

THE COUNTRYWOMAN



EMPOWERING

WOMEN WORLDWIDE



ACWW

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2011



WORLD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Photo: Mr G.Hammond

Dear Friends

HOW TIMES have changed, and nowhere more so than in the field of communication. I was unable to attend the Canada Area Conference in Nova Scotia; instead, with the help of friends, I made a DVD presentation on the current work of ACWW and future plans. I was about to mail the discs to Nova Scotia, when a postal strike hit Canada. Quick action was required and with the aid of an international courier service, the precious package reached the conference in the nick of time.

My thanks go to Area President Margaret Yetman for her card afterwards, with the signatures of all the conference attendees. Yes, it would have been better to be there in person, but we do not always have a choice in these matters and I hope to visit our ACWW friends in Canada next year.

Watching the daily news on our TV screens, it is not unusual to view scenes of unspeakable tragedy and suffering in some part of the world. Natural disaster may strike, as in East Africa where many are dying from drought and famine. When a country is worn down by war, civil or otherwise, our hearts go out to those unwittingly caught up in the fighting.

But it was not natural disaster nor war which struck the people

of Norway. The barbaric massacre of many citizens was shocking and completely overwhelming. It is difficult to comprehend, and especially hard to bear because the majority of the victims were young people, dedicated to creating a bright future for their country.

I have been deeply moved and impressed by the quiet dignity with which the Norwegian people have conducted themselves. Several members in Norway have been in touch.

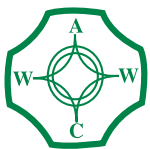
They tell of people coming together in the streets all over the country, talking, crying, united and showing their determination to fight terror with love.

I have been told of messages of support from friends around the world; of how those in Romania and Albania lit candles in their windows at the precise time candlelit parades started in Norway. In times of the greatest need, let us never forget the importance of friendship. And finally, in the words of George Bernard Shaw: "The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them; that is the essence of inhumanity."

Yours in friendship

May Kidd

May Kidd MA JP



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Women of the World

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COVER:
Women of Haiti
(Photo: Central Office
Projects file)

Deadlines:

Please note the following deadlines for sending articles and photograph to 'The Countrywoman'.

January-March: November 1st
April-June: February 1st
July- September: May 1st

(colour, glossy- not matt- prints-emailed high resolution digital photos, make the most welcome pictures).The Editor's decision on acceptance is final.

Our apologies



Middle, Dr Anne Maria Dennison, ICA President, with May Kidd, ACWW World President on the left and Merja Siltanen, ACWW Europe Area President on the right at the European Conference in Dublin. (Photo: Terry Collins)

The Countrywoman would like to apologise to Dr Anne Maria Dennison for an error which occurred in our July-September 2011 issue on page 5, where the wrong name was inserted next to Dr Dennison's photo.



Alison Burnett, ACWW's
Finance Chairman &
Treasurer

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION of Women's Institutes (NFWI), which covers WIs throughout England and Wales, is made up of 70 Federations. These Federations are amongst some of the best supporters of ACWW worldwide. Neighbouring Federations have come together to form support groups who work to fundraise and promote the aims of ACWW, as well as talk about what is being done in their individual Federations.

Valerie Stevens, a WI member of Sutton Poyntz Village and who is also on the ACWW UN Committee says the different federations give women a voice at international level through its link with UN agencies.

Valerie adds "my Women's Institute (WI) has around 45 members and during the four years as Secretary and then President of the group and also with my involvement with ACWW, we have gone from sending around £30 each year of donations to around £600-£700."

To raise money, each year Valerie's WI have two coffee mornings, in May in Valerie's home and in November in a member's home. The one held in May has developed into an art exhibition and is becoming a regular showcase for members' works. The coffee mornings in November takes place at a chosen member's home. Valerie's WI have had several events during this time; a 'Posh Frocks', 'Wine and Cheese' evening and an 'Old Time Music Hall'. Valerie speaks to every group who invites her and collects donations, which have been raised for ACWW.

Another WI in Somerset holds an ACWW Reps day inviting other counties to send several members to learn more about the depth and different issues within ACWW. Their Reps day is very useful in sharing information amongst the counties of the South West of UK, including Dorset, Devon, Avon, Wiltshire, Gwent and Hampshire.

Eileen Hurd, who is an ACWW Rep for Somerset Federation, Binegar and a committee member on the ACWW P&P Committee as well as one of ACWW's Pen Friend Coordinators, says to learn more about ACWW it is a good idea

Fundraising for 2011 Pennies for Friendship & Boxes

to become an individual member for £20, because you not only support ACWW, you receive four magazines a year informing you about the projects worldwide and the UN voice.

Eileen's own WI, always have a coffee morning on 29th April every year but this year, because of the Royal Wedding, they held a Cream Tea on Queen Victoria's Birthday (24th May) raising £361.20 for ACWW.

They also collected money for Pennies for Friendship.

Lisbeth Gregory, who is also a member of Somerset, tells us how they collect for Pennies for Friendship. Lisbeth says "each of our 20 branches has a special box for Pennies which goes with the branch Treasurer to every meeting; members are asked to donate their loose change and pop it in the box."

Lylene Scholz, Wisconsin Association Home & Community Education, USA sums this up in her concluding verse at the 26th Triennial Conference in Hot Springs Arkansas:

*"Sisters of the world
Working for a better tomorrow
But for many that tomorrow is still just a dream.
It seems it's an impossible mountain to climb.
So let's work together and make those dreams happen.
One penny, one pound, one sister at a time"*

CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

Reminder: All Subscriptions from members and member societies are due 1st January 2012. Please fill out all your details on the renewal form, including your email address.

