

THE COUNTRYWOMAN

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

JANUARY - MARCH 2015

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2013
ANNUAL
REPORT
PULL OUT



TEA TIME CAMPAIGN

Members help support International Day of Rural Women

WOMEN AND YOUTH IN FARMING

Global Dialogue for the International Year of the Family Farm

Reg Charity No. 290367





COVER: Tea Time Swartgoud branch in Mpumalanga, South Africa. See page 20

ACWW Connects & Supports Women & Communities Worldwide

The Countrywoman, distributed to over 70 countries worldwide, is the magazine of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), NGO Official partner of UNESCO



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DEADLINES

Please note the following deadlines for submitting articles and photographs to the Editor for 'The Countrywoman'.

- January-March: **November 1st**
- April-June: **February 1st**
- July-September: **May 1st**
- October-December: **August 1st**

Editor's guide on submitting articles & photos on page 4

THE EDITOR'S DECISION ON ACCEPTANCE IS FINAL

WORLD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Left to right: Elizabeth Warden, International Chair, Northern Ireland; Margaret McMillan, ACWW Finance Committee; Ruth Shanks AM, ACWW World President; Heather Brennan & Margaret Collinson the Chair of the Northern Ireland Federation of WI - Northern Ireland WI International Day celebrating the International Day of Rural Women October, 2014 at Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

As I sit and write this letter to you all, I wonder about the great variety of climates, topography, conflicts, health concerns, activities that our members are involved in across the globe. Many of our societies who do such great things, but do not go out and announce to all and sundry what we do, means we truly are "The Quiet Achievers" and this maybe to our detriment. We must learn to go out and publicise what it is that we do and how we do it.

Since I last wrote I have attended the 90th Anniversary celebrations of 'The Country Women's Association' in Western Australia, which was a great event, that certainly got the whole town of York involved and I am sure they now know what ACWW is all about. August was reasonably quiet with just a few loose ends to tie up for the South Pacific Area Conference and a Pre-Conference workshop in the week prior. The conference, from all accounts, was very successful with over 300 delegates attending at least one day. The workshop was very useful for the ladies from Fiji, Tonga and Papua/New Guinea and they enjoyed meeting the other members of the South Pacific.

During these few months I have had a few local speaking engagements and have spread the word of ACWW. I have also been invited to be an Ambassador for Australia Day in 2015 and I look forward to attending a function to celebrate the birth of our nation, 26th January. Then it was off to London, where I met, for the first time, our new members of staff, Sam Godolphin, our new Projects Administrator; Dr Sam Page, UN and Agriculture Administrator and Poonam Gill the new Office Administrator, who is the first person putting ACWW on the map when the phone rings. They were all greeted with a baptism of fire as it was the week of Committee meetings, with minutes etc and also the Executive meeting. I wish them well and hope they enjoy the time with us.

During this week we also held a Tea Time event with our own Central Office staff; Salt of the Earth, who were our joint partners on this campaign; the staff of Mothers Union and staff from ResPublica, who are located on same floor as ACWW. This was a great time to meet and greet with others in our building and put some "names to faces". During this week we were also able to travel to the London Office of the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales and learn a little about their organisation and how they work. They will return the visit in March 2015 when the Board meets.

After London it was on to Northern Ireland to speak at the Northern Ireland WI's International Day. There was a great audience and some members stated that they had not been to an International Meeting before and were pleasantly surprised, especially when they could go away better informed about ACWW. My thanks must go to Margaret McMillan for initiating the visit, and also to Elizabeth Warden for her hospitality as well.

I also had the opportunity to have a little peak at Northern Ireland, which I've written on my "bucket list" to revisit again sometime in the future. It was great to see Past ACWW World President Hilda Stewart in attendance, as she had not been able to attend the European Area Conference.

In 2015 the UN will be celebrating 70 years since its inception and ACWW has been involved with the UN for 68 of those years. This is cause for celebration for both of us. I hope your New Year holds great delight and success for you all and I leave you now with a quote: "We can't change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust the sails" - Dolly Parton.

Cheers

Ruth Shanks AM

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Affiliated with the ACWW for 80 Years

Federation of WI in Northern Ireland

Thank you, kind ladies from Edinburgh!

Free State Women's Agricultural Union 84th Congress

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We danced along the expressway to Agra

South West Food Bowl Festival

My first year as Area President

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European Pen Friend Coordinator

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CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

It gives me great pleasure to introduce three new members of staff, all of whom hit the ground running, as Committees met in London in October 2014.

First to arrive was Samuel Godolphin as the Projects Development Administrator, working alongside Juliet, as Mariana's replacement. Sam has an MA in Politics, Security and Integration from University College London and a BA in Modern History and Politics from the University of Liverpool. He spent a year as an English Lecturer with the Sudan Volunteer Programme in Khartoum and, whilst there, also took on the role of Food Security and Livelihoods Intern at the NGO Practical Action Sudan. Prior to this Sam gained experience in a grant-giving environment at the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin and the Community Foundation for Merseyside, Liverpool.

Dr Sam Page takes on the double mantle of UN and Agriculture Administrator, previously held by Christine Ro. Sam gained her Ph.D. in 'Pest management of smallholder cotton in Malawi' from Imperial College, University of London. She also has a BSc in Plant Science (University of London, external degree). Before settling back in England, Sam spent more than 20 years working to improve rural livelihoods through improving smallholder agriculture and addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender, HIV/AIDS and climate change, in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Poonam Gill has taken up the role of Office Administrator, replacing Laura Hoskins. Poonam has an MSc in Sustainability and Management and a BA in Geography, both from Royal Holloway University of London.

She has experience working for local authorities in London and was a researcher at the UN Regional Centre of Expertise for the Education of Sustainable Development in Graz-Styria, Austria.

Tish Collins, Operations Manager

SAVE THE DATE

17th - 23rd August 2016

2016 World Conference, Warwick, England
WATCH THIS SPACE!

EDITOR'S GUIDE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES & PHOTOS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Submitting Articles

It is very important when submitting articles, to make sure all the information contained is correct i.e. dates, times, amounts collected and the number of people who have attended your event or conference. Please make sure that names of attendees mentioned in your article are spelt correctly, as well as names of groups, organisations, as well as the country/region it was held. Please make sure to include all the groups featured in your article, if they have donated money, taken part or helped to organise your event or conference. If we do not know who the people are in your article, we will assume that the names provided are correctly spelt. We will also assume that your submitted written article is accurate. *Please note articles will be edited.*

Submitting Photos

It is very important when submitting digital photo(s) via email, that they are high resolution 300dpi, or are a good high gloss print if you decide to send them by post.

When taking photo(s) **please make sure the 'date stamp' on your camera/smart phone is switched off.** It is also very important to provide clearly written full names of all the people who appear in the photos, from left to right. It would also be helpful to have a short caption of where/when the photo was taken. Please ensure that the names are spelt correctly, as previously stated, if we do not know who the people are, we will assume that the names provided are accurate. Also, please ensure that the correct photo goes with the correct name and caption.

Photo Use & Release Agreement

By submitting your photo(s) you agree to grant ACWW a perpetual, royalty-free, irrevocable, non-exclusive right to publish your photo(s) in The Countrywoman and on ACWW's website. To reproduce, modify, adapt and incorporate your photo(s) in ACWW's other works and publications in any form, media or technology now known, or later developed for the full term of any rights that may exist for your photo(s). By submitting your photo(s) you warrant that you have the right to grant this, or have obtained permission from the original owner.

Please follow these instructions, as ACWW cannot accept any responsibility for inaccurate articles, or mislabelled photos and will not be liable for any disputes relating to the rights of use of any photos from any third party.

BE ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES CHEAP HOLIDAY IN NORTH DEVON

Be one of the four lucky ladies to have a **CHEAP, PERSONALLY TAILORED, CHAUFFEURED HOLIDAY** in **NORTH DEVON** in **AUGUST 2015**. Are you unhappy about going away on your own or paying single supplements? Want to explore North Devon but feel overwhelmed by a coach-load of people? Now unable to drive but love the freedom that a car brings? If so, why not consider this home stay with our ACWW member. Zippy Nomad is offering a week at her home in North Devon.

Write a cheque payable to ACWW for £200 to ACWW and share food and petrol costs. Similar holidays in the area would cost at least £350 for just Bed and Breakfast without a single supplement! In return for a cheque and a split of food and petrol costs, you can be met at Umberleigh Station and have a week being hosted, meeting local people and visiting the sights of North Devon. Contact ACWW Central Office for further details. This is a **first come, first served opportunity so get in touch quick!**



FINANCE COMMITTEE

Alison Burnett, ACWW Finance Committee Chair & Treasurer

I wish you all a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2015.

I would like to thank all societies and individual members who have contributed to PFF and/or specific projects. The work of ACWW cannot be carried out without your help. In this issue of The Countrywoman you have received a shortened version of our 2013 Annual Accounts. If you would like to receive a copy of the full report and accounts (27 pages), you should contact Central Office for further details for a Printed version, or download a PDF version from ACWW's website at: <http://acww.org.uk/about/finance>.

When you look at the last line in the Balance Sheet of the report, you will see that we have continued to increase our overall surplus due mainly to the increase in our investment income, which is settling down to give us a steady return after a few very hard years. Also we have been very fortunate to have received some very generous legacies, which have been unexpected and not budgeted for, but nevertheless very welcomed. At the beginning of another year, where we have all made our New Year Resolutions I would like us all to still think about the future of ACWW and to consider leaving a legacy. For further details about the different ways you can do this please contact Tish Collins, Operations Manager at Central Office. I would like to encourage more people to become individual members - they would receive their own copy of The Countrywoman magazine and also be able to attend the World Conference. Individual members can join, or renew their

subscriptions online by using PayPal. Societies can renew online but are unable to join with this method. You don't need a PayPal account to be able to use it, as you can use a credit or debit card to make the payment, you can also pay through Central Office. Please email Manisha Vora, ACWW's Finance and Membership Administrator: manisha.v@acww.org.uk, if you have any membership questions.

As I said above, you have to be a member to attend a World Conference and for those of you who were not able to attend the Conference in Chennai, India, you missed a wonderful experience. The next World Conference will be held in the UK at the University of Warwick in 2016. I would urge you all to start saving for this great event, where you will get a chance to meet up with other members of ACWW's family from around the world. I would be really thrilled if by the end of 2015 we have more individual members, more legacies and more PFF! *'Remember every penny counts towards helping women worldwide'*

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS USING ONLINE BANKING

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LONDON WEST END WI WELCOMES ACWW EXECUTIVES

Tish Collins, ACWW Central Office - Operations Manager wrote: At the October meeting of my local WI, ACWW's World President, members of the Executive and Heather Brennan from ACWW's Finance Committee were welcomed by Pam Young, President of London West End WI. After introductions we heard a brief talk about the 'Pig Pledge', a campaign against factory farming and the main speaker gave a very entertaining account of ghosts associated with that part of London (Bloomsbury).

