



OWN MATTERS

Newsletter of the Older Women's Network New South Wales

Vol.6 No.5 – June 2009

Bending Over Backwards?

Before you get too excited about the recent budget initiative increasing the age pension full rate by \$32.49 per week for singles and \$10.14 per week for couples – we had asked for \$80 per week so we could reach the poverty line, believing it's important to have goals – just consider that these new measures are tempered with the knowledge that the pensionable age for women will also be increasing from 63.5 to 67 over the next 14 years.

Community reaction to this change has been mixed and vocal, but the biggest change that needs to take place will be the societal shift in attitudes towards the employment and retention of older women, if this scheme is to have any measure of success. Because despite an increase in mature age workers and women's participation in the workforce over the last two decades, gendered ageism is entrenched in the Australian workplace and society.

Negative imagery of growing older permeates our language, media, and culture. These images inform the theories and practices of our socio-political structures. Older workers are perceived as less productive, frequently overlooked for promotion, and are often pressured to retire early. These attitudes are even more extreme for women.

Only last month we had the outrageous example of Patricia Pitfield, a 61-year-old Myers clerical worker, with 30 years' experience with the company, ten in her current clerical position, who was forced out of a job after failing a newly introduced company physical.

Patricia was asked to squat in front of a human resources manager, and climb steps without holding on to a railing. When she was unable to do so she was sent home. This occurred after Patricia had already produced a doctor's report saying she was unable to fully squat due to a bad back and knee replacement surgery.

Myer defended their position, claiming Ms Pitfield would be unable to open a bottom drawer or plug in a cash register – neither required tasks for her position - and is therefore unfit for work.

If this sort of thing can happen to a woman of 61, how will it be for women facing an even more competitive workplace, securing their jobs until they turn 67 before they can retire on a pension?

Despite having no income, Patricia is unable to take unfair dismissal action or even claim Centrelink benefits because Myer has not technically fired her. Patricia is also unable to pursue a worker's compensation claim because her condition was not caused by her job.

Although the United Services Union took Myer to the Industrial Relations Commission early last month it was unable to rule her dismissal was unfair as she had not actually been fired.

Having seen these organisations face failure on her behalf, understandably

continues page 3

CONTENTS

Bending Over Backwards?	1&3
Public Transport Chaos	2
OWN NSW Management Team	3
Sweetening the Country	4
Budget 2009 in Brief	4
Stayin' Alive	5
Memories	5
Letters to the Editor	6-8
Apron Fancier	6
To Protect and Serve	6
What's in a Name?	6
Swine Fever	6
An Update on Molly	7
Dear Friends	7
Slim Pickings	7
Dear OWN	8
Dear Glenda	8
The Whistleblower	8
What is Censorship?	8
OWN NSW Conference	9
At and Beyond the Rocks	10
Sydney	10
Illawarra	10
Sutherland	10
Aboriginal Support Circle	11
Aboriginal Affairs Gain in the Budget	11
Language Service Opens in WA	11
Theatre Group Report	12
Seniors Housing Forum	13
Housing Options for Older Women	13
Aspirational	14
Am I a Hoarder?	14
Communal Places	15
Betty Little's Birthday Wishes	15
Wrap with Love	15
Sleeping Well	16
DES Awareness	16
Pride Comes Before a Fall	17
Drummer's Elbow	17
Hello Knitters	17
Notices	18-19

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

Phone: 02 9247 7046 Fax: 02 9247 4202 email: info@ownnsw.org.au web: www.ownnsw.org.au

Produced with the assistance of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
with project funding from the NSW Department of Health and assistance from the City of Sydney

Who Are We?

The Older Women's Network (OWN) NSW is the peak body for 19 groups in NSW. OWN promotes the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women through a range of activities and resources, and advocates on issues of interest and concern to older women.

OWN Matters is the newsletter of the Older Women's Network NSW. It is published 11 times a year. The annual subscription for individuals is \$22 and \$40 for organisations and includes GST.

Members of OWN groups in NSW are encouraged to contribute to **OWN Matters** with items of interest to older women and Letters to the Editor. They can be sent by mail or email marked Attention – Editorial Team. Please include contact details. Contributions must be received by the second Tuesday of each month.

OWN Matters is copyright. Material can be reproduced, but only with acknowledgement of its source.

ABN 36 992 030 904

Editorial Team

Beth Eldridge, June West, Helen Young, Lorraine Inglis, Judith Mustard and Louise Bentley.

Admin Support

Margaret Holland and Margaret Kearney, Helen Monaghan.

Layout and Design

Beth Eldridge, Louise Bentley and Enid Leighton.

Membership & Subscriptions

Maureen King

Mailout Team

Pat Rayne, Noel Carpenter, Veronica Willis, Heather Jennings, Corinne Campbell. More help welcome!

POINT of VIEW

Public Transport Chaos

The NSW State Government in NSW obviously does not like public transport. Rather than invest in public transport, it appears that Macquarie Street would prefer everyone to be driving or walking or staying at home

Recent changes to bus services and proposed changes to railway services reflect the disregard the government has for the community. In addition the ferry services are up for grabs and are at risk of being sold off to the highest bidder.

Changes to the timetables for the Hills district of North Western Sydney resulted in chaos. The Dural area lost 20 daily bus services to the City and there are no services at all between after 9am and 4pm. School bus services have been cut or changed; the elderly have been thoroughly inconvenienced by bus stops and even whole services being cut or changed; workers' services have been cut or disappeared so that workers now require more than one bus/rail connection to get to work. Public safety and security have become an issue.

The Mayor of Baulkham Hills, Larry Bolitho has described these timetable changes as a debacle and a mess. He said that the government was told long before the planned changes were implemented that it would fail.

City Rail's services will suffer drastically from proposed cutbacks of 600 frontline staff at railway stations across the system. This would leave 58 stations with no staff at all. There would be no station managers for weekend duty.

At Blackheath, the proposed changes would reduce staffing to one casual worker who would work 4 hours a day (Monday to Friday only) between 5.45 am and 9.45am. The Illawarra and Hunter regions are also included in the proposed cutbacks. In the Hunter 45 of the 135 existing positions are at risk.

At the same time there are about 500 vacancies which State Rail has failed to fill.

But there's one positive note – managers will get pay rises of between 10% to 17%. That's if they still have a job, of course.

There's only one thing left to do – contact your local Member and remind him/her what form of transport you use to get to the polling booth.

Margaret Kearney

Disclaimer : *The views expressed in OWN Matters are not necessarily those of the Older Women's Network NSW, and we do not guarantee the accuracy of the facts in articles supplied by members. The Older Women's Network NSW accepts no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting, or not acting, upon any material in OWN Matters.*

Budget equals busy time for OWN NSW, and this year's was no exception. In spite of the promised increase in Aged Pension, researchers believe most recipients will remain below the Poverty Line. Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot's Media Release claims that the "2009-10 budget continues to provide support for aged and community care, focusing on supporting all older Australians, including those in rural and remote areas". Increased subsidies to improve viability for providers in regional, rural and remote areas would be very welcome to some OWN members. Continuing the Transition Care Program which helps older Australians return to the independence of their homes after a hospital stay – ditto. We wait in hope.

OWN NSW (via Betty Johnson) has also provided comment on the discussion paper "Women's Health – the New National Agenda". Of particular interest is OWN's contribution through the creation of Wellness Centres, granting older women the opportunity to participate in decision-making on their health matters. The recent change in the delivery of health services to women, from a biomedical to social model focus, have come about because it was driven by women's organisations and advocates. 'Violence against Women' has also been singled out as an area of particular interest, with a request from OWN NSW that, in addition to physical abuse, specific reference be included to other forms such as emotional, psychological, sexual and financial abuse.