Ian McConchie, General Secretary for the past seven years, recently left ACWW. We are most appreciative of his years of loyal service to the organisation and wish him well in the future.

Help ACWW Spread the Word
Extra copies of our April- June 2012 issue of 'The Countrywoman' will be distributed to our members and member societies, not the October-December 2011 or January - March 2012 issues as previously stated.

Scarves For Pennies

The January- March 2011 issue of The Countrywoman reported on the enthusiastic scarf knitting during the October 2010 Board meetings.

The contribution of £30 made by ACWW Secretary, Jo Almond towards the Pennies for Friendship Fund, for scarves Anphia Grobler, Deputy World President knitted, inspired Anphia to continue with the knitting project.

The knitting yarn used was bought at the Stitch and Craft show at Olympia in London, which was then taken back to sunny South Africa where the knitting went on. In June 2011 the amount of £183.00 was paid into the Pennies for Friendship fund. Ten scarves were knitted and sold.

In the photo below Mandie Steenkamp, President WAU Mpumalanga is holding one of these lovely scarves.



Mandie Steenkamp
President WAU Mpumalanga

The Empowerment of rural women

Their role in poverty, hunger eradication, development & current challenges

Right: Sharon Hatten, ACWW UN Committee Chair, visits a local school in Grenada.

Below: Attendees at the Central & South America & Caribbean workshop in Grenada



SHARON HATTEN, ACWW's UN Chair promised the Central and South America and Caribbean Area President Rose Rajbansee, that she would attend their ACWW Area Conference, if she could hold a workshop on rural women. The purpose of the workshop was to learn about the needs and progress made by rural women in the area, as preparation for the 56th Commission on the Status of Women in New York 2012.

Approximately 100 women attended, the Area Conference, Sharon Hatten included and everyone was happy to participate. Sharon reported on the workshop by writing: the workshop addressed many topics including maternal health care, education, the work environment, home care for the elderly and family needs, looking at both the needs and responsibilities of rural women and girls.

Sharon adds, while the term 'rural women' refers to 'non-urban' women, rural women take on many roles in society similar to roles held by urban women. We often think of rural women as those who are involved in agriculture and live on the land, but this is diminishing their role and responsibility in society.

In regards to family needs, a young girl is born and she definitely has a father

but often not a dad. This is a common problem especially if a young girl gets pregnant and the father shows no sign of support, leaving the young mother to fend for herself.

While parents or other extended family often help, this is not always easy as others are also struggling. Often these births are unregistered which create long term problems with obtaining assistance.

The young mothers often stop going to school as it is frowned upon for pregnant girls to continue, even though the government prefers them to. Girls are encouraged to get a good education, but if they have an unplanned pregnancy, life plans are upset. Also for many rural girls further education is expensive and unavailable due to distance.

However as many young women become educated they are often confronted with the difficulty of finding jobs. It is interesting to note that as girls are becoming more educated many young boys are losing interest in education; this means that many young women often can't find suitable partners to marry, causing additional stress. The good news is many women in these areas are becoming very self confident and leaders in their communities, helping to train and encourage women to empower themselves through capacity building and



taking responsibility for change, all of which encourage these women to move away from the taboos of the past.

Rural women in many countries are responsible for their own health care and that of the family. While it is recognised that mothers often think of their health last, it is most important to the family that they look after themselves so they can in turn look after others.

At the workshop women were encouraged to grow their own food for better nutrition, use good traditional medicines, exchange knowledge and work as a community to ensure better health care and accessibility.

Of particular interest were the outdated beliefs around mental health, which still exist in some rural areas.

Rural women can suffer from depression, financial stress, job loss, stress in a relationship or other types of mental health issues, but there is often very little sympathy or even help.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

UNITED NATIONS NEWS

Some participants encouraged others to set up workshops and learn about the issues, encourage family or group support and even learn relaxation techniques. Violence is another common problem and results from poverty, ignorance and tradition. Women need to encourage men's organisations to work with men and boys to teach them respect for everyone including their mothers, sisters, wives, and aunts. Support groups in villages should help to remove the idea that violence is acceptable. The Grenadian Government has recently received funding to set up a program to prevent violence in the home and community.

As rural women are often the head of the household, they need to work. Issues surrounding business ownership, microcredit, marketing, transportation, storage of goods and infra structure must be improved before innovative ideas can become realised.

Often governments and banks don't look at women as a good investment, but this too is changing.

Lack of support, lack of opportunity and lack of access are major stumbling blocks for rural women to advance to a better life. Nevertheless many women are making a difference, because they are willing to take the first steps. While we discussed the needs of rural women



Rose Rajbansee Area President, Central & South America & Caribbean with two organisers of the Grenada workshop on rural women.

at the workshop, it was wonderful to experience the generosity of these women who wanted to share their knowledge and skills to enhance the lives of families.

Considering all the road blocks faced, rural women are an integral part in helping to eliminate worldwide poverty and eradicating hunger.

These women must be accepted as having an important role to play in helping to achieve a better tomorrow for people in their communities.

ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

ACWW is taking an active role in the NGO: Alliance for Health Promotion which has a Mission statement:

"To improve the health and development of all people by building a collective NGO voice and strengthen advocacy, policy and action in the promotion and protection of health."

