

THE COUNTRYWOMAN

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

ISSUE 2 - 2019

Welcome to the 2019-2022 Triennium
"OUR DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH"



MEET YOUR NEW BOARD

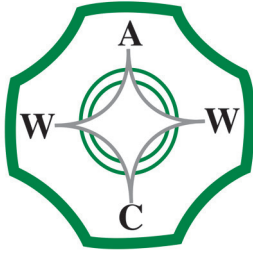
Reporting from the
Triennial World Conference

Projects Updates

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The Countrywoman Issue 2 - 2019

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The Countrywoman is the official quarterly magazine of ACWW, and was named by Mrs Alfred Watt MBE, the First President of ACWW in 1933.

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Please note that we welcome submissions for *The Countrywoman*, particularly from first time contributors or those in areas not recently featured. Due to ACWW's strategic advocacy policy, articles may be printed in the most appropriate issue, not necessarily the most immediate. We welcome contributions throughout the year.

The Editor's decision on acceptance and inclusion is final.

THE COUNTRYWOMAN

Welcome to the 2019-2022 Triennium!

3 DEAR MEMBERS...

A message from the new World President

4 CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

Updates from the Chief Executive Officer Tish Collins

4 EDITOR'S NOTE

Policy & Communications Manager Nick Newland

5 FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

New Treasurer Ruth Cargill introduces herself

6 MEET YOUR NEW BOARD

Your representatives leading ACWW for the next three years

8 29th TRIENNIAL WORLD CONFERENCE REPORT

We bring you all the excitement and photos from Melbourne

22 NEW POLICY RESOLUTIONS

The mandates for action passed by Voting Member Societies in April 2019

23 THE NEW HISTORY BOOK

Order your copy of this limited-run book today!

24 PROJECTS UPDATES

Progress Report for Project 1030- India

Final Report for Project 1024- Kenya

16 PROJECTS UPDATES

Progress Report for Project 1039- Tanzania

Back Cover: WE FUND TOTALS

A huge 'Thank You' for your contributions to ACWW's projects work



COVER IMAGE

A beautiful photograph of our newly elected Board of Trustees at the 29th Triennial World Conference in Melbourne, Australia. The shot was taken by ACWW's Projects Development Administrator Viktoria Dimitrova

MEMBERSHIP

As you are aware, all Society and Individual Memberships were due in January. Please ensure that you are fully paid-up in good time, and why not consider renewing now for next year? Just contact Central Office!

MAKING YOUR MAGAZINE SUSTAINABLE

We deliver *The Countrywoman* in an envelope rather than a plastic wrapper. This is because we use Forest Stewardship Council approved sustainable paper for both the magazine and its packaging. For every tree used in the production of this issue, three are planted in its place. This is part of ACWW's commitment to a healthier planet, and Sustainable Development Goal 12.



DEAR MEMBERS...

A message from World President Magdie de Kock



I am most grateful for this opportunity to represent our incredible organization as your World President. I am humbled because of the title that I am being honoured with, but more so because of the calibre of the people I am to represent. To have the privilege to serve this organization, comprised of volunteers that do such important work with so much dedication, is truly what makes this honour so meaningful to me.

Twenty-four years ago, I attended my first Triennial Conference in Christchurch in New Zealand as a very young leader of the South African delegation. I had no idea what to expect. At that first Conference I was overwhelmed by the wealth of knowledge and leadership that was available. Over the years it has had a profound effect on me as an ACWW member. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served as a member of a Specified Committee for 3 years, after which I was elected to serve on the Board of ACWW for another 6 years, the latter three of which included a seat on the Executive Committee with the adoption of the new Constitution.

When I look back today, I know I have been blessed to have had the exposure, and I know that none of it would have been possible without the opportunities and connections I have found through my involvement with this powerful organization. Most importantly, the experience I gained over nine years prepared me for this role.

Thomas Jefferson said:
"Far and above the best prize that life offers, is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

It is indeed a gift of life to do work that makes a difference. But because our work is important, and can have a major impact on people's lives, it comes with a great responsibility to make sure we get it right. That, I can assure you, is not the task of a single person. As an organisation, we will only be able to continue this through the work of many volunteers, and with help from a handful of dedicated employees. I want to take a moment to also recognise those who diligently work at grass roots level in our societies back home. I believe that Our

Strength is our Diversity, and this is why we have adopted this as our Triennial theme.

I am grateful for all that I have received from ACWW and I believe intensely in the importance of the work that we do. I want to serve our organization, with the support of the Board, to do what we can, to ensure these same opportunities are available now and for generations to come. Our goals this Triennium will be motivated by the desire to do all we can for the continued effective operation and viability of ACWW. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure there are opportunities – your responsibility is to actively pursue them.

We stand at the start of a new Triennium, with three years ahead of us to achieve the objectives our members have set out for us. At the Triennial World Conference in April, new policy resolutions were passed on Climate Change, Domestic Violence, Sanitation, Human Trafficking, and many other topics which reaffirm our existing commitment to empowering women in rural and non-urban communities.

We take the support expressed at the Conference in Plenary and Concurrent sessions as a mandate to improve, enhance, and expand our work with the United Nations. As we celebrate our 90th Year, and the seventy-second year of involvement with the UN, we look to securing the place of ACWW at the negotiating table. 2020 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Conference on Women and the Platform for Action, and we reaffirm our commitment to achieving the targets set out in this important document. When we meet again in Malaysia for our next Triennial Conference, we will be celebrating 75 years of our work within the UN system, and will have passed the first 5 year milestone of the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Board will take this imperative and ensure that it is properly honoured through action.

Our priorities for strategic planning will incorporate the resolutions passed in Melbourne, and include the feedback expressed by members. We will continue

our work of promoting this great Association, and indeed work harder to deploy new resources to reach even more women around the world. New methods are always coming online, which should be implemented as efficiently as possible to extend our reach whilst never forgetting that every voice, however isolated, should be heard.