Prevention of Violence against Older Women (PVAOW) project with Clearinghouse is still pursuing the idea of a national conference which would be held in SA or Qld. Matina and Ludo will be discussing with COTA the possibility of their endorsement for the conference. Others will also be approached. It will depend on whether or not there is some funding available. The outcomes of the projects of OWN NSW on prevention of violence

against older women will form a central part of the input for the conference. The "Disappearing Age" report plus the issue of homelessness of older women have been the focus of recent discussions between OWN NSW (via Sonia Laverty) and Minister Firth. Next stage, hopefully, securing funding to research the homelessness issue.

NSW Conference planning is progressing well – discussion group topics decided, performers contracted and more suitable meeting spaces arranged. It's that time again – Management Team Nominations are essential for OWN to continue. Without a Management Team, there will be no OWN. Can you imagine life without OWN? That would be the reality without Management Team volunteers. Nomination Forms have been forwarded to each Group, so volunteer yourself, or someone else (with her agreement), to reach the Office by 30 June. Don't forget to forward individual and delegate (two per Group) registrations to OWN Office before Friday 19 June, and your Group's written report by Monday 1 June. These reports form an integral part of NSW Annual Report, which is distributed to funding organisations, and also forms part of OWN's history.

Analysis of OWN NSW 2008-09 Strategic Plan occupied a large portion of the May Management meeting, with pleasing results. Most strategies have achieved positive outcomes, and future action for those requiring more attention has been decided.

Monthly reminders – NSW Conference, 20-21 July; Australia Conference Nov 30-Dec 1; Capitation Fees due by 30 June (only financial OWN Groups' delegates are eligible to vote at Annual Conference); *OWN Matters* subscription renewals also by 30 June. Reminder letters to Groups for the latter two will be sent out in near future.

Sandy McDonald

Bending Over Backwards - continued from page 1

Patricia may feel daunted at the prospect of exploring this as a discrimination complaint on the basis of ageism, with Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission or to a state or territory counterpart. Disclosing and reporting discrimination requires both some feeling of empowerment and knowledge of your options. People who are discriminated against are often members of a minority group and may already feel some degree of disempowerment to begin with, further exacerbated by their workplace victimisation experience. Patricia, like many women in her position, may lack knowledge about her legal options.

Often making a complaint can be hindered, too, by our inability to identify what has happened to us as discrimination. This is not surprising given the degree of

societal brainwashing that encourages us to regard this sort of discrimination as acceptable.

The Anti Discrimination Act promised to limit and reverse such negative attitudes about mature age workers and provide a legal path for those who are discriminated against. I can't recall seeing any announcement about the allocation of new resources to address ageism, and reinforce age discrimination laws. Until this systemic discrimination is challenged, and employers are made to demonstrate their own flexibility, and bend over backwards to employ older women, this latest innovation may just perpetuate ageism instead of being forced to address it.

Beth Eldridge

Sweetening the Country

The young Presbyterian Minister, journeying with his two camels around his enormous parish in the outback, called in to a little humpy where the woman was all alone – her husband was away droving. She was starting to make him a cup of tea when suddenly she began to cry hysterically.

“I’ve just used my last match,” she said, “and I won’t have another till the mailman comes in three months’ time.”

That was reality 100 years ago. The Minister’s name was John Flynn.

Flynn had once intended to become a missionary in the Islands. But a woman called Jennie Litchfield turned him in a different direction. “It’s the women of the inland that are going to save this country,” she said. “It’s an all-male place now; if we can make it safe for men to bring wives and families to the inland knowing there will be help when needed, we shall sweeten the country.”

So Flynn headed for the outback. He soon discovered that Jennie was right, so he persuaded some young women with nursing training to take on bush nursing. They were based at local centres, a store or a pub, and they – and a few hospitals at junction points hundreds of miles apart – were the beginning of a medical service in the outback.

With World War I came radio and aircraft, and a message to Flynn from a young pilot from the outback who was serving in Europe. “We have planes, we have wireless,” he wrote. “This could glue Australia together.” The young airman died in action, but his message lived on. It spurred Flynn into action, tirelessly lobbying influential people for money to realize his dream of a flying doctor. The invention of pedal wireless had overcome the lack of electricity in the bush, making it possible for isolated settlers to call for help.

It wasn’t until 1928 that Hudson Fysh of Qantas loaned Flynn a plane for a year ‘to see how it goes’. And it went. The Flying Doctor Service sprang into life, bringing medical care to everybody in the outback, including Aboriginal people. Its wings now span an area as big as the whole of western Europe.

The nurses Flynn recruited were city girls, but they coped with extracting teeth and delivering babies in all sorts of situations. Most did a two-year stint, then a refresher, and came back for more. Likewise the pilots – not for them the bells and whistles of an aerodrome, they

opted for the challenge of bumpy airstrips or no airstrip at all. They were all pioneers.

Nowadays the Royal Flying Doctor Service operates 50 planes from 18 centres around Australia. Each plane costs \$10m, plus \$1.5m to customize it as an intensive care unit. Free of charge, it brings medical help to people who live, travel or work anywhere in inland Australia, with the ability to reach an emergency situation within 90 minutes. Interestingly, more than 50% of emergency callouts are from people on holidays in four-wheel drives.

Speaking at a lunch-hour talk at the Jessie Street National Women’s Library, Mary Bentley, an RFDS volunteer, said that one of the pilots’ problems is that regulations require take-off and landing only on registered airstrips, but that most places they go to don’t have these. “We do our best to comply,” she conceded.

So what’s a bumpy landing or two? Seems the RFDS hasn’t lost its pioneering spirit.

Helen Young

Budget in Brief

- The long awaited increase to the single age pension by \$32.49 per week.
- The introduction of a Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index.
- Self-funded retirees receive a 50 percent reduction of minimum payments for account-based pensions in 2009-10.
- A simpler and increased Seniors Supplement that replaces the Seniors Concession Allowance and Utilities allowance.
- Starting in 2017, the pension age to gradually increase to 67 by 2023.
- The Work Bonus moves the income test from \$138 to \$250 per fortnight, however the rate increases from 40 to 50 cents in the dollar, which will be disappointing for pensioners earning over \$125 per week.



Special Moments

Stayin' Alive, Stayin' Alive . . .

The familiar beat of the Bee Gee's famous song keeps resonating within me. I've just been listening to it at the end of a delightful day spent with OWN's Theatre Group watching the women's high-stepping, hip-thrusting effervescence as they belt out the numbers they will be performing at the coming OWN NSW Annual Conference. Their show is definitely not to be missed!

I watch enthralled as Rhona Nicholson, an experienced and enthusiastic musician, works hand-in-glove with director Jo-Anne, miraculously able to follow every step of her quick and shifting instructions and pounding the piano keys in truly professional style to support the singers. Jo-Anne, shouting instructions and corrections – always with kindness and humour – pirouettes and parades, waving her arms as she moves back and forth across the floor below the stage demonstrating what she wants. It is clear the Theatre group loves her already even though she has been with them for such a short time, and it is also clear she has a wealth of theatre experience behind her and knows how to get the best from her team. She tells me they are a great group to work with, that they share a practised level of competence and awareness of each other as they work together that makes her task much simpler than it might be were they a mixture of temperamental prima donnas and challenged also-ran's.

It is a new world for me, sitting next to stage manager Veronica Willis and watching as she notes the Director's movement instructions to the group onstage, erasing and re-marking almost from moment to moment to ensure that they will have accurate directions set down for the next practice. Veronica also has long theatre experience, but has not tried stage-managing before this group. She assures me it is hard work, and I need no convincing about that, but it is also clear that she's loving it.

