospital, PNG. These are two of the committed Catholic Church workers serving the remote PNG in the fight against HIV/AIDS

#### Round Table Discussions.

The round table discussions were made up of several panels or speakers and questions were asked by the audience about specific topics or subjects of interest on the MDGs and the panel answered; but I thought sometimes, these discussions did get rowdy. I guess that is just normal.

#### The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Helping Achieve the MDGs

This was an exciting session for me since the panel were all clinicians and from across the globe. The panel had an Afghan education programme, an Australian midwife from World Vision, an African doctor, and a Cuban physician. Although the panel were from different continents, they spoke one language and commented that primary healthcare has declined in all developing countries, therefore the governments

of each country must wake up and conduct programs to address this problem; and NGOs were asked to fill the gap where the governments could not fill.

Dr. Aleida Guevara, the Cuban physician, stated that healthcare is a right to the human race, so the right to life is non-negotiable. She went on to say that, in order for NGOs to gain community support, an NGO must 'NOT SAY, WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, BUT DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE'. Another panel speaker, Dr. Ruth Bameila Engo-Tjega, an African doctor, stated that often times, because funding donors come from diverse backgrounds and often dictate relationship, they segregate the NGOs. I think this is quite true for many developing countries.

#### Roundtable Discussion– Equity, Rights and Progress toward the MDGs

The main discussion was on data collection, where many times, the data is not accurate because of the many cultural barriers where it is difficult to get the correct information for analysis. There were opponents in data collection with statements such as data are numbers and these are meaningless to the vulnerable communities.

Dr. Claudio Shuftan, member of PHM and an adjunct professor at Tulane University stated that MDGs were 'quick fixes' that did not address the root of the problem, human rights violations. He further went on saying that achieving the MDGs won't solve the global health issue. Maybe he is correct in saying that the root of the problem is human rights violations, but I don't know.

#### Day 2 (01/09/2010)

I met up with a PNG journalist who works with Radio Australia, Melbourne. She decided to do a short interview on air in tok pidgin about what this conference meant to me and also what are some ways I thought would be helpful to women to protect their children from communicable diseases and HIV/AIDS. There were lots of stalls and larger NGOs, such as Save the Children, Rotary International, and World Vision. It was just exciting. Meeting with people of different professions and how they view and express their knowledge was just awesome. I just could not stop listening and asking questions. I finally made contact with Rotary International, Save the Children and breastfeeding NGO.



PNG Journalist, Melbourne based, Caroline Tirman (left) and myself

#### Day 3 (02/09/2010)

I forgot to mention that security was really tight, similar to that you would get at international airports. ID photo was to be worn at all times while in the conference arena. The registration was fast and efficient, no long queues.

This day was the signing of the Declaration document. Also at the Declaration Tim Costello, CEO World Vision called a motion to acknowledge the devastating floods in Pakistan, the delegates responded by giving contributions to go towards the flood victims.

Throughout the sessions, the millennium goals were emphasized over and over again and, although we may not reach the MDGs, we were encouraged to work together to achieve these goals in some way. The issues of population health were to be addressed seriously if we were to reach MDGs by 2015. NGO and UN collaboration was the way to go.

#### Closing session

The closing ceremony was at hand and was indeed quite emotional. Once again the delegates gathered in the large conference hall, where we faced the lighted boulders each representing or displaying the symbol of an MDG. The red banners changed to yellow as the sun began to set on the closing of our three-day journey. Kiyotaka Agasaka, head of the Department of Public Information, began by stating that, "We respect and acknowledge the custodians of this land and the elders, past and present, on which this conference is held". He went onto saying, "The most urgent task for us is to help quicken the pace of progress in meeting the MDGs. This is not the time to question the validity of the MDGs themselves; it is the time to roll up our sleeves and ensure they are sustainable after 2015."

Mick Gooda, an Aboriginal social justice commissioner and past CEO of the Centre for Research on Aboriginal Health, made remarks on the challenges facing indigenous peoples worldwide. "Indigenous peoples are invisible in the original plans for the MDGs. We must close the gap to bring indigenous health equality in a reasonable time. Poverty, whether absolute or relative, is everyone's business."

Sir George Alleyne, Chancellor of the University of West Indies, chairperson of the Department of Medicine and director emeritus of the World Health Organization, in his closing speech stated "There is a causal relationship between complete global health and meeting the MDGs. There can be an improvement in health, without a huge increase in wealth; but global health and MDGs will not be addressed unless we address the non-communicable diseases, chronic care, and access-to-care issues we face.. Christopher Varney, a dynamic former U.N. Youth Ambassador, moved all delegates with his passion and dedication, stated: "During our three-day conference, 75,000 children died a preventable death. ...We are not gathered here for an end, we are gathered for the beginning of the next five years, and we must ask, how big is your hope?..... Let us resolve we will do everything to empower action for children's health". The entire audience stood to show our support and appreciation. He was the other of my favourite speakers at the Conference.

Jeffrey Huffins, chair of the DP/NGO executive committee, "Nothing will replace the primary importance of people meeting, in person, for good, old-fashioned face time." He referred to the passionate debates about the Declaration and reminded us that "it has strength only to the extent we are willing to advocate with our organizations." He also announced that the United Nations had reached agreement with the City of Bonn, Germany, to host the Summit next September, which may carry the theme "Sustainable Societies, Responsible Citizens."

The last speaker of the night was Conference Chair Mary Norton. She again challenged us to develop an action plan. The NGO Call to Action and resulting Declaration was almost unanimously passed. She stated "We achieved these tasks without allowing the perfect to be the enemy of the good," She asked each country represented to submit the declaration to their governments for submission to the U.N. General Assembly when it meets to address the MDGs in September this year in New York City.

The three day conference was over, and although exhausted and looking for the last energy to hang onto to return to our various homes, I believe those who attended gained a lot from the sessions and were ready to move forward and face challenges that lie ahead to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Despite a terrible experience encountered at Tiger airways, Melbourne, when travelling back to Brisbane, I will always remember the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual UN-DPI-NGO Conference. The conference gave me a vast insight and opened up my mind on the many public health issues happening around the world and what the UN is doing to solve these problems.