ACWW OFFICERS VISIT NFWI HEAD OFFICE FOR A CUP OF TEA AND A CHAT



Left to right: Jana Osborne, NFWI General Secretary; Alison Burnett, ACWW Treasurer; Tish Collins, ACWW Operations Manager; Ruth Shanks AM, ACWW World President; Margaret Yetma, ACWW Deputy President; Janice Langley, National Chair of NFWI; Maggie Simons, NFWI ACWW Representative and ACWW C&M Committee member, Henrietta Schoeman, ACWW Secretary; Joy Thompson, NFWI Board Member and Marylyn Haines-Evans, Chair of NFWI Public Affairs Committee - London 2014

Janice Langley, the NFWI National Chair and Jana Osborne, the NFWI General Secretary were joined by other NFWI Board Members and staff in welcoming Ruth Shanks AM, World President; Margaret Yetman, Deputy President; Alison Burnett, Treasurer; Henrietta Schoeman, Secretary and Tish Collins, Operations Manager to the NFWI Head Office in London in October 2014. Sitting round a table for a cup of tea led to friendly and useful discussions between the two organisations who share many of the same ideals of improving women's lives.

There were also discussions on how both organisations could work together in the future. One suggestion included the possibility of a special ACWW day course at Denman, the NFWI College in Oxfordshire, which is being followed up.

IN MEMORY



Dame Raigh Rowe DBE

It is with great sadness that we bring the news of the death of Dame Raigh Rowe. Raigh, from Western Australia was ACWW's World President 1977-1980. Holding most offices in the Country

Women of Australia, Western Australia at one time or another, she started as a Branch Secretary in 1953 rising to Divisional State then National President in 1969-71. The Chair of Social Issues Fact Finding Team and then Administrator of the CWA Training Programme followed. She actively participated in every CWA Conference between 1959 and 1988 and most ACWW Triennial Conferences over the same period.

In 1966 Raigh became a Justice of the Peace and in 1972 received Honorary Life Membership of CWA. She was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1977 and was honoured by the Queen to become Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in 1980. She also held awards from Germany and the USA. She will be missed and our commiserations are sent to her family and close friends.

More details of Raigh Roe's life can be found in 'She's no Milkmaid' A biography ...compiled by Rica Erikson and Rona Haywood. Published by Hesperian Press, ISBN 0 85905 152 8.

JOIN IN WITH WOMEN WALK THE WORLD 2015!



2015 marks the fourth year ACWW will be running its annual Women Walk the World event, so we want it to be bigger than ever. We want to raise money and promote ACWW by asking members, friends and family to walk on or around ACWW Day, 29th April 2015.

Please start planning now!

Your walk could be an organised ramble through the countryside, a walk round a neighbourhood, a stroll in a park or whatever you like. To keep things interesting you could run a raffle – start getting creative!

Your participation in Women Walk the World will help ACWW achieve its goal of connecting and supporting women worldwide. Announce your local walk as soon as possible, so that everyone marks the date in their diaries and you get a good turnout.

Women Walk the World posters, with space for local walk information, and a

sponsorship form are available on request from Central Office. So call Central Office on +44 (0)207 799 3875, or email info@acww.org.uk. You can also download information from ACWW's website at www.acww.org.uk/women_walk. Please note we will again be using our fabulous Women Walk the World logo design, put together by the Australian CWA of Victoria's junior members. Also for the fourth year running we are pleased to announce there will be a best photo competition. So take photos of your walk event and send them to ACWW Central Office for the attention of Jennifer Atigolo, Digital and Print Media Manager/Editor. The best photo will end up on the front cover our July-September 2015 issue of 'The Countrywoman'. Please ensure your photo(s) resolution is 300dpi, if submitting digital photos via email (cm@acww.org.uk), or are a good high gloss print if you decide to send them in by post- ACWW's address is on the inside front cover of this magazine.

Please make sure your photo is in focus and any date stamp on your smart phone, or camera is switched off. Read the editor's guide for submitting articles & photos to help with submissions. Please accompany your photo(s) with a short write up describing your walk. Deadline for all images and short articles is 15th May 2015. Late entries may not be included. Good luck everyone and enjoy your walks!

WOMEN AND YOUTH IN FARMING

GLOBAL DIALOGUE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY FARM



Top left Joan Brady, member of ACWW's Agriculture Committee, carrying the large white pumpkin



Throughout 2014, the United Nations' (UN) International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) focused attention on the role of family farming in eradicating hunger and poverty, and aimed at identifying policies and interventions to support family farmers.

As IYFF entered its final phase, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN in Rome, brought together government representatives, family farmers, civil society, private sector, academia and development agencies, to take stock of the momentum created and tone set from the pro-family farming agenda, by holding panel presentations on several topics at their themed 'Global Dialogue on Family Farming' event.

On 27th October 2014, Joan Brady, member of ACWW's Agriculture Committee, attended one of the panel presentations, which dealt with the topic of 'Women and the Youth in Family Farming'. Women play a huge role in food production and the youth are our future, making it important to make farming more appealing through development and

investment, which will encourage women and youth to become our future farmers. Speaking on behalf of La Via Campesina an international organisation, which Joan is also a member, and using herself as an example, she delivered a well rounded and passionate speech.

Joan said: "Thank you for this opportunity to share with you my passion, concerns and optimism for the family farm.

I am a family farmer – I know my soil, I know my climate and I know how to grow things: plants, animals and soil fertility. I know how to harvest and prepare for market; I know how to feed my family.

I am a family farmer – I know my community and I feed it. I advocate and provide a voice for those that might not have an opportunity to speak.

I participate in community planning and celebration, as well as debate as to what is best for our collective future.

I am a family farmer – I work hard to represent the interest of family farmers, which differs from the interests of trade and

multinationals. I work within the framework of food sovereignty – a framework of resilience that will feed the world – one family, one community, one nation at a time.

I am a family farmer – I am a member of La Via Campesina and the National Farmers Union (NFU) of Canada, where I am NFU Women's President. It is my mandate to ensure and facilitate the participation of women in our organisation. I also support and champion our young farmer members, because I know they are our future. Our youth members and leaders revitalise us, hold us accountable and teach us alternative approaches to investment, production and market development. We will not tell the youth what they need or how to farm, they will tell us and we will learn together.

I attended the North American dialogue on the 'International Dialogue on the Family Farm' and came away concerned about the working definition of family farming, one which highlighted only labour, a purely economic designation. Family farmers are embedded in our communities, we work where we live and thus have a higher stake in assuring healthy environments.

The definition must reflect that balanced view, one that accounts for economic, social and environmental attributes of family farming. When we look at the 'family farm' unit in itself and its connection with community, we understand the role women and youth play.

Women and youth must have equal access to land and resources, including seeds, financing, markets and more. We must facilitate their participation in leadership and knowledge transfer. If they are not part of our conversations and actions, we must examine the situation and remove any barriers before it is too late. Above all, we must prevent violence, inequity and power imbalance that limits their participation in any way.

I began this conversation by outlining all the things I do as a family farmer. After thirty years – I understand the problems that the farmers of the world face and I have with time and effort produced many solutions.

We can feed the world if we empower farm families to drive the solutions. They will deliver the answers from their passions, expertise and resilience.

I am a family farmer... and I thank you for listening".

SIX TIPS TO ENCOURAGE SUCCESSFUL TEAMWORK WITHIN A SOCIETY



Magdie de Kock, ACWW Communications & Marketing Committee Chair

Magdie de Kock, ACWW Communications and Marketing Committee Chair, is a motivational speaker and life coach, who motivates and equips women through knowledge and skills to develop attitudes and ways to discover a personal purpose to enrich their own lives and those of others. Here Magdie brings you 'six tips to encourage successful teamwork within a society'.

Magdie writes: "Teamwork plays an important role in the success of a society". She agrees with Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish-American industrialist, who said:

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision and the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results".

In her wide experience as the chair of various committees, Magdie has come to the conclusion that a successful team is like an eco-system where members feed off each other's energy, build on each other's strengths and, to some extent, counterbalance each other's weaknesses. She says: "Learn to connect with your fellow-members to build a rapport and sense of belonging". Keep the following six tips in mind to encourage teamwork within your branch or society:

1. Respect the individuality of each member
Invest time in knowing your branch members as people with desires, needs, emotions, backgrounds and dreams. Spend time with them – increase both formal and informal interactions to ensure loyalty.

2. Create an environment to produce a high-performance team

Create an environment of trust, inclusiveness and respect, which will lead to a productive team atmosphere. Humans are social creatures who thrive on establishing emotional bonds.

3. Advocate and encourage co-creation

This will help to get strong commitment from your branch members, as they will have a purpose and feel empowered.

4. Strive to create loyalty and accountability

What is in it for me? Is often the question on the mind of a member, so ensure that the individual dimension is catered for in the goals and objectives of the society.

5. Ensure the involvement of the members

Try to craft a system that allows for feedback. Formal and informal, structured and ad hoc feedback encourages interactive involvement and plays an important part in creating a successful team.

6. Appreciation and recognition

The appreciation of the Chair is the reward for a member's efforts. To reward and to recognise your members on a regular basis will add value to their experience and the way in which they will support the branch. Be present and engaged and make sure you give praise for what matters and what is above and beyond the call of duty; doing and being are both needed to foster what will add value to the branch or society.

In conclusion

An analogy for teambuilding and leading is that of an orchestra conductor. The conductor's primary duties are to unify performers (build rapport and know teams), set the tempo (be a role model and use co-creation), execute clear preparations (set objectives and deliver) and listen critically (give feedback).

Acknowledgement: Financial Times Guides. Leadership. M. Abin-Pech.



Sharon Hatten
ACWW UN Committee Chair

65TH DPI-NGO CONFERENCE - NGO COMMUNITIES MUST BE AT THE HEART OF HUMAN RIGHTS

"When we speak of human rights and we think of what are the fundamentals - what is the heart - it is clear that you, the NGO community, must be the heart" said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein at his inaugural speech in Geneva in October 2014.

DPI-NGO Conference/ Civil Society and the Post 2015 Agenda:

The United Nation's Department for Public Information (DPI) actively supports the 1,900 NGOs, such as ACWW, that have been granted consultative status within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN. Each year the DPI/NGO holds a conference to inform these NGOs of opportunities that will arise to promote their various interests over the coming year.

The 65th UN DPI/NGO Conference was held at the United Nations Headquarters from 27 - 29 August 2014 with more than 2000 delegates representing NGOs from 117 countries. This was a major civil society gathering which provided an opportunity for civil society, international networks and activists to develop an "Action Agenda" to mobilize messaging, advocacy strategies, partnerships and accountability frameworks in the lead up to the launch of intergovernmental negotiations at the beginning of the 69th Session of the General Assembly for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, due to culminate at a summit in September 2015. This conference was attended by Sharon Hatten, ACWW UN Committee Chair and Cynthia De Windt, UN Representative in New York.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will replace the Millennium Development Goals in October 2015. During the deliberations many interested groups encouraged the SDG agenda to be inclusive of young people, the elderly, rural women, education for all, health care, those with disabilities, environmental issues, peace

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



Left to right: Newly appointed UN Representative in New York, Cynthia De Windt, with Patricia Altschuler and ACWW's UN Committee Chair Sharon Hatten. (2014)

and good governance. The most impressive presentation on including disabilities was given by a lady from Australia who made her entire speech using Braille. ACWW will advocate the inclusion and importance of rural women in the SDG's. Conference workshop topics included: Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and youth - NCDs including diabetes, leukemia, chronic respiratory diseases, and obesity are increasingly affecting youth. An emphasis on proper nutrition, exercise, and access to good health care was noted; and The Use of Antibiotics - there are only 150 antibiotics in use today, 80% of which are used in the agriculture industry. While it costs US\$5 billion to research and produce a new one it may be effective only for a short time as bacteria can easily mutate.