After lunch, when I'm beginning to wilt a little, I'm impressed to see the group still vivacious and laughing as they practise new songs and dance routines. It is clear they receive enormous mental, physical, emotional and intellectual stimulation through their shared work, laughter and mutual affection and I soak up some of that as I watch.

Contact Jo Allon on 9520 2854 or 0408 412 097 if you think you'd like to be part of this warm, lively group of women. They'll keep you really alive, really alive!

Bev Cameron

Memories

In the May issue of *OWN Matters*, Enid Harrison wrote about her father, a World War 1 veteran who was gassed by the Germans. Consequently, his extreme irritability had a destructive effect on Enid's attitude towards men.

My grandfather was also gassed by the Germans during World War I, but I look back with only very fond memories of him.

For me, Grandpa was the charming man who taught me to waltz when I was about twelve years old. He lived in Cronulla with his second wife, and my sister and I used to look forward to our periodic visits with Mum and Dad. As we lived in the western suburbs of Sydney, it provided the rare opportunity for a swim at the beach. We invariably had prawns with vinegar, bread and butter for lunch and it was Grandpa who showed me how to peel prawns correctly.

Much later he was diagnosed with diabetes and lost a leg. My father sent me a telegram when I was living in Melbourne advising that Grandpa had passed away just before he was due to lose his remaining leg.

I still have Grandpa's chiming clock, together with Rudyard Kipling's *The Thousandth Man*. and Grandpa's rocking chair, beloved by my son's Burmese cats, has pride of place on his back verandah.

June West

OWN NSW 2009 State Conference

Our conference will be on July 20 and 21. It is time for each group to choose their delegates.

It's also time for each group to send us their annual report.

Additional registration forms for delegates and non-delegates can be requested from the OWN NSW office:

02 9247 7046

or email: info@ownnsw.org.au

Letters to the Editor



An Unreconstructed Apron Fancier

When my children were small I didn't wear aprons. At that stage I spent most of the time in daggy old clothes that couldn't be hurt by babies throwing up, grubby children climbing over me or endless hours digging and planting in a new garden.

Later, in my years of grand-mothering young children, when I was tidily dressed all the time, I became an habitual apron wearer to cope with the endless snack-making, finger painting, clay modelling, gluing and glittering activities that were the order of the day. Friends dropping by noticed me wearing aprons more or less permanently, gave me new and brighter ones, and gradually they became my badge of office. My grand-daughters demanded matching ones for themselves, and for a time, we were an apron-wearing team.

Now that the children are at school I only wear an apron when I am in serious cooking mode – with my I-Pod in my ears and Bocelli, Sutherland or Pavarotti thrilling my mind, I am really into creative cooking a la Maggie Beer as I work to tease and satisfy the appetite of my live-in lover, Devoted Spouse. Inevitable drips of exotic sauces, spitting hot oil or squirry fruit juices all land on the trusty apron, saving my transcendental culinary experience from rude interruption through unwanted and attention-

demanding blots on my clothing. My collection of aprons is therefore an important part of my actor's wardrobe in the ongoing drama of my life. I wouldn't be without them.

Bev Cameron

To Protect and Serve

It was 1950 and my first appointment as a Needlework Teacher in two Primary Schools (four days in one school and one day at a smaller school). The sixth class girls were permitted to go home for their lunch and I had detained the daughter of The Apron Owner, to complete some work. The door of my room was opened and there was mother wearing her apron. Words were spoken and mother turned to leave. I was faced with a bare back and bloomer wearing mother and only the full-length apron! I believe the family did live in the same street as the school.

A-nony-mouse



What's in a Name?

I have noted in *OWN Matters* newsletter that there is an issue with the name "Older Women's Network", because of its allusion to age.

This too is my own experience, as having approached several women who would be an asset to our new Baulkham Hills group, there seemed to be some adverse reaction to joining a group with "Older" being part of the name.

When this was raised at our meeting, the general consensus of opinion was of acceptance – that current members, in general, did not have a problem. However it was agreed that if I, as an individual, wished to submit an alternative, I should do so. My suggestion then, is that the name be changed to "All Women's Network".

This would have the following advantages:

- gets rid of the dreaded "older" word
- gives the group an alphabetical listing advantage in places such as telephone directories
- by changing only one word it would keep connection with our roots
- the word "all" is politically correct and is encompassing of different ethnicities

It is good to think through these things even if nothing comes of it.

G Lloyd

Swine Fever

Considering I heard on the radio that 34,000 died from seasonal flu in America last year and none have died from swine flu yet, I'm not too worried. There seems to be a panic about once a year. So far Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Equine flu, Asian flu or any other pandemic hasn't hit anyone I know but they cost governments and business around the world millions of dollars. The only ones affected are those in media; it's their bread and butter to get people feeling that they have to buy every paper that comes out and listen carefully to every news bulletin. Their circulation increases while people panic.

Barbara Malcolm

Letters to the Editor

An Update on Molly (Molls for short)

We still have the creature and I still look after her. I play ball with her every day, not in the park but in the back garden. Molly does not go to the park because the vet says she is too nervous to go out for walkies! I throw the ball, she brings it back, time after time after time, after time, oh dear! We have a walking machine which Molly uses for her exercise. I start the machine and she gets on and I have to stay with her or else she will jump off to see where I have got to.

Wherever I go she goes as well, upstairs, outside, the loo, the mailbox, everywhere. When I want to use the walking machine I cannot until after the mutt has done her six kilometers – oh joy!

When I go to bed, so does the dog, her bed is outside my bedroom door. She wakes me up in the morning by slurping her big wet tongue on whatever part of me is exposed. I do not close my door because, if I have to pay a visit during the night, I cannot see her on her bed and do not want to trip over her bed again, it hurts too much.

My daughter just comes home from work and says, oh mum, isn't she cute. I just smile, grind my teeth, and lie. What else can I do?

I am writing this letter because I need sympathy and lots of it. Please feel sorry for me and understand that I do what I do because I love my daughter. If I didn't, the dog would be gone and all would be well with the world.

Oh well, life goes on don't it!!!

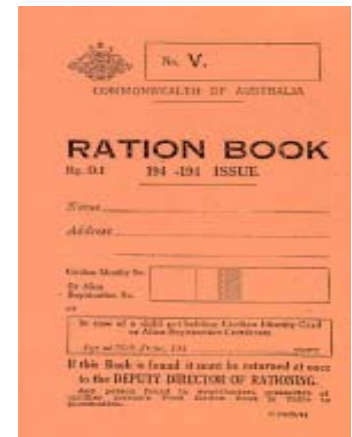
Josie Jackson

Dear Friends

We've had a horror of a year. Doug had prostrate trouble, then at the end of the festivities, on his 80th birthday he developed an excruciating pain and was rushed to hospital. A burst gall bladder left him in agony for three days. It was January 2nd and a bad time to be sick. He was almost dead when they operated, only a whisker away. The bile had been leaking all the time – litres of muck had to be cleaned out He survived, after two months in hospital, then a second operation on the prostrate and a third to take the stent out. I was on my own, fell over, did damage to my spine, landed up in Respite Care for a month – hated it, felt very strange. Couldn't write, both with my handwriting and my head. But we are on the road for a few weeks restoration, leaving our cares behind. Will we go into a retirement village? The sheer physical side of it boggles us – selling the house, moving at our age, Bloody Hell!