In closing, I am only the next link in a long chain of dedicated women who have served as World Presidents of ACWW and I honour every former World President's legacy. While I hold this torch, I pledge to continue the important and valued work of those who came before me. I will represent the ACWW membership professionally, I will foster and encourage growth of our extraordinary organization and I will personally be of service to as many members as I am able.

I am extremely grateful to my back-up team back home – my children and my dear husband, Johan, who has always encouraged me to be involved in voluntary work and who always supports, guides and protects me in all aspects of my life.

Dear Members, thank you again for the faith you have placed in me, and for the privilege to serve as your World President. I will always welcome your thoughts, your suggestions and your opinions. I will do my best for you and for the legacy and future of ACWW.

We have celebrated 90 years of Opportunities, and I am pleased and proud to be moving forward with all of you, celebrating and championing Rural Women in Action.

Magdie

Magdie de Kock
ACWW World President

CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

Tish Collins, Chief Executive Officer

The 29th Triennial World Conference, the focus of much of our work for many months, is well covered in this magazine. On behalf of Central Office staff I would like to add congratulations to all members elected to the Board of Trustees and to those appointed to the six specified committees – we look forward to working with you over the next three years. Judging by comments on the Conference Facebook page, personal efforts to save up for the 30th Triennial World Conference (TWC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia are already underway! With this in mind, it would also be great to be able to support more women to attend their first TWC and donations to the Conference Support Fund will be much appreciated, and there is more information on the opposite page.

Our auditors, Wilkins Kennedy, worked alongside staff to get the audit completed in time for the Conference so that figures for the three years 2016, 2017 and 2018 were presented. The 2018 figures were provisional as we were still awaiting some final information and the usual Annual Report summary should be published in the next issue of The Countrywoman.

As was reported at the Melbourne Conference, our active advocacy role has been developing over the last six years and reflects the origins of ACWW. As part of maintaining our consultative status with various UN agencies we must fill in annual and quadrennial reports showing how the organisation is actively engaged, especially with the Sustainable Development Goals and, in short, justifying our continued status. I am pleased to say that when Sydney Salter filled in the quadrennial report form this year she had plenty of examples to call upon.

Feedback on the Women Empowered (WE) Fund approach to funding Projects has been overwhelmingly positive. This approach aims for sustainability as it approves grants for projects out of funds actually held. The Priority Focus Area pots have been building up and, as the timing of the TWC meant that there was not a Projects Committee meeting in March 2019, there will be a 2-day meeting for the new Committee in October to assess project applications and recommend distribution of grants.

Those of you who attended the TWC will have received a copy of the Triennial Report of Work in your beautiful indigenous-print conference bag. I hope you have found some time to read it as it is an impressive 92-page report of what ACWW collectively has worked on and achieved over the last three years. In addition to a statement from each Committee Chairman and each Area President there is a report on our advocacy, our projects, reports from 80 member societies, a list of all member societies and the conference attendees. It was decided to print extra copies so that we can send them to any member requesting a copy. The report certainly answers the question 'So, what does ACWW do then?'

It would be great to hear from even more of our member societies for the 2022 report. Please don't be shy! Giving your experience of engagement around one or more ACWW policies (resolutions), perhaps with impact assessments, or simply expressing the difficulties you face. Sharing with like-minded women around the world who may be inspired by you may also make you feel more supported.

There were many resolutions passed at the TWC, broadly grouped into constitutional, environmental, and health concerns. In the coming months the staff will be compiling and publishing information and action packs to help you in your activities and will also be asking for feedback to inform the process. A statement on the International Day of Families has already been published and circulated to all member societies via email.

Please don't forget to inform Central Office of any changes to your own or society contacts and, if you are an individual member, I do hope you have given consent for us to send the occasional newsletter. GDPR regulations mean that we may not email you without your formal consent so, if your friends and colleagues are in the loop and you are not, it may be that you haven't allowed us to send anything except membership reminder notices and this magazine.

Tish Collins
Chief Executive Officer

EDITOR'S NOTE

Well... what a few months it has been! As was my experience last time, it was an absolute pleasure to see and meet so many of you at the Triennial World Conference, and for anyone I rushed passed without saying 'hello', my apologies!

This magazine is heavily focused on the Conference as you might imagine. This is partly because we want to convey the proceedings, photographs, and outcomes, but also because it has been such a focus of the past three or four months at ACWW. Giving us our new policy mandates, letting us hear what the membership have to say in person, what they feel should be prioritised, and how we can make ACWW work better for our member societies, the Triennial World Conference is such a key part of our work.

I am grateful to all those who expressed their interest and appreciation for the magazine during the Conference, and over the past three years. I am also grateful to everyone in Melbourne who showed their enthusiasm and support for our wider media presence, and new things like the recently published History Book.

On a personal note, I am also grateful to my colleagues Viktoria Dimitrova and Sydney Salter for the fantastic photos that they took throughout the Conference, many of which can be seen in this issue. It was an absolute pleasure (though an exhausting experience) to work with them both, and our CEO Tish Collins, in Melbourne and to have such a rock solid team working on the Conference.

With the advent of the new Triennium, and the theme set by the Board- 'Our Strength is Our Diversity'- I would like to renew with fresh enthusiasm my call for Member Societies and Individual Members to keep us updated with your activities, action on ACWW policies (especially using the resources we are sending out), and how we can support you in your efforts to empower women and improve quality of life for women in rural communities worldwide.

As ever, please send your contributions to me directly by emailing nick@acww.org.uk

I hope you will enjoy this issue, and I look forward to writing soon with more updates from this new Triennium.

Nick Newland - Editor

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Ruth Cargill, Finance & Membership Committee Chairman

To those of you who attended the Triennial World Conference in Melbourne, it was great to meet many of you and I trust that you have gone home enthused and inspired about the work of ACWW. For those not from Australia, I hope you enjoyed your time “down under”, I may be a little biased, but I think Australia is a pretty great place!