<http://alliance4healthpromotion.org>

CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS



Ian McConchie with Area President for South East Asia & the Far East, HRH Princess Azizah, who visited Central Office on 9th September 2011

The View from Mary Sumner House

from many different countries, religions and social backgrounds.

Some of these people have visited Central Office, some have been delegates at the two Triennial Conferences, that I also attended (the 25th and 26th in Turku, Finland and Arkansas, USA respectively), whilst some have served on ACWW specified Committees or on the Board. It has been a privilege to meet these people, to share their experiences and learn more about their individual backgrounds. I am grateful for the friendship they have shown me in the pursuit of my role.

I shall also miss the various members of staff I have worked with in Central Office during my 7 years. Some of them have now retired from the organisation after lengthy periods of service, whilst others have joined more recently but all have shown great commitment to

the charity. Of particular note is Cardi Kathiresan who retired in 2010 as the Accountant after 17 years; Jan Hugill who retired in 2011 as the Administrative Assistant after 20 years service and Carol Summers, Secretary to United Nations and Agriculture Committees, who left in 2011 after 22 years service.

Two current members of staff who are still employed in Central Office are Chloe Abrahams as Accounts Assistant since 1986 and Terry Soares as Membership Secretary and IT Co-ordinator since 1988.

I would like to thank all these people (and others I have not mentioned) for their fantastic support and friendship over the years and I wish them well for the future.

Ian McConchie, General Secretary

THIS WILL BE my last column as General Secretary as I will have left ACWW's employment by the time 'The Countrywoman' reaches your homes or societies. Since the commencement of my employment with ACWW back in 2004 I have met a wide variety of people

CANADA AREA CONFERENCE



Left: Back row (left to right): Debbie Bauer (member), Margaret Yetman (Area President). Middle row (left to right): Cindi Rabstein (member), Annemarie McDonald (member), Anne Innes (member). Front row: Hania White

Empowering Women

‘EMPOWERING Women Worldwide-encourage, educate, enrich’ was the theme for the Canada Area Conference held at Mount Saint Vincent University in Nova Scotia from the 8-10 July 2011.

There was a great deal of excitement as 129 delegates registered. It was a time for meeting old friends and making new ones. As the delegates registered and picked up their conference bags there were lots of hugs and handshaking. One could clearly hear comments such as “It’s so good to see you again” or “I am sorry that I don’t know you, but it is nice to meet you all the same.”

The Opening Ceremony was very impressive with the procession of flags followed by greetings from dignitaries, societies, Beverley Earnhart, ACWW USA Area President and Margaret Yetman, Canada Area President.

In her opening address Margaret welcomed a new Category IV Society, Southern Ontario Support Group.

She spoke about ACWW’s Caribbean, Central and South America Area project entitled ‘Climate Change and its Effects on Women and Agriculture-Women as Change Agent’, to which Canada Area donated \$10,000.00 to financially assist the workshop and Area Conference, which took place in Grenada. Margaret told the group that Caribbean, Central

and South America Area President, Rose Rajbanjee informed her that the project was very successful and she was very grateful to the Canada Area for their financial support.

The project, which fell in line with the ACWW theme of Empowering Women Worldwide, enabled the women attending to share their skills and knowledge with others once they returned to their communities.

There were several speakers at the Conference: the keynote speaker Dr. Wanda George, described empowerment as an expansion of freedom of thought and action. Reflecting on the restrictions of women in the 1800’s, to the movement for equal rights for women in the 1990’s when issues ranged from reproductive rights to taking on combat roles, issues unimaginable to women in the 1800’s.

She shared her experiences of travelling all over the world, meeting ordinary women who had learned the importance of working together and empowering each other, reflecting on the many women who had in turn empowered her over the years.

The delegates were disappointed that ACWW’s World President, May Kidd was unable to attend. However, May was able to bring her message to the conference with the aid of a DVD.

In May’s message she told the delegates there was a very easy way to explain ACWW to those who had not heard of the organisation. By saying “ACWW empowers women by giving women who have never felt they had any value, the feeling that they did indeed have worth”, May also spoke about the ‘Women Walk the World for ACWW’ event taking place in April 2012 to raise awareness and possible funds.

Dr. Ellen McLean, a past ACWW World President and a member of Women’s Institutes of Nova Scotia, drew on her own personal ACWW experiences and in-depth knowledge. She shared her thoughts on how ACWW’s work had empowered women through its projects. She spoke of her visits to the areas where ACWW projects were being carried out and the positive results. She also told the delegates of another way in which they could explain ACWW, which was, encourage, educate, enrich = effective.



Dr. Ellen McLean with Canada Area President, Margaret Yetman.

Pauline Achola, a Program Associate, at the Coady International Institute at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, spoke about her work in Kenya with the Women’s Network Centre where she developed outreach projects for women.

Dr. Conrad a Professor of Geography at St Mary’s University and Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Gambia Association, spoke about the difficult school environment of Gambian children and about the poor hospital conditions for mothers giving birth. She shared slides of her son’s experience whilst living with the people of Gambia and his remarks “They have so little and are happy and we have everything and want more.”

Alana Ryter from the Heart and Stroke Foundation gave the delegates a great deal of valuable information and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Canada’s Area President Visits NBWI Society



Margaret Yetman, Area President for Canada with Marion Green a member of New Brunswick Women’s Institutes (NBWI)

Canada Area President is pictured here with Marion Green who is a member of the New Brunswick Women’s Institutes (NBWI). The photo was taken during a visit to the NBWI society where Margaret Yetman was giving a presentation on ACWW. Marion discussed the many celebrations for ACWW Day, which she organises annually in her Area. Marion is very supportive of ACWW and helps to spread the word whenever she can.