I've missed 'Wellness and Dancing' so much, and being part of OWN. Hazel Johnson came all the way to Erina to visit me in Respite Care. What a wonder she is! Her husband died recently. Why do people who ought to know better say 'passed away or lost'? What's the matter with the proper word died? Passed away where? Gone where? Confusing for children and ridiculous – let's bring back death! On that note I'll say good bye to all my OWN friends.

Joan Johns



Slim Pickings

With all this depressing talk about the economy and the recession, the large stores are cashing in on people's worries and concerns and giving hints about how we can live more economically.

Glancing at a daily newspaper today I was amazed to see two full pages of advertisements for cheap meals (under \$10.00) by Coles Supermarkets. All meals were Coles brands or Coles specials. Investigating further, I discovered a family of four must consist of fairies and elves in their opinion. One meal consists of a pie each and a quarter share of a 420 gram can of peas plus a dob of tomato sauce.

Another meal is 175 grams each of osso bucco (which includes the bone), a quarter of a single carrot, a quarter of a stick of celery, 100 grams of rice each and two stock cubes for flavouring. And then we have the farmhouse hotdogs, a bread roll each, one thin BBQ sausage, 60 grams of cheese, a quarter of a sliced onion and a smear of mustard (optional).

Eating at this rate we will soon all end up as skinny millionaires, that's if we live that long with these meagre and poor nutritional choices.

Best wishes to all

Lucy Porter

Letters to the Editor

Dear OWN

At our meeting yesterday (11/05/09) we discussed our feeling of isolation from much that happens at Headquarters.

Many items in the Sydney diary appear interesting, but for residents of the Hills, a two hour one way trip is a huge dampener of enthusiasm.

As Parramatta has been the demographic heart of Sydney we would like to bring to your long-term planning a notion to re-centralise. Seeking hireable space out of the CBD could prove a cost saving and bring a new enthusiasm to activities.

We realise that this is a very bold thought from the newest “upstarts” group but we think we might also possibly be speaking on behalf of at least Blacktown and Parramatta and possibly others.

Glenda Lloyd (Acting Minutes Secretary HillsOWN)

Dear Glenda,

Please understand that items appearing in the Sydney diary relate to activities of the OWN Sydney Group. OWN Sydney is a group, just like your group at the Hills, except that their membership covers a much larger geographical range, taking in all of the Sydney CBD, and extending out in every direction to cover any women who wish to join OWN, and are unable to reach another local group like yours. Their membership is around 350.

OWN NSW only has groups, not individuals as members, and the activities we run are generally the quarterly meetings, our Annual State Conference or occasionally forums with several months notice. Our premises are provided free of charge through a community grant via the City

of Sydney, and we frequently have meetings with other organizations and departments in the CBD. We really encourage groups to hold regional meetings to increase their networking opportunities.

*Beth Eldridge
OWN NSW Coordinator*

The Whistleblower

The time has come to blow the whistle on the Editorial Team. I sit there with them on Wednesdays when they meet, I see and hear everything that goes on, so you can believe what I say.

Oh, they laugh a lot and say “Isn’t this funny!” or they sigh over something that’s sad or drool over a lovely poem, or squabble over a point of grammar, but most of you would say they were OK.

Well let me tell you there’s a dark and wicked side to these women – their cruel, heartless treatment of me, an essential part of the team.

The fact is, I’m suffering from malnutrition, and it’s all their fault because they give me a totally unbalanced diet. Anything that’s long-winded, irrelevant, racist, sexist, prejudiced, repetitious or personally attacks another OWN member comes my way fast. And that’s a very heavy diet.

I’d like to have something I’d enjoy, like things readers write about themselves, their reminiscences, their feelings, their jokes, their irreverence, their stropiness ... oh, and I’d love letters, especially the controversial ones ... but no, all that good nourishing stuff the Editorial Team gathers up lovingly and publishes in *OWN Matters*. It’s a wonder somebody hasn’t noticed ...

So now you know what they are

really like. And I want to see the Manager.

The Editorial Bin

What is Censorship?

Now that the Editorial Bin has blown the whistle on our practice of feeding it what we judge to be unsuitable material, it might as well be said that the Bin is not the only one who has complained. Some of us have received verbal complaints of censorship, that we have ‘pulled’ contributions that we found personally unpalatable, or have too severely pruned others.

We respect readers’ rights to criticize and protest, just as we enjoy their compliments, but where do we draw the line? Few would want *OWN Matters* to stoop to publishing personal attacks, and it’s hard to find space in a small journal like ours for long articles (see ‘*This is who we are*’, March 2009 issue, p8). Nevertheless, the word ‘censorship’ has been raised, and it needs to be explored.

In a nutshell, various dictionaries define censorship as ‘suppression of information on moral, political or military grounds’. That word ‘suppression’ is a sticking point in itself for women, who have themselves been suppressed and oppressed in some form or other since time began. It makes our ‘suspicious’ bells ring. So when does culling of information considered to be of little interest to a publication’s readership become suppression and therefore censorship? Should *OWN Matters* have new publication guidelines, and what should they be?

We would value readers’ views on this important subject, and promise to publish every written viewpoint we receive.

The Editorial Team

OWN NSW State Conference

OWN NSW Annual State Conference Agenda

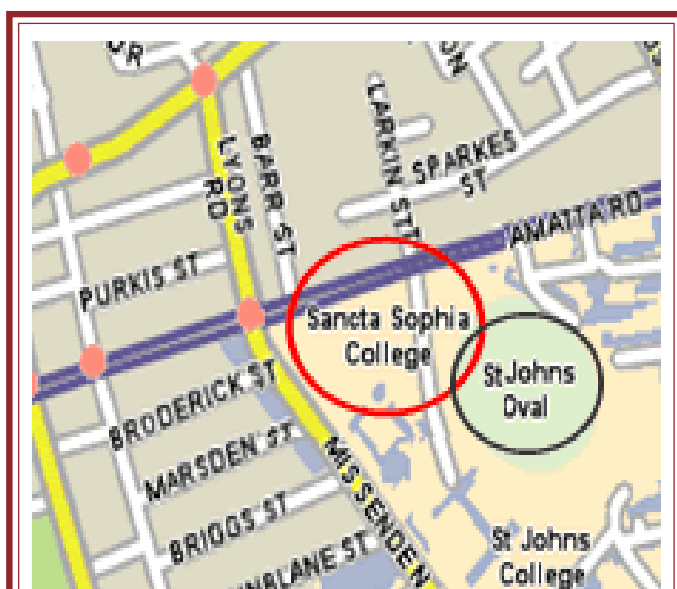
20/21 July 2009

Monday 20 July

- 9.00 Registration and arrival morning tea
9.15 Opening of conference: Introduce theme 'Active Ageing'
Welcome to country
Housekeeping announcements
9.30 Introduce Speaker
9.45 Susan Ryan 'What should be done about Human Rights'
10.45 **Stretch time/comfort break. Tea and Coffee available**
11.00 OWN NSW Annual Report, Financial Report, Management Committee nominations.
National Conference Report.
12.00 Entertainment
12.30 **Lunch**
1.30 Project Reports - Wellness; Prevention of violence against older women
2.00 Entertainment
2.30 Group Presentations
3.30 **Afternoon tea**
4.00 Group Presentations and networking
6.00 **Conference Dinner in Dining Room**
7.30 After Dinner Entertainment

Tuesday 21 July

- 8.00 Gentle Exercises
8.15 **Breakfast**
9.00 Morning Tea for new arrivals
9.30 Workshops - round 1
10.45 **Morning Tea**
11.15 Workshops round 2
12.30 **Lunch**
1.30 Entertainment
2.00 Report back from workshops
2.45 Summing up and closing remarks
3.00 Close



Sancta Sophia College is located at: 8 Missenden Road, Camperdown NSW 2050

Travelling to Sancta Sophia College from Sydney Airport by taxi will cost approximately \$35. You must make arrangements for the code number prior to arrival if you require your taxi to enter through the main gates of the College. You can also use the Shuttle Bus service.