A Triennial World Conference is such a mix of cultures and languages with an amazing display of colour, yet we have so much in common. It was amazing to hear about all the things that have been achieved in the past 3 years. Remember that since #WeAreACWW then you are all part of what has been achieved, whether you were at Conference or not.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Conference Sponsorship Fund – this enabled 13 women from 9 societies in 8 countries to register. Unfortunately, this was about half the sponsorship received to help members attend the Warwick conference. I encourage you or your society to consider contributing to this sponsorship fund to give even more members the opportunity to attend the 30th Triennial Conference in Malaysia in May 2022.

For those who were unable to make it to Melbourne: I’m Ruth, I live in New South Wales, Australia, I grew up on a grazing property and now live in a large regional centre. I have the absolute privilege of serving as your Honorary Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance and Membership Committee for the next 3 years.

As I said to the members in Melbourne, in charitable organisations like ACWW the finances are important, they enable us to do the work we do. The funds are usually raised through a lot of hard work by volunteers, so we have a duty to spend them responsibly. My role is to oversee this on your behalf, along with the Finance & Membership Committee and the Board. I also believe that the finances should be available and able to be understood by all members. If you have questions about ACWW finances, please ask me.

For now, let me ask you some questions. (I’ll answer this first one for you!):

Do you know where ACWW funds come from and what they are used for?

Empowering Funds: ACWW has been supporting projects for over 40 years. In the last 12 months, the introduction of the Women Empowered (WE) Fund has revolutionised the way the project funds have been raised and distributed.

Sponsorship: Donations to the Conference Sponsorship Fund, allow for registration and/or accommodation to be paid for members to attend a Triennial Conference. Sponsored delegates pay their own travel.

Enabling Funds: These are the funds that enable the Association to run, to pay Board, Committee, and office expenses. These come from Pennies for Friendship, Women Walk the World, investments, general donations and membership subscriptions.

Legacies or Bequests: Some members leave generous amounts to ACWW in their will. The terms of the bequest may dictate if these are directed towards Empowering or Enabling funds.

How do you contribute to the funds of ACWW?

Do you donate enabling funds, empowering funds or both?
Do you do it individually or do you leave it to your society to make a donation?
If you or your society only ever give empowering funds, what will you do to make sure you donate to the enabling funds as well this triennium?
Conversely, if you only give enabling funds, how can you also give empowering funds?

We currently have 428 member societies representing over 9 million women, there are only 1427 individual ACWW members. Are you an ACWW individual member? If not, why not? Individual membership is £25 per year about £18 covers the cost of printing and posting this magazine. This is a great resource for keeping up with what is happening, but also for giving to others to spread the word about what ACWW is doing. Too often people ask, “*What do I get for my membership?*”, consider joining, not for what you can get but what you can give.

If you are an individual member, who do you know that isn’t, who you could encourage to join as an individual member? Consider giving them a gift membership for the first year.

Do you know of other women’s organisations that should be members of ACWW? What are you doing to let them know about the work of ACWW and encouraging them to join?

At the conference the new membership fees were passed for the coming triennium, they will come into effect on 1 January 2020

Category 1	£110
Category 2	£69
Category 3	£55
Category 4	£37
Cat 5 (individual)	£27
Cat 5 for 3 years	£68

I want to encourage all members to consider if they can give more to the work of ACWW. In saying that, I know there are some of you who give what appear to be small amounts but compared to what you have, you are being incredibly generous.

To all of you who give to ACWW, thank you for your generosity and for the part you play in connecting and supporting women and communities.

I look forward to writing with an update in the next issue of the magazine.

Ruth

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS USING ONLINE BANKING

Account:
Associated Country Women of the World

Account Number:
01244108

Sort Code:
56-00-33

Bank:
NatWest Bank, 57 Victoria Street, London United Kingdom, SW1H 0HP

Branch:
Westminster

Swift Code:
NWB KGB 2L

IBAN:
GB67NWBK56003301244108

If you are sending a bank transfer, please use your name or membership number as a reference. Please don’t send cash in the post!

MEET YOUR NEW BOARD

ACWW's Board of Trustees for 2019-2022

The Board of Trustees are the elected representatives of the membership, and are responsible for keeping the organisation running and compliant with its legal duties. The Executive Committee consists of the World President, and the Chairmen of the six Specified Committees (Agriculture, Communications and Marketing, Finance and Membership, Projects, Triennial World Conference, and the United Nations). The Chairman of the Agriculture Committee also acts as the Deputy World President, the Chairman of Finance and Membership is also the Honorary Treasurer, and the Chairman of the Triennial World Conference Committee is also the Honorary Secretary. These Board members are elected by all the voting member societies who are represented at the Triennial World Conference either in person or by proxy voters.

The nine Area Presidents are elected by the voting member societies in their respective areas, and are responsible for maintaining, developing, and increasing the membership there. Together, the Board works to raise the profile of ACWW, ensure that members are properly represented, and strive to empower rural women and their families worldwide.

We are delighted to be introducing them to you here, and will be bringing you updates from each of them over the following issues.



World President
Magdie de Kock
South Africa



Deputy World President
Alison Burnett
Scotland



Treasurer
Ruth Cargill
Australia



Secretary
Christine Reaburn
Canada



**Communications & Marketing
Committee Chairman**
Sheila Needham
Canada



**Projects Committee
Chairman**
Maybel Moyo
Zimbabwe



**United Nations Committee
Chairman**
Marie Kenny
Canada



Area President
Canada
Linda Hoy
Canada

Sadly Irene Hinds was unable to attend the Triennial World Conference, and we don't have a full photograph of her.

We will of course update this as soon as possible.

Area President Caribbean,
Central & South America
Irene Hinds
Trinidad and Tobago



Area President Central and
South Asia
Sr. Lucas Arul Seeli
India



Area President East, West,
and Central Africa
Irene Chinje
Cameroon



Area President
Europe
Afrodita Roman
Romania



Area President
Southern Africa
Anphia Grobler
South Africa



Area President South East
Asia & the Far East
Dr Norjanah Razali
Sarawak



Area President
South Pacific
Gail Commens JP
Australia



Area President
United States of America
Bonnie Teeples
United States of America



29th TRIENNIAL WORLD CONFERENCE

We report from Melbourne as ACWW celebrated its 90th Year!

