



**Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.**

*restructured to*



**Australian Graduate Women Inc.**

***The Catalyst***

## **Newsletter 1 – 2019**

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Dear Members

In this first newsletter from the new executive of AGW, we trial a new embedded email newsletter similar to the GWI and UN Women Australia newsletter. We hope to send out a newsletter every two months to keep you updated of decisions, events, advocacy and future directions. In this newsletter we use both logos to indicate the restructure.

Post the Australian Federation Graduate Women (AFGW) Special General Meeting that took place on 6 April 2019, we begin by thanking the AFGW executive and the fellowships officer for the immense work that they have undertaken in the last four years and share their outstanding profiles but more so their immense commitment to AFGW and the cause of higher education for women. The new executive of Australian Graduate Women (AGW) and their short bios are then presented.

The recent Special General Meeting (SGM) of the AFGW took place on 6 April 2019, the transition to Australian Graduate Women (AGW) and the decisions that were approved at the meeting are shared. We attach a membership form and details of membership dues for 2019-2020 that need to be paid from 1 July 2019, so that members travelling and attending the GWI conference can take note of details. **This form is for the restructured organisation (AGW), your state presidents will contact you separately in regards to membership fees for your state association.**

We then highlight the preparations for the GWI Triennium and conference and AGW representation at the GWI centenary are listed. Finally, Professor Shirley Randell, AO and Professor Jaya Dantas share their reflections on attending CSW63 at the UN in New York from 11 to 22 March 2019. We hope to be in touch with all our members and inform you of future directions.

Best wishes

**Prof Jaya Dantas** (President); **Jenny Jones** (Secretary); **Prof Shirley Randell, AO** (CIR); **Alison Hayden** (Treasurer)

## ***Our appreciation of the (2015-19) AFGW executive committee***

### **Dr Jane BAKER**

Jane Baker qualified as a medical doctor, MBBS AKS from London University (Kings College London and Westminster Medical School). After a Diploma in Obstetrics she began postgraduate training in Anaesthetics at Oxford University where she met her husband Barry. They returned to Brisbane on Australia Day 1972, the day the Aboriginal Tent Embassy opened in Canberra. Academic promotion took the family to Dunedin in 1975 and in 1990, Jane joined the Otago Branch of NZFGW for the fellowship and stimulating non-medical speakers in one of the largest and most active branches of graduate women with a large number of young members. At the end of 1992, she moved to Sydney and transferred membership to AFGW NSW. On retirement, Jane became more active as a Branch President (Inner West 2003-6), NSW President (2008-10) and AFGW President 2009-2012. She has been a delegate or alternate at IFUW Conferences in Manchester, Mexico and Istanbul and Cape Town but regards her most rewarding contribution to AFGW as Chairman of the AFGW NSW Education Trust, which now includes the AFGW Trust, over a time of generous endowment and donation that has enabled the scope of Scholarships and Prizes to grow significantly. She served a second term as President (2015-19) supported by a very experienced executive who helped enable continuation as AGW at a time of fall in membership. I have appreciated Jane's wisdom and experience as we transition to AGW

### **Dalma JACOBS**

Dalma achieved her B.Econ degree with majors in Economics and Statistical Mathematics from University of Queensland in 1965. Dalma had a long career in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1959-2000) reaching the Senior Management Team and is currently on the ABS Gender Statistics Advisory Group (GSAG). Currently Dalma is assisting ABS with the development of the 2020 -21 Time use Survey as a member of the Time Use Reference Group (TURG). She has been a member of Graduate Women Queensland (GWQ) since 1965 and of the ACT chapter of the AFGW from 1990-2000. Dalma was Vice President of GWQ from 2003-2008 and the Status of Women convenor from 2004-2006. She has been the National Coordinator for International Relations from 2006-2012, and from 2015 to 2019. Dalma has represented AFGW on the Economic Security 4 Women (ES4W) National Alliance since 2006 and is currently, an advisor to the AFGW SDG4 Task Force. Internationally, Dalma has been involved in several GWI conferences. In 1965 she was a volunteer in Brisbane, a delegate in Perth in 2004 and joint lead delegate in Manchester in 2007. Dalma has made a huge contribution to the AFGW over more than 50 years and will continue to represent AGW on ES4W. I have also valued Dalma's advice especially over the last year as I begin to learn the workings of GWI and lead AGW.

### **'Tricia BLOMBERY**

'Tricia has retired from national and international involvement after nine years as Secretary, six as Education Convener and treasurer to two triennial conferences. She has represented AFGW on eS4W and as a delegate to four GWI meetings. She served six years on the GWI Finance committee before being elected Treasurer to the Board. She remains Treasurer of AFGW-NSW and of the Education Trust where the national fellowships are invested. 'Tricia's work as secretary for AFGW has been tremendous and we have appreciated her preciseness, timeliness and skill in putting together the Council, SGM and AGM documentation.