# The 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

New York, 22<sup>nd</sup> February – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Priority theme: access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work.  
Following are three reports from AFGW members who attended

## Report by Madeleine Mattarozzi Laming, (AFUW Vice; Federal Education Convener Higher Education

### IFUW's success

From the official IFUW perspective, the 55<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women held in New York 22<sup>nd</sup> February – 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 was an outstanding success. Three thousand five hundred delegates from UN member nations and over 450 non-government organisations from around the world attended a total of 160 events held in the United Nations centre. There are three levels of events that take place during the session: formal sessions of the Commission during which statements from government delegations are presented, semi-official side events, usually hosted by one or more government mission and/or NGO experts and parallel events organised by a wide range of non-government organisations which are held outside of the UN precincts.

IFUW was the official NGO respondent for one of the two high-level round tables held on the opening day of the session, represented by Professor Joy Carter, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Winchester and a member of the British Federation of University Graduates. Places for NGO representatives in the official program are very limited and IFUW should be delighted that we were selected for such a high profile position. Joy received a huge round of applause when she pulled out a newspaper published the day earlier in the UK which included a full page add reading, "We women are kidding ourselves, it is still a men's world." Her response concentrated on identifying the things that are needed to achieve gender equality:

1. role models at every stage in a person's education from primary to post graduate education.
2. research on why women drop out of the scientific, engineering and math fields.
3. quality child care for families that will enable women to study and/or work.

IFUW also hosted an event in partnership with UNESCO, which is another rare occurrence as UNESCO's charter requires it to work with national governments. This event was a panel discussion on secondary education for girls: "Advancing Girls' Secondary Education: Obstacles and Opportunities". The Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova gave the opening address. Speakers included Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director, UNFPA; Abdul Momen, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UN; Gill Greer, Director General, International Planned Parenthood Federation; Rebecca Winthrop, Director, Centre for Universal Education, Brookings Institute and Yaa Marie Jah, student and advocate from Sierra Leone. Marianne Haslegrave, President of IFUW gave the closing address. She stressed the role for civil society and for non-government organisations like the IFUW in lobbying governments to ensure financial fairness in regard to women and presented copies of the *Multi-faceted Right to Education* to the panel members, explaining that the IFUW working group on advocacy had produced the book to assist their own national affiliates and other non-government organisations engaged in the campaign for girls' education. The discussion was very well attended and there were some interesting questions and comments from the audience. A reminder that issues are seldom simple came with the discussion of female genital mutilation. The delegate from Sierra Leone explained that the government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the women who perform FGM: they will not accept any girl under 18 and they will not carry out the procedure during school terms. Initially the government intended to ban the procedure outright, but the practitioners' group pointed out that many older women have no other source of income. The MoU is a compromise that is leading to a reduction in the number of girls undergoing FGM as by 18 most of them are independent and no longer willing to submit.



The conference also made me realise the importance of UN and DPL-NGO having to collaborate to achieve the MDGs. The main emphasis on MDGs 1, 4, 5, 6 is what I think should be addressed vigorously by any NGOs/DPI. There is so much poverty in the world today, maternal health is not improving in some developing countries, HIV/AIDS is crippling nations, and child health is worsening too; how we can help to achieve these goals is up to what our organisations can provide. Finally, I would like to thank the IFUW and AFGW Inc and GW Qld for giving me this wonderful lifetime opportunity to attend the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual conference in Melbourne, Australia. I cannot express how grateful and honoured I am towards the organisations mentioned above. A heartfelt thank you to Jennifer Strauss, Jane Baker, Dalma Jacobs and Deborah Haydon and the members of GWQld. All you women are champions in your own careers. THANK YOU.

IFUW member Sonya Höstman spoke at a second parallel event: "Sharing Knowledge - Joining Forces - Gaining Power: Mentoring as a Tool to Empower NGO Women at the UN CSW". This event was sponsored by the Austrian Federal Minister for Women and Civil Service and co-organized with Women in Development Europe and the International Alliance of Women. Speakers included Julia Günther (WIDE) as facilitator, Marie-Claudine Mukamakabano (Mentor for orphans in Rwanda) and Daniela Reiter, who is the founder of the mentoring project 'genderize!' at the National Youth Council of Austria. Sonya Höstman (IFUW) presented the "European Mentor Programme". It was said that mentoring is a tool to encourage networking in order to join forces and to become stronger – regardless of age, country of origin or social background and that it is important to promote an intergenerational dialogue. A lively discussion followed the panellists' statements and everybody agreed that mentoring is vital, especially at the CSW, to encourage and facilitate participation in a more effective way.

The other events where IFUW delegates or members featured were also successful: the International Hevi Sipiä Seminar, "She Says YES to Education, South-North Dialogue" attracted around 60 people and the seminar by IFUW's four (Geneva, New York, Paris and Vienna) on the priority theme Accessing and Participation of Women and Girls to Education, Training, Science and Technology was also well attended. Unfortunately the seminar was marred by technical problems and Manjiti Dosanjhi (Coordinator of Technology Transfer Network and Biomedical Applications in the Education and Technology Transfer Division of CERN and also IFUW representative to UN in Geneva) had to withdraw at the last moment leaving her paper to be delivered by another speaker and the moderator, Anne Négre.

#### **My own experiences**

Like all delegates, I attended a number of the formal session and as many of the parallel and side events as possible, using these opportunities to participate in discussion and raise the organisation's profile. The most significant of these were:

- *Quality education for girls leads to decent jobs for women.* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Labour Organization (ILO). Panelists emphasised the importance of developing employment opportunities to encourage girls and women to complete their education. Education policy also needs to take employment trends and opportunities into account.
- *Access to Education = Access to Employment* hosted by the Mission of New Zealand. The moderator was The Hon Kate Ellis, Minister for the Status of Women, Australia. Speakers from Kiribati and New Zealand discussed the importance of providing education that would lead to decent employment especially among Indigenous and Pacifica women in an environment that is already affected by climate change.
- *Girls' Voices - Promises Made: a review of CSW 51,* hosted by the Mission of Ireland and featuring speakers from Ireland and Zambia. Very few governments have reached the targets set; this session examined the reasons and presented reports on progress to date in Zambia and Ireland.
- The official launch of UN Women, the new UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women replaces the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. UN Women joined political leaders, media personalities and celebrities including Geena Davis, who has raised millions for UN projects, Nicole Kidman, Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and Shakira in music and celebration.
- The launch of the *2011 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report - The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education at Columbia University.* Speakers included Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO; Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General, UN Women; Mary Robinson, President of the Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice; Jeffery Sachs, Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University; Graça Machel, author of the UN report on the impact of armed conflict on children and Michælle Jean, UNESCO special Envoy for Haiti.