The end of a Triennium, the start of a new one, the opportunity to pass new policy, and the greatest social event of the three year cycle that governs ACWW. Any of these could describe the Triennial World Conference, and this year we marked the 90th Anniversary of the Associated Country Women of the World.

Over 7 days, around 700 women from across the world gathered together to celebrate all that unites them. The first day saw delegates, observers, guests, and partners travel to Melbourne and arrive at the stunning Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in the Docklands area of the city. A vast venue with bright, airy spaces, the MCEC was to be our home for the next week.

Registration ran smoothly, and huge thanks go to the wonderful team of volunteers from the Country Women's Association of Victoria who staffed the Registration desks all week. Their ceaseless smiles and hard work ensured a warm welcome and great start to the Conference.

Of course, before the Registration day, we had held two days of leadership training for all those candidates nominated for election as members of the Board of Trustees.

The first day of training included an opportunity for the 26 nominees to meet each other, the World President, and the four members of Central Office staff who were present, and then dive straight into sessions on ACWW's status as a Registered Charity and how the Board of Trustees functions.

After lunch, the nominees divided between those standing for Area President positions and those running for roles as members of the Executive Committee. The latter group went through a detailed briefing and 'Q&A' session with the World President and Chief Executive Officer, whilst the Area Presidents moved to another part of the MCEC and went through an ACWW Resolutions Workshop on Practical Policy with Viktoria Dimitrova, the Projects Development Administrator, Sydney Salter, UN & Agriculture Engagement Administrator and Nick Newland, Policy

and Communications Manager. Concluding the day was a session on ACWW's work with the United Nations and international advocacy.

The second day of Nominee workshops began with sessions on the WE Fund and Project Evaluation, followed by presentations and Q&As on Membership and Finances. After lunch, a similar split to the first day allowed the Area President nominees time with the World President and CEO, whilst the Executive took part in the exercises around Practical Policy. The final sessions of the day were on representing ACWW and the chance for everyone to ask any lingering questions they had.

All reports from the sessions indicate how positive and helpful they were, not just for nominees to ACWW positions, but to take back to each candidate's home societies. It was a fascinating and inspiring two days, with lots learned from each-other as everyone shared their experiences and backgrounds.



Photographs: Over the next few pages you will see many photographs from the Triennial World Conference. So as to be able to fit in as many photos as possible, we have not individually captioned them. This also reflects the spirit of the Conference, where it truly felt that everyone had come together as one group from all over the world.

The majority of photographs here were taken by ACWW's Projects Development Administrator Viktoria Dimitrova (seen below), with additional images taken by UN and Agriculture Engagement Administrator Sydney Salter (seen wearing a radio earpiece at the bottom of page 12). Sincerest thanks to both of them for documenting the conference whilst also working hard staffing it!





The night of the second day of training was spent transforming the foyer of the MCEC into a welcoming centre for our week in the venue. A large display featuring ACWW updates, a huge map with our global membership, information on projects, details of our advocacy work, and of course some photo opportunities, were erected in the middle of the foyer. This neatly divided the queueing area for Registration, the stations where food would be served, and the main hall itself. The foyer also saw craft stalls from CWA Victoria and some external stalls set up with local goods to sell.

Registration went well, meaning that everyone had all the information they needed before attending their Area Meetings on Thursday evening. There was already a warm and positive atmosphere in the venue as old friendships were reunited and new ones forged amongst our diverse and dedicated membership.

Friday began with the Opening Ceremony held in the Plenary Hall. This included the parading of the flags of all the countries where ACWW has members, and a traditional Aboriginal Welcome to Country. Junior members of the Country Women's Association of Victoria had the honour of carrying the flags, and were escorted by even younger members.

The Opening Ceremony also included greetings from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth Realms, Australian Prime Minister Hon. Scott Morrison, the Governor of Victoria, the Hon. Linda Dessau, the Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Daniel Andrews, and a series of other leaders from around the world. A note of welcome was given by Mrs Lyn Harris OAM, State President of CWA Victoria. The keynote speech was delivered by Mrs Melissa Fletcher of Fletcher International who enthralled the delegates

with her story of growing up in a poor rural community, and her continuing commitment to ensuring that people live better, more fulfilling lives. The Opening Ceremony concluded with a performance by young musicians from the Victorian State Schools Spectacular.

After lunch, everyone knuckled down to the business of the Conference, with Session 1 including the World President's Triennial Report, the report of the Treasurer, and information on voting procedures. As many of you will know, it was with regret that HRH Princess Azizah of Pahang, Malaysia had to withdraw her candidacy for World President due to a change in circumstances in her home country. It was therefore with great delight that members welcome Her Majesty Queen Azizah of Malaysia to the stage to introduce the 30th Triennial World Conference which will be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2022. After telling the members about what was planned, a stunning video left everyone ready to start saving for flights to Malaysia!

The Chief Executive Officer, Tish Collins, gave a Central Office Report to the

membership, bringing them to date with the changes over the past 3 years.

The final item on the agenda for the first day of the full Conference was the Election of the new Board of Trustees. Conducted upstairs, voting took a record 47 minutes for all delegates to collect their papers, go into the voting room, complete the process and leave the room!

Day 2 was a Saturday and our first Conference Session including the five Resolutions that related to the Constitution. There was lively debate, and you can see the full results of what passed and what didn't later in this article. The next session continued with the policy resolution on Dog Mediated Rabies, before seeing several Area Reports presented. Mrs Sheila Needham gave her report from the Canada Area, which was followed by the Caribbean, Central, and South America Area Report delivered by Mrs Dotsie Gordon. Mrs Thilaka Perera gave her report from the Central and South Asia Area, before we welcomed guest speaker Dr Andrea Britton to educate members on the scale of the modern threat of Dog Mediated Rabies. Concluding this session was the Agriculture Committee report from Deputy World President Mrs Margaret Yetman.