Collection at the Canada Conference

We are happy to inform our readers that \$425.08 was collected for Pennies for Friendship and \$604.00 was received from the Auction for the ACWW Area Project at Canada’s Area Conference.

CANADA AREA CONFERENCE



Left: ACWW Committee Members: Christine Reaburn, Lynn Maclean and Donna Jebb

advice on meeting the many challenges when working towards good heart health. She emphasised the importance of proper eating habits as well as regular physical exercise.

At the conference candles were lit in remembrance of those who had enriched women's lives. There were also readings and prayers in honour of those who had encouraged women. The service ended with the singing of 'Make Me a Channel of Your Peace' and 'An Irish Blessing'.

Margaret officially closed the conference and in her closing remarks, she hoped the conference had empowered all delegates to do the best they could do to encourage, educate

and enrich women worldwide and work toward making our world a better place for all.

The conference concluded with singing the "Song of Peace" as the flags were been retired. A massive thank you went out to the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia for hosting the conference and for doing such a fantastic job. Thanks also went out to the many volunteers who worked endlessly to make the conference a success.

SOCIETY FEEDBACK

Children in Sierra Leone
(Photo: Centre Office)

days this becomes just pain followed by lethargy, weakness and faintness.

Over a prolonged period of time digestion becomes difficult, heart rate can increase and circulation becomes feeble, which often leads to oedema like swellings around the ankles. Respiration becomes shallow, the skin loses its elasticity and colour and anemia sets in.

Apart from the obvious hunger for food, people who are really hungry often have other hunger problems; there is hunger of the soul. There is helplessness and there are often practical and tragic reasons for this. Friends, relatives, the nearest and dearest may have already died of hunger and disease or be in the same weakened position. This helplessness drives their despair often through knowing that they too are treading the same path.

People in developing worlds can be given food, but to teach them to produce food by teaching them the practical skills of production and providing them with a water resource, will in the long run be the most helpful way of alleviating the sufferings of hunger.

This will give them a sense of pride, a sense of contributing to families and friends, reduce the helplessness, increasing the knowledge and above all increase their food intake and nutritional wellbeing.

As we read this article over a coffee and share it with our friends, ponder the fact there are 'the haves and the have not's' and we all know where we sit in this statement. This is the European Year of the Volunteer and a full ten years since the UN announced the Year of the Volunteer. What has happened since then? The answer is a great deal, but as individuals we can still do more.

We need to ask ourselves, 'How long must these people wait for the world to be different and finally, what can I do to change the way the world eats forever?'

HAZEL ARMSTRONG, ACWW Rep and a member of the East Yorkshire Federation of Women's Institutes wrote: When people see the word 'hunger' they more often than not turn away or skip to the next page. "It doesn't involve me, I'm not hungry". But before you do ask yourself the question - How do you define 'hunger'? Is 'hunger' that time between an early luncheon and a late dinner when you need a bit of a top up?

In the west people say "I'm hungry let's go for a meal whilst we have time..." So is this 'hunger'? The dictionary tells us:
- It is a feeling of emptiness, a desire or a craving
- You feel as if you want to eat some food
- A painful sensation resulting in a state of weakness

All these are true of hunger, but hunger in the developing world is much more than this. According to the last figures from the United Nations millennium goals, 1 in 7 people in the world do not have enough food to

eat; 20% of these are actually in the developed world. 1 in 3 children in the world suffer from hunger and 25,000 people die every day of hunger related causes - that equates to one every 3.5 seconds.

Hungry people are usually trapped in poverty. They lack the money to buy food, which leads to them becoming weak and less able to work. Hunger leads to malnutrition and malnutrition in turn leads to starvation, which can lead to death.

The greatest sin of planet earth is that we can currently produce enough food but the poorest cannot afford to buy it and the rich waste too much. There is an unequal distribution of income and this is exacerbated by the world economic crisis, climate change and increases in world food prices.

So what does hunger feel like? As the amount of food intake decreases the sense of hunger increases, this is accompanied by pain. But after 2 or 3

Hampshire's Support from ACWW to ZIMBABWE



Top left & right: Group of children wearing donated jerseys from children's home in Chinhoi.

Bottom: Tinashe Jeremian Gamucharai aka TJ from a children's home in Chinhoi, wearing a donated jersey.

(Photos by Sue Atrill, Hampshire Federation WI)



that they reach the children that need them the most, in particular Hillside WI in Bulawayo. They were also sent to Jekesa Pfungwa /Vulingqondo

(JPV), a national organisation formed to improve the standard of living of disadvantaged women and their families in rural communities in Zimbabwe. Bertha Jambaya, Director and Mabel Moyo, Deputy Director of JPV made sure that their share was soon on the children's backs.

It was only recently that Sue van Niekerk took over the role from Irene Johnstone and was able to circulate the overwhelming number of parcels to some new orphanages, schools and churches. Through email contact with Sue, senders received a thank you, confirmation that the parcels had arrived and they heard a little of life in Zimbabwe.

Hampshire often has coffee mornings to raise money for the postage, which is not cheap. Hampshire members have a motto, "those who knit - knit and those who can't, raise the postage". Whatever is sent, is sent to the children of Zimbabwe with the warm affection of the Hampshire WI members, who have been exceedingly generous both with their time and their effort.



THERE ARE MANY WI's throughout the world who have worked tirelessly fundraising for ACWW and one such WI is the Hampshire Federation in England who has been a great supporter of ACWW for many years.

Donating £3,345.45 for Pennies for Friendship (fund up to mid July 2011), they have also supported ACWW's Project - 'Preparation and Selling Program for Self Support to Destitute Women - Agarbathees (incense sticks)' raising over £500 so far.

The Hampshire Federation support does not end there; over the years Hampshire Federation have worked closely with the National Federation of Women's Institutes, Zimbabwe (NFWIZ).

In the autumn of 2003, Hampshire members gathered to welcome Irene Johnstone, the then Treasurer of the Zimbabwe Federation of WIs.

Over tea, they discussed how members could offer some practical help. Before this point, Hampshire had already been involved in supplying used pencils, erasers and the like for the schools that had no equipment to NFWIZ, but they wanted to do more.

The Federation explored other practical ideas and the idea of little T-shaped jumpers came up. Hampshire had previously supported children in Kosovo with similar garments and had all agreed, it was a simple idea that all could get involved in. "A small jersey does not use a lot of yarn, but can make quite an impact to a child who has nothing" states Sue Atrill a member of Hampshire Federation WI.

Sue adds "from this the knitters of Hampshire had really taken the idea to heart and there must have been as many as 10,000 jerseys knitted.

As time went on, so more elaborate mixes of colours, stitches and sometimes patterns had been used, with no colour being taboo - such was the need. Some WIs also includes little hats, mittens and scarves, the little T-shaped jersey being the most popular.

However whatever was sent was used and very much appreciated. Some WI's are now trying their hand at a blanket or two because this is a luxury for the children." In the ensuing months and years, jerseys have been sent to NFWIZ members who have been able to ensure

SOCIETY FEEDBACK

ACWW Day on Prince Edward Island



Left to right: Carol MacLellan, PEIWI President with Yolanda Cordona a guest from Columbia

On April 29, ACWW Day was celebrated in over 70 countries around the world. One such place was the Prince Edward Island Women's Institute (PEIWI), where they held a Reception from 1 to 3 at the Lounge at Royalty Centre where their WI Office is located.

Slides were shown of the ACWW Conference in Arkansas held in 2010 by PEIWI President Carol MacLellan. Displays included Conference memorabilia and information on projects such as Pennies for Friendship, Women Feed the World and Water for All. Donations were accepted for the new

project in the Central and South America and the Caribbean Area for the Area Conference which was held in Grenada. Delegates from there attended a workshop, the aim of which was for them to teach others in their communities how to improve their standard of living.

A newcomer to the province was Yolanda Cordona and her friend Maybelle Arnandez, both of Columbia, who added interest to the new project as they demonstrated some customs from their homeland and brought food from Columbia for everyone to sample.

Other guests in attendance were the Hon. George Webster and dignitaries from the Department of Agriculture. It was an exciting afternoon for all who participated.

Wells WI Raise Funds for ACWW



Top Row from left: Jane Pyatt, Harriet Warburton, Lucy Stankiewicz (President), Ellie Wylie. Bottom Row from left: Debbie Russell, Angela Knapp (Treasurer), Clare Stephens (Secretary)

WHILST SIPPING PIMMS, kindly donated by the Kings Head pub in Wells, and feasting on entries to their Strawberry Pudding Competition, the ladies of Wells WI, Somerset raised funds for the Youth Development Centre (YDC) –'Limbe in Cameroon' project at their Garden Party.

It was a lovely opportunity for the members to relax and mingle and admire the flowers arranged by the ladies of Wells Floral Art Society. The bulk of their donation came from the Shabby Chic Tombola, which was very popular.

Claire Stephens (Secretary) worked incredibly hard to produce beautiful handmade gifts for them all, including lavender bags, posies of garden flowers and decorated jars filled with old fashioned sweets.

In Cameroon the YDC have been working especially with the schools in this community where they have, with the help of the locals, identified potable water problems in the village.

This problem warranted attention given the importance of water to life.

Most of the women and children who fetched water have been expressing their desire to have potable piped water and have since 2006 been in contact with YDC for support in that domain. The

community has been involved in designing this project, although its main focus was primary on the school children.

The aim of the YDC project entitled 'the Completion of Owe Primary School Potable Water Supply' is to carry out community development projects in schools and communities throughout the year. One of the project achievements is being measured on the following factor:

-Do women and children still spend long hours fetching water from the small brooks in the surrounding farms?

With the help of the ladies of Wells WI, the YDC is well on its way to raising the funds needed for its 'Potable Water Supply' project. Well done ladies!



Wells WI Garden party



Wells WI entry for Strawberry Pudding Competition



Left to right: Clare Stephens & Harriet Warburton in front of Clare's Shabby Chic Tombola

Tea In the Afternoon

On Saturday 13th August 2011 at 3pm a tea party was held at Selly Manor in Bournville, Birmingham in memory of Florence Ferry by her family.

28 guests dined on sandwiches filled with smoked salmon with mild horseradish, egg mayonnaise with cress and chicken with tarragon mayonnaise etc.

For desert they had homemade scones with Strawberry Jam with Clotted Cream, Chocolate Ganache Fan Cake; Lemon Viola Butterfly Cake and Ginger Cake topped with cream cheese frosting. "It was a glorious



afternoon, sunny and warm and everyone had a lovely time. I know my mum would have really enjoyed it, as she loved afternoon tea and pretty china" remarked Ann Ferry. "My mum was also a big supporter of ACWW, so in her honour the tea party raised money for ACWW in the amount of £386.50. The donation went to ACWW's 'Women Feed the World' project."