The formal meetings of the Session consisted of national representatives delivering their statements in response to the theme. Predictably, most of these were flattering to the government concerned and they often agreed with the opinions of clearly identified blocks and there were few surprises. Perhaps the most interesting event during the formal sessions was the arrival of an SMS sent to dozens of delegates by an Egyptian women's group denouncing the official delegation as unrepresentative of the Egyptian people. A number of NGOs and Caucuses also presented statements on behalf of their organizations. These reports, made on behalf of millions of women worldwide, took a more challenging line of argument and stressed the following points:

- Women and girls must be treated with respect and dignity. They must live in a safe environment and have access to equal opportunities in education and the work force. Their voices must be heard and their needs met. They need to achieve leadership positions. Governments and the civil society need to provide support, assistance and mentorship so that they can achieve these goals.
- Girls and women must be taught that education is a basic human right and they need mechanisms to access this right.
- Governments and communities must take a stand to prevent women and girls from being used as weapons of war and for trafficking. Laws must be introduced and upheld against these human rights violations.
- Boys and men need to be educated not to emulate stereotypes of masculine behaviour which glorify all types of violence including against women and girls.
- Large numbers of women are illiterate; very poor and rural women who are often isolated and have no access to education are particularly vulnerable.
- Schools must be safe and the journey to school must also be safe.
- There is a high dropout rate of girls in secondary schools in many countries for cultural and other reasons that limit girls' access to tertiary education and pursuit of careers outside the home.
- Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines need assistance including work study programs, mentoring by professional women and funding.
- Education needs adequate funding for operating costs; teacher's salaries need to be sufficient to attract and retain quality staff.
- Ownership of land and access to clean water, adequate food and affordable, reliable energy must be available without gender bias.

One other memorable moment came about during a parallel event hosted by the Czech Republic when a delegate from one of the West Africa nations (probably Sierra Leone, but possibly Senegal) asked a question of the panel:

"So, you are telling us that all the positive changes to women's lives, their work and legal position, came about because of the Second World War ... how can we achieve those things without a war?"

**Progress on the theme**

This question may turn out to be more pertinent than we would like to believe: delegates who had been to CSW previously noted that the anti-feminist argument was stronger this year with some national delegations making speeches that questioned issues which were accepted years ago. In particular, the Holy See's speech rang alarm bells. During the informal consultations on the agreed conclusions their delegation adopted a position that was less co-operative than in previous years: wording that had been agreed since Beijing was now being questioned. They challenged the idea of gender mainstreaming by demanding that the "essential genius" of women should be recognised. Also, Hayrunnisa Gül, wife of the Turkish President, described the growing acceptance of the *hijab* in public places where it has previously been banned as a victory for women's rights proving once again that gender equity is a complex issue.

Further evidence of the increasing opposition to gender equality by some national governments was that the Commission could not get agreement on the conclusions until 23:30 of the final day. The last meeting should have adopted the draft report, but this was not possible and the Commission had to reconvene on 14<sup>th</sup> March.

### Recommendations

IFUW had one of the larger NGO delegations with 20 members from a wide range of countries. On the one hand, this was an exciting show of organizational strength, but it also produced difficulties that could be avoided in future years. The majority of this year's delegates had not attended the Commission previously and found it hard to sort out the different parts of the event.

It was also difficult for IFUW delegates to identify each other, and very difficult to plan activities or strategy. Talking to other delegates, I found there was support for a daily briefing held at a regular meeting place. The official Australian delegation met at 18:00 each evening at the Hilton Hotel to discuss the day's events and make plans for the following day. In fact, I got more useful information from these briefings or from the Australians, in particular Elaine Butler (who happens to be a GWSA member), that from the IFUW party. I believe that the IFUW delegation could have been more welcoming and inclusive to delegates who had travelled very long distances to attend or who did not speak English. A little more advance planning would have improved things a great deal. It would not have been hard to schedule a couple of social events or to recommend 1-2 places to stay so that it was easier for us to find each other. Some delegates also thought we should have a distinctive badge or bandanna like the ones worn by the ILO delegates.

I also believe that a guide for delegates in English, French and Spanish, which clearly explained the structure of the session, the distinction between formal sessions, parallel events and side events, outlined CSW protocol about participation and speaking and set out IFUW's plan of action for the session. Much of this information is available on the CSW and IFUW websites, but a concise form could be made available to delegates as soon as they agree to attend. A guide like this would not be hard to assemble from official sources and could be updated quickly each year. My colleague Helen Forgasz and I missed the NGO Consultation Day on February 21, 2011 as we were not aware how important our presence would be, and we were not the only ones. This day is devoted to workshops on the Commission's priority theme the key outcomes from each workshop, known as the *Expectations* have a significant impact on the Commission's Outcome Report. This day also allows NGO delegates to form alliances to lobby for their priority goals.

Finally, Anne Nègre reported that all French delegates had been given diplomatic status by their Minister for Women and suggested that IFUW delegates lobby their own national governments to do the same. Not only would it raise our profile further, but it would make attending events at all levels much easier and make our role more effective. I raised this during the debriefing session with the Office of the Status of Women, but think we should follow this up with a letter.

Let me finish by saying that I am glad I attended the CSW session and I am grateful for the support I received. The 56<sup>th</sup> session will focus on women in rural areas and they are already collecting information. Should any of our Australian members wish to contribute, they should contact the IFUW office as soon as possible.

### Helen Forgasz AFUW Vic, Federal Education Convener (Schools)

It was indeed an honour to have been invited to join the IFUW delegation to CSW55 as an 'expert' in research on gender issues in science, mathematics, and technology. Although women's participation in science and technology was to be a focus of the CSW55, it ended up being a minor issue. Considering the current global picture, it was perhaps understandable that more emphasis was placed on addressing girls' access to secondary education.