Meanwhile 2.5 billion people have no access to toilets or simple sanitation improvements which would help alleviate the need for antibiotics.

Pension provisions

The world's demographic profile is changing. It is estimated that by 2030 there will be more people over the age of 60 than under the age of 10. It is also estimated that only 48% of the current 700 million people over 60 receive a pension, and half of those receive inadequate funding.

Child Rights

On 20th November 2014, the UN celebrated the '25th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child'. Unfortunately, in many countries, one right children do not have is the right to be registered at birth. Without this right, the unregistered child may not be allowed to enrol for school, vote or obtain a passport. While the global rate of birth registration grew from approximately 58 to

65 per cent between 2000 and 2010, UNICEF estimates that there are still 230 million children under the age of 5 not registered. This happens in all countries including the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia. Non-registration is a particularly serious problem in developing countries, such as in parts of sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia; even in industrialised countries with a high overall rate of birth registration, there are pockets of marginalised and disadvantaged groups who are not registered. But technology and persistence is making a difference. Some examples of good practice include: guides to birth registration in multiple languages; using university students to hold birth registration days; and midwives phoning the birth details to a central registry.

UNICEF claims Success in Battle against Polio

The UN children's agency UNICEF said the annual number of polio cases has fallen from 350,000 in 1988, to 416 in 2013, and 243 so far in 2014 – an extraordinary drop of more than 99 percent. All but three countries where polio was firmly entrenched – Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan – have eliminated the virus within their borders, and multiple outbreaks have been contained over the past 26 years.

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF THE UN - WITH 68 YEARS OF ADVOCACY WORK BY ACWW



On 26th June 2014, the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon announced the start of the global celebration of the 70th anniversary of the UN, which aims to honour the historic breadth of the organisation's development, security and human rights work, and ultimately, unite the international community in a common cause to enable a strong UN to realise a better world. Their slogan is 'Strong UN - Better World'. The sixteen month commemoration will culminate on the 70th anniversary (UN70) of the entry into force of the UN Charter – 24th October 2015 – the day now celebrated as UN Day. The Charter came into force in late October 1945, when China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United

States and of the other signatories filed their instrument of ratifications. The UN70 celebration aims to unite member states, global civil society and the many individual men and women working in common causes. It also aims to show a strong UN working to realise a better world. This celebration should include the membership of ACWW, who have worked tirelessly to highlight and address rural women's issues during UN deliberations, during the past 68 years (ACWW 68).

How did ACWW's association with the UN start?

Since ACWW's establishment in 1929 as a rural women's pressure group, it soon became clear that these women needed a much louder voice at international levels. The opportunity arose at the 5th Triennial Conference in 1947, when ACWW's Policy Committee recommended that ACWW co-operate with the UN's fledgling Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), which aimed to raise crop yields and improve food security worldwide. The Policy Committee also recommended that ACWW support the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and provide input into the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC), whenever matters of interest to ACWW were being discussed. ACWW's members gave overwhelming support to these recommendations and resolved to send representatives to all three UN organisations; circulate information about the UN to all

member societies and publish reports of their advocacy work in The Countrywoman. Resolutions from the floor urged all members to give practical help by raising the standard of food production and nutrition in their own countries. Support was pledged for the UN and in particular 'in assisting rural people to understand the machinery and programme of the UN and its specialised agencies'. ACWW was one of the original NGOs to receive special consultative status. ACWW currently has nine UN Representatives (Reps), these representatives are based in or close to cities that host UN agencies, i.e. Bangkok, Geneva, Kuala Lumpur, Paris, New York, Rome and Vienna. They work with other NGOs that have similar objectives to lobby on behalf of rural women. Most recently ACWW's UN Reps have been active on the following UN Committees:

- FAO and its Committee on World Food Security
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- UN Economic Commission for Asia & the Pacific (UNESCAP)
- NGO Committee on UNICEF; UNICEF Working Group on Girls
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women
- NGO Committee on the Family
- NGO Committee on UNIFEM

As part of the 'UN70/ACWW 68 years' celebration, we will be looking at some of the key issues that ACWW has campaigned on during this time, in future issues of The Countrywoman. Watch this space!

28TH ACWW WORLD CONFERENCE 2016 AWAITS ALL



Left to right: Afrodita Roman; Henrietta Schoeman, TCC Chair; Christine Trewick and Lynn McLean -Triennial Conference Committee, (TCC) London 2014

ANY ACWW MEMBER who has ever attended a Triennial / World Conference will certainly agree that it is the highlight of any triennium. Henrietta Schoeman, ACWW Triennial Conference Committee Chair said: "In less than 2 years' time we will again have the opportunity to meet and enjoy a week of deliberations, but also a jovial get together for ACWW members from around the world. The next ACWW World / Triennial Conference will take place at the University of Warwick in Coventry, UK. It will be held from 17th to 23rd August 2016 – so please mark your calendars!

This is a warm invitation from the Triennial Conference Committee (TCC) and the host society to all members to attend. So get a group of friends together and make this a memorable occasion. The host society for the conference is the West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes, who we have been working along with their representative, Jackie Gregory. The TCC consists of myself from South Africa, who is ACWW's Secretary and Chair of TCC; Afrodita Roman from Romania; Christine Trewick from the UK and Lynn McLean from Canada.

The University of Warwick has been named 'The Times and Sunday Times - University of the Year'. It is situated on a large 700 acre

campus and has a spacious Arts Centre, where ACWW's Conference will take place. The Arts Centre is situated in the heart of the campus, where accommodation will be available, within strolling distance from the Arts Centre.

A site visit to the University was carried out by the ACWW Executive late in 2013 to see the facilities. We are excited about the world class venue and accommodation. Warwick is near Birmingham in the heart of England and borders the northern extremities of the Cotswolds. It is the capital town of the English county of Warwickshire and is situated 11 miles south of Coventry. The town also lies upon the river Avon. It is world famous for the magnificent Warwick Castle and is also blessed with beautiful parks and gardens.

The last ACWW Triennium Conference which was held in London, UK was in 1939. The 2016 Conference will be the ideal opportunity for members all over Europe who have never been to such a meeting to attend, as it is practically on their doorstep. Apart from attending the Conference full time, the TCC will also make provision for day delegates. We will keep you updated and informed in the run up to the 28th World Conference. In the meantime please visit: <http://tiny.cc/9rjaqx> for advance information to help you plan for 2016.

28TH TRIENNIAL/ WORLD CONFERENCE LOGO



Ideas for a logo for the 28th Triennial Conference came from the host society, West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes. After approval by the TCC and ACWW Executive Committee the ideas were forwarded to ACWW's Digital and Print Media Manager/Editor, Jennifer Atigolo. After producing a few examples, she designed the final artwork. This logo will be used in all future correspondence relating to the 2016 World Conference at the University of Warwick, Coventry. The St George's Cross is associated with Saint George, since the time of the 11th century crusades. This Red Cross was introduced to England by the late 13th century and was worn by soldiers as identification. Saint George rose to the position of 'Patron Saint of England' around 1348 and his cross is central to the Union flag.

The Tudor rose is the traditional floral heraldic emblem of England and takes its name and origins from the Tudor dynasty, uniting the previous warring dynasties of York and Lancaster.



ACWW WORLD CHOIR

The next ACWW World Conference in Warwick 2016 will soon be upon us. Suzanne Garrett, ACWW UN Committee member has been asked to form a choir from those attending and would love to hear from anyone who would be interested in joining. Suzanne says: I have a CD available, as well as the words to allow you to practice. There has already been a lot of interest from those members who I have mentioned it to. If you would like to join us please send an email to me at suzanneblodwen@gmail.com and I will make the CD and words available to you. If it is at all possible it would be great to all meet a day early at the University to practice, but we are flexible, we just want you to join us.

WORLD PRESIDENTS' REPORTS

2013 was a busy year for ACWW, especially for the World Presidents. From 2010-2013 May Kidd was ACWW's World President and in 2013 at the Triennial Conference in Chennai, India, Ruth Shanks AM was elected the current World President. Both World Presidents have written about their presidency during 2013.



Ruth Shanks AM
World President's Report

ACWW World President 2013 - 2016

The Triennial Conference in Chennai was a wonderful exercise in co-operation between the office of ACWW and the organisation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate. The conference was hailed by all who attended as a resounding success and gave cause for all who attended to go home with renewed efforts to support those who are so worthy of our support. As I was elected at this conference at the end of September, 2013, I can only report that the new Executive and Board are strongly committed to continuing the great work of this organisation and will all be working together, in conjunction with the staff at Central Office, to strengthen the work which has gone before us. We will also be looking to forge new partnerships and strengthen the financial base on which all our work is based. I believe this organisation has a great future and I look forward to the next few years as President of the Associated Country Women of the World.



May Kidd
World President's Report

ACWW World President 2010 - 2013

2013 saw the final nine months of my presidency, a hectic period in the run-up to the 27th Triennial Conference in Chennai, India 26th September to 2nd October 2013 – so much to achieve, so much to finalise, so little time. The year started with the South East and the Far East Asia Area Conference in Miri, Sarawak, on the theme: 'Voice of Women Worldwide – Empowering Transformation'. We discussed, listened, learned and laughed

together. Yes, women's voices were heard, loud and clear, and we vowed to work hard so that the voices of all women worldwide might not only be heard but listened to. We visited the neighbouring country of Brunei, as guests of the members of Brunei WI, and planted four fruit trees at their headquarters. I am confident that, like these trees, the sterling work of ACWW in that Area will continue to flourish and bear fruit.

On my way to Sarawak, I stopped in Kuala Lumpur to address a meeting of the National Association of Women's Institutes of Malaysia. Following conference, my husband and I were privileged to travel to Kuantan, at the invitation of Area President HRH Princess Azizah. There, I met with members of Pahang WI and saw for myself how many young women were being taught to cook and sew, and thus improve the lives of their families.

I travelled to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Canada, where the WIs of both provinces were celebrating their Centenary. The theme of the former was: 'A century of Women's Voices for Progress and Change'. In both provinces there were formal ceremonies, receptions, speeches, banquets, small groups and lots of worthwhile working together in a spirit of friendship.