### **Merle THOMPSON, OAM**

Merle joined the then NSW Association of University Women Graduates in 1968 as a young graduate and participated in the Hunter Branch for 18 months. On returning to Sydney as branches met in business hours she became a silent member for over 10 years until Blue Mountains Branch was formed. For over 30 years Merle was employed in the NSW Public Service as a vocational counsellor then in administration and policy with a focus on equity in education. After retiring fairly early Merle's existing commitments to AFGW as well as Polio NSW and the Australian Plants Society increased considerably and continue. In 2000 she became National Registrar assuming the role six months early and served two terms of three years plus an additional few months. In 2009 she returned to that role, having served as a proxy in between times, then in 2012 took on the new position of Hon Business Manager in which she continued until the SGM this month. As mentioned by Jane in our post-council news in February, Merle was awarded the OAM at the Australia Day honours. Merle has very kindly agreed to be **Public Officer** for the AGW and has assisted us during the transition phase.

### **Dr Jennifer STRAUSS, AM (Fellowships Officer)**

Jennifer Strauss AM is a poet and retired academic who worked for many years in the English Department of Monash University. She has also worked for many years for AFGW and GWI at State, national and international levels, especially with regard to constitutional matters and scholarships. A multiple past President of both GWV and AFGW, she served two terms on the GWI Board. She is currently on the GWI Fellowships Committee, Assessment Co-ordinator for GWV Scholarships and Fellowships Officer for AFGW. Jenny and Jocelyn Eskdale (Convener of Resolutions) did the excellent job of changes to the constitution as we transition from AFGW to AGW. Jenny has kindly agreed to be fellowships officer for 2019.

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### **Introducing the AGW COMMITTEE FOR 2019 - 2020**



**Professor Jaya Dantas**, PhD accepted the position as **President of GWWA** in February 2019. She is currently Dean International and Professor of International Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Curtin University in WA. Jaya has worked for 32 years in India, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Australia and has undertaken teaching and research in Timor Leste, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Pakistan and South Africa. Her research focusses on post-conflict resettlement among migrants and refugees especially women and youth. She is a passionate advocate for education of women and youth. As a migrant women from India whose life has been immensely impacted by education, she contributes lived experiences on gender,

education and health.



**Alison Hayden** is currently Treasurer of GWWA. Alison worked with the Commonwealth Bank for 23 years. While working, she studied a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and completed a Graduate Diploma in Education. She then worked in schools in country WA and in Perth teaching Accounting and Finance and taught in China for a year teaching English. Alison worked for 8 years as a finance administrator for a charitable organisation in Broome, WA. Whilst working in Broome in 2001, Barbara Hale visited from Perth and gave a talk about Graduate Women WA. On her return to Perth, Alison became a committee member and later Treasurer of GWWA. She is committed to being part of an organisation dedicated to assisting women achieve their potential through education.



**Jenny Jones** is the immediate Past President of GWWA on the Committee. She completed a Bachelor of Science at UWA, followed by a career as a Teacher, Computer Programmer and Systems Analyst, and an Academic. She has raised children and step-children, and is now enjoying her time with grandchildren. Since retiring, she has been involved with several not-for-profit groups, finding a particular resonance with the goals of Graduate Women both here in Australia and Internationally. As well as an on-going interest in science and its ability to inform public debate in different areas, she also enjoys reading, writing poetry, philosophy and travel.



**Professor Shirley Randell AO, PhD**, has been a past World Vice President of IFUW and member then Convener of the IFUW Projects Committee. She is currently a member of the Graduate Women International Special Committee on Project Development. Shirley was Founder and President of the Ballarat Branch of AFGW Vic, an Executive member of AFGW ACT, and Founder and CIR of both the Vanuatu Association of University Women and the Rwanda Association of University Woman. Since returning to Australia she has been CIR of AFGW NSW and is an Executive member of AFGW City Branch. Shirley has worked at all levels of education in Australia, Asia, Pacific and Africa and is currently Adjunct Professor at the Universities of Canberra and Newcastle.

## SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING (SGM) OF THE AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF GRADUATE WOMEN (AFGW)

The SGM was held on 6 April 2019, and the name of the association changed from Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc to Australian Graduate Women (AGW) Inc. This decision was unanimously carried. Dr Jennifer Strauss and Jocelyn Eskdale worked hard to produce the Rules that were accepted by Council in a unanimous vote and the Constitution of the AGW was accepted in its entirety as the Constitution of the AGW Association. The Constitution is accepted by Fair Trading NSW and Graduate Women International.