### Sessions attended: Major highlights

#### 22 February 2011

I attended the second high level round table held on Day 1. The focus was on *Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology*. The keynote speaker was Josefina Vasquez Mota, Member of Parliament and former Minister of Education, Mexico. She spoke of the issues faced by women in Mexico and some of the initiatives taken to address them. She considered education a way forward, but education per se was insufficient. Gender stereotypes were a major disadvantage for women. She mentioned the need for labour flexibility, IT skills, access to credit, shared domestic responsibilities, better child care, and stronger laws against human trafficking. Following the keynote speech, ministers

or their delegates from a range of countries each spoke. The initiatives they described were far-ranging, e.g., support for business entrepreneurs, better child care allowing women to work more flexibly, pre-service teacher education as well as in-service, the appointment of a female university "advisors", the potential of mobile phone technologies to open the world to women, and the role of the media.

Jane Hodges (International Labour Office) and Deepali Sood (Plan International) responded on behalf of the UN and NGOs. Each identified issues requiring action to result in quality education and decent work for women: gender stereotypes, professional development of teachers, unequal domestic "care" responsibilities, the role of labour organisations, the need for affirmative action, school to work transition, appropriate counseling, Internet safety, relevant education, improved school curricula with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) integrated, and for women and men to work together to achieve equity. The keynote speaker responded and endorsed the views put forward.

#### 23 February 2011

I attended the UNESCO parallel event chaired by Gulzar Corat. Speakers included: Liz Broderick, Jan Easton, and Jane Hodges. Key challenges were identified: equipping woman with essential scientific/technological skills, and giving girls the confidence to succeed and achieve in a setting free from discrimination. Australian data were presented: a high female participation rate in education BUT inequities in science/technology fields and lack of female success in the workplace; a significant waste of female talent. Reasons: belief barriers (the "good mother" vs ideal worker"), workplace cultures ("gender asbestos" – toxins hidden in walls; sexual harassment – 1 in 4 women), and structural barriers (pay gap, lack of flexibility in working conditions).

Education alone was not seen as the answer ie, being in school ≠ learning, being in class ≠ participation etc. There are higher drop-out rates of girls in western countries. Schools need to work on barriers, stereotypes, physical environments; more research on "gaps"; teachers need to be gender sensitive. An emphasis on jobs (for women), social protection, improved management structures, and rights, were also discussed.

#### 24 February 2011

The NZ-Australia parallel event took place. There were several speakers. Issues relevant to the each speaker's context were identified:

- Gender gaps in primary education in Africa
- Gendered pathways evident in Pacific Islands.
- Gender gaps in the workforce in most countries.

I also attended the Science and Technology caucus . This was poorly attended, a general discussion was held; there were some conflicting views.

In the evening, UN Women was launched. This was an exciting launch. The stars were brought out to speak on relevant issues with which they were involved.

#### 25 February 2011

I watched a fascinating film documenting the life and work of Charlotte Bunch which did not, however, cover her time with GEAR, leading to the creation of UN Women.

#### 28 February 2011

An IFUW meeting was held with Gulsa Corrat (Director, Sex Discrimination, UNESCO). This was an optimistic and encouraging session about the working of UNESCO in the area of gender equality. Gender equality is now one of two global priorities of UNESCO. There is a 6-year action plan, which includes mainstreaming and gender-specific activities. UNESCO has the capacity for training and delivery for gender mainstreaming: 6 modules (15 minutes each) online; one module focuses on how to advocate for gender equality. Unlike UNICEF, UNESCO is not involved in projects at the grass roots level, but works with ministries and governments. The need to collaborate to get good disaggregated data (by gender) was recognised; the UN statistics unit in Montreal is responsive.

Later in the day, the UNESCO-IFUW event was held. There were five speakers, two were outstanding: Irina Bokova, General Secretary of UNESCO and Ya Maria Joh, an 18-year old from Sierra Leone. Irina

Bokova spoke of gender equality in sub-Saharan Africa, noting unequal opportunities based in cultural and social customs. Policies that work, she claimed, required a strong political will. She spoke of several initiatives: no cost schooling, scholarships, and cash-transfer programs; the school must be rewarding – a safe environment with good and stimulating curricula that gender-based harassment was unacceptable; that health and sex education were needed, and that girls should be encouraged to think more widely than traditional careers. Schooling must be empowering, non-formal, and technical capabilities encouraged. Investing in single-sex settings had wide, lifelong benefits for women. A just society was more productive (economically). School textbooks needed to reflect gender sensitivities. New initiatives were needed with commercial partners. She claimed that mobile technologies and ICTs had the potential for long-term benefits.

Ya Maria Joh, an 18-year old from Sierra Leone spoke of the barriers to girls' education in her country. Her talk was moving and painted a desperate picture for young women in that country. She spoke of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) taking between 1-2 months out of school. "Young women in Sierra Leone were becoming more aware of the nice things available in life; to gain them they found "sugar daddies" (ie, prostituted themselves). Class sizes in Sierra Leone were 70+, and there was a lack of materials, computers didn't work etc. A woman from the Sierra Leone delegation responded after the presentations. She spoke proudly that the Sierra Leone government had recently legislated against girls under 18 undergoing FGM. The audience reaction was quietly hostile to this. She failed to outline why this was a move forward. I managed to converse with her on a later occasion and brought up the issue with her. She responded that there was a large number of women in Sierra Leone for whom initiation, or the performance of FGM, was their only source of income; they had protested that their livelihoods were being taken from them. The woman also pointed out that after the age of 18 girls were less influenced by parents and many chose not to undergo FGM. She was therefore very proud of this small step in the right direction.

### 1 March 2011

The launch of the 2011 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report: The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education* was held at Lerner Hall, Columbia University. The speakers were: Irina Bokova (Director-General, UNESCO); Michelle Bachelet (Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General, UN Women); Michaëlle Jean (UNESCO Special Envoy for Haiti); Mary Robinson (President, Mary Robinson Foundation -Climate Justice, and former president of Ireland); Jeffrey Sachs (Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University) and Kevin Watkins (Director, Education for All Global Monitoring Report)

This was a very special event. The high profile speakers all spoke eloquently to the topic of the report with genuine concern and high hopes. Jeffrey Sachs talk was particularly memorable. He pointed out that it was not only in developing countries that governments were prepared to spend more on defence than on primary education; the USA, he maintained did the same. He was also outspokenly critical of both sides of US politics in reaching agreement on tax breaks for the super wealthy; the richest 400 in the US, he said, had more money than the poorest 25 million in the country.

### Submission by Women in Adult & Vocational Education (WAVE) to CSW Debrief –

8th April 2011 Canberra, authored Elaine Butler

#### Recommendations for action

##### Preamble

WAVE welcomes the Agreed Conclusions from CSW 55,<sup>1</sup> and looks forward to working to promote and implement these not only for the benefit of women and girls in Australia, and elsewhere, but also as direct economic, social and cultural benefits for local communities and the wider Australian society. Access to relevant quality education and training is widely recognized as a human right, and the foundation of empowerment of women and girls, including enhancement of their economic, social and political well-being.

We note that the outcome of the Commission's consideration of the priority theme takes the form of agreed conclusions, negotiated by all States. These identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of previous commitments. They also provide action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant

non-governmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the UN System and other relevant stakeholders, in order to accelerate implementation.

The Commission on the Status of Women adopted agreed conclusions on the priority theme on 14 March 2011.<sup>2</sup>

We are now at a moment in Australia where there is no current policy framework with a focus on women and girls in education and training in this country. Indeed, the last policy for girls in compulsory education was dated 1996. This signifies a serious gap in our collective knowledge of what is 'going on' for girls and women in education and training other than relying on broad data sets that do not investigate underlying complexities associated with gender, diversities and so difference.

Historically the barriers to equity faced by women in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and (to a lesser degree) employment have been addressed through national policy frameworks, including the last VET national policy for women, *Women: Shaping our future*. This expired in 2010; moreover it was never implemented. Current national and state/territory policy approaches take a 'social inclusion' approach. For the most, this approach does not include gender analyses, is not gender sensitive, has no accountability in relation to gender let alone women and girls, and is most often 'gender neutral' in its language, strategies and implementation. It is timely that Australia reinstates gender sensitive policies and practices relevant to the demands of learning, living and working in C21st for women and girls in all their diversity.

In line with CSW 55 Conclusions and international obligations, including recognition of related global agreements identified therein, WAVE seeks Australian Government commitment to implement education, training and employment policies based on gender analyses, including a new strategic framework for Australian women with a clear set of priorities and targets that take account of their diverse backgrounds, locations, life stages and needs.

The new framework must move beyond a gender-neutral stance to be based on gender analyses and be set in the context of key initiatives including the forthcoming COAG Reforms; the Skills Australia proposed reforms and the work of the National VET Equity Advisory Committee (NVEAC). The inter-related gap between VET and inequitable employment outcomes for women also requires urgent attention and structural change.

#### WAVE argues that:

- taking a gender neutral position is out of step with international human rights conventions and also with international Global Reporting Index (GRI), which has a committee addressing gender issues within its framework;
- taking a gender neutral position is out of step with the Australian Government's Office for Women, National Pay Equity Campaign and the considerable work being undertaken by the Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner;
- taking a gender neutral position is out of step with the numerous Australian women's organisations clustered under the National Women's Alliance, all of who express their concern regarding the status of women in Australia, women's economic sustainability and the relevance of education to this position;
- The National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC) is in a powerful position to counter many of the misconceptions that have gained currency about the irrelevance of gender to conditions of employment, under employment and hidden unemployment. There is substantial evidence that women are still disadvantaged in relation to pay equity, access to part time jobs of significance, that they are still disproportionately represented in low paid part time and casual employment with poor conditions and fail to be counted as part of unemployment figures as they also are in unpaid carer roles within the family. When they do choose to return to work TAFE and other adult education offers them a pathway into further study and employment;
- young women and other women still study in gender-segmented patterns in VET and VET in schools.
- This reproduces patterns of gendered employment and employment outcomes;
- a failure to acknowledge these structural flaws and address them now following CSW 55 and through planned reforms would be a wasted opportunity. Embedding indicators and building on existing

- capacity in relation to the provision of gender sensitive policies and programs for women and girls in VET is critical. For improved sustainable outcomes for women and girls through reinvigorated gender sensitive education and VET policies (including those based on social inclusion discourses) require:
- recognition that increased qualifications for women do not necessarily result in improved employment outcomes and that structural reforms are needed;
- promotion and provision of gender sensitive counselling, including career counselling, to result in broader subject selection (including science and technology) by women and girls in schools to prevent the perpetuation of segmented fields of work and study;
- a reinstatement and re-commitment to the value of pre-vocational programs for women returning to work after raising children, caring or moving from income support; and
- promotion of industry and employment based training programs to women to address skills shortages, opportunities in emergent industries and occupations and viable career pathways to full employment and decent work.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

In recognition of the key theme for and Agreed Conclusions of CSW 55, WAVE recommends the following as necessary for VET policy and programs to achieve substantive equality between men and women in Australia.

We call on the Australian Government to:

- make women's learning needs central to all VET strategies and policies, including the forthcoming National Equity Blueprint. This requires an explicit recognition of women per se, to adequately redress issues of intersectionality (Indigenous women, women with disabilities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women, low SES women, rural women and so on);
- implement strategies for VET based on gender analyses to inform a training framework able to provide opportunities for women at different stages of their life cycle and appropriate to their needs and circumstances. Again, such analyses must include attention to issues of intersectional issues and related disadvantage;
- ensure gender expertise on all national VET equity advisory committees & VET working groups;
- ensure gender analysis and provision for implications of such analyses informs all COAG consultations especially those relating to VET reform;<sup>3</sup>
- implement a VET strategic framework for women with clear priorities and accountability mechanisms, including linking VET funding arrangements to key performance indicators for women, especially those most disadvantaged (Indigenous and disabled women and girls);
- collect, analyse and publish performance and outcome data that include trends over time and are disaggregated by gender and demographic characteristics. Such data will assist in the identification of trends and issues, development of strategies to address these, and ongoing monitoring;
- provide accessible gender sensitive career counselling (including VET in schools) to broaden subject and course selection by girls and women in schools and VET to enhance career pathways and meaningful employment outcomes for women and girls as well as addressing Australia's gender segmented labour force;
- reinstate and recommit to the value of pre-vocational or 'stepping stone' programs for women returning to work after raising children, caring or from income support;
- develop, implement and monitor programs that promote women into non-traditional trades and professions;
- design and implement a national program in partnership with strategic corporate and industry partners to redress entrenched cultures in masculinised industries and occupations to increase enrolments in VET and higher education and so the critical mass of women in such industries and occupations;
- ensure that employment creation programs and employer based incentives designed in response to skilling Australians for future employment opportunities, for skill shortages, emergent industries and occupations include initiatives that benefit women and girls, and include quotas & or targets where necessary to address Australia's gender segmented labour force;<sup>4</sup>

- ensure provision of local, accessible, flexible and culturally sensitive training, at low or no cost, so that training-related initiatives and policies benefit all who are currently outside the workforce or seeking to improve their existing employment status and security;
- promote industry and employment based training programs aimed at recruiting women into industries that value flexible work practices for men and women to enable caring responsibilities to be met.

Authored by:  
Elaine Butler National Co-Convenor- WAVE; Aust Govt. Delegate CSW55  
Endorsed by: Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

- UN Economic and Social Council Commission on the Status of Women Fifty-fifth Session 22 February-4 March Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women on the basis of informal consultations ECN 6/2011/L.6 8 March 2011 Available at: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw55sess.htm#agreed](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw55sess.htm#agreed)
- UN Women Commission on the Status of Women Agreed Conclusions: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/)
- Of high significance at the moment are Inquiries relating VET system reform including 'Foundation Skills'; Apprenticeships and Traineeships; Assessment in VET; Teaching in VET
- Of significance here for example is the recent announcement of \$200 million Critical Skills Investment Fund to improve skills in the resources sector – a heavily masculinised sector



WOMEN IN ADULT AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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# AFGW REPORT to IFUW

## EDUCATION

### ACTION on 2010 CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

and

### 2010-2013 PROGRAMME for ACTION (PfA)

Refer to these links for the context of the relevant Conference documents:  
[www.ifuw.org/resolutions/2010/30th-conference-resolutions.shtml](http://www.ifuw.org/resolutions/2010/30th-conference-resolutions.shtml)  
[www.ifuw.org/programme/](http://www.ifuw.org/programme/)

## STATUS OF WOMEN EQUITY AND WORK

### RESOLUTION 1 – Work Life Balance for Women between Professional Careers and Family Responsibilities

#### PfA: Pillar 1 - Education for Empowerment and Leadership.

1.1 Advocacy Completed two decades ago. ILO Convention 156 Ratified by Australia on 30 March 1990.

1.2, 1.3, 1.4 Considerable advocacy is shown on [www.afgw.org.au/advocacyFS.shtml](http://www.afgw.org.au/advocacyFS.shtml)

#### General Action-

1. AFGW is currently undertaking considerable advocacy and project work in collaboration with the 6 National Women's Alliances as follows:
  - Work life Balance; Several Submissions made during 2007-10
  - Paid Parental Leave; Several letters and submissions during 2007-10. Jennifer Strauss and member Marie Coleman presented AFGW views at related public hearings. RESULTS; National government funded scheme introduced on 1 January 2011.
  - Provision of affordable, available, high quality Child Care and Out of School hour Care; Several letters and submission forwarded to government during 2007-10 Triennium. Member Marie Coleman presented AFGW views at related public hearing.
  - Defining and measuring the Care Economy in Australia. AFGW represented on project advisory group by Elaine Butler and Daima Jacobs.
  - Sharing family responsibilities;
  - Narrowing the Gender Pay/Wealth Gap;
  - Career Pathways for Women and Girls; Emergent and Non-traditional Occupations and Industries [ie Viable Work];
  - a school focused Girls into Non- Traditional Trades pilot project;
  - Indigenous Women's Experiences of Work;
  - Women and Employment Survey. AFGW represented on advisory group by Elaine Butler and Daima Jacobs)
  - What Business Wants Project – Assessing SME's attitudes and approach to gender equality in the workplace and female participation in the Workplace. BPW is leading this project.
2. The November 2012 AFGW triennial Conference theme has now been approved and will be: **Women, Education and Work.** Expert speakers at a public day of workshop discussions are currently being locked into the program.
3. AFGW endorsed and contributed substantially to the Workplace balance and Professional development components of the Australian 2010 CEDAW NGO's Shadow Report and the 2011 Follow-up Action Plan and Resource Sheets. Elaine Butler, Marie Coleman and Daima Jacobs from AFGW were members of the National Advisory Group.
4. As members of the newly established national Gender Statistics Advisory Group (GSAG), AFGW members Marie Coleman and Daima Jacobs keep a watching brief on all official statistics on Numeracy and literature particularly in the development of the first cut of a new set of Gender Indicator to be issued at the end of June 2011. The key series will be: Males and females aged 15-64 years at all skill levels of Numeracy by age. However, a lot of work still has to be undertaken to ensure that gender disaggregated data on the educational outcomes of women is collected and made publicly available at no cost.

### RESOLUTION 3 – Financial Literacy

#### PfA: PILLAR 3 - Education for financial independence, employment & entrepreneurship.

1. AFGW has been involved in several Financial Literacy projects through the economic Security4Women National Women's Alliance since 2004. Several Facts Sheets were produced including *Women, money & debt*; *A woman's guide to surviving the money jungle; Separation: deciding to leave a relationship; Separation: property; Gambling*.

### RESOLUTION 2 – Numeracy and women

#### PfA PILLAR 3: Education for Financial independence, employment & entrepreneurship

2.1 – Australia is participating in the 2011 OECD PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) Survey (with results available in 2013).

Three AFGW members who were CSW55 delegates are currently collaborating with Office for Women and other NGOs on follow up strategies which cover Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) all non traditional fields of study for women. Copies of advocacy letters and submissions will be forwarded to IFUW when completed. A detailed news item of their CSW55 experience will published in the 2011 issue of AFGW magazine *Graduate Women* to be released in July.

