

NCW ACT Newsletter

Issue 319

November 2013

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It has been a busy and rewarding year with achievements to celebrate, social outings to enjoy, sponsors to thank and the contribution of past members to acknowledge and remember.

The Newsletter is a little late in coming out because our editor, Jean Thomson sustained an arm and shoulder injury while travelling in Western Australia which required surgery in Albany hospital. Fortunately Jean is on the mend now but her typing is somewhat compromised. Thank you to Margaret Findlater-Smith who is assisting to get the Newsletter out and to Jean - *very best get well wishes.*

The Seminar 'Older Women and Homelessness' held at the Southern Cross Club on 31 October 2013 was a great success judging by the comments and responses received. The speakers and panel participants provided excellent presentations and the day went smoothly with professional facilitation from Design Managers Australia.

We were sorry that Liz Dawson was unable to attend to be on the panel as Liz has achieved a great deal with the establishment of Common Ground in the ACT.

A report on the day's proceedings has been prepared by DMA which will be available for download or if requested, distributed to members. (There will be a small charge for hard copies). Our appreciation and thanks are extended to the Southern Cross Club, The Canberra Mothercraft Society and Design Managers Australia for their generous financial support to hold the seminar. We were pleased that Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA was able to open the Seminar - his ministerial responsibilities include Housing and Ageing. Unfortunately it was a Sitting Day at the Assembly so the Minister was unable to stay for the presentations, and other members of the Legislative Assembly were unable to attend. A further donation has been received from ACT Shelter to assist with the seminar costs - thank you to ACT Shelter as well.

Thank you also to the delegates including NCWACT members for attending. Enhancing awareness of an issue as important as homelessness is a first step which will hopefully lead to changes in the future.

Special thanks to the Convenor Margaret Findlater-Smith who developed the program with outstanding speakers from a wide range of service providers and to the members of the Committee, Roslyn Dixon, Jenny Jarvis and Jessie Middlemiss for their assistance with the preparations and on the day.

A group of NCWACT members attended the NCWA's annual wreath laying ceremony held at the War Memorial on October 4 2013.

At our AGM held on 12 September, Life Members Jenny Jarvis and Coral Fleming retired from the Executive having held many positions over many years. Thank you to them both for their contribution, as well as their knowledge and history of the organisation.

Sue Schreiner (Health Adviser) is warmly welcomed as a committee member.

Nicole Lawder MLA, the former head of Homelessness Australia was guest speaker at our AGM. We also enjoyed 90th birthday celebrations for Beryl Evans and Helen Wiles, members who continue to be involved in the activities of the ACT Council.

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An Oak's Day Luncheon was held again this year at the home of Laurayne Bowler which was enjoyed by all. Thank you Laurayne for providing your home and making us welcome. The monies raised will go towards bursaries for an undergraduate in Midwifery and Education in 2014.

It is with sadness that I report that two of our highly respected members died recently. June Laszlo and Heather Clark were very involved over a long period of time with NCWACT, holding a variety of positions and contributing as advisers.



I hope that you will be able to attend the NCWACT Christmas Luncheon to be held at Lemon Grass on Thursday 12 December. (Details appear elsewhere in this newsletter).

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year with family and friends and I look forward to seeing everyone in February.

Wendy Saclier

The following people were duly elected at the recent Annual General Meeting

EXECUTIVE 2013 – 2014

President:	Wendy Saclier
Vice Presidents	Margaret Smith, Helen Raymomd
Secretary	Roslyn Dixon
Assistant Secretary	Laurayne Bowler
Treasurer	Jessie Middlemiss
Roll Secretary	Jean Hodgkinson
Convenor of Standing Committees	Roslyn Dixon
Committee Women	Wendy Gray
Public Officer	Jean Hodgkinson

We congratulate all these ladies and are very pleased that they are willing to continue working so hard for our NCW.

Vale Heather Clark

Heather was born in Sydney, the eldest of 3 children. She was educated at St George Girl's Select School and Sydney University where she met Douglas Clark. Heather and Dr Clark were married in 1953 and moved to Canberra in 1954 where Douglas worked as a research scientist for CSIRO. They built a house in Deakin where they brought up 4 sons, before Douglas died unexpectedly in 1972.

Heather then took up work at various schools, as a teacher's assistant or secretary. She was secretary of School Without Walls in Braddon for many years. During all this time she continued her work for community groups, always interested in helping those less fortunate than herself. Heather served on numerous committees, including in 1980, the International Year of the Disabled, as well as the Marriage Guidance Council of the ACT, and the Board of Specific Educational Learning Difficulties (SPELD).

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As a delegate from SPELD she came to NCW ACT in the 80's and continued as a member of NCW for many years, until her increasing ill health precluded her attendance at meetings. As well as the other commitments, Heather was a hardworking member of the Anglican Church and one of the first two women appointed to the Anglican Synod of Australia.

For her tireless voluntary work she was awarded an OAM in 1988 and was extremely pleased that on the occasion of her investiture, the Queen was visiting Australia and so conferred this honour.

Vale June Laszlo

Edna June McKee was born in Ryde, Sydney, on the 21st of June 1927. Her parents were Thelma and Roland McKee. She had one sister Gwendalyn who was 21 months older. Thelma and Roland were married in December 1924 and they moved into one of the McKee family homes in Ermington. Unfortunately Roland had a fatal motorcycle accident in November 1928.

"Mum had no recollections of her father and this certainly had a big influence on her life. To make matters worse her mother Thelma was asked to vacate their house. Without any means of support Thelma took her two daughters and moved in with her parents who by now owned a small orchard in Young NSW. As the orchard was small, the two girls were raised in very modest circumstances, and to the best of my knowledge with very little contact or support from the McKee's. I think this explains Mums thrifty nature; she did not like to waste anything especially food. Despite these difficult circumstances the two girls completed school and successfully entered the workforce.

Mum initially took up a clerical role in Young. In 1948 her grandmother Alice Mills passed away and she received a small inheritance. With this she moved to Sydney and studied part-time to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree from Sydney University. In 1954 she became an articled clerk to Roscoe Hoyle a Sydney solicitor. This was the start of a legal career that spanned over thirty years. 1954 must have been a big year for Mum; on the 17th of April she married Ivan, her husband of 44 years. Sometime in the late fifties they moved to Tamworth NSW, this was to allow Dad to take up a teaching position with the NSW Education Department. Mum had completed her articles in Sydney and joined Lyons and Barnett a local legal firm as a solicitor. This must have been quite a talking point in country Tamworth in the 50's.

In February 1960 their first child was born, Andrew Roland Laszlo. I followed 23 months later. About this time they brought their first house in Jean Street, Tamworth. Unfortunately this happy situation was not to last, Andrew died of lymphoma in July 1964. Of course this was devastating for both my parents but it particularly affected my father who had lost all his family in the previous war. Mum confided much later that her own grieving was curtailed by her need to support Dad through this very difficult time. She was not complaining, it was just a statement of fact.

Some time before Andrew's death Mum's sister Gwendalyn had also passed away and my Grandmother Thelma had come to live with us. The five of us formed a stable unit and I think the late sixties and early seventies was a very happy time for all us. Aside from raising a family and her legal work Mum was a committed member of Quota, a women's community service organization and she volunteered for LifeLine.

In 1973 we moved to Canberra, primarily so Dad could take up a more senior position in the newly formed ACT Teaching Service. From the very beginning Mum loved Canberra, for her it was the perfect place. There were also new career opportunities. Within a short time she was offered several positions, including an associate position with Minter Simpson now Minter

Ellison, one of Australia's premier legal firms. Sometime later she was invited to become a partner at Minters. This was quite an honor but she declined for family reasons. Again this was typical for her and perhaps a very wise decision.

I think the rest of the seventies and early eighties were generally happy also. Of course Debbie and I were going through our teenage years so there were some rough patches along the way. Mum continued her work with Quota, often serving on the executive and receiving a number of accolades. She also joined the Penguin club, a female version of Toastmasters and again often served on the executive.

After retirement in 1987 she became increasingly involved with the National Council of Woman (NCW) and Council of the Aging (COTA). Mum also had to care for her mother who was now suffering with dementia and she routinely looked after her three grandchildren so that Debbie could work. Greg came to live with Mum and complete his education. In 2000 I also moved away leaving Mum in Canberra alone with Greg.

By 2005 Greg was established so Mum left the house she had lived in for 32 years and moved into Mirinjani. For the first time in her life she could completely focus on her interests. As many of you know she embraced life here and would often tell me how happy she was."

from the Eulogy delivered by Nick Laszlo

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN ACT: ENVIRONMENT & HABITAT REPORT
by Wendy Rainbird, October, 2013.**

1. 2020 Vision competition The 2020 Vision project for ACT Schools Festival of Young People's Ideas received 50 entries displaying thought, creativity and innovation. Anne Quin said: We really appreciate the time and effort students have put in to presenting some excellent work.

Speaking of time and effort, our judging panel comprising coordinator Wendy Rainbird (SEE-Change volunteer and former primary school teacher), Bob Neill (ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment), Peter Miller (SEE-Change volunteer and engineer/primary school teacher), and Anne Clarke (Executive Officer of SEE-Change), each spent five hours judging the entries last week in what was a difficult task. There was a lot of information included in the entries and it required plenty of concentration and thought to arrive at a shortlist. Entries that have made it through to the finals will be displayed at the CSIRO Discovery Centre in November, and in public libraries around Canberra during November.

The 2020 Vision Parliament of Youth for Sustainability of Youth. The 2020 team received 39 Green Papers from 11 colleges - a great effort! We have now advised all colleges of the Green Papers selected for presentation at the Parliament in November. Among those were papers selected by the Green Paper judging panel as the best for each broad topic. Congratulations to the following students:

Best Green Paper on Transport: **Anneke Rebel** - UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra

Best Green Paper on Urban Planning: **Nic McGinness** - Canberra Grammar School

Best Green Paper on Smarter Buildings: **Jenny Wang** - Daramalan College

Best Green Paper on Food: **Kara Tedman** - Lake Tuggeranong College

Best Green Paper on Energy: **Sam Sautelle** - Dickson College

Best Green Paper on Waste: **Esther Lee** - Daramalan College

Best Green Paper on Water: **Teagan Pyne** - UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra

Best Green Paper on Human Systems and Lifestyle: **Patrick Brennan, Hannah Fromholtz, Ben Pearlman** - Melba Copland Secondary School.

Dates for Parliament of Youth on Sustainability: Saturday, 2 November 2013 and Wednesday, 6 November 2013 at the Manning Clarke Centre, ANU.

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2. A recent conference on Age Friendly Cities, which is now a global movement through the World Health Organisation, was called "Coming of age_ Challenges and opportunities for communities in Australia" conference. It was held at the University of Canberra on 9 October, 2013.

There were international, interstate and local presenters covering many aspects on what helps to make cities age-friendly, especially accessibility to services and events, social interaction and conviviality, healthy eating and exercise, and for learning new skills and knowledge. In the section "Community programs: ACT Landcare and ParkCare " I was one of the presenters, representing ACT ParkCare as a volunteer of many years.

I showed images of the beauty of the Nature Parks and Reserves around Canberra and the ACT, photos of volunteers who work conserving such places, and many photos of the wildflowers which can be seen there, while making these points:

- The network of natural places, the Nature parks and Reserves on the mountains, ridges, and hills of Canberra and the ACT, provides beautiful and accessible places for the physical and mental well-being for both locals and visitors. These are very close to where people live.
- These Nature Parks and Reserves are places for true re-creation, whether walking, running, rogaining, strolling with the dog, photography or painting, and were designed from the start of the Burley Griffin's plans for the Australian nation's capital. Often termed the Bush Capital.
- Since the start of Landcare in 1989, volunteer groups formed, to work in liaison with the ACT Government's Park Rangers, to help look after these places so loved by Canberrans. Thousands use these places, for example Mt Taylor is called "the gym in the sky", and from Australian War Memorial there is the "Kokoda Memorial Trail" leading up Mt Ainslie. As these Parks & Reserves had been cleared for grazing in earlier years of settlement, and because they are adjacent to the suburbs, there are various weeds from garden plants going wild, and from introduced species. Local people volunteer to conserve the natural beauty and biodiversity of these Nature Parks and Reserves, and some who joined such groups aged in their forties, have been working for Parkcare for 20 years and more.
- The social connections made through these groups provide opportunities for sharing information and concerns, and conviviality. The ParkCare groups attract people from all walks of life, and you may be clearing weeds next to a scientist, a nurse, a doctor, a teacher, a top public servant, a student. This makes for a richness in social connections.
- As Parkcarers and Landcarers work with the Rangers and other people there is a lot of learning. Experiential learning is known to be a very effective way to learn, and many Parkcarers and Landcarers have learnt an enormous lot about the plants, animals, habitats and the dynamic ecosystems in these areas, while working to conserve the natural values of these place.
- This creates positive opportunities for people in retirement (or not), for keeping active, learning new skills and knowledge, and working for clear values.
- Through the support of government agencies, the Rangers, the Parks and Conservation Service and the three Catchment umbrella groups, there are organisational structures that make the volunteer work more effective in a number of ways.
- We quoted the recent ACT individual Landcare Awardee, Caroline Wenger:
"It gives you a great sense of satisfaction to walk through the park and know that it's looking so good because of what you and your group have done. I think it also gives you a great sense of community. You meet the people in your neighbourhood. You can develop a huge network of friends not just in your own suburb but even right across Canberra. And it's great exercise! Forget the gym. Get out there and pull weeds or walk in the park regularly and survey birds as you go. Good for the body, good for the soul."

The battle for the individual rights of women is one of long standing and none of us should countenance anything which undermines it.

Eleanor Roosevelt

HOUSING REPORT (Omitted from some copies of the 2012-2013 Annual Report)

My 2012-13 reports have concentrated on two priority areas: (1) the property market in Canberra and (2) the ongoing problem of housing affordability and homelessness

In late 2012 the CEO of Housing Institute of Australia (ACT) claimed the local building industry needed further stimulation from the government to lift building activity and maintain jobs. There was a risk of ACT homebuyers being lost over the border as ACT had failed to keep pace with NSW incentives and grants to potential new home buyers. By February 2013 it was forecast that the cooling property market would impact severely on ACT revenue as the government is highly dependent on house and land sales.

Recent reports in July claim that home building starts in Canberra are down 32% on a year-to-year basis compared with 2012-3 and it is considered to be the delayed effect of the GFC. Canberra's high levels of residential building between 2007 and 2012 were driven by projects set in train before the GFC and the building boom was heavily weighted in favour of multi-residential developments. These have slowed down considerably and recent budget measures like reduction in stamp duty and increase in first home buyer grants are measures taken by the ACT government to give the housing market a boost. It is now actually cheaper to buy than to rent in six Canberra suburbs, whereas a year ago no Canberra suburbs qualified.

I reported throughout 2012-13 that affordable housing and homelessness in Canberra continued to be a major problem. Homelessness has been on the rise as rents in Canberra proved out of reach for many. ABS figures released in late 2012 revealed homelessness in Australia has risen by 8% over the past five years but the rate had jumped by 70% in the ACT in the past five years. The most recent ABS census figures recorded in 2011 had 1785 Canberrans listed as homeless. A disturbing feature in recent times is the new face of homelessness—women of various ages—with or without children, who have no secure permanent residence but “couch surf” or sleep in cars, who cannot afford the high rental market, who arrive in this situation in a variety of ways often not of their making. They are not as visible as people sleeping rough on the street. They are often a hidden statistic in homelessness figures but known to the local helping agencies.

A December report by the Institute of Health and Welfare claimed almost a quarter of a million Australians requested help from welfare agencies in the past year. ACOSS(ACT) Director confirmed the figures reflected the experience of organisations working with Canberra's homeless and that although Canberra is considered a wealthy community its members had to acknowledge poverty and homelessness as an issue in the ACT and work together to address it.

Further research by Anglicare Australia in 2013 found no affordable and appropriate properties available in most low income categories in Canberra. 75% of the rental market was unaffordable for the poor. The report urged the federal and ACT governments to boost assistance for renters struggling to afford housing and urged the government to redefine “affordable” for the National Rental Affordability Scheme. Anglican News in July contained a report claiming housing costs were pushing students into poverty and lack of affordable housing was causing increased demands on charities. An Anglicare survey of tertiary students living independently found a high degree of rental stress. The high private rental costs caused increased reliance on charities for financial support. ACOSS(ACT) Director claimed that even the city's designated student housing was unaffordable for welfare recipients.

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A recent national report by ACOSS found 66% of housing and homeless services are confronting rising resource gaps and the \$ 5.9 million cut in federal funding in the last budget will hit the Canberra social welfare sector badly.

The ACT government has introduced some positive measures in the 2013-4 budget to assist people struggling to find affordable housing. Firstly, In the area of disability housing "Project Independence" will deliver, within a couple of years, supportive housing in three sites for people with mild intellectual disability.

Secondly, \$7.6 million in funding has been allocated for a Common Ground Supportive Housing project in Canberra and thirdly, the cut in stamp duty, the increase in the first home buyers grant and the increased income threshold for households for access to the Home Buyer Concession Scheme are all measures taken to improve housing affordability.

The government has scaled back its land release program and will focus this year on urban renewal as a priority to increase the number of people living in the city to 20000 in the next 15-20 years. As part of its Affordable Housing Action Plan it aims to provide more affordable housing and keep Canberrans in the Territory. It doesn't want people working in Canberra and living in NSW.

Coral Fleming (ACT Housing Adviser)

Australian Native plant used to help fight starvation in Africa.

John Turnbull sent this about *Acacia colei*, which is one of the plants on the Red Centre plant list. It features an Australian plant, a Canberra scientist, a TV identity and a group of Central Australian cooks, all of whom have improved the lives of 480 farmers in Niger! There are two specimens of *Acacia colei* in Section 324 –

Acacia colei : seeds for human food

Acacia seeds historically formed part of traditional diets of Australian Aborigines. Australian acacias were first introduced and trialled in the Sahelian region of West Africa in the 1970s and 1980s for fuelwood and windbreaks. In 1986 a paper in an *Acacia* conference in Australia by the "Bush Tucker Man", Les Hiddins, stimulated interest in their potential for human food in the Maradi area of Niger. In this area famine was a regular occurrence. After NGO- and CSIRO-supported trials *Acacia colei* was chosen as the key species to develop as a source of nutritious seed for human food. The main advantages of *A. colei* include: high seed production from the second year, seed easily harvested and processed, and suitability for long storage periods. It can also provide fuelwood, small construction wood and improve soil fertility. It tolerates drought and infertile soils and its foliage is not eaten by stock.

The seeds are tasty, safe to consume and nutritious, being high in protein (21%), carbohydrates (57%) and fats (10%). *Acacia* seed flour is amenable to incorporation in a range of food products. Aboriginal ladies from Central Australia visited Niger and passed on their knowledge of acacia food preparation. *Acacia* flour is now included in over 40 local dishes. World Vision reported that between 2006 and 2009, over 50,000 acacias were planted on 480 farms in 33 villages. More trees are being planted each year as consumers claim many benefits.

Acacia colei is named after Jerry Cole, a Canberra resident and former CSIRO employee, who discovered this species in Central Australia.

Arts and Letters Report October 2013

It was pleasing to hear a few days ago that the Canadian writer Alice Munro aged eighty two was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature for her acclaimed short stories. She is only the 13th

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woman to be awarded the prize since its inception in 1901. She is known for her writing about the human spirit and her themes about the issues facing young women growing up in rural communities. She has been writing since 1950 and has a strong following in Australia.

The Tent Makers of Cairo recently visited Canberra exhibiting their works at the Egyptian Embassy and holding a series of workshops through Canberra Quilters Inc. These beautifully applied pieces used as wall hangings inside tents are rich in colour and traditional in design but are not well regarded in Egypt and it is a dying art. The revolution in January 2011 further affected the tent makers incomes because of the reduction in tourism. I was fortunate along with many women to participate in the workshops to learn the traditional techniques working on two layers of cotton and canvas.

Jenny Bowker, who has lived in Egypt and other countries in the Middle East is an internationally acclaimed quilter who is a member of Canberra Quilters and assisted in bringing the two young tentmakers to Australia.

Wendy Saclier

Music Advisor's Report October 2013

Music continues to be a very important focus in Canberra's Centenary Year. Each day there are at least three musical offerings. So far there have been over 520 such offerings this year. Some are small, some large and have been held in venues such as churches, the High Court, the National Gallery, the Street Theatre and Parliament House.

Recently the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Sydney Dance Company performed *Project Rameau*. This was only held in Brisbane and Canberra. The music of Jean-Philippe Rameau provided inventiveness and imaginative orchestration of Rameau's scores which in turn provided a perfect counterpoint to the work of contemporary dance. The performance was only one hour long and held over two nights at the Canberra Theatre. Not only was there music of Rameau but also of Vivaldi and J.S. Bach. The performances were seamless with no break between the various movements.

The Canberra International Music Festival which turns 20 next year will have a new musical director, Roland Peelman in 2015. He will succeed Chris Latham who will finish his term in 2014.

The petite Sarah Kim gave her ninth organ recital at the Wesley Music Centre last week. Sarah Kim is the organist at Notre-Dame-des-Vertes and St George's Anglican Church. Her program included J.S. Bach's *Toccatina and Fugue in F major*, *Master Tallis's Testament* by Herbert Howells, Mozart's *Fantasie et Fugue en Fa mineur* and Messiaen's *Le banquet celeste*. Sarah has become increasingly interested in the works of contemporary composers such as the young Columbian composer, Juan Pablo, Carreno.

As part of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra's music education program, students from more than a dozen ACT schools took part in a special musical performance titled *The Noteworthy Centenary Concert*. The conductor, Warwick Potter brought together 45 students who performed the second movement of Andrew Schultz's specially commissioned work *Centenary*. This was a wonderful opportunity for these young students to work with a professional conductor.

Recently the ACT Keyboard Association has been formed and launched at the Wesley Music Centre in Forrest. The Association has been formed to fill the void left by the closure of the Music Teachers' Association and the demise of the performance program at the ANU School of Music. The composer, educator and pianist, Larry Sitsky AM is the patron.

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The aim of the new Association is to “promote and encourage the study, practice, performance, teaching, knowledge and composition of keyboard music for all ages and abilities”. The inaugural president is Arnan Wiesel, the Israel born pianist. He has been the winner of many national and international prizes and has performed in the US, Europe, NZ and Israel. He was a lecturer and head of keyboard at the ANU School of Music until 2012. Wiesel states that the association will offer a diverse program of styles – popular music, jazz and classical. There will be workshops as well as performances and awards for composition to young people’s music competitions. New keyboard technology such as electronic keyboard, piano and clavichord will all be linked.

Finally the Arrabato Ensemble, founded in 2005, performed original compositions which were inspired by the rhythms and spirit of flamenco. Their concert at the Street Theatre was part of the Capital Jazz Project. During the concert instruments changed roles to suit the mood. Cello and guitar joined with percussion – an unusual set-up of cajon box drum, djembe, bells and cymbals.

Helen Raymond

Social Issues 2013

Child, Youth and Family Report

School Volunteer Program ACT

In Weston Creek, Rotarian Ted Rayment and his wife Wendy set up a volunteer program to mentor children in 1997. The program is for some children who need that extra boost. Twelve years later the program continues and now about 120 mentors visit about 30 schools across Canberra each week. Students across Canberra are helped with time management, assignments, keeping diaries and keeping to deadlines.

Health Program Cut in the ACT

Despite the fact that the Council of Australian Governments has released data showing the number of Canberrans who are overweight or obese is at a record level the ACT Government has closed the SmartStart for Kids Program after 13 years. The program has successfully reduced the weight and improved the futures of its primary school participants. About 2,500 students from 20 ACT schools have completed the program annually in the past 4 years. About 55,000 students who are overweight, obese or at risk of developing problems have completed Smart Start since it was launched. The Chief Minister defended the decision not to review the funding on the grounds that the program was too focused to deliver widespread results.

Economic Status Linked to Disease

A review by Catholic Health in Australia found that poverty poses a risk to health equivalent to high cholesterol and smoking. A persons socio-economic standing defined by whether or not they finished school is a greater indicator of the risk of dying of an avoidable cardio-vascular incident than smoking, blood pressure, and cholesterol combined. Some of the information revealed by the review:

- Australians on lowest incomes live on average 3.1 years less.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are twice as likely to die of heart disease while in hospital
- Rates of obesity are three times higher for people living in public housing compared with home owners and 40% less likely to receive heart imaging or stents to keep their arteries open.

Health inequalities can be addressed if we recognize that people who are socio-economically disadvantaged have a greater risk factors and a different way of engaging with the health system.

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Many pregnant women are still uncertain or unaware about the negative effects of alcohol on the developing foetus. A recent study found that despite information about pregnancy and drinking a study of 2,700 women in NSW and Queensland found that just over a third of women continued to drink during pregnancy. Present guidelines say “even a small amount

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alcohol' taken at a "critical time' could be harmful. In developed nations the most prevalent alcohol use is among white, well educated, middle class women Two ANU Academics warned that as one third is a significant proportion, research in this area is urgently needed and can be justified. They stated that the health of our nation's next generation could depend on it.

Interesting Crime Statistics

The most recent crime statistics published recently are very encouraging. All seven of ACT Regions experienced a decline in reported offences across the board from July to September, with Weston Creek leading the way with a 33% decrease compared with the same quarter in 2012. This was followed by the ACT's rural areas down 20%, Tuggeranong down 17% falling from 2320 in July-September 2012 to 1918 in July-September 2013. This continues a five-year downward trend in reported crimes and offences in Tuggeranong. Canberra's Inner South saw a decrease of 13% and Woden experienced the smallest decrease across Canberra of 4%.

Roslyn Dixon

Health

"Inferior hygiene killing patients" (CT headline Aug 19, 2013. Concern expressed about hygiene in hospitals generally and in the ACT and terrible outcomes for patients - death, limb amputations, wrecked health. Canberra Hospital staff failed to meet the national benchmark for hand hygiene in 4 out of 5 of its audits in the 18 months to March 2013. Latest figures showed 57 patients had golden staph in their bloodstream at Canberra Hospital in the 2 years to June 2012.

Medical negligence payouts at Canberra Hospital have increased 500% in the past 3 years.

Obesity remains a concern for the ACT Government. The latest approach is a junk free aisle at supermarket checkouts. There is debate about whether it will achieve anything other than longer queues at the other checkouts.

Sue Schreiner Health Adviser

NCW ACT Advisor on Ageing

WHO Conference on Age Friendly Cities and Communities

Approximately 180 people from overseas, round Australia and ACT attended the first Australian Conference on WHO Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Canberra on 9 October 2014. Canberra as well as a number of cities and council areas attending the Conference are accredited WHO Age-Friendly Cities.

The Conference was opened by the ACT Minister for Ageing, Shane Rattenbury. The keynote speaker, Dr Alexandre Kalache, who was the WHO Director responsible for launching the WHO Active Ageing Policy Framework and Global Movement for Age-Friendly Cities, was an entertaining, inspirational and informative speaker who provided us with background to the development of the policy framework and the establishment of a network of Age-Friendly cities and Communities across the world.

Paul McGarry, Senior Strategy Manager, Valuing Older People, from Manchester City Council in the UK, another excellent speaker, provided us with an international perspective on establishing an Age Friendly City. Dr Alan Headon, Centenary of Canberra History Advisor, set the Conference in context by providing us with an overview of Australian social history. Speakers from Councils across Australia shared their experiences on Planning, Infrastructure and Community Projects with Conference participants. Key issues to emerge were:

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- the difficulty and cost of providing timely, affordable transport for senior members of the community;
- the lack of access to appropriate affordable housings especially for seniors with low incomes; and
- the need to provide safe, age-friendly neighbourhoods which encourage on-going physical and social activities.

We also heard about a number of innovative programs implemented in communities across Australia which help to improve the quality of life for our senior citizens. These included:

- Intergenerational activities between young people and residents of aged care facilities;
- Dementia friendly gardens;
- Library programs: and
- Hub meal prograes.

A meeting hosted by the ACT Minister for Ageing, Shane Rattenbury, on the morning following the Conference, resulted in the formation of an Australian network of Age-Friendly Cities to continue the exchange of information. It is hoped that this informal network will encourage the development of more facilities and programmes to improve the quality of life for Australian seniors. It is anticipated that another Age-Friendly Conference will be convened in 12 or 18 months.

In summary, the Conference did not solve the problems faced by cities and communities in supporting an increasingly ageing population. However, the Conference enabled the exchange of ideas and information on some of the ways that these are being addressed across Australia and more broadly across the world.

Laurayne Bowler

EDUCATION

National Education Reform – more than \$34M over four years in new funding to reflect the ACT Government’s contribution and transitional support under the National Education Reform Agreement (NERA) with the Commonwealth, which provides a new funding framework for all Australian schools on a needs based approach. The principle underpinning the reforms is that all students have access to the best possible education regardless of where they live, the income of their family or the school they attend.

Coombs Primary School - \$550,000 to complete designs for the Coombs Primary School that will provide public preschool and primary school facilities for the growing community in Molonglo.

Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) – registration for teaching in the ACT will require professional learning by each teacher who seeks registration from the beginning of 2014 – requirement of 20 hours of professional learning.

Centre of Quality Teaching and Learning at the University of Canberra. \$26M, which is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the UC. The Centre will comprise of a research component and the professional learning opportunities will be available for all teachers across the country. In the ACT \$2M will be for the government sector.

Review of Approval and Registration Processes applying to non-government schools in the ACT. Initial submissions were from a number of interested peak community and advocacy groups and education providers. The analysis of the submissions will be presented to Minister Burch by 25 October 2013.

We await with interest the way forward by the Coalition government under the leadership of Minister Christopher Pyne!!!

Narelle Hargreaves

This newsletter has been printed with the kind assistance of the office of Ms Gai Brodtmann, Member for Canberra. The views expressed in this newsletter may not reflect those of the member.

NUTRITION

Nutrition Australia has just been informed that the Application Grant for 'Project Dinnertime 2014 has been approved!

NCW ACT applied in partnership with Nutrition Australia ACT who will organise this project for Senior Citizens in Canberra after planning discussions with NCW ACT.

Thursday 14th November 12 - 2pm was the 10th CIT Double Tick Luncheon. We have 23 bookings. Our Guest Speaker was Dr. Tom Gavranic OAM who spoke on 'Sodium and your Health'. Dr. Gavranic is the President of Saltskip Canberra Inc.

Wendy Gray

SEMINAR ON OLDER WOMEN AND HOMELESSNESS

Our seminar on Older Women and Homelessness held on 31 October 2013 at the Southern Cross Club Woden was our most successful event for many years. We had 73 attendees and a range of excellent speakers covering the topic of older women and their risk of homelessness.

The seminar was facilitated by Justin Barrie and Mel Edwards from Design Management Australia and their professionalism made sure that everything ran smoothly. The speakers were excellent and all approached the subject in different ways, giving a broad view of the problem. Design Management have prepared an excellent report which is available for download on our website. www.ncwa.org.au and click the link to ACT.

[You can download the report from our website page.](#) Anyone wishing to have a hard copy of the report please contact the editor. There is a small cost involved as the report will be printed in colour.



INVITATION

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF ACT INC

PLEASE JOIN US IN CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

Luncheon @ \$35 per person

On Thursday 12 December 2013 12:00 for 12.30

LEMON GRASS THAI RESTAURANT

CNR. CORINNA STREET & BALL STREET WODEN

ENTRÉE

Vegetable spring rolls, Curry puffs

MAIN COURSE

GANG PANANG Creamy red curry (beef) with crushed peanuts and

Kaffir leaves topped with crispy egg noodles

CHICKEN PRARAM Chicken breast with steamed vegetables in peanut sauce

SEAFOOD PAD GAREE Seafood stir fry of crab, mussels, prawns, squid and egg in yellow curry

PAD THAI Thai stir fried rice noodles with crushed peanut, egg, chilli jam and bean sprouts

STEAMED RICE

DESSERT

Figs with lotus, nuts with pistachio cream and ice cream

TEA OR COFFEE

Water on table, drinks to be paid for individually

Restaurant licensed/corkage \$3.00

Bookings with payment please by Monday 9th December 2013

Hon. Treasurer, P.O. 3028, Manuka ACT 2603

Enquiries: Jean Hodgkinson - Ph 62605129 Roslyn Dixon Ph 61693506

Please advise if transport is required

Enclosed please find payment of \$.....for.....person/s for the
Christmas Luncheon on Thursday 12th December 2013

NAME OF MEMBERS/GUESTS:-----

Please mention any dietary requirements on this form

DATES FOR THE DIARY

NCW ACT Meeting Dates 2014

Executive

February 3

March 3

April 7

May 5

June 2

July 7

April 4

September 1*

October 6 *

November 3

December 1

*Public holidays

All executive meetings will be held in the Board Room at QE11 Hospital in Curtin

Assembly

February 13

March 13

April 10

May 8

June 12

July 10

August 14

September 11 AGM

October 9

November 13

All Assemblies are held at Yarralumla Uniting Church Centre Denman Street, Yarralumla
Meetings commence with Lunch at 12 noon followed by the meeting, usually over by 2.30 pm

NCW Adviser's Meetings Contact Ros Dixon Ph 6169 3506

NCW NEWSLETTER - February 2014 - CLOSING DATE for items of interest

The next newsletter will be produced in January 2014 for February 2014

Please send items to the editor Jean Thomson OAM before 12 January 2014

Email: elabeach@thomzone.com or (02) 62813396