My husband and I received outstanding hospitality both in Pictou County and in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, and throughout Prince Edward Island. It certainly was different, and fun, addressing a happy gathering of potato farmers at PEI's annual Potato Blossom Festival! Frequently my role took me to ACWW Central Office, London, for Committee meetings and to work with the Central Office team in preparation for the Triennial Conference. I attended the prestigious Charity Staff Foundation Award in Central Hall, Westminster, to see ACWW member Hazel Armstrong, Yorkshire, England, honoured as a nominee for the International Aid Courage Award.

Hazel is one of ACWW's most valued Resource Persons. She willingly travels to Asia and monitors ACWW projects in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan etc, no easy task.

I was invited by the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales (NFWI), to participate in their Pre-ACWW Triennial Conference meeting. It was a pleasure to address a gathering of 1,000 members of Buckinghamshire Federation of WIs. Their positive reaction to my speech and their support for the work of ACWW was humbling. In Scotland, I was delighted to give a presentation at Aberdeenshire Federation SWRI; to address Inner Link, Perth; to talk

with the members of Glamis Guild; to take part in Angus Federation's 2013 Women Walk the World and to address Cortachy WRI at their 90th birthday celebrations – this was a special pleasure as my late mother was a founder member and the first treasurer of Cortachy WRI. Finally, there was Chennai, India, for ACWW's 27th Triennial Conference, on the theme: 'Empowering Women Worldwide – Encourage, Educate, Enrich'. A pre-conference workshop was held, courtesy of the hostess society DMI and ACWW.

18 members from the Area enjoyed a three-day training programme on leadership and management. This enabled the attendees to take back home their new-found skills and teach others what they have learned.

The Triennial Conference was an amazing experience for all fortunate enough to be there. Much was achieved in those few days: the reports, the speakers, the voting and much more. The happy mix of delegates from all corners of the globe; the hall filled each day with eager, smiling faces; the daily welcome and loving care of the DMI sisters; the children both able-bodied and disabled, and their joy at receiving the donated reading books; the traditional music and dance – who will ever forget Incredible India?

Back in 1929, ACWW started as a friendship organisation for rural women worldwide, offering mutual understanding and support. In 1947, ACWW was one of the first organisations to be granted consultative status by the recently formed United Nations.

Some decades later, ACWW began funding small scale projects, thus enriching and transforming the lives of grass-roots women and communities. Both my report and the Annual Report covered 2013, where we were, but now it is 2014, so where do we go from here? For it is simply not acceptable that millions worldwide still do not have the basic human rights to which every human being is entitled: a roof over one's head, access to clean water; enough to eat; access to healthcare; freedom from abuse and violence. The need is out there, and it is huge.

These words were quoted at the closing of conference:

*"There are 3 kinds of people in the world -
Those who make things happen,
Those who watch things happen,
And those who simply wonder
what happened."*

From now on, may all ACWW members and supporters make even more and better things happen, to help the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the sick, the uneducated and the abused, wherever in the world there is need.

WORKING TO ERADICATE FGM



Some of the young girls involved in the fight against FGM

6 FEBRUARY IS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. This is a tremendously important Day for both the ACWW and the WI, since the following resolution was passed at the last Triennial Conference: "Be it resolved that ACWW calls on all people worldwide to stop the practice of female genital mutilation, female circumcision and cutting, which endangers the health and life of young girls". This provides a good opportunity for member societies to get involved. Possible activities could be:

- Send 'lobby letters' to government Ministers and faith leaders calling on them to ban the practice/implement existing laws.
- Awareness- raising campaign within communities.
- Support for FGM survivors (e.g. paying for restorative surgery)
- Re-train women who perform FGM operations as reproductive health workers.
- Promoting the ACWW FGM awareness project in the Gambia.

Leading the way to eradicating FGM in Bristol, England

Bristol has been at the forefront of campaigning to stop Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for more than five years. In October 2014 a National Conference on FGM for professionals from all over the UK was held in Bristol. The conference was the first opportunity for such professionals to meet and share their experiences and ideas.

The audience was health workers, social care workers, the police, and community groups who looked at the 'Bristol Model', a diverse approach recognised as the UK's model of good practice that informs central government policy. This event marked an

incredible year for FGM which had risen to high on the national and international agenda. 2014 saw the well-publicised 'Girl Summit', where Prime Minister David Cameron, announced a package to protect girls in the UK and abroad from FGM and forced marriages. 2014 was also the year when Fahma Mohamed, 'Young Trustee of Integrate Bristol', made headlines when she was invited to see the then Education Minister, Michael Gove, whom she insisted write letters to all schools in England and Wales to highlight

the risk of FGM, during the summer. Our own ACWW member, fondly known by her pen name as 'Zippy Nomad', attended the conference, which showed the city of Bristol leading the way to eradicating FGM in England.

Zippy met some of the community movers and staff from local statutory agencies and shared with them ACWW's work in this area. When asked about her main thoughts from the day, she said, it had to be the way that the Bristol Model was echoing what was happening in ACWW projects, namely that for success, grassroots leadership was essential. She pointed out that statutory agencies had a major role to play in speeding up change, with leadership and legislation; which is enforced and funded. Zippy Nomad said "Between them must be collective ownership and decision-making, services and training. Maybe it should not need saying, but listening and leaving aside egos and professional politics also seems important! The people involved in the Bristol Model seemed to have done just that".

Zippy Nomad has conference papers and other information she would be pleased to forward to anyone who would find them useful. Please contact ACWW's Central Office, who would be happy to pass your message on. Readers might also find the following websites useful:

www.bava.org.uk
www.forwarduk.org.uk
www.integratebristol.org.uk
www.dofeve.org
www.un.org

INTERNATIONAL OFFICER GAINS INSIGHT INTO ACWW



Barbara Wood, International Officer for Country Women's Association in Tasmania (CWA) is standing on the right in the red jacket, with Lindy Cleeland, Southern Tasmanian Area President

For Barbara Wood, International Officer for Tasmania and an ACWW Individual member, seeing the latest Countrywoman with so many articles, gave her insight into the world of ACWW and its members. Barbara said: "There was an interesting one page article in the October-December 2014 issue called 'Six

tips to ensure a successful Meeting'. I found it very informative and it wasn't until after I thought about how to distribute it to others, that I saw that the author was Magdie de Kock, Chair of ACWW's Communications and Marketing Committee. I first met Magdie in India at ACWW's 2013 Triennial Conference. In July 2014, my husband, Allan and I had the pleasure of staying with Magdie and her husband Johan, in South Africa, on our way to St Helena. Not only is she a warm hostess who loves welcoming visitors, but she runs a great meeting! I recommend you read this article. The magazine also contained news about knitted and crocheted scarves and beanies being made for children in Namibia and South Africa; a fun creative fundraising idea using pairs of socks; family farming in Canada and Wales etc... There were so many similarities to women around the world. Please consider becoming an Individual member of ACWW, so that you can enjoy your own copy of the magazine. Those members out there, who do receive one, show them around to tempt others!"

1ST MOUNT PEARL WI DISCUSS THE UN



1st Mount Pearl branch member

At the regular monthly meeting of the 1st Mount Pearl WI branch of which Margaret Yetman, ACWW Deputy President, is a member, began with a 'Pot Luck' meal of international dishes. Margaret's presentation focused on the United Nations (UN), where at the start of business each member was asked if they could name a member state of the UN. There was a presentation showing the beginnings of the UN, the member states and ACWW's affiliation with the UN. The evening concluded with members singing 'Song of Peace' and branch members posing for pictures. Margaret said: "The photo above shows some of our branch members. I would like to point out the member, Juanita Lester, who is holding the October-December 2014 issue of The Countrywoman, which contained her article on Family Farming".

FUNDRAISING FOR PENNIES FOR FRIENDSHIP



Marie Bradbery, Treasurer of Terrigal Evening Branch of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales, Australia (CWA of NSW), sent

in an update of her fundraising results, from using Hazel Armstrong's creative calendar fundraising idea, featured in the January-March 2014 issue. Marie said: "I attended the conference of our Annual General Meeting of the Northumberland Group of CWA, which had 74 members present, where my own branch, Terrigal Evening, is a member and sold some of the calendar dates. I also sold dates at ACWW's South Pacific Area Conference at Dubbo Branch and to group members, family and friends. Each calendar date was sold at \$A1.00, with a prize draw of \$A50.00.

I finished selling the calendar dates at my local CWA Group Conference; after which a pre sealed envelope was opened and the winning date revealed. \$A50.00 was won by Lorraine Abercrombie, of Roseville, a suburb of Sydney, an old school friend of mine, who picked the winning date, '1st March 2014'. The sealed envelope containing the winning date, chosen by a staff member at ACWW's Central Office in London, was opened by the Rev Wilma Bond, a CWA member. The calendar was consulted and Lorraine's name announced. The photo shows Lorraine (right) and me at the class reunion luncheon, where I sold Lorraine the date. In the end I managed to raise \$A315 for ACWW's PFF fund".

22 GIRLS ATTEND DAUGHTERS' DAY



Left to right front: Cybil Kirsten, Kotie Greyling, Marlene Schutte
Back: Elmie van Niekerk, Lilian Breedt, Ronel Erasmus, Hester Koegelenberg en Trudie Breedt.

The women of Makwassie WAU in South Africa held their yearly daughters' day on the 1st of July 2014 and what a day it was! The whole day had an Easter theme and was attended by 22 girls of all ages.

Thea van Rooyen told them an Easter story with the help of egg boxes, in which they placed symbolic things typical to the Easter happenings. Thereafter, they could tell the whole story with the help of their boxes. With the help of the WAU ladies, they decorated their boxes to take home. They were also entertained by a puppet show from Lilian Breedt (member), with the Easter theme in mind. Kotie Greyling (member) taught the girls how to make coconut fridge cookies. The morning ended with a lovely lunch, where all the girls were treated at beautifully decorated tables. They are all looking forward to next year's daughters' day!

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WAU CONTINUES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Sitting in front: Santa Cronjé (Mooi-Harp Chair) and Stacey Fortuin (SAVF Ons Hulde). Standing (left to right): Bettie Jooste, Yolanda Visagie (Mooi-Harp Liaison officer), Sophie Opperman, Annetjie van Emmenis, Elna van Dyk, Ria van Wyk (Mooi-Harp Vice chair) and Debbie Opperman (SAVF Ons Hulde)

WOMAN'S AGRICULTURAL UNION (WAU) Mooi-Harp branch continued to make a difference with their community project during 2014, which aimed to assist Suid-Afrikaanse Vrouefederasie (SAVF) Ons Hulde Ouetehuis, an economic, social and community development Federation based in South Africa, work towards improving the quality of life within communities and neighbourhoods. One of SAVF projects is focused on providing elderly and disabled care for less privileged persons in a local old resident's home. The residents include both men and women from age 60 and over.

A large percentage of the residents only receive a monthly state pension and state subsidy of the Department of Social Services.

SAVF needs all the help, assistance and support that the community can offer. This not only includes financial help, donations for food, clothing, linen and toiletries, but also the need of friendship.

On 19 June 2014, WAU Mooi Harp members donated scarves, socks, gloves and blankets that were knitted and crocheted by members themselves. Toiletries were also donated. WAU members often visit SAVF to spend time with residents.

FEDERATION OF WI IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In our **October-December 2014** issue, an article written about the Federation of Women's Institutes in Northern Ireland read that £3,000 in total was donated to four of ACWW's projects by the Federation, however this was incorrect.

Thanks to the very generous amounts raised by the Federation, ACWW projects in the following areas each received a donation of £3,000: Bangladesh, Romania, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka, totalling £12,000. As Editor, I would like to apologise for this oversight.

KNITTING LESSONS IN SOUTH AFRICA



Koster members back row: left to right Nellie Prinsloo, Marina van der Westhuizen, Connie Eloff and Judy Steynberg with local school girls

The Koster branch of the WAU in the Platina Region of the North West Province of South Africa was contacted by the Principal of the local School, asking for the members' help to teach girls the skill of knitting. The members are spending two days every week to devote their time and knowledge to the benefit of the school girls who are eager to learn.

AFFILIATED WITH THE ACWW FOR 80 YEARS

2014 marked the 90th anniversary of the Illinois Association for Home and Community Education (IAHCE), USA. Happily, it was also the 80th anniversary of IAHCE's affiliation with ACWW. While IAHCE have undergone a number of name changes over 90 years, it has not changed its mission to promote social and economic well being in homes and neighbourhoods through education, leadership and volunteerism.

IAHCE has been with ACWW since the beginning, according to ACWW's 75th Anniversary history book, when ACWW's 3rd Triennial Conference met in Washington at the beginning of summer in June 1936. Nearly 7,000 American women attended in Washington, including 188 from Illinois. At the IAHCE Annual Conference in March 2014, IAHCE International Director Pat Weitzmann had the opportunity to give a brief history of IAHCE's affiliation with ACWW. She also gave an update on ACWW, including the then recent 2013 Triennial Conference's Resolutions and Recommendations.

THANK YOU, KIND LADIES FROM EDINBURGH!



Thankful mothers and children from a remote part of South Africa want to express their appreciation for the knitwear they received from the kind and friendly ladies from Edinburgh. Margaret McKay past ACWW Projects Committee Chair (2010-2013), presented some beautiful knitted jerseys and hats to Magdie de Kock, Chair of ACWW's Communications and Marketing Committee, when she attended the European Area Conference in Norway 2014. Magdie distributed these gifts to needy children, which was well received.

Beautiful photos of the happy children were sent to the kind donors and the "knitting ladies" as they are known, were pleased to see the children wearing their knitwear. Margaret said "The knitting ladies are from different areas within the city of Edinburgh and some are members of my local Corstorphine branch of Scottish Women's Rural Institutes (SWRI). Some ladies were members of a group, which was formed by our Institute Treasurer, Hilda Martin. For many years, these ladies have been keen knitters, knitting small hats for babies born at the local maternity hospitals, ensuring that the babies all went home warm. They also donate knitwear to a Children's Hospice. Being experienced knitters they are keen to continue knitting for good causes. They have continued to knit over winter. Magdie says she will be happy to collect it from Central Office, where she will be attending the Board meeting in March and will take it back to South Africa where it will be distributed to needy children.

FREE STATE WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL UNION 84TH CONGRESS



Free State Women's Agricultural Union (FSWU) Executive Council

With great expectation, members and friends of the Free State Women's Agricultural Union (FWAU) looked forward to the 84th Congress, which took place from the 10th to the 11th of September 2014 at Monte Bello Estate, Bloemfontein, South Africa, at which 250 members, delegates and visitors attended.

With a feeling of excitement and expectation in the air, the venue was beautifully decorated in black and orange.

FWAU President, Vanda Gagiano, declared the conference officially opened after a scripture reading by Helena Kriel.

Event speakers were excellent and all received positive comments. Rev. Pieter de Villiers highlighted the conference's theme- 'Hope gives me wings'. Sandra Venter, spokesperson of the Tissue Engineering Centre, Pastor Jan Botha and Ina de Wet, pointed out the importance of organ donation.

RAISING AWARENESS OF WOMAN & CHILDREN LIVING IN ABUSIVE SITUATIONS



Lizanne Groenewald, the CEO of The Ladies Circle wearing a pink wig to indicate that she is part of "sisters with blisters"

On 22nd November 2014 'The Ladies Circle' (Die Dameskring) supported the 'Sisters with Blisters' walk, when they took part in the campaign in Gauteng, South Africa. It was a national walking campaign, where

more than 10,000 people took part. This fundraising walk, which has been taking place every year for the past ten years, aims to raise awareness of the plight of woman and children that live in abusive situations.

More than 5,000 men, woman, children and even pets took part in last years' 5km walk, raising an astonishing R400 000. All proceeds went to the non-profit organisation, 'Women and Men against Child Abuse (WMACA)'.

To add an element of fun and a way of being noticed, participants were encouraged to wear brightly coloured clothing, wigs and even high heel shoes. Lizanne Groenewald, the Executive Officer of Die Dameskring, also took part in the 'Sisters with Blisters' walk, on behalf of the organisation.

Lizanne says: "As an all-women organisation, it is so important to support good causes such as 'Sisters with Blisters', because it encompasses a very important value, which our organisation.

WE DANCED ALONG THE EXPRESSWAY TO AGRA



Suzanne Garrett, ACWW UN Committee member wrote: No one can travel to India and not see the Taj Mahal Mausoleum, as well as other amazing sights, so when I was going to ACWW's 2013 Triennial Conference in India, I arrived a little early breaking my journey in Delhi to visit Agra to see the Taj. You are allowed to call it this once you have visited. Each day I was picked up from the hotel by my guide Rashid, I didn't catch his surname. This time we headed immediately for the brand new expressway that linked Delhi to Agra. One morning when he picked me up to start our journey, I noticed he wasn't as lively as he had been the previous day, but it was early and maybe that explained the difference. We were the only car on this

impressive road when Rashid began our journey in the right hand lane. Soon we wandered across the three lanes to the left and then we wandered back to the right. This dance as it had become, was becoming quite alarming, I had to work out what was going on, so I asked him if he was well. "Quite well Madam", he replied. I waited as we danced along some more, then I tried, are you sleepy Rashid? "Not sleepy Madam", he replied. This dancing all over the expressway continued for quite a long time and I was eternally

grateful that we were still the only car on the road. As we continued to dance from one side of the road to the other, I felt a sense of self preservation and demanded Rashid stop the car immediately and get out and walk around. After a short time he got back into the car and the journey began again. I had to strongly suggest a couple more times that he stop before he seemed to wake up enough to continue safely.

I was keen to know what had caused the problem so very carefully I asked him questions. It turned out Rashid's youngest daughter had just turned eighteen the night before and there had been a party. He felt he had eaten and drank too much and now admitted he was feeling unwell.

I managed to hear his whole story during our journey. He had been born in Rajasthan in a small village and had never gone to school. He had a wonderful carefree childhood, with no one telling him of the importance of learning. As an adult he had come to Delhi to find work and had eventually married and had a family. Rashid had never of course been taught to read or write, so was determined his children would not turn out the same as him and would go to school. His children then taught him in the evenings to do both and now he was literate. Not only did they celebrate his daughter turning eighteen, but they were also celebrating the fact his daughter was going to attend University... his pride knew no bounds. Ever since I can remember I wanted to visit India and see the Taj Mahal and yes I saw it that day. My journey to ACWW's Conference gave me that opportunity, it was a dream come true. But my dream palled into insignificance when I thought of Rashid's dream. His children were going to have a better life, because they had a good education. Now when I think of Delhi I don't think of the poverty or the noise, I don't think of the fact that my life had been in the balance as we danced all over the expressway, causing me to persuade my guide to pull over and walk around his car, I think of Rashid a man who drives a taxi to support his family, who can walk ten feet tall. A family man I was proud to have met during my time in Delhi.

SOUTH WEST FOOD BOWL FESTIVAL



The 2nd Southwest Food Bowl Festival was held in Nannup from 17th -18th October 2014. Pat Twiss member of the Nannup Branch, Country Women's Association of Western Australia (CWA of WA) wrote: "The Nannup Branch of the CWA of WA was asked to hold a cooking competition for adults and children. Unfortunately they were not as many entries received as expected, but we had enough entries to make it worthwhile for the judges. Devon teas with a soup and sandwich lunch with plenty of happy customers made it a successful day. The Bowling Club room looked very decorative with the cooking competition display. A two-sided display board promoting CWA of WA, plus a promotion of ACWW recognising the UN's 'International Day of Rural Women and the UN Year of Family Farming', made colourful viewing. A promotion of Lupin Flake posters and information pamphlets with recipes was also well received. Lupin Flake is a good source of protein, an excellent source of fibre and is gluten free. The recipes are very easy to make and very tasty.

Various farmers of Nannup opened their farms over two days giving nearly 600 visiting school students, and other visitors, interesting information and activities. Speakers gave tips on the Paddock to Plate journey encouraging the importance of eating healthy food and most importantly how to grow it. A luscious lunch and a South West dinner were enjoyed by the lucky few. Many stalls selling South West produce kept the rest of the visitors and locals happy.



MY FIRST YEAR AS AREA PRESIDENT



Valerie Stevens, ACWW European Area President 5th from the left during her visit to Eastern Europe.

VALERIE STEVENS, ACWW European Area President, sent in a report on her first year of presidency. Valerie wrote: It has been a very busy first year as ACWW's European Area President. By the time you read this, I would have spoken at Federation meetings in the UK: Dorset, Hampshire, Huntingdon and Peterborough, Avon and Wiltshire; at IPA lunches in Barnstaple, Derby and Somerset; at a daffodil tea party in Hereford; and represented ACWW at the National WI meeting in Leeds.

I have made three trips to Norway, two planning meetings and the European Area Conference. Met society members in Budapest and Bucharest and been the guest of the Women's Union of Russia in Moscow, Yakutsk and Siberia. Closer to home, I have spoken at Dorset Federation of WI meetings in Beaminster, Wool and Dorchester, and at a Masonic women's meeting in Portland.

Thanks to all these invitations I have raised money, which will enable representatives of Eastern European societies to attend ACWW's World Conference at the University of Warwick in 2016. I am a member of the Planning Committee for this conference and I can assure members that it will certainly be a memorable experience.

What is so special about ACWW?

Why was I treated like royalty in Oslo at a Conference on 'Women, Power and Politics' in November, 2013, where I was invited to meet the mayor at a reception in Oslo Town Hall, and in Moscow and particularly Yakutsk? Of the three branches of ACWW – an international voice at the UN, a helping hand in projects and the arm of friendship, it is the third which seems so important in these situations. Being part of an association in which women from all over the world

has a voice outside their own community, which may be isolated by economics, politics or geography, is invigorating and may be life enhancing. In Yakutsk I was told that one of the most important things I had said was that women's lives do not stop once child-bearing is over. Ten children were by no means unusual among the women I met.

As ACWW's European Area President in Yakutsk, a VIP bus was waiting for me at the foot of the aeroplane stairs; I was provided with a car and driver throughout my stay (courtesy of the Deputy President of the Republic); my stay was in one of the best hotels (courtesy of the ministry of family and social affairs); all special entrances, meals and events were paid for by the Ministry of Agriculture and I received gifts of the most overwhelming generosity.

In return, I spoke at two conferences in Moscow and Yakutsk, was interviewed for the radio and local press, had meetings with the three ministers who were my hosts, visited three farms and met and talked with so many women who just wanted to meet a woman from England, as well as the representative of an international organisation. Ten of the ladies from Yakutsk said that they hoped to be in Coventry for the conference in 2016.

The journey involved will be long and the expense considerable, but for them the experience will be rewarding. In my diary I have visits planned with members in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Georgia and Romania. In England, Kent, Leicester and Rutland, Worcester, Buckinghamshire, the Yorkshire Country Women's Association and Westmorland and Cumberland all have ACWW meetings at which I am invited to speak. With two more years of my presidency to go I shall have many happy memories to enjoy and share.

PEN FRIEND FROM ACROSS THE SEA

Brona UI Loing, a member of Two Mile House Guild - Kildare Federation, Ireland had been corresponding with her ACWW Pen Friend, Paddy-Ann Pemberton from New Zealand for many years. Imagine her surprise when she heard that Paddy-Ann and her husband was planning a trip to Europe and were contemplating visiting Ireland. Brona contacted her straight away and invited the couple to stay with her in the beautiful Kildare countryside, which Paddy-Ann was delighted to accept. The great day dawned and Brona was at Dublin Port awaiting their arrival, strangely she recognised Paddy-Ann straight away and it was like they had known each other all their lives.

Unknown to Paddy-Ann a huge reception had been arranged by Brona of about seventy members, some of whom are also members of ACWW. Brona kindly invited Kildare Federation and Dublin Federation members to a reception, which was in a hotel near Dublin. They were plied with food and lots of champagne, all courtesy of Brona. Paddy-Ann regaled them with stories about her life in New Zealand and her commitment to ACWW. They were delighted to have the President of Kildare Federation attend, along with their International Officer, Helen Weir, Dublin Federation International Officer and Vivienne O'Herlihy.

EUROPEAN PEN FRIEND COORDINATOR

A big 'thank you' goes to those who showed interest in the appeal in The Countrywoman for a European Pen Friend Coordinator. We were in the enviable position of receiving a number of applications and the position has been offered to Debbie Reardon from Keswick in the Lake District who was very keen to get involved. She is a retired teacher who has 30 years experience hosting international students and longer in the WI. Please contact Debbie via Central Office.

A VISIT TO MY PEN FRIENDS IN SCOTLAND



Linda Dodds (Judy's pen friend - left standing); Isobel Ider (standing right). Seating: Judy Parks (centre) listening to her Scottish pen friend Enid Gray, and twin sister Margaret Gray of Ayr - Photo taken while touring in Girvan.

JUDY PARKS, ACWW's Pen Friend Coordinator wrote: Both me and my travelling friend, Peggy MacNeill belong to Annapolis Valley Clan Donald, Nova Scotia Canada, so it was fitting to join the Clan Donald High council tour to Skye and Bannockburn in June 2014 in Scotland. The purpose of this tour was to take in the historical celebrations of Scotland's 700th anniversary of Scottish Independence, with tours covering several other places ... like Edinburgh, Falkirk Wheel, Skye, Kenmore, Killin, along the way.

While in Scotland I thought it would be good to visit my Pen Friends and friends who were located in Ayr and Dunfermline, unfortunately the clan tour did not visit either, so these journeys were divided up, with the first week dedicated to seeing my Scottish Rural Pen Friend, Enid Gray, who I met with her twin sister Margaret and friend Isobel in Ayr, plus my other Pen Friend, Linda Dodds from Ireland who came over to Ayr to surprise me. I had never met any of those gals before except through email and air mail. It was so amazing how we seemed to get along like long lost friends.

It seemed everywhere we went, we were shown hospitality that I am sure must be quite unique. We were welcomed with open arms and they couldn't do enough for us! It was a day of touring and fellowship, before the ladies left us and returned home.

Then it was off on the train to Dunfermline, which is my ancestral home, where we stayed with Sandra Adam a member of Dunduff Rural WI, a branch of West Fife

district SWRI and her husband Bob. I met them four years ago when I travelled there with my daughter to do some family research, and they've been to Canada twice to visit us.

The West Fife Scottish Rural members welcomed us for four days of concerts, surprise party and touring. Besides Sandra, I keep in touch with several other West Fife members: Kate Adamson, Johan Tarvit, Agnes Mahon, Margaret Brown, Betty Stratten and it is truly a "Coming Home" time. Peggy was absolutely amazed at the fellowship and kindness we received from both Scottish Rural WI members and Linda Dodds from Northern Ireland WI.

Finally, we arrived for our clan tour centre near the town of Stirling, Scotland, with Stirling Castle looming in the distance. There were members from Australia, New Zealand and USA. All so very thrilled and inspired by being in Scotland. England is next on my bucket list, as several on my family tree are from there too, and also Ireland where I went a decade ago. It's really strange that those of you who haven't emigrated away from what we call the "Old Country", tend to take your heritage for granted. Here in New Scotland, (Nova Scotia) we believe keeping our traditions for future generations is very important.

Even though, I keep encouraging individuals to take part in the Pen Friend Scheme, the Scottish members and even though I have two very special ones, are not too eager to write letters. I have however filled a few requests for others here in Canada. Ireland is quite receptive to the scheme, as is England. Haven't had any inquiries from Wales as yet. To create your own wonderful memories and build great long distance friendships, why not contact Central Office and ask for more information on the Pen Friend Scheme.

WAU MEMBERS OF TABUKI REGION BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR EVERY CITIZEN



WAU members of the Tambuki region in South Africa make a difference wherever they go, with their aim to share their skills and build a better future for every citizen. Their most recent project is to knit and crochet knee blankets for the elderly and the sick in their region. This project is very popular and has proven to be a great success. Each member carried around needles and wool in their bags, so that they could work on the blankets every spare minute.

Another WAU project that has brought smiles to people's faces is their weekly baking project. The idea is to bake a cake and give it to whoever they came across on that day. Firstly, they encounter the emotion of shock, then the reaction of astonishment and then always a big smile of appreciation.

Elbie van der Schyff, who is the Chair of the WAU Tambuki region says: "We would like to carry this out to the whole region. This is a small gesture that has a big impact. This really makes a difference in the lives of our less privileged citizens".

WAU also has an Alzheimer project, which Elbie says has opened their eyes to the need of these patients. Elbie says: "Books, toys and pillows made of different textured material were given out to Alzheimer patients. At these occasions tea is served with healthy eats, a chat, a hug and a smile, which means the world to the elderly.

We also have a youth outreach programme that is a priority in our region, and where about 1,000 girls are reached annually. We are them life skills with the emphasis on the importance of education. We also stress the importance of managing their money and budgeting and toiletries are handed out. This project turns out to be mostly beneficial to the local orphanages".

WARM HEARTS - WARM HANDS



Above: School children eager to learn knitting. Below Maria Mahlangu with her very first 'Crazy Patchwork' blanket. Maria is now generating her own income.

Our weekly knitting classes at a local knitting shop in Witbank is a very special and dear to Wilma van Zyl, member of WAU Nocturne, Carpe Diem Region, Mpumalanga, South Africa.

The knitting classes started back in June 2013 when a member of Wilma's WAU Nocturne branch started work at 'Waste me Not' wool shop. Wanting to take part and share her knowledge Wilma offered to teach any interested parties how to knit.

Wilma said: "The very first class, which took place on a Wednesday afternoon, saw only three women and the following week there were seven. The owner of the shop furnished a comfortable corner of the shop and from then on there was no stopping us and beautiful crazy patchwork and creative blankets were knitted. As the word spread every week saw more women attending.

Maria Mahlangu, one of the first ladies to start, could not even cast on, yet today she generates an income with the items she knits. By empowering her, I reached my first milestone. In the school holidays, there are a number of young girls ages 7 to 10 that also come to learn how to knit. I thought since such beautiful items are created each week, we should help others.

Karen Oberholzer, one of our Nocturne WAU members, who also works at the shop 'Waste me Not' where we meet every week, is involved in an organization - Xero Derma Pigmentosium (cancer kids) and we thought it appropriate to make each of the eighteen children a handmade blanket. These children have no resistance to sunlight and

are kept indoors therefore the Nocturne WAU members and the knitting group started knitting squares. To my greatest joy many ladies from other branches and even ladies that are not part of WAU, became involved. My mother in Worcester, a town in the Western Cape Province, knitted 18 teddy bears and in February 2013, we handed 18 blankets and teddies to the organizer, Maryna de Beer. Our second project - 'Warm Hearts Warm Hands' had us make 80 pairs of fingerless gloves and 16 scarves for an organisation called 'Helpende Hand'.

Currently we are doing a toy project for Christmas and donations of handmade toys will be distributed to local orphanages and old age homes where Alzheimer patients benefit from handling the soft toys.

Each Wednesday leaves me with the most wonderful feeling, knowing that one can transfer knowledge and make a difference".



ZIMBABWEAN SOCIETIES ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

In response to the overwhelming support for International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Zimbabwean societies commemorated '16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children'.

This is an international awareness-raising campaign, which runs from 25th November - UN International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10th December - Human Rights Day. The campaign spans these 16 Days in order to highlight the link between violence against women and human rights. Today, women and girls are subjected to many forms of human rights violations solely on the basis of their gender.

2014's 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign was even more important in South Africa because it celebrated many milestones. It marked 60 years since the signing of the Women's Charter on 17th April 1954 in Johannesburg; 20 years of freedom and democracy in South Africa and 16 years of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. South Africa adopted the campaign in 1998 as one of the intervention strategies towards creating a society free of violence.

The campaign continues to raise awareness amongst South Africans about the negative impact of violence against women and children in the community.

Violence takes on many forms, including for example emotional violence and trauma, which women and children experience in their homes, at work, at schools, on their streets and in their communities.

In most cases women and children often experience violence such as physical / domestic, in the form of rape and assault. Another terrible affliction is the violence of poverty, starvation, humiliation and degradation. Poverty, inequality and unemployment are conditions under which violence thrives.

Many organisations and volunteers worldwide, who also support abused women and children, need assistance from the public. Together, ACWW, its members and supporters can take action to support the next 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign, either now or in the lead up to the campaign.

28 GIRLS ATTEND A SKILLS DAY IN SOUTH AFRICA



IN RECOGNITION OF THE 67 YEARS OF service rendered by that the late Nelson Mandela to South Africans, the inhabitants of South Africa annually celebrate "67 Minutes for Mandela". On this day various community projects take place. Members of the Volmoed-Branch of the Women's Agricultural Union (WAU) situated in a rural area near Rustenburg in the North West Province of South Africa, decided to participate in creating a project which they called 'Girls Skills Day' to teach new skills to local girls between the ages of 9 and 15 years. 28 girls from six schools situated up to 30 km away, attended this event. Since they were mainly from low-income families they only paid R10, less than £1 for the course. Girls were pre-divided, alphabetical into six groups of 4 or 5.

Each group moved to one of the 6 stations at which different activities were offered. At each station a WAU member was in charge, assisted by Setswana speaking ladies to do the necessary translation to the local vernacular.

After 67 minutes the groups all moved clockwise to the next station. After lunch they moved twice again. The following morning they again moved twice so that by lunch time all 6 groups had participated in all the activities provided.

The activities offered at each station were:

- **Cooking:** Recipes in English and Setswana were used to prepare bread, scrambled eggs and tomatoes.
- **Baking:** A lemon cake was prepared following a recipe in English and Setswana, baked in a ring tin in a brazier under a reflector after which it was decorated with lemon icing.

- **Planting spinach plants:** This was done to encourage the girls to start a vegetable garden. The girls received recycled 1 litre plastic yogurt tubs with holes drilled in the bottom of the tub and decorated by using PVC paint. After filling the tubs with a prepared compost and sand mix, they planted two spinach plants. Recycled 2 litre plastic milk containers were converted into watering-cans to gently water the plants.
- **Flower arranging:** Flower shapes were cut out of recycled plastic cold drink bottles for the girls to paint with PVC paint. One of WAU's members is an artist, and she encouraged the girls to use bright colours and showed them how to mix primary colours to create a variety of colours.
- **Bead necklaces:** Recycled wooden beads were used to make the necklaces. Girls threaded lengths of wool through the beads to create colorful necklaces.
- **Stationery bags:** Fabric which was unsuitable for most purposes was ideal to make bags for stationery.

In addition to these group activities, the girls received information on how to start a vegetable garden as well as additional packs of spinach seedlings. They also received printed information on Nelson Mandela.

They were sent home with a certificate of attendance. The girls enjoyed working in groups doing new activities, and learnt skills that they can implement in the future.

NEW MEMBERS SIGN THEIR NAME



Withycombe Raleigh WI, Devon England

The Withycombe Raleigh WI, Devon Federation International Group, which meets once a month have a unique way of welcoming new members. When someone new joins, the WI gets them to sign their name on an ACWW table cloth, which is used at each meeting. Their signatures are then embroidered to keep a lasting record. The photo above shows some of the members, with the table cloth showing past and present members, Alma Othan, their Chair, sits centre in the front row. Speakers at the WI meetings range from UK HM forces service overseas, the work of other NGOs abroad, to battlefield artists and ACWW activities.

ELECTED AT A 3 DAY CONFERENCE



Marda Oosthuysen, (pictured above) a member of Die Dameskring for 22 years was elected President at a three-day Bi-annual Conference which took place in October 2014. She took over the reins from Mignon Smit, who was President for the past four years and is currently a member of the ACWW Project Committee. The conference themed "Leef" ("Live"), which took place from 9th – 11th October 2014 in Wellington in the Western Cape Province of South Africa, highlighted activities of Die Dameskring.

The work of ACWW was discussed during the conference and photographs taken at ACWW's Southern Africa Area Conference, which took place in Modimolle Limpopo from 24th – 26th June, were featured as part of the highlights.

TEA TIME CAMPAIGN

IN AID OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

To celebrate **International Day** of Rural Women, which was on 15th October 2014, ACWW and Salt of the Earth asked members to host a tea party, which didn't have to be complicated or time consuming but had to be fun! The aim of this campaign was to bring people all over the world together to drink tea, raise money and raise awareness of ACWW to reduce the deprivation of women living in rural poverty. We asked members to invite their friends, colleagues and community members and ask them to donate to grassroots projects that benefit women. The money raised will not only benefit the lives of some of the most disadvantaged women all over the world, but also their families and communities. Many raised awareness for this important day to help women less fortunate than ourselves and we bring you a few below including ACWW's own Tea Time event held on 13th October 2014. To date ACWW has received over £600 from members in response to the Tea Time Campaign.

TEA TIME IN SOUTH AFRICA



Swartgoud branch in Mpumalanga, South Africa had their Tea Time during their October monthly meeting. Guests were invited and asked to contribute to the tea and cake. There were 19 ladies present, each dressed up and donning hats to enjoy their high tea. The photo includes Cindy Coetzee, Cosmos Region Chair, Swartgoud branch members and Henrietta Schoeman, ACWW Secretary and Triennial Conference Committee Chair.

CORN SILK TEA TASTING



Radwinter WI in Essex arranged a "Corn Silk Tea Tasting", with tea specially sent from Japan, as part of their Tea Time Campaign fundraising event for ACWW and Salt of the Earth. Most members were surprised to find that they liked the new taste!

The taste reminded several members of the flavour of cornflakes. £50 was raised in donations from a raffle and tombola.

TEA TIME IN CANADA



Anne Dunn, Secretary, WI Overlander in Canada held their tea party on 28th October 2014. The photo is of Lynda Desrocher (member) who is adding finishing touches before the doors opened. A good time was had by all, \$175.00 Canadian was raised and many are looking forward to another Tea Time event next year.

CENTRAL OFFICE HOST THEIR OWN TEA TIME EVENT

On 13th October 2014, in support of International Day of Rural Women, we at Central Office held our own Tea Time event. In attendance was ACWW Exes and Communications and Marketing Chair, as well as Kate Hartley, Development Manager, Salt of the Earth and Brian Woodcock, Chair of Trustees of Salt of the Earth; Salt of the Earth were our joint partners on this campaign. We also had some staff members of Mothers Union and staff from ResPublica, who are located on same floor. This was a great time to meet and greet with others in our building and get to know our neighbours.

AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO BE MISSED TEA FOR ONE, TWO AND MORE



Wig & District WI members

Bethan Williams, ACWW Agriculture Committee wrote: "It was an opportunity not to be missed for our Wig & District WI monthly meeting. The invitations were out, the guest speaker was booked, but there was no inspiration for a theme. ACWW's Tea Time campaign was exactly the right solution.

Suzanne Garrett, ACWW's UN Committee member was coming to stay in Llangrannog, West Wales and had been invited to speak at our WI monthly meeting. On the night, Wig & District WI members and guests from Cross Inn WI and Sarnau WI in Ceredigion, Wales, were welcomed with the best china and autumn flowers on every table. Suzanne gave a most interesting talk on the Country Women's Association in New South Wales, Australia and on ACWW projects she had monitored in India. Photos were taken in Pontgarreg Memorial Hall where Wig & District WI met. A variety of delicious cakes were eaten by 24 members and guests, along with numerous cups of tea drunk and money raised for ACWW funds. It was an original idea worth repeating. In the end we raised £41. A most enjoyable evening was spent with tea for one, two and more".



Left to right: Kate Hartley, Development Manager, Salt of the Earth; Ruth Shanks AM, ACWW World President & Magdie de Kock, ACWW Communications and Marketing Chair



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN & TEA TIME CELEBRATION



Ruth Shanks speaking at the Federation of Women's Institute

Margaret McMillan, ACWW Finance Committee member wrote: The Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland (FWINI) celebrated International Day of Rural Women and ACWW's Tea Time at the Lodge Hotel, Coleraine on 18th October 2014, where ACWW's World President Ruth Shanks AM was the guest speaker. Ruth reminded us how important our work is with ACWW.

During the celebration fundraising also took place and members were thanked for £5,500 raised at the '2014 Women Walk the World' events around Northern Ireland earlier in the year.

LYON'S BROOK WI IN NOVA SCOTIA ENJOY A CUPPA



Left to right: Sheila Reynolds, Jennie McInnes, Betty Doucet and Lynn MacLean

Although Lyon's Brook WI in Nova Scotia, Canada, was unable to participate on the date set, 15th October, they did go ahead and hold their tea party not too long after on 4th November 2014.

During the Tea they watched a PowerPoint presentation on different global projects, which were helping rural women. Here are a few members of Lyon's Brook WI in Nova Scotia enjoying a cuppa and baked goods.

WOODBIDGE'S TEA TIME INITIATIVE



Left to right: Linda Leigh, President of Woodbridge WI and Val Watts, SEFWI's ACWW Representative

Maureen Staines of Woodbridge WI wrote: "On 24th October we organised a welcome day for members to raise funds for ACWW's Tea Time campaign. Our member, Pat Clark offered an open house for tea and coffee for members and their friends, where they could take part in a fun quiz, based on the Tea Time Fact Sheet, have home-made cakes and sandwiches and enjoy a relaxed sociable occasion. We were really pleased to be able to send in a cheque for £287.00 to ACWW and would like to thank ACWW for the opportunity given to us to come together".

RURAL WOMAN HONoured AT TEA TIME



Left to Right: Cecile Jarrett; Shirley Webber-Rural Woman of the Year being pinned by Dotsie Gordon-ACWW Area President

The Courtleigh Hotel and Suites in the heart of New Kingston, Jamaica was the perfect setting for a Tea Time party during which the Jamaica Federation of Women (JFW) held an award ceremony called 'Rural Woman of the Year 2014', on International Rural Women's Day. Shirley Elizabeth Webber, Incumbent President of the Manchioneal Branch, a small district by the sea, in East Portland, emerged the indisputable winning candidate among the four nominees from the deep rural parishes of St. Elizabeth and St. Mary. Shirley has been a member of JFW for nearly forty years and during this time she has served the branch in several leadership positions including, President for the past twenty-seven years; she has also been the

Principal of the Federation's Early Childhood Development Institution in the community. In addition to providing JFW with quality voluntary service, Shirley had also given similar service to her church and the wider community through the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management.

Her branch members hail her as a stalwart who has received several awards from various community based organisations. She has met all the JFW criteria for the JFW/ACWW Lucille Miller Rural Woman's Award, sponsored by Citibank. President, Gloria Millwood was proud to present her well-earned Rural Woman of the Year award.

Witnessing the occasion were several members from the Awardees' Manchioneal Branch and Executive Members, such as Cecile Jarrett, who chaired the proceedings and Dotsie Gordon, ACWW Area President for Caribbean, Central & South America. Music was supplied by Norman Jarrett, husband of the Chairwoman. The evening's event had a heavy down pour of rain, so the expected numbers of attendees was reduced and some members had to pull out due to illness. However, for those who were able to make it, sharing the moment made it an extraordinary event for the recipient. Tea, scones, sandwiches and cake were enjoyed by all, as they used the opportunity to take part in ACWW's Tea Time campaign. They are looking forward to another Tea Time event in 2015. Dotsie said: "We will be better prepared to make it a fundraising event in 2015 although October is the rainiest month in Jamaica".

THE SHELBY COUNTY EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS HOSTED A TWO DAY TEA TIME EVENT



The theme: 'Frost is on the Pumpkin - Raising Funds for Sisters around the World', was a two day Tea Time function hosted by the Shelby County Extension Homemakers. The first day was a day of cutting and making scarves out of fleece material. These scarves were either 11 inches or 9 inches wide and 60 inches long with fringed ends. In one hour and a half the ladies made 150 scarves for individuals in need. These were delivered to the Salvation Army Shelby County facility for winter warmth. The second day was for spent sipping tea, learning about traditions of pumpkins around the world, enhancing their knowledge of new crafts, tasting pumpkin breads, and eating cakes. Both days were enjoyed by all who attended.

PROGRESS REPORT

**BANGLADESH***Sustainable sanitation practices for disadvantaged women*

Organisation: Sayapath

Supported by: Irish Countrywomen's Association

The aims of this project were to build awareness among extremely poor women and children living in river basin communities in Kaligonj district, Lalmonirhat in regards to sanitation and hygiene practices. The project was geared at installing sanitation hardware (tube-wells and latrines) to help improve a family's health, which should in turn help reduce child mortality.

It was hoped that a public-private partnership would be developed between community women's institutions and public and private sector health, water and sanitation service providers, resulting in sustainable 'WATSAN' (water and sanitation) services working at grassroots level.

The benefits achieved so far are:

- Vulnerable participants are using pure water for drinking and household activities, since four tube wells have been installed. Ten sanitary latrines have also been installed. Thus the beneficiaries are now practicing good hygiene and sanitation, at a personal and family level to secure their good health.
- The participants have learnt how diarrhoea can be prevented by washing hands with soap before preparing food, before eating, before feeding children and after defecation.
- Rising awareness among the vulnerable people, regarding safe drinking water. During the awareness training it was realised that most of the health hazards expressed by most people in this area were caused by contaminated water. The reduction of water-borne diseases in river basin communities has resulted in improved health for the women.

Sayapath, who are running the project, have reported that 84 adults and 108 children are

benefitting from the tube wells, and 164 adults and 188 children from the sanitation which has been provided. The numbers of women and men benefitting are approximately equal.

Sayapath staff and monitoring team have monitored the project at each stage of its implementation. Monitoring is done weekly, monthly and quarterly at different phases of implementation i.e. community mapping and needs assessment, participants targeting development, leadership development, weekly meeting, training, campaigning and workshop, as well as community water point selection, hardware installation, advocacy, networking and linkage development. Sayapath is taking responsibility for arranging all possible measures of monitoring to ensure that the project activities are accomplished as per plan and timeline proposed.

Hazel Armstrong, ACWW Projects Committee member and Resource Person, monitored this project and found that Sayapath had done a baseline survey in the two areas, which she visited. However, having identified that water and sanitation are the underpinning issues, these needs to be addressed. Hazel said: "I have asked questions of the beneficiaries, who are now aware of the source of funding available and I have examined their knowledge of the improved sanitation and hygiene. One group noted a drop in infant mortality since they undertook this learning".

FINAL REPORT**UGANDA***Promotion of Increased Household Food Security and Incomes among Rural Poor Women-led Families in Katikamu Sub-County, Luwero District*

Organisation: Maganjo Farmers Association (MAFA)

Supported by: Zurich Financial Services

This project, run by Maganjo Farmers' Association (MAFA), which received ACWW Project funding in September 2013, ended in August 2014. The project aimed to improve the food security situation for households of rural poor and women-led families in Katikamu Sub-County, Luwero District of

Uganda, by training 60 women in methods of sustainable agriculture, income-generating activities, environmental protection and marketing, savings and credit management. The project included the establishment of a small revolving loan facility, which the beneficiaries could use in order to improve their income-generating activities.

The project has made a number of achievements in pursuing its aims of leaving the beneficiaries with skills vital for not only a profitable small business, but a better standard of living than before its initiation. The women have received training in agriculture and agronomic practices, and are now familiar with using locally available materials, like animal waste, to make compost manures. Since the training programmes were initiated, food production of the women and families involved has risen by an estimated 67%.

The result of this rise is that all members of the household have more food on a daily basis. Families who were suffering from chronic malnutrition, only able to provide one meal a day for each member, were now benefitting from 2 or even 3 meals each day instead. The improvement in nutrition and diet is bringing with it wider health benefits for those involved.

The revolving loan fund has proved very successful and has been taken up by 90% of the women who were initially targeted to take part. Those making use of the revolving loan fund have seen their incomes rise by an average of more than 80%. Some examples of specific skill training that has helped small business owners to make such profits include record and book keeping, saving and credit management skills, and specific agribusiness techniques that were tailored to their specific employment roles.

Overall, the project was carried out according to MAFA initial plans; however, some challenges were faced by their staff. Firstly, the project was hit by unseasonable droughts, when it stopped raining in November and did not start again until April the following year.

Secondly, difficulties were faced in encouraging all the women to record their savings, as some of them were unable to read and write. Thirdly, the current land tenure system creates a situation where individual farmers only have a small patch of cultivatable land each to work on. Finally, there were some issues in making each woman repay the loan back in time, as some prefer to reinvest the saved money. Despite these challenges this project has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on all the women who took part and the established revolving loan system will continue to provide support for women working in this field long into the future.

FINAL REPORT



INDIA

Community Health Care Project in 5 Villages

Organisation: Association for the Social, Educational and charitable activities for the poor communities (ASHA)

Supported by: Hertfordshire FWI, England

The Association for Social, Educational and Charitable Activities for Poor Communities (ASHA) reported 650 women have benefitted from this project. The main aim of this project was to empower women and girls by improving their health, thus enabling them to take an active role in their own social and economic lives.

The main achievements were to:

- Increase awareness of health issues
- Improve hygiene and sanitary practices within the community
- Provide medical care for their targeted underprivileged community
- Provide better health conditions
- Increase recovery rates from illness
- Decrease deaths due to lack of treatment
- Improve attitudes amongst the tribal community regarding better health care

Health awareness camps were conducted in 5 villages.

The topics covered included:

- How to take preventative measures to avoid the spread of contagious diseases
- How to keep clean and safe drinking water
- The importance of bathing daily and washing clothes frequently
- How to keep their house and surroundings neat, tidy and clean.

The tribal women were educated through personal discussions and awareness camps about family planning, pre- and post-natal care for mothers and care of babies, especially the benefits of breastfeeding.

ASHA reported that the target women have increased awareness of health issues and are taking more control of their fertility. Due to this training ASHA has found there is a reduction in maternal and infant mortality in the target villages.

FINAL REPORT



INDIA

Employment-Oriented Tailoring & Embroidery Skill Training for Women & Adolescent Girls

Organisation: Society for Women and Downtrodden Development (SWADD)

Supported by: Individual supporter from Hampshire, England

The Society for Women and Downtrodden Development (SWADD) who ran this project, reported that 68 women and girls, aged between 15 and 32 years old, have benefitted from this project aimed at training women in tailoring and embroidery. The women, some of whom were widows, learned these skills in the hope that their family income would be increased and their status enhanced.

The beneficiaries were taught the following:

- How to stitch and use a sewing machine
- What materials were needed for a sewing machine
- Tailoring accessories
- Procedures to follow carefully while taking measurements
- Terminology used in tailoring and embroidery
- Pressing/ironing new clothes and how to remove stains
- Problems and solutions regarding sewing machines
- How to handle sewing machines properly
- Techniques involved in making various items of clothing
- How to find employment opportunities for skilled tailors

SWADD reports that all the beneficiaries completed the training successfully and they are now able to be employed in the textile industry, or to work on a self-employed basis.

A baseline study was carried out at the start of the project, and this was used to carry out monitoring and evaluation of the project during its implementation. The tailoring and embroidery instructor and trainers and the project stakeholders' committee have been monitoring and evaluating the project.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2015

ACWW AREA CONFERENCES

Caribbean, Central & South America

The Caribbean, Central & South America Area Conference will be held from the 10-12 June 2015.

South East Asia & Far East

The South East Asia & Far East Area Conference will be held from the 20-24 September 2015. These dates may change.

USA

The USA Area Conference will be held from the 20-22 September 2015 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Africa East, West and Central

Africa East, West and Central Area Conference will be held from the 26th - 27th November 2015.

ACWW EVENTS

Women Walk the World

For the fourth year running we are pleased to announce our upcoming Women Walk the World event, which aims to promote ACWW and raise money. For more information please visit www.acww.org.uk

Tea Time with ACWW

To celebrate International Day of Rural Women on the 15th October 2015, ACWW is asking members to host their own tea party.

The aim is to raise money and awareness for this important day, which will help women less fortunate than ourselves.

FOR SALE

VAT REG. NO 240 0467 05.

All prices are exclusive of postage & packing.

- ACWW Promotional Pin 3/4 inch diameter - £1.00
 - Badges (Brooches) - £2.00
 - ACWW Greetings Cards - each 60p, £2 for four
- Overseas orders will be sent by surface or 'small packet' rate. (If remittance not sterling, please add sufficient to cover bank charges)

PUBLICITY MATERIAL

Items are available from Central Office.
Please state quantities required and date needed.

- ACWW Bookmarks
- Resolutions & Recommendations booklet
- Working with Women Worldwide – Highlights of 75 Years of ACWW £5
- ACWW 2010 Constitution £3
- Pen Friend Scheme form (via email)
- ACWW A3 & A4 Projects Posters
- All about ACWW leaflet
- ACWW Mini leaflet
- ACWW Projects & Funding leaflet
- ACWW UN leaflet
- You can make a difference leaflet
- Pennies for Friendship Promotional Cards
- Pennies for Friendship labels available at <http://www.acww.org.uk/members>

ADVERTISE YOUR ACCOMMODATION WITH US

Delegates, members and representatives all round the world are always on the look out for accommodation, especially in the lead up to conferences.

If you have a room to rent in your Bed and Breakfast (B&B), Hotel or Guest House, why not advertise it in THE COUNTRYWOMAN.

For more details please contact the Editor:
call +44(0) 20 7799 3875 email cm@acww.org.uk



LEAVE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

Bequests are incredibly valuable to the work ACWW does – not just for the women and communities who benefit from projects and the connections made globally through our work now – but to women and communities to come. Bequests enable ACWW to continue to deliver a broad vision of seeing generations of women empowered through the relief of poverty and sickness, the protection and preservation of health and the advancement of education.

You can be assured that your gift will make a genuine difference to our work.

To find out more about leaving a bequest please email tish.c@acww.org.uk to receive a Bequest Information Pack.



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS & DONATIONS

Please cut out this form (or photocopy if you don't want to cut your magazine) to make donations, join ACWW or renew individual memberships.

PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Return to: **ACWW, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB, UK**

Mrs/Miss/Ms Surname: _____ First name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Post/Zip Code & Country: _____

I enclose my cheque/credit/debit card payment for (amount): _____

(Cheques, in any convenient currency, should be made payable to ACWW. If paying in other than sterling, please add sufficient to cover bank charges. International Money Orders, or Bank Transfers are also accepted.)

PLEASE COMPLETE BELOW:

Amount

(1) New/Renewal of Individual Membership (Category IVb) at £20 p.a. Number of years: _____

Three years for £50 _____

(2) A gift membership at £20 p.a. for _____ years _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

(3) Donations – Pennies for Friendship _____

TOTAL _____

Please quote membership No. _____

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(There is a small charge for using this method of payment)

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