2.2 – Some of our members will investigate how AFGW might contribute, but AFGW really has no corporate capacity to assist in this specific research. However our support on eS4W Financial Literacy projects is relevant. AFGW notes this year's National Literacy and Numeracy Week (NLNW) as Monday 29th August to Sunday 4th September. The theme this year is *The Fundamentals are Fun!* SEE details at the DEEWR link [www.deewr.gov.au/SCHOOLING/PROGRAMS/NATIONALLITERACYANDNUMERACYEEK/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/SCHOOLING/PROGRAMS/NATIONALLITERACYANDNUMERACYEEK/Pages/default.aspx)

#### General Action

1. AFGW/Members Madeleine Laming and Helen Forgasz attended CSW55 as part of the IFUW delegation. Numeracy was part of the agenda although Science, Technology and Engineering were included in the STEM focus.
2. AFGW Member Elaine Butler was chosen as one of two NGO members in the Australian Government CSW55 delegation. Elaine is also National Co Convenor of Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE) ([www.wave.org.au/](http://www.wave.org.au/)) She is currently drafting some advocacy letters and preparing a submission based on the Concluding Statement and will be seeking endorsement by AFGW and other NGOs with an interest in Education. Hopefully, a national vocational education and training policy, which includes numeracy programs suitable for women requiring "remedial" training can be implemented.
3. Elaine Butler also recently met with Prime Minister Julia Gillard in a one on one conversation for 10 minutes and also with Education Minister Chris Evans - both encounters were part of the community Cabinet Meeting in Adelaide. Elaine was able to raise quite a lot of issues relating to the education of Women and Girls including Helen's research on the national numeracy test results in schools and commanded PM Gillard for her focus on education, including Vocational Education and Training. While their knowledge of CSW55 Outcomes was uncertain they did listen to our concerns. Minister Evans said he'd be back in touch with Elaine. Elaine has recommended that all NGOs need to invest (a lot) more advocacy work on the CSW55 recommendations, at both national and state levels. An overview pack was prepared for the PM and the Minister by WAVE. The DEEWR information came via OfW and the Alliances in their wrap up at the CSW55 debrief. A national strategy for women and girls is essential as Social Inclusion didn't appear to work for women and girls, and the States tended to default to Social Inclusion if no national requirements were provided.
4. As members of the newly established national Gender Statistics Advisory Group (GSAG), AFGW members Marie Coleman and Daima Jacobs keep a watching brief on all official statistics on Numeracy and literature particularly in the development of the first cut of a new set of Gender Indicator to be issued at the end of June 2011. The key series will be: Males and females aged 15-64 years at all skill levels of Numeracy by age. However, a lot of work still has to be undertaken to ensure that gender disaggregated data on the educational outcomes of women is collected and made publicly available at no cost.

### RESOLUTION 3 – Financial Literacy

#### PfA: PILLAR 3 - Education for financial independence, employment & entrepreneurship.

1. AFGW has been involved in several Financial Literacy projects through the economic Security4Women National Women's Alliance since 2004. Several Facts Sheets were produced including *Women, money & debt*; *A woman's guide to surviving the money jungle; Separation: deciding to leave a relationship; Separation: property; Gambling*.

2. Joint Advocacy by the National Womens Alliances incl/AFGW and others plus research by ASIC has led to the development of a National Financial Literacy Strategy and the MoneySmart website MoneySmart ([www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au)). AFGW is now maintaining a watching brief on the foreshadowed draft legislation to implement the recommendations. If more advocacy is required that will be followed up.
3. In addition, AFGW through eSAW is currently supporting a project called **10thousandgirls Financial Literacy Program** where eSAW is funding of up to approx \$20,000 for bursaries to young women in difficult circumstances, in order to inspire and educate young Australian Women to plan for the future and financial foundations.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

##### **RESOLUTION 4 – Abuse of Female Migrants**

##### **PfA PILLAR 2 – Education for Freedom from Violence**

1. On 15 February 2011, the Minister for the Status of Women, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, and the Attorney-General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP, announced the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. AFGW currently has a watching brief on the reaction to and implementation of the National Plan and foreshadowed legislation to support it.
2. On 30 May 2011 Attorney-General Robert McClelland welcomed the passage of the Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011 through the House of Representatives. It still has to be passed in the Senate. It contains a number of improvements to the Family Law Act 1975 - to create a safer and fairer family law system and prioritise the safety of children.

#### **ENVIRONMENT**

##### **RESOLUTION 7 – Addressing Climate Change – Greenhouse Gas**

##### **PfA PILLAR 4 – Education for Sustainable Future**

- IFUW Vice President and AFGW Immediate Past President Jennifer Strauss has written to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency quoting the clauses in this resolution and requesting that the Government support the foundation blocks for an international climate agreement. Climate change is a global problem that needs a global response.

#### **PEACE**

##### **RESOLUTION 8 – Cluster Munitions**

##### **PfA PILLAR 2 – Education for Freedom from Violence**

- AFGW President Jane Baker has written twice to the Minister for Defence. First she congratulated the Government on its decision to sign the UN Treaty to Ban the Use of Cluster Bombs. A follow up letter was submitted as the Government proceeded towards ratification of the Treaty with legislation to make this Australia into line with the provisions of the Convention. AFGW is urging the Government to make this legislation as strong as possible to prevent the use of these unacceptable weapons.

##### **RESOLUTION 9 – Peacekeeping**

##### **PfA PILLAR 2 – Education for Freedom from Violence**

- AFGW President Jane Baker has written to Prime Minister Gillard requesting that Australia, following the example of other UN nations, prepare a National Action Plan to ensure the terms of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) re women's place in peacekeeping be implemented.

Dalma Jacobs  
AFGW - CIR

## **Obituaries**

### **Betty Davy (nee Cowley) OAM 1919-2010**

Betty Davy was a former office bearer in AFGW at state and federal level, including federal secretary and a member of AFGW NSW for more than 40 years. She passed away in September 2011 only a few days after celebrating her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday and the morning after the news that the ALP was to form a minority government.

Family, friends and colleagues met for a service of thanksgiving for her life and commitments on 10th September 2010 at St Andrew's Anglican Church, Roseville. All those assembled remembered with love and pride her feisty enjoyment of life, and her many personal and professional community activities. Her daughter, Helen, and her son-in-law Michael Lowe survive her.

Betty was intensely proud of her schooling at Meriden, Strathfield. She then attended the University of Sydney (1937-1940) graduating as Bachelor of Arts with Honours in English and History. After gaining her Diploma in Education at Sydney Teachers College Betty first taught in country NSW; Cooma, Armidale and Kempsey. In the latter North Coast town she met her future husband, Clyde Davy, who worked for the then Bank of NSW (now Westpac). After marriage and the birth of their daughter the family moved about country NSW, following Clyde's career with the bank. In the late 1960s, the family returned to Sydney's North Shore, and Betty furthered her teaching career successively at St Ives and Killara High Schools, and then at Brigidine College, St Ives.