The nominated candidates were elected **as the** Executive for 38<sup>th</sup> Triennium and three are from GWWA:

- President – Jaya Dantas GWWA
- Coordinator of International Relations - Shirley Randell – AFGW NSW
- Secretary – Jenny Jones – GWWA
- Honorary Business Manager/Treasurer – Alison Hayden – GWWA

At the AGW AGM early in the next financial year the three councillors listed in the new rules can be elected from the full membership with a vote by members. We will keep you informed of developments.

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We attach a membership form and details of payment and ask and sincerely hope that all current members consider joining AGW. We live in a time of immense global change and turmoil and it is women's voices that will continue the ongoing efforts of the last 97 years.

Payment will be received from 1 July 2019. The annual membership dues are \$ 70. **This form is for the restructured organisation (AGW), your state presidents will contact you separately in regards to membership fees for your state association.**

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### GWI "Peace Through Education" Triennial and Conference

Plans are well underway for AGW participation and representation at the GWI Triennial and Conference. The AGW delegates at the GWI Tri-ennial Conference will be:

- Jaya Dantas (President AFGW),
- Shirley Randell (CIR AFGW),
- Jennifer Strauss, (Member Emeritus AFGW),

and **alternate delegates** will be:

- Jane Baker (Immediate-Past-President AFGW),
- Miranda Mortlock (member GWQ),
- Stefania Piantavigna (member GW Victoria)

AGW will subsidise travel costs for members attending the GWI triennial conference in the following amounts: delegates **\$1200**, alternates **\$900**, AGW members who are financial as at 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 who provide evidence of their registration to the executive **\$300**.

We have now submitted our AFGW Triennium report – thank you to Dalma and Shirley for their work on the report and to the State Presidents who contributed to the report. We will have excellent representation from AGW. Dr Miranda Mortlock and Dalma Jacobs (GWQ) have a poster presentation accepted for the Geneva Centenary Meeting, Profs Jaya Dantas and Shirley Randell have a workshop presentation and Marion Myhill is presenting a seminar. Amie Khosla will be representing AGW as a young Member. Emily Lawson (GWV)'s song was selected as the Centennial song for the GWI centenary. About 12 members of AGW will be travelling to the GWI conference.

## REFLECTIONS FROM CSW63 AT THE UN IN NEW YORK



Prof Shirley Randell and Prof Jaya Dantas attended the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63)** at the United Nations in New York from 11 March to 22 March 2019. They were delegates of Graduate Women International.

Shirley and Jaya also presented two parallel sessions at CSW63. They attended a reception held by the Australian Ambassador to the United Nations, HE Gillian Bird and an inspiring Town Hall by the Secretary General, Antonio Guterras.

*Prof Jaya Dantas and Jayde Frank – a third year medical student from Curtin University with the former Minister for Women – Hon Kelly O’Dwyer, and HE Gillian Bird, the Australian Ambassador to the UN.*



*Shirley and Jaya standing (sixth and seventh from the right) at the GWI breakfast meeting on 11 March 2019*

### Some strong messages from CSW63 were:

- Some of the powerful strategies governments can implement to reduce disparities are: fair taxation, universal social protection, equitable income distribution, gender responsive budgets, and tackling inequality.



Global migration continues to be a politically divisive issue across the world.  
Emergence of conservative protectionist governments across the world (Hungary, Brazil, USA, Austria, Italy, Turkey).  
Sexual and reproductive health issues continue to be controversial and punitive in some countries.  
Homophobia continues and is criminalised in some countries.  
The need to promote dignity of work for women and men around the world.

*Jaya, Kate Jenkins, Dr Sima Samar ( the human rights activist from Afghanistan) and Shirley*

*GWJ presented a Parallel Session on Women's Empowerment through a Holistic Approach to Education.  
From left to right – Shirley from Australia, Sylvie from Rwanda, Jennifer from USA, Nayana from Mexico, Stacy – ED of GWJ from Geneva, Nolwazi from Zimbabwe, Hazel from South Africa and Jaya from Australia. Apart from Hazel and Stacy all the rest presented at the session..*



For those interested the link to the final agreed CSW63 conclusions is  
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/outcomes> & <https://undocs.org/en/E/CN.6/2019/L.3>

A more detailed report on CSW63 and reflections will be circulated by Shirley and Jaya in the next few weeks.

Any feedback and comments welcome and can be sent to [Jaya.Dantas@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jaya.Dantas@curtin.edu.au)

**We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay our respects to their elders past and present**

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