Saturday afternoon was a rather different affair, with our first three Concurrent Sessions. One offered an introduction to 'Bush Tucker', the traditional native food and sustenance of Aboriginal Australians. Hosted by the owner and chef of a local Aboriginal restaurant, it gave a fantastic opportunity for those visitors from around the world to learn more about the culture and practices of Australia's native people and their continued belief that living in harmony with their surroundings, and making the most positive choices, are so important. The second session was a talk on ACWW's work with the United Nations and its agencies, how we advocate



on behalf of our members, and posing questions on how we can better achieve this. The third session was an opportunity for members to sit down with the World President and Chief Executive Officer and ask anything they'd ever wanted to know about ACWW. This proved hugely popular, and very helpful with so many first-time attendees at the Conference.

On Sunday morning we gathered in the Plenary Hall for the Thanksgiving Ceremony, led by The Revd. Elizabeth Murray of St. John the Evangelist Church in Toorak, a suburb of Melbourne. The Ceremony included musical performances by the Conference Choir, conducted by Robyn Dean and accompanied by pianist Llewella Evans, and messages of hope from leaders of several faiths. Reverend Murray was joined by Mrs Tris Mardiatuty, Executive Member of the Islamic Council of Victoria, The Revd. Loni Vaitohi of Shepparton Uniting Church, and Mrs Diane Wright, Founder and President of Anam Cara House Colac. During the Ceremony there was also a presentation of the names of all those ACWW members who passed away in the 2016-2019 Triennium.

The fourth Conference Session opened with the Area Report from East, West, and Central Africa presented by Area President Irene Chinje. After this inspiring report which covered the unprecedented attendance levels of the recent Area Conference, World President Ruth Shanks AM presented a report of the European Area, on behalf of the late Area President Mrs Margaret McMillan who sadly passed away in 2018.

Three Resolutions relating to the environment were debated and voted upon, before we welcomed Sister Vijilli Dali, a familiar face to many long-term attendees of Triennial World Conferences, to the stage to give a guest presentation on Human Trafficking. The startling reality of the present situation globally reminded members of the importance of acting on ACWW policy resolutions in their own countries and communities and ensure that governments are held to account for their actions, or inaction.

After lunch the Conference once again split into three Concurrent Sessions. The first was hosted by local business Creswick Woollen Mills, whilst the second focused

on the Sustainable Development Goals and the personal journey into involvement in their success delivered by Warwick Shanks... who revealed at the end of the session that he is of course the son of World President Ruth Shanks! The third session was hosted by the Country Women's Kitchen, a fantastic programme run in Queensland, Australia, focused on sustainable use of food and nutrition.

On Sunday evening we welcomed delegates back to the Plenary Hall (stopping on their way in for some popcorn!) for an evening of entertainment from the South Pacific. The evening opened with a fashion show from Creswick Woollen Mills, highlighting their wares. After this, the World President introduced the new ACWW History Book and asked the author, Nick Newland, to come to the stage and talk about the conception, process, and publication of the book. Nick's presentation included two video messages from past World Presidents, Mrs May Kidd and Dr Ellen McLean. It was wonderful to hear from these past leaders of ACWW, and there was an emotional response from many delegates in the hall.





The evening concluded with a screening of 'She Shears', a film about competitive female sheep shearers in New Zealand. The film was supported in its production by member society Rural Women New Zealand, and we were pleased to be able to support the screening in Melbourne. The empowering message of the film came across to all viewers, and it was great to see the success of such competent women in a traditionally male-dominated sport. The film was introduced with a traditional Māori greeting by RWNZ National President Mrs Fiona Gower.

Monday morning took us straight back to 'work' with the resolution on Climate Change being hotly debated, before discussion moved onto the Textiles and Clothing, and then Domestic Violence resolutions. The latter involved lots of discussion around the use of the word 'domestic', as many felt that the broader definition of 'gender-based violence' was more helpful - but the proposers of the resolution and others pointed out the specific and critical circumstances of the domestic setting when dealing with the protection of survivors.

Southern Africa Area President Mrs Maybel Moyo delivered her Area Report, but only after having been welcomed to the stage by members of her Area singing a traditional song of safe travels. The next guest speaker was Mrs Sandi de Wolf AM who examined issues around Domestic Violence in Victoria, Australia. Concluding the session was the report of the Projects Committee, which was presented by committee members Mrs Edwina Marr, Mrs Hazel Armstrong, and Sr. Viji, as Chairman Anne Marit Hovstad was sadly unable to attend the Conference due to a family tragedy.

The next session opened with the Area Report of the South Pacific from Mrs Gail Commens, the Area President. The following report was given by Mrs Jo Ellen Almond as Area President for the United States of America.

Three healthcare-related resolutions were debated in this session, relating to Iron Deficiency, Gender-Sensitive Healthcare, and Health and Nutrition. Following these resolutions was guest speaker Kelly Nash, who gave a dramatic, funny, and engaging routine on how women can empower themselves through changed attitudes. High octane, and not for the faint hearted, there were squalls of laughter and not a few tears by the end of the session!

The final Conference Session for the day opened with the report of the Global Survey of the Living Conditions of Rural Women, jointly presented by World President Mrs Ruth Shanks and Policy and Communications Manager Nick Newland.

Following this, the Invitation to Host the 31st Triennial World Conference in 2025 was discussed by the World President. As no member society had yet offered to host the Conference, the World President referred members to the Constitution and Bye Laws which state that whilst as much notice as possible should be given, the Board of Trustees can accept offers to host. All members were invited to again consider their situations and whether they might host the Conference in 2025, and to contact Central Office should they wish to make an offer to do so.

Policy resolutions on Pollinator Protection, Q Fever, and Safe Toilet Facilities were then discussed. Three members of the United





Nations Committee, Mrs Chris Treweek, Mrs Pat Twiss, and Mrs Christine Reaburn, then presented the report of the Committee to the Conference.

The final item on the Conference agenda was the announcement of the results of the Election to the Board of Trustees. The results were announced by Mrs Sarah Cain, the independent Scrutineer who had overseen the voting process. A warm round of applause was offered to all those who had stood for positions, recognising their commitment to ACWW and thanking them for their contribution. You can read later in this issue the full results of the election and 'meet' the new ACWW Board of Trustees.