Betty had many and wide-ranging community interests. She was a long-term member of the Liberal party, and from the early 1970s became increasingly active within it. Her community work included the English Speaking Union and three leading women's organizations: the Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association of Australia, the National Council of Women, and the Australian Federation of University Women. In all three, Betty had an impressive record at state, national and international levels, as convener of committees and secretaries at state and national level. Within her local AFGW branch (North Shore, NSW), Betty was a strong advocate of initiatives in higher education. She served as branch president, and as secretary on two occasions, and she later served as representative to the NSW state executive. She helped organize the Triennial Conference of AFGW Inc. in 1997, centred at Macquarie University (the theme was 'Participatory living, learning & leadership').

Shared ideals led Betty to attend four successive overseas conferences of the International Federation of University Women - in Helsinki, San Francisco, Yokohama and Graz. These were followed by travel and extensive contacts with other IFUW members, which strengthened Betty's commitment to the struggle for women's rights. Improvements in health and habitat, and in personal integrity, would be promoted by our graduates' support for equality of opportunity for women and for their lifelong education. And so Betty continued her community commitments, proving that there is no barrier to service. Latterly, she added UNIFEM Australia and their city breakfasts on International Women's Day to her many activities. In 1995 Betty received the Order of Australia Medal for her services to all the above community groups. Many considered her pivotal role three years earlier in establishing the NSW Seniors Card was central to the awarding of that honour. She also was awarded the Liberal Party's Distinguished Service Medal by the then Prime Minister, John Howard.

Planning and advising right to the end, Betty will be remembered for her contentment of mind and for revelling in today while ever hopeful for the morrow,

**Dorothy E. Betty OAM**

Past President AFGW Inc and AFGW NSW I

(Adapted from the tribute in AFGW NSW Newsletter)

### **Obituaries continued over**

**Betty Grey OAM**, life member of AFUW Tasmania, 1923–2011  
 Betty was AFUW CIR when Federal Council was in Tasmania in 1989–1991. Betty, in conjunction with Faith Layton, AFUW President, worked tremendously hard to increase the international aspects of AFUW National Conference with representatives from throughout the Pacific: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomons, Vanuatu, and, of course, New Zealand. At the branch level, she was most supportive of the annual Careers Evening for Girls.

Betty was considered in Tasmania as a trailblazer in education and a committed community worker. She trained as a teacher at the Phillip Smith Training College and the University of Tasmania. She taught at Huonville Area School and Smithton High School before being required to resign from the teaching service, as women were required to do at the time, to have her family.

After returning to the Education Department she was appointed Senior Mistress—something Betty described as a ‘horrible sexist term’ - at Launceston Matriculation College. This was an innovative time in Tasmanian education, with the creation of years 11 and 12 colleges in the government system, and Betty was a committed and enthusiastic part of making it work. She was later appointed vice principal of another pre-tertiary school - Launceston’s Alanvale College.

Betty was also active within her professional associations and the community. She was a member and officer of the Tasmanian Teachers Federation, the Retired Teachers Association, the Australian College of Education, the World Education Fellowship, the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Adult Education, the Women’s Health Network of Launceston, the Zonta International Club of Launceston, the National Council of Women, the National Foundation for Australian Women, the Tasmanian Women’s Consultative Council, the Advisory Council of the University of Tasmania’s School of Nursing, Amnesty International and other local groups.

Betty was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1998 for service to education through the Australian Education Union and to the community through organisations including the National Council of Women and Zonta International. Later she was inducted as a member of the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women.

She had a wonderful sense of humour and had hearty discussions with people from all walks of life. Most of all, we will miss her smile and encouragement.

**Kathy Mumford**  
 Past President AFUW Tas

### **Elizabeth (Betty) Patterson AM**

Elizabeth F. (Betty) Patterson (nee Armstrong) AM died aged 91 at Kentish Court, Sinnamon Park on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011. Betty Armstrong graduated with a BA from UQ in 1942 and taught at the Anglican Girls’ School Herberton and Clayfield College while also studying for her Diploma of Education. In 1946 she married Rev Tom Patterson and from 1946–58 she participated in ministry within the congregations of Innisfail and Paddington.

In 1958 her husband was appointed Chaplain of Scots’ College Sydney and Betty returned to teaching at Ascham School. Following the sudden death of her beloved husband in 1964 Betty returned to Brisbane and taught at Somerville House from 1964–69 while studying as an evening student for her B.Ed graduating in 1969.

In October 1969 Betty became the inaugural Principal of Grace College – then a new residential college for women at the University of Queensland. She did an amazing job in the first difficult year of the College getting established and according to the College Newsletter there were times when there was not enough money for her to be paid. Betty gave outstanding leadership and is remembered for her personal touch which included such things as arranging an early breakfast before sunrise for Muslim students during the month of Ramadan.

Her picture hangs in the present dining room of the college and also in the Patterson block. She retired as Principal of Grace College in 1984 and in recognition of her role in support of Education was awarded an AM in June 1986. She was also made a Fellow of Grace College and recently had a bursary named in her honour.

Betty supported AFUW-Q (now GWQ Inc) in many ways. She had the patterns for hoods and bought correct material for us and the coloured silks for the hoods which varied for each faculty before the change to the white hood for all first degrees at UQ. The Fellowship Fund Branch honoured Betty by naming one of their Commemorative Fellowships in her name. I had the pleasure of having Betty as my Secretary during the 3 year period I served as President of AFUW-Q and could not have had more faithful support from anyone. Betty was a wonderful wordsmith and I enjoyed putting my signature to letters she drafted for me.

Betty was a foundation member of the Alumni Association of UQ – now Alumni Friends so her association with that group goes back to 1967.

Betty played a significant role in Uniting Church Affairs and put her talents with Gown Hiring to the design of the graduation hoods for the Brisbane Biblical College. She had a lovely home which I often visited. I remember her being told that she should retire from the Uniting Church position she held but she decided to work on for one more year as when she retired they would appoint a man in her place. This is what happened but they appointed two men to cover the work she had been doing! A letter from the Moderator of the Uniting Church in Queensland was read at her funeral and the Present Principal of Grace College, Sue Fairley attended.

We remember Betty and give thanks to God for her life.

**Deima Doherty**  
 Membership Secretary GWQ



Left: Betty Davy



Right: Betty Grey

Below: Betty Patterson (far right) with the current Principal of Grace College Dr Sue Fairley (centre) and former Principal Berilyn Miller Morrison 2010

