

Older Women's Network NSW – up

OWN NSW is now an established entity registered with the Department of Fair Trading, fully insured, has an ABN and a GST registration. At the July conference we will hold the inaugural meeting and the election of the NSW OWN Management Team.

The fact that OWN has grown over the past thirteen years to an extent that makes the formation of a peak body a logical move means that outside perception of its strength and significance as a voice for older women will continue to grow.

It has been a busy and exciting time for the members of the NSW Steering Committee and Interim Management Team – Hedi Roggeveen, Anne Warren, Pat Simpson, Enid Harrison, Vonnie Russell, Cate Turner, Betty Murphy, Ruth Kearney, Gwenda Fulford, Helen Smith, Kath Olive, Nancy North and Jutte Dale. I would like to thank them for all the fine effort in thought and energy they put into it over the past year.

The possibilities that the new organisation opens up are significant both internally and externally. For existing OWN groups there is the opportunity to establish closer working relationships with each other by using OWN NSW as a communication hub which can disseminate ideas and information between groups. There will be opportunities to involve individual members of regional groups in many issues of concern to older women such as housing, transport, health, social isolation, income support, aged care, mental health and changing negative attitudes to older women.

The issue of broadening membership and promoting the establishment of more OWN groups in NSW is one that the peak body will take up. This will require raising the public image of OWN and promoting it as an organisation that can make a difference in older women's lives, and one that can negotiate a better deal for all older women by representing their interests to government and non-government organisations.

The Wellness projects have had amazing success in attracting funding for their activities. OWN NSW will be able to provide a focus and expertise in encouraging local groups to apply for funding for projects that have statewide implications. The future scope of a NSW Newsletter will be the subject of a workshop at the conference, but there are many possibilities including a wider distribution of the newsletter beyond Sydney members.

As OWN NSW is emerging, so too is Sydney OWN. Sydney OWN has attracted energy and input not only from members of the OWN Inc. Working Committee but from women who have taken the opportunity to have an impact on the future direction and shape of the group – some for the first time are in leadership roles.

The skills and expertise that many members of OWN have brought to the task of representing older women so effectively for many years and the networks they have established with other organisations, will hopefully be available to add to those of the Management Team of OWN NSW.

The outcomes of the changes made so far have been extremely positive.

and running.....?

Recommendations from the various workshops at the conference will influence the directions taken by Management Team when they assume office in July. The success of their activities will only be possible with the support, goodwill and work of OWN members from all groups.

The initial period of settling in will no doubt take much discussion and thought as the working processes are put in place and tested out. We wish them well in the new venture, and also some fun!

Pam Ledden

And Sydney OWN is on the way...

Many thanks to the many OWN Inc. members who responded to the letter and questionnaire asking for comments and choices of activities for Sydney OWN. (Should we call it SOWN or OWNS?) All your suggestions will be so valuable in planning future events. See the enclosed flyer for our first celebration of Sydney OWN – a wine, cheese and poetry readings on Saturday, 21 July.

OWN Inc. members met on Wednesday, 20 June to lay the groundwork for Sydney OWN. The two teams – administration and activities – have already met and we hope a third one (advocacy) will be set up soon. We agreed that as there is a lot of preparation for Sydney OWN's inauguration, it is too early for the change over from OWN Inc. to Sydney OWN to occur in August. At the OWN Inc AGM in August, we are recommending that OWN Inc. continue and take steps to prepare for the inauguration of Sydney OWN in November.

Joy Ross

Volunteering and Older Women

The Older Women's Network, like most initiatives in civil society, was founded on volunteering. People, mainly a small group of older women, recognised the need for such an organisation to defend and support the needs of older women by older women. No one was paid to do this. This is social action at its best. Without such voluntary social action our society would be the poorer by far. In fact I would go so far as to argue that throughout history, virtually all new forms of social institutions that have made life better, have all been created in the first place out of the voluntary action of those with the vision and the passion to make it happen. So were created the first hospitals, the first schools. So now is created the global struggle for human rights and to preserve our forests and oceans.

Of course, that is the more dramatic view of volunteering, the heroic view. There is also the mundane, everyday sort of volunteering that most of us identify with. It is the work, willingly given, but not paid, that enables these organisations to continue to operate. Such 'ordinary' volunteering keeps the flame alight, gives joy to countless individuals, provides enrichment for all of us, including the volunteer herself. We are now just beginning to realize that the very process of volunteering creates networks in our communities, increases the general level of trust, weaves an invisible web that supports the community in times of need and crisis, and enhances its image of itself in times of celebration. Such was the experience of the Sydney Olympics. We now have a name for this kind of ordinary, everyday work. It is creating social capital. We now appreciate (or at least some of us do) that this social capital is at least as valuable as the other capitals, including human capital, environmental or natural capital, and financial or economic capital. In fact governments are now willing to invest big money into creating social capital because it is so important to the health of our communities. The trouble is that money can't buy social capital. But volunteering can!

So, volunteering is good, essential to our well-being. But there is another side to this story, what Eva Cox calls the dark side of volunteering.

Second wave feminists treated voluntary work with grave suspicion, as did unionists who saw a threat to their paid employment. Both feminists and unionists saw volunteering as a confidence trick of the state. If the ruling interests can establish a situation where the everyday caring needs of

people are catered for by a willing army of unpaid workers, then social harmony prevails. The financial capital that would otherwise have to go to providing for paid services, can now be invested in the economy. To take examples current in the media hype over the budget, we either pay for free childcare services, or we create industry assistance packages. As a nation we are told that we cannot afford both. The trouble, of course, is that it is women, and increasingly older women in particular who are "altruistic" and "have time on their hands" and whose traditional role it is to look after everybody else. We are taken on a guilt trip to take on this voluntary work. Many older women are experiencing the increasing demands to take on the grandmother's shift of childcare so that their daughters can continue employment....because the state has pulled back from their promise of affordable childcare. Worse than that, where welfare services of various kinds are paid, the employment conditions of those (usually women) carers are often the worst in the country. Why pay proper wages to people who should be doing the work for nothing?

In this context, OWN is justified in being deeply suspicious of overtures by the state to encourage volunteering. You can't blame them for being tempted to "harness this largely untapped resource among healthy older people". Or maybe you can!

So volunteering can provide both the very best and the very worst of experiences for older women. How do we, as an organisation of older women, track a path through this minefield? Clearly a policy on volunteering for older women is needed.

I think the key to the paradox lies in the issue of power and control. The state clearly is interested in encouraging volunteering, but under its control. A bit like "work for the dole". And the more organisations become dependent on state funding, the more they come under the bureaucratic control of the funding body! They don't understand that by harnessing and controlling it, even if that were possible, then they kill the very thing that is most valuable: the generation of social capital.

However It does not have to be like that. There are several steps that OWN can take. One is to have a clear and workable policy. Two is to make that policy clear to all with whom it deals. Three is to negotiate clearly the basis of any funding grant. A partnership is one of equals. While the funding body provides financial capital, it is OWN that brings the equally valuable resource of social

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capital (including its networks, knowledge and volunteer labour) to the negotiating table. One is not more important than the other. Four, and most importantly, it is vital to have at least a small source of untied funds which can be used to resource any action that the state may not like. It is crucial that OWN not lose its voice. OWN must retain its capacity to speak out, without fear or favour, in the interests of older women. To lose that capacity is to lose the lot!

Jenny Onyx

Congratulations Brigid Sen

Brigid Sen is a member of our Theatre Group currently teaching in China. She has received the "Lotus Award", given by the Hunan Provincial Education Department. Brigid is the only recipient from this campus, where there are six foreign teachers this year.

Every year the awards are given to foreign teachers to the universities in this province. Brigid received a beautiful bouquet of flowers, a splendid silk folder with a certificate of appreciation and a fine trophy with a Confucian prophet's figure. This award-giving pompous ceremony, where twenty-eight other foreign teachers from other universities were also the recipients, took place in a big hotel, followed by some entertainment and dinner.

Genes and Joan

I am writing this article to balance the negative material on food gene technology that has been published in OWN newsletters in the past. I want you to know that I am a most unscientifically-minded woman! However, I was born and bred on the land and remember that in the early part of the century William Farrer saved our wheat industry from ruin by the part he played in plant selection, which produced rust free wheat. From what I have read, this is the equivalent of genetic manipulation.

I wrote to the CSIRO Division of Plant Industries, Black Mountain, Canberra and asked for simple straight-forward information on food gene technology. Boy, what a mass of information came in the post!

Let us start with Ingard cotton, the only genetically modified crop allowed to be grown in Australia. It contains a protein called BT, which kills the greatest pest to plague the plant – the heliothis moth. It has no impact on natural predators such as spiders, birds, reptiles and frogs and is harmless to humans. Since the advent of DDT more than half a century ago, nearly 50% of the world's total production of synthetic insecticide has been sprayed on cotton to eradicate the moth. This figure has been reduced by 50-70%. Farmers previously spent \$150 million on insect control. Farmers growing cotton must provide "refuges" – i.e. they must plant crops nearby that do not kill the moth. We may be able to see the day when the ubiquitous crop-dusters spreading DDT far and wide will be put out of business!

BT was only released after extensive research and permission from the Federal Government Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Department, the National Advisory Commission and the Registration Authorities.

CSIRO is currently investigating a wheat that will have increased disease resistance, improved grain quality which will benefit our starving and ever-growing third-world populations. They are also investigating crops that grow on arid land and rice that is more nutritious with a greater yield.

CSIRO is committed to providing a clean, safe food supply and a sustainable environment, and say that they will consult with the community and address problems of what we do so that our agricultural industries can still be effective in global agriculture and not become pawns of the multinationalists.

Despite suggestions to the contrary, there are no GM fruits or vegetables on Aussie supermarket shelves as there are in the USA. Some conventional foods today contain allergens and are harmful. GM food is helping to reduce or eliminate these allergens. GM food is also being researched for longer food storage – one quarter of the world's food supply is currently rotting on shelves!

So, search the CSIRO's website at www.csiro.au (do a search for Gene Technology); write to CSIRO Plant Industry Information Unit, Black Mountain, Canberra or ring the Gene Technology Information Service on 1800 631 276 (free call).

Joan Johns

Spin the Globe!

We came together, some of us, earlier this year, to talk about the increasing insecurity we were feeling about the future and the decline of our living standards through the imposition of the GST and the general evils of economic rationalism. At the back of our minds, also, is the dark cloud of globalisation hanging over us with its impending threat of privatisation of public services in Australia like health, education, transport, communication, corrective services and the rest.

This new OWN group, fourteen of us, met for our third meeting at Windmill Street recently, and over a bowl of leek and chickpea soup we talked about these concerns and what we could do, if anything, to add our voice to the growing tide of protests. All of us believe passionately that Australia needs a new direction based on cooperation, ecological sustainability and equality and fairness. We are strongly opposed to the Howard Government's agenda of economic rationalism that is driven by global corporations that only benefit the few and causes insecurity and poverty for the many.

The forthcoming multilateral trade negotiations to be held on November 13 at Qatar by the World Trade Organisation, will be attended by our government. They will be discussing the privatisation of public services, agricultural development and even intellectual property rights. The Minister of Trade, Mark Vaile, has asked for public comment to assist the Government in its decision. (When are the elections?) So, yes, we decided to do just that. Sam McKay drafted a letter for us and the final copy, after discussion, was sent to the Working Committee for approval. A copy will be posted on the notice board at OWN.

We then debated the best way to make our voice heard on all these burning issues, How can we ensure that our older women's perspective is considered? We are a small group, our energy levels are not what they were, but we have drive and commitment. We agreed that the best way would be to support bigger and wider grass roots organisations that are already functioning strongly. Groups like, "Now, We the People", and AFTINET, (the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network) and to see that our comments are regularly posted on their websites and also on our OWN website, (<http://www.zip.com.au/~ownnsw>).

We want to raise awareness about the Conference that will be held by "Now, We the People" on July 14 and 15. This is a conference to unite people against economic rationalism and corporate globalisation. There will be some wonderful speakers, including Quentin Dempster, Jenny

Macklin, Christine Milne and others, as well as a number of very interesting workshops. You will have to register. Details are on the Notice board or you can ring me in the evenings on 9692 8427.

Lastly, if you are interested in joining our group, we are meeting again at Windmill Street on 11 July, (11 am to 1pm) just before the Conference to discuss how we can have an input. You will be assured of a stimulating meeting.

Muriel Hortin

Corporatisation of General Practice

There is a strong move towards corporatisation of general practice, which involves the creation of huge medical centres where specialist health professionals such as pharmacists, pathologists and radiologists work alongside GPs. These huge centres are financed by large corporations – it has been claimed that over 55% of general practices in Perth (where this all seemed to start) are now owned by one or two big companies.

Many people are concerned about the possible cost to the patient of GP corporatisation. Their concerns include a possible decline in quality of care if patient- or income-targets are set; the loss of freedom to choose a practitioner if restrictions are imposed in referring outside the corporate practice; the possibility of unnecessary diagnostic tests; a possible loss of independence and a diminished sense of responsibility on the part of the GP, which might compromise ethical decision-making.

Others claim that the benefits of GP corporatisation outweigh the concerns. Possible benefits for patients include a reduction in travelling time between different health providers; opportunities for enhanced communication between providers, e.g. liaison with pharmacists could minimise problems with illegible prescriptions; better Information Technology infrastructure; and doctors being able to concentrate on the practice of medicine rather than on small business issues.

What do you think?

Compiled by Renate Watkinson

Aboriginal Support Circle

On the 22nd of May, four members of our Aboriginal Support Group visited Bankstown Wellness Centre to talk to around twenty five older women about our group.

We also had the pleasure of listening to two Koori women, Vera Cabot and Jenny Thomsen, who told us about the Biyani Health Centre at Bankstown. Biyani means women performing curative procedures on other women. It is run by Koori workers and offers physical, cultural, spiritual, social, personal and emotional care as well as offering health information and referrals. Visiting health professionals come once a fortnight and there are workshops on Saturdays. The latest one was on massage and naturopathy. Every second Thursday they offer an art class with a Koori teacher.

Since 1988, the Biyani Centre has been running a weekend camp once a year, where women participate in many activities including traditional dancing, bushwalks, relaxation activities and display of material related to health. Guest speakers are invited to talk to the women on many subjects. The number of women increases every year, (last year there were 200) showing how popular it is. In order to obtain funding for the camp, the Centre has to write a submission to the Health Department every year.

Vera and Jenny invited us to participate in one of their fortnightly painting workshops. I was so surprised on arrival to recognise my friend Mary, whom I had studied with at UWS, Goolangulia Centre for the Diploma in Indigenous Australian Community Studies. Mary is now working part-time at the Centre and was also there to participate in the art workshop, which was under the guidance of Daniele, a young and talented artist. Daniele was very patient, understanding and encouraging of we budding artists.

Half the people were continuing their work from the fortnight before which was a painting of a fish on a fairly large board. Each one was encouraged to let their imagination run free and the results were amazingly different even if the beginning format was similar. The rest of us started on the decoration of a small cardboard photo-frame. Among us was a young man, Tom, who was presented to us as a future policeman, here to get to know the community with whom he will be working after his training. He stayed with us for the four hours of the workshop and went on producing his artwork and mingled with us all day.

We all used the dot painting technique, mixed with drawing. Being a non-indigenous person, I was a bit hesitant to use Aboriginal design, but was reassured that if I followed the rules I was all right.

Vera and Jenny told us that the group has been invited to participate in the exhibition *A Whisperings in the Wind* at the Casula Power House Museum. Great excitement: do we want to participate? Shall we do a joint artwork or each of us a single work? How long do you have to do it? We learn that we only have one four-hour session a fortnight to produce our masterpieces. We opt for a series of small acrylic paintings with a similar theme – whispering in the wind. We each choose a broad subject and a basic colour for Daniele to prepare the board for us. We will do the basic work at home, drawing, choice of colours and so on, so we will be ready to start at the beginning of the next session. It was a really wonderful experience and I am looking forward to continuing my association with the group.

Monique Reiher



Women's Reconciliation Dinner

You are invited to at the YWCA of Sydney on Thursday July 12th at 7 pm for 7.30 pm for an evening of good food, terrific company, entertainment and interesting speakers, including Shelley Reys, Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia and YWCA Director and Amelia Cormack, former youth representative on the NSW Reconciliation Council. Well-known Aboriginal singer and musician, Marlene Cummins, will be here to entertain us, along with Amelia, who is also a talented singer and musician. The evening is supported by the Women's Reconciliation Network and the NSW Reconciliation Council. The Y is sponsoring some of the places at the dinner, while we are inviting our non-indigenous members and supporters to either sponsor a table, or an individual place, for indigenous guests.

Dinner (including wine): \$35. Concession: \$25 (members, students, pensioner) Buy one ticket and sponsor another for \$25: Total: \$60 (eg you might invite 3 guests of your own and sponsor 6 places for indigenous guests, or you might sponsor all 9 places)

Make out your cheque/money order to: 'The YWCA of Sydney' and sent to 5 -11 Wentworth Avenue Sydney 2010

Cataracts

What is a cataract? Over half of people over 65 have some cataract development and most cases can be treated successfully with surgery. A cataract is not a skin that grows over the eye – it is a clouding of part of the eye called the lens. Vision becomes blurred or dim because light cannot pass through the clouded lens to the back of the eye.

What causes a cataract? Cataracts can form at any age, but most often develop as people get older. In younger people they can result from an injury, certain drugs, long-standing inflammation or illnesses such as diabetes.

Symptoms can include:

* **Blurred Vision:** “I’m not seeing as well as I used to” people may notice that some things seem blurred round the edges, or that your glasses seem dirty or scratched.

* **Seeing Double:** The cloudiness in the lens may occur in more than one place, so that the light rays that reach the retina are split, causing a double image.

* **Poor Vision in Bright Light:** Bright light or very sunny days may make it more difficult to see.

* **Change of Colour Vision:** As the cataract develops, its centre becomes more and more yellow, giving everything you see a yellowish tinge.

What can be done? The most effective treatment for cataracts is a small operation to remove the cloudy lens. Diets or drugs have not been shown to slow or stop the development of the cataract.

What is a lens implant? When the cloudy lens has been surgically removed it is usually replaced by a plastic lens so that the eye can focus properly. Occasionally a doctor will decide an eye is not suitable for a lens implant. In these cases contact lenses or special glasses will be prescribed instead.

What happens after the operation? Your sight will usually improve within a few days, although complete healing may take several months. It is a good idea to have some help at home, especially if you find it difficult to put your eye drops in.

You will need to take it easy for a couple of weeks so your eye can heal. Avoid rubbing your eye; wear an eye shield if you are a restless sleeper. Don’t do any heavy lifting, and avoid strenuous exercise and swimming. You can do light housework or cooking but try to get some help if you can. You don’t need to stay indoors but take care if it is windy, in case anything blows in your eye. Wash your hair leaning backwards rather than forwards. Avoid eye make-up for six weeks. You can resume your sex life a week or two after the operation. Avoid driving until your surgeon tells you it is safe. New glasses are usually prescribed four to eight weeks after the operation.

From the Internet

Pig Pen

A friend, in her sprightly 60’s, went to a house party. At the end of the evening some friends offered her a lift home. The host overheard this and asked her to stay the night. She declined his invitation gracefully. Piqued, he said: “At your age you should grab every opportunity.”

Helen McMaugh

Aliwa Wadjella! Watch out! There’s a whitefella about!

In 1930’s Western Australia, down the Margaret River, the Davis Family stays together while the Australian Government through the Protector of Aborigines tries to split the family up and remove the children ‘for their own good’. Held together by Mum Davis’s fierce love, the women of the Davis family develop a unique strength as they move from town to town battling ignorance, prejudice, patronising interference and plain stupidity.

Noongar writer, Dallas Winmar, has been entrusted with the stories of the Davis Sisters and has unearthed the wit, tenacity and strength of love which has made the Davises one of Australia’s most significant and influential families. *ALIWA* has been written by Dallas Winmar and produced in collaboration with the Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre in Western Australia. It is directed by Neil Armfield.

Gather together your family and friends for an entertaining and informative evening for a Friends of Tranby Fund-Raising Theatre Party on Sunday 16 September at 5 PM at the Belvoir Theatre, Surry Hills

Tickets are \$35 - a saving of \$3 on the regular box office price. Tranby has booked 100 tickets and, with the generous discount given by the Belvoir, will make \$1000 if we fill all 100 seats.

To book your tickets please send a cheque/money order made out to Friends of Tranby, *ALIWA*, c/- Leigh Bowden, 25 Beach Road, Collaroy 2097 by Friday 10 August. Please include your name and address.

(We must make full payment to the Theatre by August 16 to secure the seats.)

OLDER WOMEN SPEAK UP: VIOLENCE IN THE HOME

You may remember that Older Women Speak Up published a booklet of stories of violence against older women in the home. 10,000 copies were funded by the Department for Women. We heard the stories at seminars held through New South Wales.

To our surprise the booklet proved so popular that all the 10,000 copies were gone early this year. We have now had it reprinted at our own expense. We need to recoup this outlay so must ask you for a donation of \$5 per booklet (includes postage). We shall continue to send the booklet free to women wanting a single copy.

This booklet is made up of stories of violence as told by older women to groups of other older women. The stories show in women's own words how all kinds of violence happens - physical, emotional, sexual, social and financial abuse, and the devastating consequences for women. The stories illustrate the tremendous courage and strength women have. We adopt creative strategies to survive, and become empowered to change our own lives and ultimately the lives of older women everywhere.

The booklet is compiled and edited by Margaret Sargent and Jane Mears (with funding from the Department for Women, New South Wales).

WHAT IS NEXT? During the next few months we plan to produce two reports on the work we have done in connection with the Older Women Speak Up booklet:

The first book will be written for older women, especially those with personal experience of violence in the home. Many of you will have contributed to the work by participating in groups, telling stories and filling in questionnaires. So in a very real sense this first report is yours and we shall wait with bated breath to hear your reactions to it.

The second book, *Survival Is Not Enough*, will be targeted mainly to people who work in the area of violence against women. It will offer an analysis of our aims and results in undertaking the work of Older Women Speak Up. Again we shall welcome reactions from readers and hope to engage in useful dialogue about violence against older women in the home.

You can order the booklet from: Older Women Speak Up, 1A Liverpool St, Bundeena, NSW 2230, Australia Ph/Fax 612 9660 5925 Ph 612 9523 9558 msarge@zip.com.au

Margaret Sargent

NEW DENTAL SERVICES FOR NSW

When the Federal Government axed the Commonwealth Dental Health Program in 1996, NSW dental services lost more than \$130 million.

Recently released data from the 1999 National Dental Health Survey showed that the inequality in access to dental care for adult Australians resulted in a decline in levels of oral health among low-income people between 1996 and 1999.

These findings have been confirmed by a new report on the state of dental health, by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, which states that over half a million Australians are on long waiting lists for public dental services. Also, that ever-increasing numbers of pensioners and others on low incomes are having their teeth extracted rather than restored.

In response to what can only be described as a crisis in oral health, the NSW Government recently announced that NSW Health is increasing dental funding for disadvantaged people by \$33 million over the next two years.

The new State-wide Priority Oral Health Program will put greater emphasis on those most in need, guaranteeing same-day, emergency care to patients who require it. The aim is that those in need of semi-urgent treatment will be seen within ten working days.

Many additional services will be available to public dental patients in NSW including the introduction of a computerised dental triage system enabling people to have their problem assessed without leaving home.

It is expected that an extra 200,000 patients will have been treated in the first three years of the Priority Oral Health Program.

June West

To succeed!

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the approval of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived; this is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Diabetes

Recent trials have shown that good blood glucose control and very good blood pressure control (often involving treatment of minor degrees of blood pressure that would not be treated in a person without diabetes) can substantially reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease in diabetes.

Having normal blood fat levels (cholesterol and triglyceride) is important as is, of course, not being a smoker. All this involves sensible healthy diet patterns and plenty of exercise. People on insulin may find they need to eat more regularly than they would wish, to keep blood glucose levels normal but not too low. Eating extra or taking extra exercise may require temporary adjustment of treatment.

Exercise matters. One does not need to become an Olympic athlete, but the couch potato who slowly builds up to 30 minutes brisk walking a day – or even every other day - will be doing herself much good! People with diabetes do need to take care of their feet however, and some will have problems of the circulation or heart. It is sensible to discuss your exercise plans with your diabetes health care professional before starting.

What about cholesterol and high blood pressure? Diabetes increases the risk of heart attacks, stroke and circulatory problems, so additional risk factors such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure are treated aggressively, using the treatment aims normally kept for people who have already had a heart attack or stroke. It is a case for “the lower the better” for both blood pressure and cholesterol - and for blood triglyceride, another blood fat implicated in diabetic heart disease. Medication may be needed to achieve the best possible control of blood pressure and blood fat but a diet low in salt, excess alcohol and animal fat helps.

What are the latest theories on the causes of diabetes? Type 1 or insulin dependent diabetes results from the total destruction of the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas. This is usually an auto-immune process. This means that the body has ceased to recognise the cells as belonging to it - it “sees” them as foreign and destroys them, just as it would destroy a foreign tissue such as a graft, an infecting organism or a cancer cell. What triggers the process is not known but it is probably different in different people.

Type 2 or non-insulin dependent diabetes is a group of diseases, all ending in the body being resistant to the actions of insulin and unable to make enough insulin to compensate for this. Again,

a genetic predisposition is required but an unhealthy life style can precipitate the disease itself. Insufficient exercise, and a diet that is high in calories, simple carbohydrates and fat and encourages obesity are contributing to the present “epidemic” of diabetes in the world – a predicted doubling of the number of people with diabetes by the year 2010.

Does diabetes run in families? Yes. For Type 1 diabetes, the risk of diabetes in other members of a family where one person has diabetes is 5 -10% if a brother or sister has the disease, 4-6% if the father is diabetic and 2 - 3% if diabetes is present in the mother. For children of families with Type 2 diabetes, the risk of developing diabetes 10-15% (vs perhaps 5% in the background population), with a 20-30% risk of having abnormal blood sugar handling that may progress to diabetes. This risk can be reduced by significantly by adopting a healthy lifestyle of more exercise and healthy eating.

For more detailed information on Diabetes go to:

http://www.surgerydoor.co.uk/level2/Living_with_Section/livingwith_diabetes.shtml

THE LAST LAUGH

Have you ever tried to assume an expression of sympathy while shaking with laughter?

When I joined my friend for lunch along with several other guests, we listened in sympathetic silence as the sad tale unfolded. It seems that our hostess had decided to clean the pond, wherein resided one golden, lonely fish.

As soon as her back was turned, a feathered missile shot like an arrow from the nearby tree – and R.I.P. little fish. “It was bad enough that he stole it,” said our hostess sadly, “But he sat up there looking down at me with my poor fish wriggling in his clenched beak.”

I could imagine the culprit, filled with curiosity, watching the poor unsuspecting human as she went about the business of cleaning the pond. How perfectly still he would have perched in the tree, bright eyes alert, the cream, brown and blue speckled feathers a perfect camouflage among the foliage.

Perhaps it is the reason for the wild, maniacal laughter when the beautiful but wicked Australian kookaburras gather on the bough.

Maybe they are simply enjoying the last laugh.

Marie Williams

MY LIFE AS A HOUSE SITTER

Sue, my friend, remarked to me over coffee one day, "My husband and I don't get away very often because of the two dogs, the horse and the house." I blithely said, "I'll mind them for you". After all, the dogs were Chihuahuas and I could throw carrots over the fence for the horse!

Well... The day came for me to get my 'orders'. There were also thirty-nine wild ducks (I counted them) to throw seed out for, mince meat for Mr. Magpie and extended family, two butcher birds, who could catch their share on the wing, two kookaburras, and lots of seed for lots and lots of very colourful parrots, all flying free. Noah the horse needed hay as well as carrots.

Well, me, my goods and chattels arrived on the Monday. I had quite a lot of chattels, as my second name is JUSTIN CASE. Sue had left me lots of goodies – sweets, a mini Xmas pudding, special coffee and orders to help myself to anything in the fridge and cupboard.

My biggest problem, or should I say my littlest, was the smaller of the dogs. Very, very shy she was. Every time I entered a room that she was in, she'd leave. The first few days we went in and out, out and in, till we'd both had it. Some bribery and corruption and a little cunning was needed on my part, but overall I think she won on points!

Feeding the wild birds. These guys could tell the time and arrived promptly at feeding time each morning. Which magpie was George, the original beggar? How could I get mince past the clever butcher birds, to feed the kookaburras? Then there were all the feeding stations to fill for the parrots...

I was glad there was a fence between Noah, the Horse, and me. I like horses, but he looked as though he had a strong left hook, or was that hoof?

The good bits were when everything went well and I could sit before the roaring fire, (husband left tons of wood for me), drink the special coffee and listen to Sue's CD's.

Over all it was an interesting few days. Would I do it again? I guess so...but don't tell Sue!

Norma Bostock

"Many, many thanks"

Dear OWN

I had the pleasure of meeting ladies from the Older Women's Network at the first day the wellness centre of the Sutherland area. They performed dancing, singing, two types of exercise, and all had the loveliest smiles and warmth on their faces. It was the most enjoyable function I have been to for years. They were far better than professionals – they all seemed so happy and fit, as though they were really enjoying it all.

I was so thrilled and happy to think elderly ladies could do such a performance and I could become a member of such a group. I felt so thrilled; I felt I could cry with emotion. I know I won't be able to perform like them, but I can assure you I will certainly give it a go. I feel I will get help and not be laughed at like a silly old lady of 85 years.

I have been looking for something like that for years. I was never a craft person. I was always active and interested in sport.

Since my husband died seven years ago I have been so lonely. I have outlived my relations and friends in my own age group. I have two good and lovable sons but work has taken one to Victoria and one to Queensland, so I have felt out on a limb.

Many, many thanks to you all for starting such a wonderful Older Women's Network.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Dobeson

THE PRIMROSE MAN

He was the primrose man and he came to our house every spring of the war. He brought baskets of interwoven twigs filled with bright yellow primroses, which smelt of the dew and moss of the English woods. He was thin, with a face like a hawk. His clothes were shabby, spotlessly clean, and round his neck he always wore a red kerchief. He told me tales of the wild creatures of the woods that would come and talk to him at sunset. He promised that one day, when peace came, he would show me where the primroses, cowslips, bluebells and violets grew. During those bitter years he was my symbol of hope for the future. But when peace came he was no longer there.

GVK

Computer Mysteries

LETTER FROM UK OWN

This time last year I wrestled with the mysteries in my new computer. Two simplified guides at \$30 each, some sporadic instructions from a grandson, one attendance at a senior's class and the only message thoroughly understood was "It's now safe to turn off your computer."

Could I get rid of the thing? But who wants a second-hand, anything but pre-loved computer? Then in OWN's newsletter a small ad. *Networks 4 Networks* offered free tuition in the use of the Internet to women in Sydney's Inner West. The tutors would be older women for older women. Good. Experience had taught me that the best teachers in the use of technology are under 15 or over 50. Moreover this tuition would be free.

Having enjoyed the benefits of the freeloading 1970's and still on the alert for the increasingly rare freebie, I rang the number given. A home visit from the coordinator of the program confirmed that I was qualified to be accepted on the program. This included a monthly visit to the community centre where the program originated, to meet other participants.

My tutor was about the same age as my daughter; there are others nearer my own age. Ann was punctual, kind, patient and more than generous with her time. In a few weeks I could use email and access a few web sites. Then my computer sickened and on the 15th September 2000, it died. Though still under warranty the vendor declared a "software problem", not covered. Not true either. I paid for new software. By New Year it had died again. A couple of grandsons, computer engineers, shook their heads, "Not a good job. Could be anything." Their 15th-old cousin inspected its interior saying, "Motherboard's stuffed, Grandma, needs rebuilding, could do it but have to go back to school, should've called me sooner, Yellow Pages now."

The Yellow Pages yielded a technician whose charges were no more than TV repairers. The motherboard was rebuilt for \$406, which added to the \$150 already paid to the dishonest vendor. I could have bought a more reliable unit in the first place!

As computer literacy is now part of our social life we need low cost access. Programs like *Networks 4 Networks* and computer clubs are invaluable especially as once we are skilled, people are encouraged to train to become voluntary tutors, passing on the skills and enjoying their own and their pupils' achievements.

Helen Monaghan

Dear Friends

This is a very short note to say hello and how much I enjoy reading your newsletter every month. I have been meaning to write to you for some time, but never seem to get the time. But here I am in the office on a Sunday trying to catch up and I started my day with reading the newsletter! Well, it is catching up and INSPIRATIONAL!

Concession Fares interested me particularly. Here in London we have the Freedom pass for older people of pensionable age which, after much negotiation, has been extended to British Rail. It is paid for by local government and it costs my local authority (where I am the Social Inclusion and Equalities Manager) 4 million pounds a year. All the thirty-two London Boroughs work together with the private companies to reimburse them. They have a complicated formula to do this. Despite yearly pressures the Freedom pass remains free to older people in London and is the envy of others across the country. Whilst we know the accountants would love to get their hands on the 4 million, our politicians also know that they risk tampering with the concession at their peril. Older people are reliable voters!! It would also be very short sighted. The pass keeps us very active and involved and if they took it away they would soon be paying for community care and residential services for us instead! And that would be a lot more expensive.

With my voluntary hat I am working with colleagues across the country trying to set up OWN, UK. We have made a lottery application to pay for some core costs and a development worker. We've already run four very successful regional meetings and hope that they have demonstrated the interest and demand for such a network and so I am interested in your developments too.

OWN Lewisham has conducted their own survey of residents of sheltered accommodation and are now regularly consulted by our housing department not only about current situations but also about what future developments should be.

We are also working to look at the life-long learning needs of older women. What we lack here is a Theatre Group with some 'bite'. But maybe that's for the future!

Elizabeth Sclater
Elizabeth.Sclater@lewisham.gov.uk

THEATRE GROUP REPORT

Our performance for Volunteering NSW was before a very appreciative audience. Some of the feedback included comments like 'very topical and lively', 'enthusiastic response to a joyful interlude', 'fantastic reaction and participation and just what was needed to revive the audience for the next session of conference'. So despite a few hitches with our props it was a successful performance. We won't go into the hitches here – enough to thank Janet and Lucy for their quick response to the dilemma.

Our performance at the Wellness Forum in the "Tramshed" at Narrabeen was also very successful. The Forum was organised by the North Sydney Women's Health Service to introduce the benefits of wellness for older women to women in the Manly Warringah Pittwater area. We travelled by bus, train and ferry to this event, which was attended by approximately one hundred women. They were a very lively and pro-active audience who clapped and sang along in our final number. I have heard on the grapevine that a Wellness Group will be formed in the area.

Other shows coming up are: A Luncheon for the Friends of the Theatre Group followed by a performance on 26 June and a performance at the OWN NSW State Conference on 3 July.

Merle Highet

OWN (Australia) AGM & 9th Annual Conference

The OWN (A) AGM and Annual Conference for 2001 will be held in Melbourne on Monday and Tuesday, 17 and 18 September.

The Returning Officer has informed us that there will be an election of office bearers of the Executive and appointment of National Councillors. The executive positions are: Convenor, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Councillors (4). Nominations are to be delivered to the Secretary* by August 3, marked Returning Officer. Nominations can only be made by members** of OWNA.

Official notice of the date, time and location of conference and agenda will be sent out by 3 August 2001. Items for inclusion on the agenda can be made by members only. Such items must be delivered to the secretary at least six weeks before

the conference so that they can be in the hands of delegates at least twenty eight days before the conference.

A copy of the OWN (A) Constitution is available at 87 Lower Fort Street.

OWN Inc. delegates will be elected at the OWN Inc. Annual General Meeting in August.

A meeting for OWN Inc. members to discuss items for inclusion on the agenda and to recommend amendments to the OWNA 'Policies and Strategies' will be held on Thursday, July 19, 10am at Windmill St.

* Secretary: Betty Johnson, Room 410, 149a King St., Sydney 2001

** A member is an older women's organisation which has been accepted as a member and pays a capitation fee to OWNA.

Relative Freedoms

At our monthly discussion group on 18 June we agreed that in many ways we are freer today to do as we like than our grandmothers were. On the other hand, in some aspects of their daily lives, our grandmothers had freedoms which most of us no longer enjoy.

Today, we have much more freedom of dress, we have sexual freedom outside marriage on a scale undreamed of by our grandmothers and it is now acceptable for children to be born out of wedlock without the stigma it once had. We have enormous freedom in choosing our education and career paths and the expectation of financial rewards is no smaller today than for the male equivalent.

However, grandma dined on foods which didn't come out of a can or the freezer and, if she chose, she could have more children than would be economically possible today. She was completely free from government intrusion into her life apart from occasional contact with postal officials or customs officers.

Grandma had no worries about drug problems, didn't get her senses assailed by talk-back radio and soap operas, never had to search for a parking spot and could generally rely on the family doctor not to be a member of some group practice.

The consensus was that in spite of present day problems the group preferred to be living today rather than two generations ago.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 23 July at 10.30 am at 75 Windmill Street. The subject: *Have freedoms acquired in recent times led to greater happiness for women?*

Joan Hook

Maisie Cavanagh wrote this poem as a prayer for a Women's Interfaith Group which was launched at Parliament House on 22nd March. Maisie and Elsie Heiss spoke powerfully as representatives of Aboriginal spirituality. Just a few nights before the launch, Maisie, who was ill at the time, sat down and wrote this lovely poem. She has generously allowed me to share it with OWN members.

Norma Anet (member of the Aboriginal Support Circle)

Our Spirituality

For us Aboriginal people our Spirituality
is the dance that we dance and the song that we sing
Even though others around us cannot hear the melody.
It is the very thread that weaves our identity
and enables us to make that inward journey
to experience and know the rapture of being alive.
It is not only what connects us to the landscape
it is also what connects us to each other.
It enables us to be lifted to those higher places
where judgement of others is
nonexistent and only kindness matters.
It makes known to us the way to those sacred places
for peace and reflection.
And it tells us the stories that give us the guide signs
that lead us through the passageways
as we journey through our lives.
Our Spirituality evokes our prayers for understanding
respect and recognition of each other and the landscape
we share.
It brings forth the awareness in our hearts
that you and I drink of the same water
and breathe of the same air.
If we stood on the moon looking down at the Mother Earth
we could not see any divisions of states or nations
only a oneness.
And the world can be that spiritual symbol that
reminds us that you and I really are one.

Maisie Cavanagh

My Mother's Neck

My mother was always a very busy woman. As the heart and soul of my father's shop on the main street, she couldn't leave off work when I was born, but had to employ a live-in nanny to look after me. Only in the evenings could she devote herself to me. After our little games, she would tuck me into bed with loving care, read me a bedtime story and then give me a good-night kiss on the cheek. I would return her kiss, holding on tight, so as to keep her for myself a bit longer.

One night, by chance, my lips landed on her neck instead of her cheek. Even now I shiver with delight when I think of that revelation. Never have I felt anything as soft and silky before. I buried my lips into that cosy recess and lingered on, savouring this new sensation.

The next morning, my first thoughts recalled my new experience. At bedtime, I could hardly concentrate on the story, anticipating the return of my new-found pleasure. This time, I managed to rub my whole face back and forth against this silken magic.

Mother's neck became an addiction for me, my desire escalating day by day. I would implore her: "Mummy, please stay a little longer!" Then "Mummy, come to bed with me tonight!"

How wondrous it would be to stay nestled in that comforting hollow all night. But mother explained to me that much as she loved me, her place for the night was in the double bed next to daddy.

How I envied daddy for that privilege!

Trudy Davis

"Nephila Pliumpes" A Most Remarkable Creature

Monday 11th of May was like a glorious spring day as I walked along the path admiring the beauty of the Botanical Gardens.

The large sign that caught my particular attention stood before what remained of a spider's web woven between some bushes. "The Golden Orb Spider" read the sign. "Nephila Pliumpes" Description: "Large grey abdomen, yellow knees, sometimes with a much smaller male in tow". Reading on ... "Harmless but will bite if harassed". It seems that the females create a wheel-shaped orb and this is often connected to other wheels between the trees and bushes. It seems that the spiders are busy at this time with the business of reproduction. They die during winter.

So why was I so fascinated by this information? Because the best was yet to come.

"The golden silk thread is stronger than steel of the same thickness". It can be used in the manufacture of cross hairs of a rifle or telescope, as well as for use of surgical thread in MicroSurgery. Having never heard of this particular spider made me wonder if the surgeon who removed a 'lump' from under my right eye, might have used this spider silk to place almost invisible sutures in the incision. The local doctor had to go off and find a special instrument to remove them, since they were small enough to have been done on a sewing machine. There is no scar.

Sad to say, I didn't get a glimpse of the Golden Orb. Not a spider in sight, only a deserted or desecrated part of the wheel swaying in the breeze. Hopefully, I'll get lucky on one of my next visits.

Marie Williams

HEAVY METALS IN UNLIKELY PLACES

Do you buy potatoes, oranges or onions packed in orange-coloured nets because they're more environmentally friendly than plastic bags? Austria's consumer journal, Konsument, recently reported that some of these nets contain considerable amounts of heavy metals such as lead and chromium (mainly from the yellow, red and orange colours). The heavy metals in the nets don't present a direct health hazard – they won't migrate into the fruit or vegetables. However, they make the disposal of the nets more problematic. Konsument advises consumers to buy unpackaged fruit and vegetables to help ease the environmental burden of incinerating or landfilling materials with heavy metals.

From the Internet

CRABBIT OLD WOMAN

What do you nurses, what do you see
What are you thinking when you look at me?
A crabbit old woman not very wise.
Uncertain of habit with far away eyes
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice "I do wish you'd
try"
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who, unresisting or not, lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, you're not looking at me
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still.
As I move at your bidding as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten with a father & mother,
Brothers & sisters who love one another.
A young girl at sixteen with wings on her feet
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet
A bride soon at twenty – My heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.
At twenty-five now I have young of my own,
Who need me to build a secure home.
A woman of thirty my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last.
At forty my young now will soon be all gone,
But my man stays beside me to see "I don't mourn".
At fifty once more babies play round my knee
Again we know children, my loved one and me
Dark days are upon me; my husband is dead,
I look at the future; I shudder with dread,
For my young are all busy rearing young of their
own.
And I think of the years & love I have known.
I'm an old woman now & nature is cruel,
'Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool
The body, it crumbles grace & vigour depart.
And now there's stone where I once had a heart
But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells,
And now & again my battered heart swells

I remember the joys, I remember the pain
And I'm loving and living life over again
I think of the years all too few – gone so fast
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last
So open your eyes Nurses, open & see
Not crabbit old women look closer – see me.

This poem was found among the possessions of an old Irish lady who had died in a Geriatric Hospital. The poem gives a deep insight into how patients react to care and attention of staff with whom they come in contact in hospital.

Beauty Laid Low

Here she comes my angry child
Fleet-footed tracks across the sand.
Lightning on her lovely brow
Thunder in her troubled hand.

She'd wakened in the rosy dawn
Eyes clear as newly-minted moons,
With smiles as sweet as honey dew
With laughter like a flute in tune.

There in the sky like puff-balls pinned
Striking gold from sunbeams,
Sea birds suspended in the wind
Enchant my child by no means.

"O what has caused this tragic mien?"
Her puzzled father asked.
"Suffers she some psychic pain
At what's to come or past?"

"Well, you know that handsome boy
Who took her in to dinner
Passed by her window this very morn
And said, "I'd like you thinner".

Now what young person worth her salt,
With tender curves like Rubens painted,
Would bear such ignorant assault
Unless she would, betimes, be sainted.

Judith Mustard

I don't believe it!

I don't believe people who say they find sewing easy, any more than I am convinced Mozart could compose music at the age of six. (I've also heard that at the age of six, Mozart proposed to Marie Antoinette, precocious little brat.)

You're about to shorten a hem. You measure carefully and mark the length you want it. You attempt to thread the needle. There is a wispy bit of thread which won't go through, no matter how much you try. Your scissors prove to be blunt. You find another pair. You snip off the offending bit of thread.

The thread is not the right colour, but it's near enough. Push the needle into the material. Draw thread to its full length. Forgot to make a knot, so it comes right the way through. Make a knot. Start again. Push needle into material. Difficult to push it through. Is it blunt? Too thick? Find another needle, with a larger eye. I thread it easily this time. The cotton keeps slipping out. The eye must be too big. Find yet another needle. Seems to be just right. All seems to be going well! But something has happened to the thread. A knot has appeared half way down it. Logically you should be able to pull the thread gently to straighten it out, as it's just a single line. You tug vainly, over and over. No good. You have to break it. Threading procedure as before. Start again. Can it be possible that it's going according to plan? Yes! Until the last couple of inches. The thread is not long enough. I try hard to make it last out, but it keeps slipping out of the needle because it's too short. Have to get more cotton just for the last inch or so. Annoying. More threading, more tangling, more frustration. Finally it's done. But it's too short... I've cut along the wrong marks... Oh well, it used to be a nice skirt...

What about buttons? Don't tell me anyone can sew on a button in less than half an hour. Impossible. The button is about to come off the blouse I'm wearing. Have to re sew it or it might fall off. Can't be bothered taking the blouse off, even though my mother used to tell me you shouldn't sew a garment while wearing it as you'd sew up your brains. (Maybe she was right? Sorry, Mum.) Same problems as before. Then the button detaches itself before I get to anchor it into position. Where did it go? I scabble around on the floor. I find it. Start again. Thread tangles. Thread breaks. Thread is too short. Have to take the blouse off after all. Rethread needle. Needle in right hand, pass it up through the material. Now for the button. Needle up through the first hole, down again into the button, then down into the material. Somehow the

cotton is now around the outside edge of the button... And the button is back to front. I will wear something else...

And what about sewing machines? I bought one, years ago. My friend was amazed that I could thread it. "Oh, well," she said, "I suppose if you can drive a car you can thread a sewing machine." I couldn't quite work that out, but I accepted the compliment graciously. Threading it is actually the easy part (if you accept that it takes a while because you can't see as well as you used to.) I put my foot on the pedal. The material starts to move, the thread breaks. I have to begin again. The material gets caught, bunches itself up, won't move. Takes a while to release it. The bobbin runs out, but I don't discover this until I've reached the end of the seam. Make new bobbin. Rethread needle. Discover I've accidentally caught up another section of the material and sewn it up with the rest. Have to unpick that. I'm determined to get it done. But how do you keep the stitches in a straight line?

I don't like sewing. I think it's a myth that people can do it easily. I'll bet Mozart would have had problems, too. Even if he was ten. Or eleven.

Renee Simons

Are you a carer?

An excellent free book called *The Carer Experience* is available from the Seniors Information Service. Topics covered include diagnosis and understanding of dementia and getting information about legal, financial matters and service available to carers. It is essential to plan ahead while the person has the ability to make financial and legal decisions.

If your caring role continues, it is important to get as much help as possible. Carers Resource Centres can give you written information and the names and contact numbers of support groups in your area.

For a free copy of *The Carer Experience* and for more information on Carers Resource Centres phone Seniors Information Service on **13 12 44**.

notice

NSW COMMITTEE ON AGEING

The NSW Committee on Ageing (NSWCOA) advises the Government on matters affecting the needs and interests of older people in NSW. The COA provides advice to Government, conducts consultations and seminars and publishes research on ageing issues. The committee currently has 14 members, appointed as individuals, on the basis of their expertise and experience. For information about its many publications, phone 9367 6860 or check out their new website <http://www.coa.nsw.gov.au>

Rally

'Drop the Debt' March and Rally

Sunday 22 July
1pm
Archibald Fountain
Hyde Park

For more info contact
Pat Ranald pranald@piac.asn.au

A (cheap) holiday by the sea?

Accommodation is in single or twin rooms with shared kitchens and bathrooms at the Royal Far West Children's Health Home Elsie Hill Building –
two minutes walk to Manly Beach!

Cost is \$27.50 per night single and \$44 per night twin.

Bookings can be made during office hours Monday to Friday by phoning **9977 4377**.

18-24 Wentworth Street, Manly

Computer Skills for women at Randwick TAFE.

If you interested in gaining free computer skills for work opportunities, please phone 9469 8539 and say you are interested in the WOW computer course.

Bereavement and Grief

At the OWN office we have transcripts of a special ABC Health Report program about debunking some myths about bereavement and grief.

Norman Swan's guest is Mal McKissock who has many years experience in bereavement and grief counselling.

Bequests to the Older Women's Network

If you would like to include a bequest to OWN in your will, the following options will guide you in its wording. Please specify which Older Women's Network you wish to be the recipient of your gift: the Older Women's Network NSW or the Older Women's Network Sydney

Option No. 1 I devise the sum of \$to the Older Women Network for the general purpose of the Older Women's Network OR for the specific purpose of

such purpose being consistent with the aims and objectives of the Older Women's Network, to be administered by the Older Women's Network.

Option No 2 (for a proportional bequest) I give to the Older Women's Network for its general purposes or the specific purpose of % of my estate (or% of the rest of my estate).

The gift you make to the Older Women's Network will be an enduring record of your generosity.

board

Jessie Street National Women's Library

Lunch-hour Talk

Thursday, 19 July, 12 to 1.30 pm

Venue: Lady Mayoress' Rooms, Sydney Town Hall.

Guest Speaker: Selena Adcock

"Genealogy: The Quest for Answers"

Selena outlines the steps to be undertaken in doing your family history, what to look for and pitfalls to avoid.

Entrance is \$15. Sandwich lunch included.

RSVP on 9876 3927 or

9265 9486 or email shirleyjones@ozemail.com.au

Minymaku Way

A film about the inspiring work of the Ngannyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankuntjatjara Women's Council in the remote desert communities of Central Australia.

July 13 on SBSTV

Are you eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card?

Changes in the recent budget (subject to the law being passed) may make you eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card. The Commonwealth Seniors' Health Card is available to people who are Australian residents of pension age and who are not receiving an aged pension. This card entitles you to cheaper prescription medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). By showing your card to the pharmacist you will be entitled to prescriptions for \$3.50. There are income limits for the qualification of this card: single \$50,000; couples \$80,000; illness separated couple, each \$50,000. To apply you will be required to provide proof of age, identity, length of residence in Australia and proof of income to your nearest Centrelink by making an appointment on 13 10 21.

Ervin Gallery

A symposium

on

'Modern Australian Women'

Monday 8 October

9 am – 2.30

Numbers are limited and booking are essential

Phone Prue Davidson

9258 0150

for a booking form

Membership of the Older Women's Network is open to all older women

Annual fee:

Membership, including Newsletter..... \$20.00

Newsletter only (for Gov't Depts. institutions and organisations) ... \$25.00

Send your cheque, name, address and phone number to:

Older Women's Network, 87 Lower Fort Street, Millers Point 2000