The Ladies' Circle Contributes Towards Pennies for Friendship Fund



(Middle) Mignon Smit, presents the contributions of The Ladies' Circle members for the Pennies for Friendship Fund to Dr. Semane Molotlegi, Area President of ACWW in Southern Africa. (Left) Yolandé van Tonder (Right) Barbara Muller, supplier of the Trauma Intervention Project material.

THE PRESIDENT of 'Die Dameskring' (translated – The Ladies' Circle), South Africa, Mignon Smit presented a donation of more than £3,000 to Dr. Semane Molotlegi, the Southern Africa Area President for ACWW.

Nationwide, empty recycled bottles were filled with the contributions of the members of 'Die Dameskring' at the Area Conference held in 2011 and went towards the ACWW's Pennies for Friendship Fund.

The ACWW Project Leader for the Trauma Intervention Project, Magdie de Kock, has been working with ACWW for

the past year to support South African women and children.

Dr. Molotlegi attended the conference of The Ladies' Circle to monitor this project and to report back to ACWW's Project Committee.

Dr. Molotlegi thanked the members and management of The Ladies' Circle for their financial contribution and their shared vision to empower and support women with projects like Pennies for Friendship. This shows that even a very small individual contribution can make a huge collective difference in the lives of women and children across the world.

How a Postcard Became a Quilt

Aly Paul-Breugem, member of Passage, Netherlands wrote: In 1990 I was in Venice. Of course I visited the St Mark's Basilica. Outside, on the San Marco Square, I bought a postcard with a picture of the beautiful floor of the basilica. The pattern of the floor had given me the idea for a quilt. With the postcard as my guide I collected fabrics and made the quilt in almost the same colours and the exact pattern as the original. The quilt is 3.94 square feet.



UN Australia National Conference

PAT TWISS, International Coordinator, Country Women's Association of Western Australia wrote a report on her experience at the Union Nation's Australia National Conference held in Perth from the 5-6 August 2011.

Pat said: Through my connection with the Country Women's Association of Western Australia I was invited to attend the conference as a rural representative funded by Lottery West. Other successful rural applicants came from as far away as Kununurra and Esperance, Western Australia.

School Students participated before the conference in a UN Peace poster competition with an opportunity to win a substantial prize for themselves and their school. UNNAA delegates travelled from all the Eastern States and Northern Territory. Two high school students attended as well as invited guests and speakers from other organisations,

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SOCIETY FEEDBACK

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three from Tonga, Samoa and Papua New Guinea.

Benson Saul, the UN International Year of Youth representative for Australia, and first indigenous person representative, was in attendance. He told how he was working towards a unified Australia, finding dialog and mutual understanding as he travelled around visiting schools and youth groups.

The keynote address, 'Overview of the Millennium Goals', was given by Christopher Woodthorpe, Director of the United Nations Information Centre, Canberra. This was very informative for anyone, who did not have the extensive knowledge of some of the delegates.

Overall, tremendous progress has been made with millions of lives saved and improvement given to people's livelihood, achieving real reduction in poverty, an increase in education levels, a decline in child deaths, improved safe drinking water and extra investment made towards HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Women, minorities and rural areas are not so well off and are actually being left behind. Some Pacific Island States face tremendous challenges with only moderate improvements. Steps have been taken to make the goals achievable, as the needs of women and children are critical to making all the Millennium Development Goals a success. A comment from a delegate pointed out that the millennium goals are

being achieved as the world population is growing all the time (7 billion people predicted by 31 October 2011)

The theme of the conference was 'Goals for Life' – focusing on the progress towards the achievement of the world's eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015. During two very full days we heard wonderful speakers on these eight millennium goals, with interactive sessions, finally breaking up into eight workshops to develop practical strategies to influence the progress of the goals as well as ideas for the future. These will be eventually passed on to the Federal Government for consideration at United Nations level.

END POVERTY 2015 – MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Speakers of distinction who spoke on the Millennium Development Goals gave valuable contributions of information to the conference.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger – Tim Costello
2. Achieve universal primary education – Susan Cromb
3. Gender equality and empower women – Eversley Mortlock
4. Reduce child mortality – Jenni Ng
5. Improve maternal health – Jenni Ng
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases – Trisha Langdon
7. Ensure environmental sustainability – Dr Brad Pettitt
8. Develop a global partnership for

development – Robert Hill
(For more information on the MDG's see www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

International Year of Chemistry was acknowledged with speaker Dr Clair Patterson of Sci-tech, Perth Western Australia. Science is everywhere and her aim is to increase public appreciation and understanding of chemistry, especially encouraging women to make a future in chemistry.

Another issue discussed was the need to change political will in Australia, particularly in relation to the treatment of asylum seekers arriving by boat, especially children, a key concern.

An agreement in 2000 by the 189 then Member States of the United Nations was a defining moment for global cooperation in the 21st century to make the world a better place for all. Real achievements are being made, but there is still much to be done by governments, business communities and the public on how they can help.

A simple suggestion is 'Adopt a School' Organisation Inc. started in WA and run by volunteers to help schools in Bali. It provides support for teachers and teacher's aides working in undeveloped countries. For as little as \$50-100 a primary school child can be clothed and educated for a year.

(www.adoptaschool.org.au)

PROJECT REPORTS

Kanikkar Tribal Women



Tribal women taking oath during a training programme

INTEGRATED EDUCATION & Development Society (IEDS), India applied for and received grant assistance to carry out a full-fledged Kanikkar Tribal Women's Cooperative Development

project, where IEDS successfully carried out all the activities envisaged in the project. This report carries information on the results, successes and impacts of the project during the first six months.

The long-term aims of the project were in line with the Millennium Development Goals, which listed several targets for achievement by 2015. The beneficiaries of this project were the tribal women living in the forests of the western ranges within the jurisdiction of Thiruvattar block of Kanyakumari district, in India. The project involved 1,500 tribal women and their families.

The tribal community in Kanyakumari district is living in the forests of the Western Ranges, where the government of Tamil Nadu had allocated five acres of forest land to each family. However, a very large percentage of the tribal land

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is with outsiders, who have encroached upon the land by various means. This project is not about working with the local community to remove these outsiders, but instead to safeguard the livelihoods of the tribal women and their families using cooperative means.

The project is designed on two envisaged main objectives – (1) educating the tribal women to tap maximum local resources and (2) creating a cooperative production and marketing system based on forest produces and cattle rearing.

Three training programmes were organised to equip 56 tribal women with knowledge and skill to initiate

economic activities on locally available natural resources. The outcome of this programme was that many tribal women have applied the knowledge gained through various training programmes.

With this they have achieved 25% sustainability within a period of six months; the sustainability status before the training programmes was 0%.

The impact of the programme was that the women have availed themselves of more internal and external loans through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). A good perception about project activities has increased throughout the community, leading to an improvement for the rural

women and their families, enabling them to reap the project's maximum benefits.

The project has succeeded in making the voices of the tribal women heard by government authorities. Also the tribal women now have the confidence to work with IEDS, informing them of certain local needs like the need for community sewing machines.

This mutual understanding has had an impact and will in no doubt pave the path to improving the tribal women's livelihoods and strengthening their community, playing a vital role in their lives and in the lives of future generations.

Lining up for Credit

Micro Credit for the Women of Laval

THE PROJECT of Micro Credit is a project conceived by the group of rural women of Laval Women in Haiti.

The Micro Credits, which were used for granting small loans, enabled the women to come up with marketing ideas to help them generate more income in their newly formed or existing businesses.

Thanks to this program being financed by ACWW, about 50 rural women were already involved with the trade of their choice in the community. With the credits granted, these women were able to buy from farmers and resell at their community markets.

The rural women acquired necessary knowledge, especially in the field of accountancy. This acquired knowledge made it possible for the women to develop and to apply all the information received within the framework of this program. This experience enabled the Laval women themselves to gain skills in communication and in management of human resources.

It was reported that all 50 women were directly touched by this program with funds of 3000 Gourds at the disposal of each one. Indirectly, the project touched the lives of all their families. The rural women of Haiti have acquired a great many skills and support in such a short space of time, skills which no doubt will give them and their families a fighting chance in years to come.



PROJECT UPDATE



Left: Widows in Jampothi village.
Right: Milk cows given to the Widows



family as well as increasing economic independency.

The NNT Project co-ordinators have organised monthly evaluation meetings in each village to review the outcome of the project. The monthly evaluation report has highlighted many valuable suggestions pointing any mistakes.

The results so far: Socio-economic, education and health condition in 30 deprived Dalit families has been improved; 120 children had an opportunity to continue their school education; school drop-out has ceased; poverty is being eradicated and food security is ensured in these 30 families.

Health education has improved and the health status of children, adolescent and target women has been improved in 30 families for the beneficiaries. Self-reliance and self-confidence has improved and the 30 widows who were supported with milk cows have received respect from the community members.

So far, apart from 10 widows awaiting their milk cows, NNT have not faced any real problems for implementing this project and in the last six months everything has gone well. NNT have a good experience in social and economic empowerment of women at the rural areas, through education. This project has shown that changes amongst the widows in the community can be easily achieved through training, skill promotion and income generation activities.

According to the original plan, NNT is expected to complete this project by November 2011. After the completion of this project, they will continue to assist another group of 40 women. NNT is determined to continue for another two more years helping all the women in their deprived communities.

The Dalit Widows

MARY D.VIMALA, Project Director of Nutrition Network of Tamil Nadu - Trust (NNT) introduced a project to aid 40 deprived Dalit widows in India, to self help groups (SHGs) members in the surrounding areas.

The SHG leaders and SHG members had a special meeting with NNT to select the beneficiaries for the project. A special condition was put in place to help with the selection process of beneficiaries, where priority was given to women who were classed as deserving Dalit widows. This was on the basis that their annual income was less than Rs.10,000.

It is not easy to improve the social, economic and educational development of 40 deprived Dalit widows and their families, especially in a developing rural community, as well as eradicating the existing chronic poverty, ensuring food is secure and given to the widow's families.

Accordingly 40 deserving Dalit widows were selected as beneficiaries from Kavarai and Jampothi village from the 50 widows who applied for support. Those selected were trained in live stock management, feeding and animal

disease control, through six days of informative and orientation training. Two days capacity building training was also conducted for the 40 beneficiaries, to strengthen their self confidence.

After the training and with the help of a part time Veterinary Doctor, the project team, NNT and the beneficiaries went to an open market and purchased 30 milk cows. All these 30 animals were insured under the group insurance scheme. After purchasing, the cows were freely distributed to the beneficiaries.

Through this project activity the beneficiaries have obtained basic knowledge on education, health and sanitation. The project's 40 widows have acquired tremendous skills on income generation and self help activities, through capacity building training. They have also got an immense skill and techniques on dairy development activities, which is expected to bring a sustainable income to the families.

As many have realised the importance of educating their children by sending them to formal school, the income expected from the milk cows will help them to bear their children's higher educational expenses in the future,

This income will also help the women to work on keeping their children in good health. Improving the habit of small savings and bringing social status to the

Prevention of Female Infanticide & HIV/AIDS



Top left: Female Infanticide Prevention Group Exercise. Top right: Health Education Programme being carried out. Bottom: Sister Viji interacting with beneficiaries

THE PEOPLE'S Association for Community Health Education (PACHE) Trust has been involved in the Prevention of Female Infanticide and HIV/AIDS in parts of India since December, 2009 with the financial aid of ACWW.

This project was initiated with the dual aim of curbing female infanticide amongst the rural population and reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS amongst vulnerable groups, especially the rural women.

Though PACHE Trust has been involved in the prevention of HIV/AIDS for the past 19 years, the organisation has only recently started work for the prevention of female infanticide in their chosen areas, which are the rural villages of Chellampatti and Vadipatti blocks of Madurai District in Tamilnadu in India. The following is a 6 month progress report for the period from July 2010 to January 2011.

On the eve of World AIDS Day, which aims to increase awareness, fighting prejudice and improving health education, PACHE, in association with Panchayath Level Federations, planned to conduct activities to give the villagers a better understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention through education.

World AIDS Day is important in reminding people that HIV/AIDS has not

gone away and that there are many things still to be done towards controlling the epidemic. The programme was started at Melakkal one of the target village's at Vadipatti Block, where around 72 women participated.

Resource personnel from one of India's leading health departments, Deputy Director of Health Services, Dr. Palanisamy and Medical Practitioner, Dr. Mrs. Ganga highlighted the causes of HIV/AIDS and its impact on rural women.

Women activist Mrs Ramani condemned the stigma and discrimination against many of the people living with HIV/AIDS and advocated the need to protect the rights of the individuals living with the disease.

During the programme cultural events were conducted to make the villagers aware of how to keep themselves safe and to prevent the spread of the disease. Two training programs on health were organised this year, one in Chellampatti block and the other at Vadipatti block; between 28 and 32 women participated in each of the training days.

Women's health in regards to Sexual Transmitted Diseases (STD), with specific references

to India and Tamilnadu, were discussed in detail. Infections and various forms of STD were explained using charts, visual aids, flip panels and PowerPoint presentations.

This was followed by a discussion on safe sexual practices. Myths and misconceptions regarding sexual practices, for example using condoms and reproduction, were discussed and demystified. Even topics on the correct usage of condoms and how the women can improve their negotiation skills to get men to use them were discussed.

Health as a vehicle for social and behavioural change was stressed at every opportunity during the trainings. The participants listened to the deliberations in rapt attention and took part in the proceedings enthusiastically.

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PROJECT PROGRESS



Female Infanticide Prevention Group Exercise project

The life skills education session encouraged and enabled the women to acquire the following skills:

- Coping effectively with risky situations
- Understanding of sexual issues and sexuality in order to reduce vulnerability to HIV/AIDS
- Safe sex behaviour to reduce the risks of STD

- Building confidence in their day-to-day lives.

The conclusion was to develop a way for the rural women to learn about personal actions, directed at themselves and at others. Actions which, when learned, would show these women how to change their surrounding environment in a healthy and safe way, allowing them to live fulfilling productive lives.



Peer Educators Programme - role playing.

So much has been done in the last six months and the results show the program has been a success. However there is still a lot more to be achieved.

Over the next six months, based on lessons already learnt, regular activities like outreach programs, counselling, education and training programmes will be carried out.

With the support of ACWW, stakeholders and the local community, PACHE Trust is well on its way to achieving the goals it has set for the next six months.

This means that PACHE Trust is moving forward on its path of empowering the rural women of India.



For more information go to:
<http://www.acww.org.uk/latest-news.html>
 Click on 'ACWW Women Walk the World'

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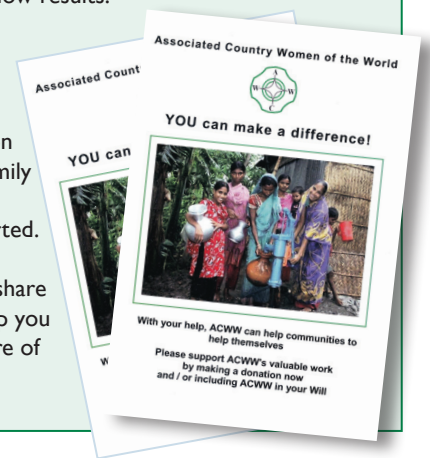
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Leave the World a Better Place

A BEQUEST to ACWW is no vague charitable gesture. The organisation has always approached the funding of projects that will aid rural women in need in a strictly practical way. Proposals are carefully evaluated and, if they qualify for backing, programmes are monitored on the spot by experienced people like ACWW's own Area Presidents. Money given is made to work. And to show results.

ACWW is active in more than 70 countries worldwide and supports a range of rural women's development projects. Around 30 are funded every year providing leadership and skills training, nutrition education, literacy and basic education, including family planning and HIV/AIDS awareness. Small businesses and income-generating schemes are actively supported.

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