Monday ended with a party atmosphere at the Gala Dinner, with live music accompanying a fantastic meal. Dancing late into the night, delegates showed their moves and celebrated a great Conference. As you can see from the photos, much fun was had by all!



Tuesday's first session included the reports of the Communications & Marketing and Triennial Conference Committees, presented by Mrs Magdie de Kock, and then Mrs Henrietta Schoeman, Mrs Afrodita Roman, and Mrs Lynn MacLean respectively. The final business of the Conference was to thank all delegates and announce a few last pieces of 'housekeeping', before delegates took a longer break than normal.

Returning to the Plenary Hall after a delicious lunch, the official Closing Ceremony ended the Conference with due pomp and circumstance. After a message of welcome and thanks from the outgoing World President Mrs Ruth Shanks AM, the Hostess Society volunteer committee we welcomed to the front of the hall for a round of applause and thanks. The World President then delivered a final address, and asked the staff members present to come to the stage. Chief

Executive Officer Tish Collins, Projects Development Administrator Viktoria Dimitrova, UN and Agriculture Engagement Administrator Sydney Salter, and Policy and Communications Manager Nick Newland were warmly received by the membership, and thanked for their work during the Conference.

In turn, each of the retiring Board members were called to the front of the stage and thanked by the outgoing World President, before the new post-holder was called forward. The retiring member then pinned the Badge of Office onto the new member, and the members swapped seats: The new Board Member taking her seat on stage, with the retiring member sitting in the front row of the hall.

Mrs Magdie de Kock, as new World President, then came forward to deliver her acceptance and opening speech to start the new Triennium. She was met with

a rapturous and warm applause, and then took her place next to the outgoing World President. Mrs Shanks AM then stood to give her final address, and to declare the Conference officially closed. A standing ovation erupted and lasted several minutes, with misty eyes and cheers of thanks for Ruth in her final duty as World President.

As the new World President and outgoing World President left the stage together, followed by the newly-elected Board, volunteers from all corners of the earth came to the stage to parade out the flags of member nations, 'heading to Malaysia' for the next Conference. As they did so, traditional music from Malaysia played in the hall and moving lights in the colours of the Malaysian flag decorated the stage. The new Triennium was launched with a smile, a laugh, and a commitment to achieve even more than in the past three years!







AREA PHOTOS FROM MELBOURNE

Your delegates from around the world!



Canada

Resplendent in their distinctive and traditional red stoles, the Canadian delegates included the outgoing Deputy World President Margaret Yetman, and the newly elected Chairmen of the Communications and Marketing and United Nations Committees, as well as of course the new Area President, Linda Hoy.

Caribbean, Central and South America

The ladies (and gent!) from Trinidad and Tobago join outgoing Area President Dotsie Gordon and Donna Miller from the Jamaica Federation of Women.

We at Central Office are rather jealous of the snazzy jackets!



Central & South Asia

Outgoing Area President Thilaka Perera is joined by the newly elected Sr Seeli, along with other delegates from the Area in beautiful traditional outfits.



East, West, and Central Africa

Area President Irene Chinje stands with her delegates and proxy voters. We are always so pleased to see proxy voters sitting with the geographic areas they are voting for, and to see the bond of camaraderie that is established between delegates and proxies. This allows member societies unable to attend the Triennial World Conference to be represented, and many of the proxy voters spend lots of time during the conference communicating with the relevant societies to ensure they are kept up to date with proceedings.

Southern Africa

A much larger delegation from Southern Africa than were seen in Warwick in 2016, this group includes outgoing Area President, and new Projects Committee Chairman Maybel Moyo, new Area President Anphia Grobler, and new World President Magdie de Kock.

Europe

Delegates from the European societies gather with their new Area President Afrodita Roman and Deputy World President Alison Burnett. You may notice the delegates from Northern Ireland with their distinctive scarves!





South East Asia and the Far East

A colourful display from the ladies of South East Asia and the Far East, with new Area President Norjanah Razali wearing a pale green hijab in the centre. The ladies from Sarawak and Malaysia must have been competing to see who could get the most activity on social media about the Conference, as they were all Tweeting and Facebook-ing throughout, all for the good



United States of America

As has become tradition at Triennial World Conferences, the American delegates dress in the colours of their flag each day- easy to spot them across the hall at any point! Outgoing Area President Jo Ellen Almond and newly elected Bonnie Teeples are both pictured with their delegation.

Outgoing Board

The last official Board meeting of the 2016-2019 Triennium was held in Melbourne, with this photo taken just before the Closing Ceremony. Sadly, Anne Marit Hovstad and Maria Abdul Karim were not able to attend due to family matters.



South Pacific

The largest delegation at the Conference was, predictably, from the South Pacific Area. The volunteers of the Hostess Society, the Country Women's Association of Victoria, can be seen in their bright pink scarves! It was wonderful to have so many delegates from the Area, including many of the Pacific Islands, and of course New Zealand alongside delegates from all corners of Australia. In the photo is returning Area President Gail Commens, new Treasurer Ruth Cargill, and retiring World President Ruth Shanks AM, sat in the centre!



...and finally

A huge 'Thank You' to all the delegates, observers, guests, supporters, friends, and family who attended the 29th Triennial World Conference and contributed to the debates, competitions, fund-raisers, and celebrations of ACWW's 90th year, and of course all the volunteers who worked so hard throughout the week. We look forward to seeing you all in Malaysia!



RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE 29th TRIENNIAL WORLD CONFERENCE

The following Resolutions were considered by the Delegates at the Triennial World Conference and, having been debated, and voted upon by the Voting Member Societies, and achieved the requisite majorities, the following have been adopted or rejected. Those adopted are now active ACWW policy, and we will shortly be communicating resource packs as appropriate.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 1. | Subscriptions
Mover: ACWW Board of Trustees | ADOPTED |
| 2. | Chairman of the Agriculture Committee
Mover: ACWW Board of Trustees | ADOPTED |
| 3. | Role of the Deputy World President
Mover: ACWW Board of Trustees | REJECTED |
| 4. | Adoption of the New Constitution
Mover: ACWW Board of Trustees | ADOPTED |
| 5. | Adoption of Bye Laws, Standing Orders, and Rules of Procedure
Mover: ACWW Board of Trustees | ADOPTED |

POLICY RESOLUTIONS

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 6. | Registration of Old Landfills
Mover: Norges Kvinne Og Familieforbund, Norway | ADOPTED |
| 7. | Protection of Shared Marine Environment, Sustainable Coral Reefs, and Fish Stocks
Mover: Country Women's Association of Western Australia Inc, Australia | ADOPTED |
| 8. | Use of Plastics
Mover: Scottish Women's Institutes, Scotland | ADOPTED |
| 9. | Action on Climate Change
Mover: Wiltshire Federation of Women's Institutes, England and Wales | ADOPTED |
| 10. | Pollinator Protection
Mover: Country Women's Council, USA | ADOPTED |
| 11. | Textiles and Clothes
Mover: Südtiroler Bäuerinnenorganisation, Italy | ADOPTED |
| 12. | Domestic Violence
Mover: Norges Kvinne Og Familieforbund, Norway | ADOPTED |
| 13. | Iron Deficiency
Mover: Country Women's Council, USA | ADOPTED |
| 14. | Gender Sensitive Health Care (as amended)
Mover: Rural Women New Zealand, New Zealand | ADOPTED |
| 15. | Health and Nutrition for Women with Emphasis on Environmental Health
Mover: Lanka Mahila Samiti, Sri Lanka | ADOPTED |
| 16. | Elimination of Dog Mediated Rabies
Mover: Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc., Australia | ADOPTED |
| 17. | Q or Query Fever
Mover: Country Women's Association of New South Wales, Australia | ADOPTED |
| 18. | Safe and Secure Access to Toilet Facilities for All
Mover: Queensland Country Women's Association, Australia | ADOPTED |

90 YEARS OF OPPORTUNITIES

Celebrating the Associated Country Women of the World

We are delighted to announce that ACWW's latest history book, '90 Years of Opportunities' was launched at the Triennial World Conference in April 2019.

A substantial production, this book includes an overview of ACWW's 90 year history, as well as a particular focus and update covering the 15 years since the last history book was published. A combination of written history and visual reflection, we are delighted that the book includes interviews with Past World Presidents Lyndsay Mundy, Ellen McLean, Hilda Stewart, Ursula Goh and May Kidd, as well as immediate past World President Ruth Shanks AM.



If you would like to order the new ACWW History Book, please contact Central Office at info@acww.org.uk or call +44 (0)20 7799 3875.

Please let us know if you would like a copy signed by the author.

PROJECTS UPDATES

Progress Report from Project 1030 - INDIA

Society for Women Downtrodden Development (SWADD) *Income Generation for Rural Women and Girls by Establishing Provision of Hygienic and Low Cost Sanitary Napkins*

Due to the limited availability and high costs of commercial sanitary products, a large number of women and girls in rural India use old pieces of cloth to manage their menstruation. Furthermore, as a result of cultural taboos and limited access to water, they find it difficult to keep these homemade products hygienic. As such, they are at risk of being exposed to a wide range of urogenital infections, including fungal infections, Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI), and Urinary Tract Infections (UTI). In light of this, The Society for Women Downtrodden Development (SWADD) seeks to make sanitary pads both accessible and affordable for women and adolescent girls in Thiruvannamalai District through the manufacture of low-cost pads and training on hygienic menstrual practises.



SWADD has implemented the first phase of its project and has achieved the following:

- Selected and acquired a manufacturing site;
- Bought and assembled machinery;
- Sourced the raw materials needed for the sanitary pads production;
- Trained six local women, from impoverished backgrounds, to produce, promote and sell the low-cost sanitary towels;
- Commenced production of sanitary towels;



The sanitary pads produced by SWADD are 100% biodegradable and the group will sell them at 18 Indian Rupees (INR) or around 20 pence, per pack of 8. This will bring the price of a single sanitary pad down to 2.25 INR, whilst the commercial pads are sold at various prices between 3 and 9 INR per pad. The group reports that they are currently producing between 400 and 500 pads per day.

The project is progressing well and the group shared videos of their production activities with ACWW. Nonetheless, the organisation has experienced some minor challenges, including delays in the delivery of its machinery and, in turn, the training process. This has now been resolved and the production process is back on course. Additionally, administrative delays to the health and business certification of their product occurred and they are expecting to resolve them shortly.



The second phase of the project, which includes seminars on menstrual hygiene management and the sale of the produced sanitary towels, has partially commenced. SWADD started advertising and selling their products in 2018.

It is hoped that, in conjunction with hygiene awareness seminars, the project will help improve menstrual hygiene management in Thiruvannamalai District whilst providing a source of income for the trainees.



Final Report from Project 1024 - KENYA

Upendo Okatekok Women Group *Grassroots engagement for sustainable sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescent girls*

With this project, Upendo Okatekok Women Group (UOWG) hopes to reduce the rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease among girls and young women.

This is a huge challenge, which will require long term interventions from multiple stakeholders. Nevertheless, this project has already helped improve attitudes towards, and understanding of, sexual rights and reproductive health amongst a cross-section of society. For example, it has helped empower many girls and young women to seek advice and take control of their sexual and reproductive health. As one beneficiary explains, *“I can go to the health facility and get SRH services without fear due to the introduction of youth friendly centres and referral linkages with schools”*.

In order to achieve its overall aim, the UOWG undertook the following:

- Engaged 16 parents, community leaders, teachers, health workers, tribal elders, and civil society representatives as key stakeholders;
- Established Youth Clubs at 5 different Schools that focus on, and provide a safe space for, discussion of Sexual and Reproductive Health, which now have over 30 members respectively;
- Supported monthly youth to youth school clubs meetings through the distribution of health literacy materials and conducting talks;
- Provided training on sexual and reproductive health and rights to 150 peer educators and 5 club patrons;
- Developed, produced and disseminated educational material on sexual rights and reproductive health, including 500 brochures, 200 posters, 50 t-shirts, and 4 video presentations, to help raise awareness about issues affecting young girls and women;
- Established linkages and partnerships with community health facilities, which could enable young people in need to access treatment or advice;

As a result of its holistic and multi-level approach, this project has helped improve community attitudes towards female menstruation and general reproductive health – even amongst hard to reach groups such as men and boys.