Alternatively you can catch the train from the Airport to Central Railway Station and then catch a bus or taxi to the College. Buses which travel along Parramatta Rd to the College are the 435, 436, 437, 438, L38, L39, 449 and L40. Alight from the bus on the corner of Parramatta Rd and Missenden Rd.

At and Beyond the Rocks

News in brief from OWN Sydney:

- OWN Sydney's Working Group continued its program of improving its effectiveness and efficiency with a workshop under the guidance of Roxy Rascon on May 25th. Our thanks go to Roxy for a very lively meeting. OWN Sydney members can expect further information in due course as new ideas are put into practice.

- Working Group members Leonie Higgins and Joan Modder will represent OWN Sydney at the coming OWN NSW Conference in July.

- OWN Sydney will be represented at a City of Sydney Aged Interagency seminar on 4 June. WESTPAC's 'Our Community' will present 'Promoting your Community Organisation' with topics on marketing and promoting organisations in the community.

- OWN Sydney will give 'front-of-house' support to the OWN Theatre Group for its production on 7 November.

Bev Cameron

Illawarra OWN

Currently, Illawarra OWN is bubbling along, with new faces at each meeting and a general feeling of enthusiasm in the air. Our activities groups are proceeding exceptionally well, with the coffee club and the Current Affairs Group proving the most popular. This seems to show that our members certainly like to talk!

We have been trying to increase the number of members willing to write contributions for our newsletter. Following discussion of Nowra OWN's interest in its members' memories of World War II, it was suggested that there would be a wide range of experience of World

War II among the members of Illawarra OWN. Therefore all members have been invited to write perhaps half a page (or more if they so wish!) about what they remember about this time and to submit it for publication in the next newsletter. There was a general buzz of excitement among members when this proposal was made so we are hoping for great things!

Members recently enjoyed an interesting bus trip to Berry. Members from our group who attended the Regional Meeting at Nowra reported having a wonderful time. We are eagerly anticipating the forthcoming State Conference.

Peggy Rodden

Sutherland Wellness

A birthday celebration! We celebrate the commencement of the Sutherland Wellness project each year in the second week in May. The OWN Wellness Centre is now eight years old and well known, not only within OWN, but throughout Sutherland. At morning tea breaks in the celebration week, the Eighth Birthday cake was cut by the founding partnership of Noreen and Barbara. Both received beautiful floral presentations. Their great joy was to see so many long time participants present and the almost overwhelming number of newer smiling faces so happily expressing enjoyment of 'their Wellness.'

Noreen and Barbara also expressed their feelings of reward as they gradually step back from more demanding responsibilities as ongoing and outstanding contributions are made by wonderful volunteers, so full of enthusiasm and capabilities. The

most satisfying aspect of the procedures was surely the thankyou to all the volunteers carrying roles of responsibilities for the successful day-to-day functioning of the centre. Called to the front for recognition and acknowledgement were the nine members of the Management team, the three-woman coordinating team and the long list of women leading and filling roles on various sub-committees.

With registration numbers continuing to healthily grow, we also continue to expand our program. While physical exercises, the Computer-Beginners and the Supportive Neighbourhood Lunches remain the primary features, later additions are steadily becoming more consolidated. These include The Last Friday Lunch, Discussion Group and Meditation Hour as well the development of our performance groups of singers, drummers and dancers.

The bursting onto the scene of the DAMES stands out among these exciting developments as their numbers increase and they continue to develop their repertoire and accept engagements for performances. Their expertise will be further enhanced by a new project to assist script and script writing skills. With minimal set-backs through her three months absence for corrective leg surgery, Director Anne was enthusiastically welcomed back. Rehearsals are beginning for a performance at OWN NSW conference.

Unless you have time to listen, don't ask the 18 Pt. Wolstonecroft holiday makers how they enjoyed their five days away. Apparently an overwhelming success, a great time was had by all including inter-group guests.

Barbara Burnham

Aboriginal Support Circle Issues

Aboriginal Affairs Gain in This Year's Budget

The National Indigenous Times has reported that "Indigenous affairs money is scattered" (through various portfolios) "but plentiful" in this year's budget. The Rudd Government has realised how underfunded Indigenous affairs have been in the past, but at least it is prepared to allocate growing resources from now on.

This year, \$1.3 billion dollars have been allocated over ten years. In addition, in November 2008, COAG (Council of Australia Governments) granted funding of \$4.6 billion over 10 years. So in percentage terms, this is better than just about any government has done before. (The Keating Government of 1992-1993 allocated an equivalent percentage.)

Black health has been allocated \$200 million over four years. While it is not as much as the Australian Medical Association previously reported as needed, under the Howard Government, there was an annual shortfall of \$450 million. \$50 million has been allocated to Native Title Representative Bodies to help boost capacity. The Torres Strait Islands will receive \$30 million for stage four of a major infrastructure building project. While also not as much as needed, at least this

is positive. In the Northern Territory, \$203.1 million over three years is allocated to ensure the sustainability of more than 1600 jobs already created, not to be confused with work for the dole.

However, disappointingly, just over \$800 million is being directed to the Northern Territory intervention, brought in by the Howard Government, which is now being called "Closing the Gap", with \$106 million allocated for one year, primarily to Centrelink, for continuing compulsory income management, a highly contentious issue. This is on top of more than \$100 million already expended by Centrelink, mainly on bureaucracy! There is no mention of funding for the new National Indigenous Representative Body to be set up, but preferred models are due to be delivered in July, so hopefully funding will be forthcoming.

While health, housing, education, infrastructure and policing will still be short of cash, the verdict is that "the will is there, and that is worth acknowledging".

Pat Zinn

Aboriginal Language Service Opens in Western Australia

Central Australian woman, Dorelle Anderson Hanley, has opened a new translating

and interpreting service in Perth, using her own money, offering fully qualified and accredited speakers in nine Indigenous languages, mainly from the Central Desert and East Kimberley regions. She was an interpreter in Alice Springs and speaks five Indigenous languages herself. The service will be available through the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

It is extremely important for government workers, lawyers and health professionals in traditional areas to have this service, which they have been seeking for years, but successive governments have never taken up this issue.

New South Wales Grants to Protect Languages

The NSW government is offering one-off grants of up to \$25,000 to community organisations to help protect and revitalise Aboriginal languages, and over the last three years 45 language projects have been assisted across the state. The launch of the latest round of a \$200,000 grants program took place recently in La Perouse.

Before the arrival of Europeans, at least 70 Aboriginal languages and dialects were spoken in the NSW areas, but now there are only about 20 distinct languages used.

Pat Zinn



Theatre Group Report



Now that we've drawn breath after our part in the *Short and Sweet Communities* event (and Josie has caught up on her sleep) we've begun working on our program for the OWN NSW Annual Conference in July. As you'll have read last month, we have new members, now including Wendy Brown, in the Group so we'll undoubtedly fill the small stage space at Sancta Sophia College. We'll need as much free area as possible on the stage.

And just to illustrate our versatility, we've also contributed to the OWN BATTLE AXE Television Production Unit by performing the background music for a short video on Louisa Lawson. Our former director, Susan O'Brien, discovered a poem by Louisa Lawson which our pianist, Rhona Nicholson, set to music. We have performed it at various gigs but this time it was recorded in living colour and sound.

Besides the rehearsing and performing, we are waiting in anticipation for the results of our grant application to the Mercy Foundation. The writers

were informed that they would hear in ten weeks time...so we are keeping our fingers (all!) crossed for some time around the end of June.

HOT GOSS! No doubt rumors have been flying about another Joint Concert being organized for November this year – in fact on **7 November, Mott Hall**. So be sure to put it in your diaries, organize your buses and plan to Christmas shop in the morning then enjoy music and dance in the afternoon.

The Theatre Group would like to thank Sydney OWN for their offer of help with this major event which takes a great deal of planning and organization. Sydney OWN will be looking after all the front-of-house details and will also be providing financial assistance for such items as advertising, etc. Remembering 2006 and 2008, the Group really does appreciate knowing Sydney OWN will be out there for us.

Jo Allon

About the House

Seniors Housing Forum

Seniors Housing roundtable forums were held around Australia recently, part of Shelter's "A Place to Call Home" campaign, when housing providers and older people met for a community consultation. At the forum I went to in Sydney there were about 30 older people from various tenant groups, most with a lot to say regarding the complex problems involved in housing the aging population. The older generation (the Builders) were there, as were their offspring, the Boomers, who are renters. The oldest Boomer will be 62 this year.

112,000 older people in Australia are in housing stress now, a lot of them older women. It is predicted there will be many more, many of them over 85. Recently the government allocated \$6.4 billion for social housing over 3.5 years – the biggest public housing investment in more than sixty years. While the large amount being spent is a good way to keep the economy going by providing jobs, consultation with interest groups is very important at this stage so that a bigger percentage can be gained for older people, and to avoid the unsustainability that has previously been built into social housing systems.

Shelter will forward ideas from the forums to the housing ministers, Tanya Plibersek and David Borger, and will send us a copy.

Heather Jennings

Housing Options for Older Women

Ageing of the population is an issue that is promoting much discussion and many theories and policies that are being developed for dealing with the changing demographics. The subject of 'housing' is an integral part of this issue. Being now in it's 21st year it follows that, like myself, early members of OWN are increasingly among the older women who may be struggling with how to resolve their needs for support as they find their independence slowly diminishing. The pages of *OWN Matters* frequently reflect this with items from longtime members like Enid Harrison, Helen Monahan and others.

This certainly is not an issue going unnoticed. Developers of the form of real estate known by the euphemism of 'Retirement Village' have certainly not overlooked this lucrative field of investment. Neither have the so defined 'Not for Profit' who are the vast majority of

providers to the Federal Government of places of High and Low Residential Aged Care. They also find it advantageous to offer the housing market "Self Funded, Self Care," places. Local and State Governments also are working towards having in place planning policies and extended regulations to encourage provision of suitable housing for this growing percentage of older people in the community.

There are also organizations like the Benevolent Society that are researching and developing different types of establishments with newer ideas for more appropriate accommodation that can reflect more up to date thinking on maintaining wellbeing throughout advancing years

Each of these options can be a mine-field for decision making when it comes to giving it your consideration. Through my own circumstances I have accumulated some insights into the many misapprehensions, misunderstandings and downright misleading information that seems to prevail 'out there.' Being informed and understanding the role of the various providers can be the first step you take towards resolving the issue of housing. Taking advice from your peers may help but this will be influenced by their individual experiences. Advice from those who have a vested interest in your place of choice is most definitely to be treated with due scepticism.

Of course staying in place will be the desirable option for many, and again do make sure you are well informed of the available services to support you.

For others of you out there, dear sisters, may I urge you to seek 'truly independent' advice before taking any steps in the direction of securing a place in which to gracefully (or disgracefully as the case may be) grow older.

Some suggestions: (contact numbers can vary locally so look them up.)

- The Benevolent Society
- The Aged Care Rights Service.
- Retirement Village RESIDENT'S Assoc.
- Local Government
- H.A.C.C..
- State Gov. Department of Housing (Community Housing)
- Residential Aged Care (Fed. Gov.)

Barbara Burnham

No place like Home?

Aspirational

The word I think relates to two-storied Tuscan style houses in a desirable location, surrounded by desirable home owners, or by the mortgage-ridden who build or buy desirable residences. Maybe I am deterred by the idea of carting vacuum cleaners upstairs or just deterred by the idea of living in these residences (as if they would have me as a neighbor anyhow –shades of Groucho Marx). These glorious homes seem to have two retired persons rolling around in large spaces or crammed with desirable furniture. Would Ikea fill the bill?

They have an awful sameness surrounded by much paving, not much in the way of grass or bushy shrubbery, often with “pools” used by grandchildren and no one else.

They seem to have more expensive potted plants with frillier lacy curtains to peer through. When we moved to our house we experienced torches played in on the chinks at the top of the blinds to illuminate our newly painted kitchen. In this area heritage fishermen’s shacks (renovated of course) are often demolished and replaced by these Tuscan monstrosities.

Are these aspirants the new “silent majority”? I’ll bet they are conservative voters. Or are they working class people who aspire to be able to amass more moolah? I note on the rare occasions I travel by car to Sydney that the gracious old homes of the rich seem to have been replaced by great stacks of apartments.

There’s an island near here which is definitely aspirational and others have pointed out to me that many of the flash houses sport “For Sale” signs now, so this recession may have forced them to sell. Or with climate change it may mean that they feel the waterfront might send their castle floating down the estuary.

Some might be enraged by the diatribe, but I would be pleased to read your opinions on the subject.

Enid Harrison

Am I a Hoarder?

Do you keep all kinds of stuff? Do you say things like, “this is too good to throw away”, or “someone might need this”, or “it might be worth money some day”, or even “I just can’t throw it out”. Do you have clothes in your cupboards that you haven’t worn for years? Do you have boxes of papers you have not sorted out? Piles of papers

or magazines you meant to get articles from? Is the clutter thoroughly packed and organized? Or is it getting in your way, and beginning to bug you? If you will still let people in your house, you could be a Stage One Hoarder.

There is a three-part definition of clinical hoarding. (Randy and Frost)

- 1 Acquisition of, and failure to discard, a large number of possessions that appear to be of limited value.
- 2 Living spaces are cluttered enough that they can’t be used for activities for which they were designed.
- 3 Significant distress or impairment caused by the hoarding.

As for me, a large number of my possessions appear to be of limited value. Sometimes my home seems cluttered with a lot of stuff, and sometimes the clutter really gets to me. Does this make me a hoarder?

The main problem is that hoarders can’t decide what to get rid of. An old friend was recently told by the Housing Authority that his choices were psychological treatment for hoarding or eviction. He is an ex-builder who filled his garage, shed, carport, laundry and half his house with all kinds of building material because he thought “it might be useful”. Definitely a Stage Two Hoarder.

A Stage Two Hoarder is starting to lose the use of normal household items like beds, tables, chairs, washing machine, counter tops because the piles of stuff have expanded to cover them up. It can get so there is no room to sit or sleep, no space to prepare meals, and only a narrow passage between rooms because of the clutter. It is difficult to clean and the hoarder starts making excuses to discourage people from entering their home.

Hoarders find it difficult to throw anything away, and can’t organize the junk either. With lots coming in and little going out, clutter accumulates. Hoarders’ homes are full of junk, often old newspapers and magazines, old clothing, used containers and bags, mail and notes, all kinds of stuff. Often essential repairs are not done and the hoarder can’t access community help. The clutter is highly combustible and would make rescue difficult in the event of a fire.

You might not want to know about the homes of Stage Three, Four or Five Hoarders. They deserve better but need help.

Lorraine Inglis

Community

Communal Places

Col James, a highly respected long-time Sydney housing activist, spoke at Shelters' recent Seniors Housing Forum. He emphasised the total isolation of some older people and spoke of model community/village styles of housing overseas – housing where people live how they choose, age is respected, and which have central communal living space to attract people.

He said development applications are now going in from developers who are only after the money on offer. They have no sense of community or co-operation – the stakeholders need a say. Col is a director of the Housing Research Centre at the University of Sydney, which is planning a colloquium called "Social Isolation and Residential Flats: The Role of Communal Places". They would like people to attend and contribute ideas.

Colloquium: 4 – 6 pm, Wednesday 30 July 2009

Dean's Meeting room,
Level 4, Wilkinson Building,
148 City Road, Darlington.

RSVP: Susan Clarke, 9351 4219 or
clark_s@arch.usyd.edu.au

Wishing Betty Little Happy Birthday

It was Betty's birthday on May 18th, and her friends got together some delightful gifts, including a DVD player which now sits on top of the tele at the bottom of her bed, as well as a copy of *The First Australians*.

They also gave Betty two new nighties, some lavender oil, and several lots of flowers.

Naturally more cards, letters and demonstrations of love from her friends are always welcome!

Betty is now living at:

Blacktown Aged Care Facility,
190 Stephen Street,
Blacktown
NSW 2148

Wrap with Love

It's time to cast on again. The ABC's Knit-in for Wrap with Love, by now a social event in the Sydney calendar, is on at the Ultimo studios on Friday 7 August. If you have spare yarn, you can start now on the squares that will form warm wraps to comfort the victims of earthquakes, wars, floods and other disasters that happen all too often around the world.

Last year close to 1000 knitters turned up at the ABC, producing a lot of warmth and good humour and 1700 wraps. They were entertained by ABC personalities while the needles flew – and didn't I see an apron-clad Richard Glover pouring tea? Good to see people having so much fun while they did so much good. Non-political, non-racist, non-denominational, Wrap with Love, a uniquely Australian organization, offers its supporters absolutely nothing, not even a tax exemption, except the joy of giving. Yet the ABC reports that in 2008 there was a 30% increase in the number of knitted squares donated. Must be something we're eating.

If you can't get to the ABC Knit-in, why not have one at home (can't guarantee Glover will be there to pour tea)? A nice get-together with your friends and neighbours while you knit will be very cheery, and a phone call to 02 8399 3000 will tell you where to send the squares.

Here's how to knit diagonal squares, which should measure 10 x 10 in (25 x 25cm):

Use 8 ply yarn on size 8 (4mm) needles. Knit plain stitch only; stocking stitch curls. Start each ball of yarn at the beginning of a row and sew in ends. Don't cut ends off short, as the square will unravel. When starting or finishing a square, sew in all ends. Breathe in, breathe out.

- Cast on 3 stitches
- Row 1: K1, increase 1 in next stitch, knit to end of row.
- Repeat Row 1 until side edge measures 10 inches (25cm)
- Next Row: K1, K2 together, knit to end of row.
- Repeat this row until 3 stitches remain.
- Cast off.

Somebody, somewhere, who's cold and miserable will love you for it.

Helen Young



Sleeping Well

Before going to bed:

- Avoid going to bed too early. It isn't the time for 'deep sleep.'
- Go to bed at around 10pm to 10.30pm.
- Avoid using alcohol to help you sleep. As the alcohol is broken down in your body, it causes you to sleep less deeply and to wake more frequently.
- Don't smoke within an hour or two of going to bed. Smoking stimulates your nervous system.
- Don't go to bed hungry or with a full bladder.
- Regular exercise can improve your sleep, but avoid vigorous exercise late in the evening.
- Allow yourself time to wind down before going to bed. If you are working or studying, stop for at least 30 minutes before bedtime and do something relaxing.
- Use your bed only for sleep and sex so that you learn to associate your bed with sleep.
- Avoid taking sleeping pills. If you do need to take sleeping pills, try not to take them for longer than a week because they can be addictive.
- Try and make your bedroom quiet, dim and cool.
- Avoid too many blankets and electric blankets. If you're too hot, you won't go into deep sleep.
- Do something quiet and distracting, for example play cards, read, knit or enjoy a warm bath. If your mind is very active or you can't stop worrying, it may be helpful to concentrate on something else, such as doing a crossword or watching television. By distracting yourself from your worries, you may find it easier to wind down and become sleepy.
- Go back to bed when you feel more relaxed and sleepy.
- If you're still awake after a further 15 to 20 minutes, get out of bed again. Repeat this process until you fall asleep shortly after returning to bed.

Overcoming long-term sleeping problems

For some people, sleeping problems may last for weeks, months or even years. Not surprisingly this may lead to anxiety about getting to sleep, which in turn makes the problem even worse. It can be helpful to take specific steps to break the cycle of feeling anxious and restless in bed. Below are some steps to follow when you can't get to sleep.

- Get up if you can't sleep after trying for 15 to 20 minutes. Staying in bed when you are feeling restless and anxious is unlikely to result in sleep.

DES Awareness Week

June 1-7 is DES (diethylstilboestrol) Awareness Week to raise awareness of the anti-miscarriage drug, DES, given to women during pregnancy from 1938 to 1971 (and sometimes beyond). Women given DES and their children of that pregnancy are at higher risk of certain types of cancer and reproductive problems. An Australian blog has been set up for people affected at <http://desnsw.blogspot.com> Support group contact: DES Action Australia-NSW 02 98754820.

Free Booklet

The Department of Health & Ageing has published a new booklet: [Be Active: A Physical Activity Guide for Older Australians](#). This resource offers ideas for keeping active at no cost, including balance and strength exercises that can be done at home.

Free copies can be ordered by calling 1800 500 852.

For an electronic copy: [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/85D45F1F05013209CA257585001C4679/\\$File/choosehealth-borchure.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/85D45F1F05013209CA257585001C4679/$File/choosehealth-borchure.pdf)

Our OWN Wisdom

Pride Comes Before A Fall

The trolley rattled along the corridor at the Respite Care House and stopped at my door.

“Tea darling?” A familiar voice called. As the call to a three course lunch would be coming soon I shook my head. “Not today thanks, dear” looking longingly at the scone piled with jam and cream

There is not much to do in Respite Care but there are days when a flurry runs through the house and one of them is Exercise Day. Everyone was rounded up except me, the only walking wounded. It was a very slow process but at last we were all settled in a circle.

“Well here we are”, I said in a cheery voice. No response. I tried again, “This is my first time at exercise class” I said. Not a flicker or a turn of the head.

I turned to the woman beside me and she smiled at me. Her arm hung limply over the side of her chair but her fingers moved. I put my hand in hers and she squeezed it. Response at last, from someone who couldn't speak.

Exercises began; we twiddled our fingers and toes, rolled our shoulders and did other exercises that can be done sitting down.

Then came the floor games. A large mat was thrown on the floor. It was divided into squares with a number in each square. We had to throw a small soft ball into each square and the one who got the highest score got a sweetie.

Easy I thought. But I'd better not win, being less handicapped than anyone else. Round the circle we went. One man scored 31. My friend next to me 18.

Good on you” I whispered. Confidently I took the ball in my hand and threw at ten. It rolled off the mat. The same thing happened on the second try. Not as easy as I thought. I tossed the ball around in my hand a few times and aimed strongly at ten. It landed on two: I got the lowest score in the group.

But they gave me a sweetie.

Joan Johns, Gone Bush, Piligra Scrub

Joan and her husband, Doug have been in the wars since this year began, but you can't keep a good woman down. She and Doug have gone bush again (last seen in the Piligra Scrub. Welcome back Joan, we've missed you.

Drummer's Elbow

It was a movie, 'The Visitor' that turned me on to drumming. The story was about a professor who returned to his home to find a couple of refugees staying there. One of them plays the djembe, an African drum. In the course of the story the refugee is caught and eventually extradited, but in the meantime the professor learns Afro drumming. I loved the sound, so I enrolled in a course of seven lessons in Afro drumming at the community college.

Our teacher is from Senegal and has obviously done a lot of drumming. I am enjoying the lessons and we have already learnt a couple of rhythm patterns. This week we were told that if we get these and a couple of others right, and can keep together, we've got a gig, not a paid one, but for the Community College.

In the next course I will learn to skin a drum, so then I have a bigger djembe, but what would be good is a drumming group. Another member of OWN has her own djembe – like me, she thinks drumming is wild. Two is not enough to make a group, so we are checking things out. Is anyone out there interested in joining an OWN drumming group?

In the meantime, I've given the sore elbow I got at the gym lifting weights a new exotic name. I reckon I've got drummer's elbow.

Lorraine Inglis

.....

● **Hello Knitters**

● The Inner City Branch of NSW Knitters Guild will

● now hold meetings at Customs House Meeting Room,

● on the second Saturday of the month, 11am-1pm

● starting 14 March 09.

● If you like to knit and are interested in attending you

● are welcome to attend. Non-members are allowed to

● come to two meetings before joining, and the Guild

● are always happy to see newcomers.

● This group of volunteers will also help the library out

● on special occasions such as:

● World Knit in Public Day - 14 June 09

● Knitting Inns in July

● ABC 702 Knit In -August

● Teens learn how to knit - July School Holiday activities

● <http://www.knittersguildnsw.org.au/>

.....

Notices

JESSIE STREET NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBRARY

Fifteenth Annual Fundraising Luncheon
Monday, 14th September, 2009
Guest Speaker: Adele Horin

Do Newspapers Have a Future and Who Cares?

Tel: 02 9571 5359, Email: info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au
Adele Horin is a highly respected *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist with a long-standing interest in social justice issues and social change, as well as matters affecting women and children.

Politics in the Pub

Gaelic Club, 64 Devonshire St Surry Hills

6 pm Every Friday Night (ceases at 7.45 pm)

12 June – What is Driving the NSW Government's Privatisation Agenda – What Should Be Stopped? Prof Bob Walker (Syd. Uni), Dr Betty Walker (Economic Consultant), Dr John Kaye (Greens MLC)

19 June – The G20 – What Will it Deliver? Stephen Long (ABC journalist), Ross Buckley (UNSW)

26 June – Feminism – The Unfinished Revolution! Anne Summers (writer and author), Emily Maguire (writer and author), Catherine Fox (journalist- Financial Review)

3 July – Clean Coal, Emissions Trading – False Claims or Real Policy? Richard Dennis (Director Australia Institute), Dr Iain MacGill (UNSW)

10 July – The Refugee Crisis – Promoting Humanity or Re-Igniting Fear? Prof Mary Crock (Syd. Uni), David Bitel (Immigration Lawyer)

17 July – The Greens – Protest Party or Mainstream Political Force? Prof Geoff Hawker (Macquarie Uni), David Shoebridge (NSW Greens)

24 July – Rudd's New Employment Services – Howard's Policy Revisited! Maree O'Halloran (Director, Welfare Rights Centre), David Thompson (CEO, Jobs, Australia)

31 July – Afghanistan/Pakistan/Palestine – In Search of Solutions. An Evening With Paul McGeogh (SMH Journalist)

7 August – The Great Superannuation/Tax Concession Rort. Eva Cox, Julian Disney

14 August – Holiday Destinations/Political Nightmares – Fiji, Thailand Stuart Firth (ANU, Hamish McDonald (SMH)

21 August – The Influence of Zionism on Australian Politics

Dr Peter Slezak (UNSW), Michael Brull (Independent Australian Jewish Voices)

Website www.politicsinthepub.org.au

Live Debates IQ2

June 25: Public Funding of Private Education Is Unconscionable

August 4: The Media Cannot Be Trusted with the Truth

September 15: Our Current Immigration Rate Is Too High

October 26: Intelligence Squared Should Shove Off to Melbourne Where It Belongs

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: Older Women's Network NSW or the *Older Women's Network, Sydney.*

Option No. 1

I devise the sum of \$
..... to the Older Women's Network
for the general purpose of the Older Women's Network OR 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% of my estate to the Older Women's Network for its general purpose or the specific purpose of

.....
.....
.....
The gift you make to OWN will be an enduring record of your generosity.

OWN Sydney Notices

WOW! Subscribe NOW!

Subscription to OWN Matters is \$22 per year, due every JULY 1!

Want to join OWN Sydney at the same time? We can fix this up in the same way, if you tick this box and include just another \$5

Would you like to donate? \$.....

Payment method

I enclose a chq/money order for \$22 - to Jun30, 2009 made payable to OWNNSW OR Please debit the following credit card for \$22 (plus any donation)

Visa

Mastercard

Bankcard

Total amount:

Card no.

____ / ____ / ____

Exp. date __ / __

Name on card (please print)

Signature _____

Address _____

State & Post Code _____

I need the large print version (on A3)

I'd love it on email

Email only - don't post

Email address: _____

What are Friends For?

Please send the above subscription to:

Name: _____

Signature _____

Address _____

State & PC _____

Members and friends are welcome to attend all activities

Wellness on Wednesdays

9.30am-11.45am every Wednesday

Held in Mott Hall, Argyle St., Millers Point.

Lost Ladies

10.00am every Wednesday during school terms, exploring various locations or topics of interest.

Film Discussion group

You are invited to join Tuesday 9 June, to see *My Year Without Sex*; recommended for viewing are: *What Just Happened*, and *Star Trek*.

Please ring Yetty on 9665 2050 to check details.

Creative Movement

10.15am Thursdays at Mott Hall, Argyle St., Millers Point.

Find your inner rhythms! Call 9247 7046 to check details.

Coffee and Gossip at Bondi Junction

You are invited to join us at The Coffee Shop, Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club at 11.30 on the last Friday of every month for an informal get together. Enter from 2 Bronte Road, Bondi Junction. Contact Yetty on 9665 2050

Battle Axe - Jan Wood's OWN Video Workshop.

Learn to shoot, direct, script, edit and produce your own TV. Each Friday 1-3.00pm at 75 Windmill Street Millers Point, some classes on location.

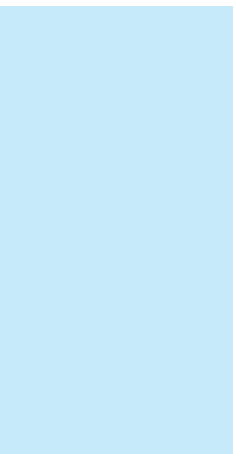
Contact OWN NSW on 9247 7046 or email info@ownnsw.org.au

The Aboriginal Support Circle

have invited Elaine Syron to speak at their meeting on Monday 13 July at 10.30 at 75 Windmill Street, Millers Point. Elaine and her husband Gordon, are the guardians of their huge collection of Aboriginal Art, made up of 1300 paintings from over 450 different indigenous artists, They are determined to keep the collection together until, hopefully a National Aboriginal Keeping Place and Cultural Centre in Sydney is established. Everyone is welcome to attend.

IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:
Older Women's Network NSW Inc.
87 Lower Fort Street
Millers Point NSW 2000

OWN Matters



**PRINT
POST
PP239337/00007**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**