One participant noted that *“with the many SRHR trainings for parents and children, my father now buys sanitary pads and sometimes sits and talks with me on issues of sexuality, unlike before when he did not share anything”*

- A.G.*; Pupil at Obekai primary School

* names are changed to protect the privacy of project participants

“ I am grateful to Upendo/ACWW for its training on parent-child communication for it has bridged the gap between parents and children. I did not have the confidence but now I sit down and have talks with my children about sexual and reproductive issues ”

Christine*; Parent at Okatekok Primary School

150
peer educators
trained in sexual
& reproductive
health

16
stakeholders engaged
including parents,
teachers, &
tribal elders

Given the widespread stigma attached to the issue, this project is crucial as it helps challenge deeply-held beliefs that have historically hindered women from seeking and accessing health services. In light of this, it is hoped that young women will be better equipped to deal with the broader range of gender issues that impinge on all aspects of their lives.



By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

Sustainable Development Goal 3, Target 3.7



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



Progress Report from Project 1039 - TANZANIA

Lifeline Counselling Centre & Gender Empowerment (LCC&GE) *Rice and Maize for a Better Tomorrow*

In a society where engaging in sex before marriage is seen as shameful, Tanzania continues to observe a dated law (introduced in 1961) banning pregnant girls from school. Since 2002 this law has been “updated” to also bar girls from re-entering schools once they have become mothers. This approach was expected to discourage adolescents from engaging in sexual activities, but despite its enforcement, Tanzania has seen an increase of adolescent pregnancies from 23% in 2010 to 27% in 2015.

Once pregnant, girls have no further chance to receive education and are forced to enter early marriages or low-skilled jobs. Project 1039 is being implemented in Shinyanga Region of Tanzania, where the teenage pregnancy rate is higher than average for the county, at 34%.

Lifeline Counselling Centre & Gender Empowerment focused their efforts on working with 49 young women who left school due to early pregnancies, and 50 grandparents caring for grandchildren but unable to provide for them. 20 members of the implementing organisation were also involved in maize milling training.

The Progress Report submitted by LCC&GE informs that:

- A one-day introductory workshop was organised for local leaders, NGO’s, and representatives of other women’s groups. 26 government officials attended and were encouraged to support women’s initiatives in the municipality of Shinyanga
- Due to the increased price of the maize milling and rice crushing machines, the group followed the advice of the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) and focused on purchasing and installing maize grinding and milling machine, leaving the rice crushing machine for a more advanced stage of the business development
- Electrical motors and supplies were purchased and installed in the workshop – the installation costs were higher than budgeted and LCC&GE funded the difference through local contributions
- 38 women beneficiaries were selected for business management training in book-keeping, customer care, and business expansion were the main focuses of the sessions
- A retail shop to sell maize flour and provide resources on good nutritional practices was established; at the time of the reporting, the group was waiting on the receipt of their official business registration and was operating with a temporary one as per the advice of the local authorities
- Internal monthly evaluation sessions took place as per the groups Monitoring and Evaluation plan.

Lifeline Counselling Centre & Gender Empowerment reports that the project has contributed to increased opportunities for small women-led businesses and has improved the supply of maize flour to match the demand for it in the Ndalla community, Shinyanga.



38
women trained in
business
management



1 NO POVERTY



2 ZERO HUNGER



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



TARGET 1-1



ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY

TARGET 2-1



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD

TARGET 4-3



EQUAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

TARGET 4-4



INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH RELEVANT SKILLS FOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS



Want to Support projects like this one?
Donate to the
WE Fund:
Income Generation and Livelihood



Case Study: Chausiku*

Chausiku is 24 years old and lives with her husband and four children (three daughters and a son) in Negezi, Shinyanga. Her family cultivated enough maize, sorghum, and paddy (rice still in the husk) for their needs and had little surplus to generate income. She was also involved in a small-scale cotton production initiative with the expectation that it would positively affect their household income, whilst her husband worked seasonally in construction. Despite all these efforts, Chausiku's family struggled to meet their day-to-day expenses, and even more so with unexpected medical or school-related ones.

Chausiku joined the Ndalla women group, aspiring to an improved standard of living for her family. She gained business and entrepreneurship skills by participating in several workshops organised by LCC&GE and currently works at the maize flour shop established as part of Project 1039. Having a stable job, she is in a better position to provide for her children's needs and as an unexpected benefit, the relationship with her husband improved as well due to the shared responsibility of household expenses.



Case Study: Neema*

Neema joined LCC&GE with small capital from her maize flour selling business. This project is particularly beneficial to her because she can now buy flour from the local milling workshop without having to spend money on travelling to a nearby town to purchase it. She shared that the flour produced in the workshop is of higher quality than the one from her previous supplier and she was particularly impressed with the good hygienic conditions during the production process. Her enthusiasm about the product's quality has led to an increased popularity of her service and she now sells 40 to 50 kilograms of maize flour per day, compared to 15 to 20 kilograms before the workshop was established.

The business training sessions also contributed to her success as she feels more confident in her marketing approach. Neema had to walk four kilometres every day to take part in the training sessions, but with her determination and support from LCC&GE, she was able to endure and complete the training. With the income from her business she can now provide for the basic needs of her household, whilst also setting aside emergency funds and savings to re-invest in her business.



* Names may have been changed to protect the identities of project beneficiaries



THANK YOU to everyone who has so generously contributed to the WE Fund since it was launched. In just over 1 year, you have donated the fantastic total of £96,671.79. This makes a huge difference, and we will bring you updates on new Projects next issue! Your investment in women's empowerment is critical, and hugely appreciated.

As of 14 May 2019,
the current WE

Fund pot totals are:

