



Zonta Club of Brisbane Inc.

Member of Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

Club No. 680, Area 1, District 22 – Charter Date 01.10.1971 – ABN 47 885 713610
GPO Box 1768, Brisbane Q 4001

Newsletter – APRIL 2009

President – Margaret Ferguson; 1st Vice-President – Julie Mannion; 2nd Vice-President – Jennifer West;
Corresponding Secretary – Ann Trezise; Minutes Secretary – Joan Moloney; Treasurer – Robyn Currell; Directors – Lea Greenaway, Melanie Ho,
Allison Tait, Cecily Tucker, Bronwyn Williams; Newsletter Editor – Judith A Anderson.

DATE CLAIMERS, REMINDERS, & EVENT INFORMATION

- ◆ **SAT., MARCH 28** **SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING** 9.00 am, Jen West's home, 10 Bunya Lake Court, Bunya. Phone: 3351 1892 or 0417 194 162
- ◆ **WED., APRIL 1** **CLUB MEETING** - 6.30 pm fellowship for 7.00 pm meeting and dinner, United Service Club, Wickham Terrace.
- ◆ **WED., APRIL 1** **PAST PRESIDENTS' COMMITTEE MEETING** 6.00 pm prior to the dinner meeting, in the lounge of the United Service Club, to discuss planning towards the Woman of Achievement award.
- ◆ **SAT., MAY 23** **BIRTHING KIT ASSEMBLY DAY** 8.30 am at Queensland Academy of Creative Industries (61 Musk Avenue, Kelvin Grove) in association with the Academy's Z Club.
- ◆ **SAT., JUNE 13** **RED, RITZY & RANGEMOOR** - a Zonta Club of Brisbane event in partnership with the Heart Foundation, at Margaret McMurdo's home, "Rangemoor".
- ◆ **JUNE 17 to 20** **THE MIRACLE WORKER** starring Caroline Heim. Brisbane Powerhouse. (*See full story below*)
- ◆ **FRI., JULY 3** **HIGH TEA and TOUR of OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE** Allison Tait has organised a second date for those who missed booking for the March 6 tour. Time: 10.00 am to 12 pm. See Lea Greenaway or Allison Tait to book your place.
- ◆ **TUES., JULY 14** **VIS-A-VIS with QUEENSLAND BALLET** – performance followed by supper with the dancers. (*See full story below*)
- ◆ **FRI., SEPT 25 to SUN, SEPT 27** **INAUGURAL DISTRICT 22 CONFERENCE** Rydges Southbank Townsville (23-29 Palmer St, South Townsville). More details closer to the event, but claim this date now!
- ◆ **THUR., OCT 1** **BABETTE STEPHENS THEATRE NIGHT** Opening night performance of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, directed by Michael Futch. The Loft (QUT, Kelvin Grove), 7.30 pm, followed by the presentation of the 2009 Babette Stephens Award to a second year acting student.
- ◆ **WED., NOV 4** **WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT PRESENTATION DINNER** This important biennial prize competition is organised by a committee of former Club Presidents. The presentation coincides with the November meeting and is an important occasion to invite friends, family, and prospective members. More details closer to the event.

The United Service Club has a strict deadline for finalising meal orders. As it is assumed you will be attending all meetings of the Club unless an apology is received, it is critical that you let Judy "Goodtime" Anderson know by *noon* on **Monday, March 30**, if you will *not* be attending the meeting. Judy must also be advised in advance of any guests. Telephone: 3357 6007(H) or 3391 8588(W); Email: judesanderson@hotmail.com; Fax: 3891 1029 (W). Any member from whom an apology is not received in time is automatically invoiced for the meal ordered for her.

MEMBER NEWS

In 1988, after 10 years' membership, **Susan Davies** left the Zonta Club of Brisbane, thinking the commitment was too great with her other activities. It was therefore with great pleasure that the Club welcomed her back into the Zonta fold at the March meeting and heard both Leneen Forde and Ann Shevill introduce our latest Zonta Wonder Woman before she was inducted by President Margaret. Ann had this to say about Susan:

Susan had been a specially good member of this Club, and her husband Terry was a valued Hon Zon - author of a very well received biography of famous Australian Aviator, Lores Bonny. They were both greatly missed. Since then, Susan has sold her communications business to Saatchi & Saatchi, had a baby, helped reform the Queensland bureaucracy as a post-Fitzgerald-era commissioner, lectured at uni, worked as a communicator, buried husband Terry, seen their son turn 21 in February this year, raised half a million for a Buddhist-run hospice service, met the Dalai Lama, traveled quite a bit, re-partnered with an old

teenage heartthrob, had cancer twice – and here she is! Thanks for coming back to our Zonta fold Susan. Please welcome another Zonta Wonder Woman.

Members at the March meeting were saddened to hear that **Susan Plant** has decided to resign. Susan's letter of resignation reads: *I have decided, after lengthy contemplation, to resign from Zonta. In recent months, our business activities have greatly increased and I also have heavy demands on my time currently supporting Gordon's elderly parents. I have greatly enjoyed being part of the club and hope to keep in touch with friends I have made in the last 3-4 years. Please pass on my best wishes to the Board and all members.*

President Margaret commented that, while Susan has not been a member for a long time, she had contributed many ideas, time, effort, enthusiasm, and especially personal service. She served on the Board and played a substantial role in making our *Joie de Vivre* function such a success in 2007. Her smiling presence will be missed.

Karen Brady has applied for and been granted Leave of Absence for six months to enable her to care for her husband, Ron, who is undergoing treatment for melanoma. Karen has kept us all updated with news of Ron's battle, and we wish her and Ron well at this difficult time for the whole Brady family. Karen hopes to return to the Club in September or October.

Some members of the Club will remember **Janet Irwin** who was a wonderful Club member some years ago. Leneen has passed on the following message: "Sadly, Janet has died in New Zealand. Sally and Jane were there at the time. There was a family funeral at the crematorium near Nelson where Bill, her son lives. Sally is organising a celebration of her life in Brisbane in the form of a picnic at UQ on Labour Day."

2009-2010 BUDGET

Treasurer Robyn Currell's carefully prepared Budget for 2009 was tabled at the March meeting and enthusiastically supported.

Robyn explained that the Club's Administration Fund has been steadily growing over recent years and what had previously been shown as the Administration Fund in monthly reports had only been the balances in the term deposits, ignoring the working account.

In line with requests from the Service Committee, the Board recommended that the Cassandra Weddell Fund and the Jean Rialland Fund be topped up using some of the extra monies in the Administration Fund, and that an Administration Fund Reserve of \$10,000 be established.

All interest earned each year is to be attributed to the Administration Fund through the year and allocated to the funds proportionately at the end of the year. This will assist members to see the balances increasing or decreasing on the monthly reports according to their income and expenditure.

As a result of the global economic downturn, the Board has given considerable thought to the extra burdens which will be placed on the community, and Club members will not be immune to these. Therefore, the Board recommended that the annual fees for 2009-2010 be set at \$150 and that dinner fees be set at their cost of \$37. Decisions on these matters will be made annually by the Club, dependent on the particular current circumstances.

Full details of the budget proposal are attached for the reference of members. Members are reminded that fees are now due.

COPING WITH TRAUMA

Our guest speaker at the March meeting was Dr Christian Heim who, apart from being husband to our Caroline, is a musician and composer, and a psychiatrist. At a time when so many people were suffering the aftermath of floods and fire, his exploration of the notion of trauma was both timely and fascinating. Dr Heim touched on a number of the current controversies in psychiatry, notably whether contemporary practice has medicalised something which is part of normal human experience. An increasing number of studies now demonstrate that post-traumatic counselling can actually delay or inhibit recovery rather than assist it, and that talking to a professional may actually prevent a person from talking to family and lead to imprinting of the traumatic memory.

Dr Heim also spoke of recent research which has demonstrated that, contrary to earlier findings, it is possible to manipulate memory and eradicate or reduce the intensity of the memory of traumatic events in the past through a combination of new drugs and old-fashioned 'talking therapy'.

Referring particularly to the fires in Victoria, Dr Heim stressed that the most important and helpful actions in dealing with this or a similar event are for victims to be assured that they are not alone, that they be supported in reconnecting with family and friends and in returning to the normal rituals of life as soon as possible, and that they be encouraged to talk to someone they know.

It appears that the most important personal characteristic in determining how an individual will react to a repeated, predictable trauma, or to an acute, one-off event, is resilience – and we certainly live in a country that fosters resilience in us all!

EXCITING LINE-UP OF FUTURE SPEAKERS

Through her work as an historian and her role as Director of the Brisbane Institute, our very own Emeritus Professor, Dr Kay Saunders, has an enormous web of contacts, and we're delighted that Kay has been able to engage three very interesting speakers for future meetings this year:

In April, **Jennifer Bartlett** from the Brisbane City Council will talk about the Eden Project, an environmental movement in Devon. (Kepp your ear to the ground for the Eden Project visitors who are coming out to Brisbane later this year).

In July, **Dr Nicholas Saunders** of the Diamantina Institute for medical research will talk about cancer research.

In August, **Dr Andrew Hindmoor**, a political scientist at UQ, will address the fascinating topic – The Economics of Happiness .

There will be no speaker for May as it is the AGM and the Induction of the new Board, and we will have our Women of Achievement presentation dinner in November and our annual Christmas celebration in December. However, there will still be a spot somewhere for Kay to tell us about her new book, and there will be speakers on service related topics, too.

FORMER BABBETTE STEPHENS AWARD WINNER IMPRESSES

Our club judges for the Babbette Stephens Memorial Award had their first glimpse of the candidates for the 2008 award in *The Cherry Orchard* on May 13 last year. The four girls in the then second year cohort (Jodie Behrendorff, Polita Cameron, Ellen Grimshaw and Lauren Orrell) went on to appear in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in October and, following the performance, Polita was announced as the winner of the 2008 Award.

On March 12 this year, there was a further opportunity to check on the further progress of the four young female actors when judges Dina Browne and Judith Anderson were guests of QUT's Creative Industries at the opening night performance of the third year production of *The Hypochondriac* (Moliere's famous 17th century classic, *Le Malade Imaginaire*). Polita gave a confident and accomplished performance in the key role of Toinette, the maid, and we wish her well as she begins the wearing process of constant auditions which will dominate her life once she enters the profession.

If you haven't yet done so, mark the award presentation evening in your diary to see this year's candidates in the second year production of *Cymbeline* on Thursday, October 1. (See details in date claimer above).

SUCCESS FOR PAST INDIGENOUS BURSARY WINNER

Jen West keeps in touch with former winners of our Indigenous bursary at The University of Queensland, and spoke of the journeys of these young women at our Area Meeting on March 22. Here's part of the message from Karina Maxwell (nee Hall) who received her Zonta bursary during the final year of her Social Work degree in 2006:

When I graduated in 2007, I competed against 1200 applicants to successfully gain a position within the Public Service Commission graduate policy officer program which consisted of 24 graduates. This unique program moves the graduates at four monthly intervals throughout the year to gather valuable knowledge and experience of working within Government. My first placement was within the Department of Child Safety where I was exposed to many very high level meetings and interactions, and gained a vast amount of knowledge and experience. My second placement was within the Service Delivery Performance Commission and then the Public Service Commission where I worked on the performance frameworks for the CEOs of the public service. My final placement was within the Department of Communities working with the Youth Justice and seniors area of policy. I found that all my experience working in these areas enabled me to gain a position in my current role as Acting Senior Business Performance Officer within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing area of the Department of Housing. I am enjoying this role immensely and am climbing the corporate ladder with the vast amount of experience I have gained over the past year.

On a personal note, my daughter has come along this journey with me and has now entered Grade 6 at school. I couldn't have achieved the things I have achieved without the support from the Zonta bursary and also from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit at the University of Queensland.

AREA WORKSHOP STIMULATES AND ENTERTAINS

The 'star turn' at the combined workshop for Areas 1 and 3 on March 22 was unquestionably Katherine Williams, the 2006 winner of our Indigenous bursary at The University of Queensland. Katherine received a standing ovation and prolonged applause for her moving account of her life and her determination to succeed against the odds.

Katherine was a splendid example of two key messages which emerged during an interesting and refreshing day of presentations and discussions – that the power of the ripple effect makes it possible to achieve change one person at a time, and that if you invest in a girl, she will do the rest.

98 Zontians attended the day from as far afield as Gympie, and it was very pleasing to see the Zonta Club of Brisbane so strongly represented with nine members present – Margaret Ferguson, Mary Magee, Julie Mannion, Rhyl Row, Ann Shevill, Cecily Tucker, Jennifer West and both Judith Andersons.

Members were also made a major contribution to the program for the day. Jen West gave an excellent presentation about the Indigenous bursaries and introduced Katherine Williams; Ann Shevill entertained the room with stories of the club's early days; and Judith Anderson was MC, linking the presentations to Area Director Vicki Williams' theme of *How to succeed in Zonta without really trying*, and keeping the day running smoothly and on time.

Our District Governor, Vicki Varthas, reported that District 22 now has 1221 members in 48 clubs, and urged members to consider attending the inaugural District Conference in Townsville in September. She also strongly advised that members book accommodation NOW because there is another major event in Townsville at that time.

Among the events to look forward to are: Zonta's 90th birthday on November 11 this year; next year's joint area workshop to be hosted at Maroochydore by the Maroochydore and Blackall Ranges clubs; and a possible District fundraiser for the Amelia Earhart fund around the October release of the movie *Amelia*.

According to *Variety* magazine, Richard Gere and Hilary Swank will star in this new Amelia Earhart biopic. "The movie will tell the story of how the aviation legend's famous trans-Atlantic flight came to be and will also chronicle her rocky relationship with her husband, publisher George Putnam (Gere). Earhart went missing over the Pacific Ocean in 1937 during a solo trans-global flight attempt and was declared dead in 1939. Mira Nair (*Monsoon Wedding*) is directing the biopic from a screenplay penned by Ron Bass (*Entrapment*)."

E-NEWS FROM OUR NEW HEADQUARTERS

Zonta International is now firmly ensconced in our new headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois. Oak Brook is 20 miles (c. 30 minutes) due west of down-town Chicago, along with several other 'oak' suburbs and communities (Oak Lawn, Oak Park, Oak Forest), but I'm sure they still catch the breeze off Lake Michigan on one of Chicago's legendary windy days. The great news is that new Communications Manager, Emily Yeager, has produced the first ZI e-newsletter. Access it by clicking on: [ZI Newsletter / Volume 1, Mar 2009](#)

SLATE ANNOUNCED FOR APRIL ELECTION

Nominating Committee Chair, Margaret McMurdo, announced the slate for the election of office-bearers for the 12 months commencing June 1. While nominations can be made from the floor at the April meeting, the Nominating Committee's role is to ensure that there is a candidate for each position and that there is an appropriate range of skills as well as a balance of experience and fresh input. The new Board will be installed at the May meeting and will take office from June 1.

President:	Margaret Ferguson (continuing)
1 st Vice President:	Julie Mannion (continuing)
2 nd Vice President:	Jennifer West (continuing)
Corresp. Secretary:	Allison Tait (continuing)
Minutes Secretary (Board):	Cecily Tucker (continuing)
Treasurer:	Judy S. Anderson (returning)
Directors:	Melanie Ho (continuing), Ailsa Gillies (returning), Pat Hall (new), Joan Gottardo (new), Lenore Guthrie (new), Barbara Kent (new)

The Club is particularly grateful to Joan Moloney who has volunteered to act as Minutes Secretary for Club meetings. Joan's other commitments mean she is not available on the last Wednesday of the month to attend Board meetings, and so cannot serve as a Board member, but she is happy to continue taking minutes at Club meetings, while Cecily Tucker keeps records of Board meetings. In presenting the slate, Margaret acknowledged the contribution of those who will be retiring from the Board: Treasurer – Robyn Currell, Corresponding Secretary – Ann Trezise, and Directors – Lea Greenaway and Bronwyn Williams.

At the April meeting, the Club will also elect the Nominating Committee for the next year. Former Presidents Iris Scott and Judith Anderson have offered to continue in this role, as has Tess Garrone, but Margaret McMurdo has indicated that she wishes to stand down. As with Board elections, other nominations can be received from the floor, but the size of the Nominating Committee is restricted to three.

TIME TO PULL ON THOSE POINTE SHOES!

Our annual fellowship night at Queensland Ballet will be held on Tuesday, July 14, at 7.30 pm at the Company's home in the Thomas Dixon Centre, cnr Drake St & Montague Rd, West End.

The relaxed format of the Company's informal *Vis-a-vis* performances enables members and their friends to see their State company at close quarters in performance, and our special Zonta evening provides the chance to get to know the dancers and Artistic Staff at supper after the performance. And as July 14 is Bastille Day, you can even say you celebrated it with a Frenchman – the Company's French Artistic Director, Francois Klaus!

The program always consists of excerpts from repertoire or works in progress, plus demonstrations of technique and new works by emerging choreographers, all in a very wide variety of styles.

A cash bar operates before the performance, at interval, and for the supper, and Aromas' mobile coffee van is also on site beforehand and at interval. There is parking in the grounds and surrounding streets, and public transport is possible via City Cat to West End or via the regular 'Buz' service, number 199, which runs between the Valley and the West End ferry. The Thomas Dixon Centre also has full disability access.

Tickets will be on sale from the April meeting – only 30 seats are available, so early bookings are essential. Any tickets unsold by the July 1 Club meeting will be returned to sale to the general public.

ENDING THE SILENT GENOCIDE IN THE CONGO

March 5 was a proud day for UNIFEM Australia as it marked the 20th annual Breakfast, but the guest speaker, Ms Lulu Mitshabu (Africa Program Coordinator for CARITAS) delivered a very sobering message about the impact of war on the women and girls in DRC, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The war in the Congo raged for five years from 1998 to 2003 and resulted in an estimated 5 million deaths, either directly or subsequently through poverty and the long-term effects of the conflict. The shattering statistic is that three quarters of these victims of war were women and children because sexual violence was deliberately used as a weapon of war (i.e. rape under orders including forced incest and sexual attacks on babies) in order to achieve political and military ends. The trauma was exacerbated by the threat of HIV, as 60% of the military personnel of DRC were infected. While the conflict has technically ended, brutal sexual violence remains endemic and 1200 people die each day in a country which should be among the richest in Africa. As Lulu said, it is now more dangerous to be a woman in DRC than to be a soldier on the front line.

Lulu urged us all to 'wipe the tears of the women of a nation in pain' by making ourselves fully aware of the horrendous situation and to take action. To find out what you can do, go to www.caritas.org.au/congo. This site also enables you to download the report: *Forsaken Voices: Desecration and Plunder in the DRC*.

As Ann Shevill told us at the March meeting, UNIFEM Australia was begun and was first incorporated in Brisbane, and the first

International Women's Day breakfast was organised here in 1990. Ann says: "It had its primary years in Brisbane; its secondary years in Sydney; its College years in Melbourne; and has now a Secretariat and paid staff in Canberra., and has always been supported by Zontians".

As a footnote, Avon has just given one million dollars to UNIFEM – and all 1200 of us at the breakfast on March 5 receive a fabulous Avon lipstick in our bag of goodies!

Our thanks to Iris Scott for once again organising the Club's tables at the breakfast.



(L to R) Allison Tait, Cecily Tucker, Ann Shevill, Lenore Guthrie, and Iris Scott at the UNIFEM breakfast

THE MIRACLE WORKER

Caroline Heim's not-for-profit theatre company, Crossbow Productions, will be staging six performances of *The Miracle Worker*, the inspiring story of Helen Keller, at the Brisbane Powerhouse from June 17 to 20, 2009, to raise awareness of people living with disabilities, particularly hearing loss. In his 1959 play, William Gibson recounts Helen's courageous fight to communicate with the world, aided by Annie Sullivan. It is a well known and loved story that ran for months on Broadway as a play and was made into a Hollywood film in 1962.

Members of the hearing and vision impaired communities and their carers will be given free tickets to attend performances. Mediated post-performance discussions will give those living with a disability the opportunity to share their untold stories, and will also be recorded.

The production will be signed, and Brisbane Powerhouse is providing hearing aids for the hearing impaired. The vision impaired in the audience will be invited onto the stage with their carers before each performance for a tactile tour of the set.

The project is already creating much interest in the hearing and vision impaired communities, and organisations such as Deaf Services Queensland, Access Arts, and Vision Australia are very enthusiastic about the project and about the reports, journal articles, conference papers, and radio interviews that will flow from it.

Crossbow Productions has registered the event with the Australian Cultural Fund so that tax deductible donations can be made.

VATICAN SAYS WASHING MACHINE BROUGHT RIGHTS TO WOMEN

I'm indebted to Ann Shevill for this gem:

Vatican City -- The washing machine has had a greater liberating role for women than the pill, the official Vatican daily said in an International Women's Day commentary. "The washing machine and the emancipation of women: put in the powder, close the lid and relax," said the headline on the article in *Osservatore Romano*. "In the 20th century, what contributed most to the emancipation of western women?" questioned the article. "The debate is still open. Some say it was the pill, others the liberalisation of abortion, or being able to work outside the home. Others go even further: the washing machine." The long eulogy to the washing machine -- for which the first rudimentary models appeared in the 18th century -- highlighted "the sublime mystique to being able to 'change the sheets on the beds twice a week instead of once'," quoting the words of late American feminist Betty Friedan. While the machines were at first unreliable, technology has developed so quickly that now there is "the image of the super woman, smiling, made up and radiant among the appliances of her house," wrote *Osservatore*.

ZONTA – THE BIG PICTURE

As we absorb ourselves in the day-to-day activities of our Club, it's sometimes easy to forget that we're part of an organisation that celebrates its 90 birthday on November 8 this year and which is unique in its focus on improving the status of women world-wide.

As International President, Beryl Sten, remarked in a letter to clubs late last year: "We can look back, with gratitude and pride, on a procession of women leaders who have brought us from our beginning in 1919, to our current achievements in service and advocacy that advance the status of women around the world."

Beryl's focus for her biennium is on internationalism: "International Service is the essence of Zonta. We must all recognise the great good our International Service provides to those women who are less fortunate than we are. During the Biennium of Internationalism we will feature International Service in our publications and our website, and we will encourage our clubs to fully understand and support our International Service Projects. We will also feature our international educational programs (Amelia Earhart, Jane Klausman and Young Women in Public Affairs) to highlight and emphasize our true international focus, as well as encourage and support young women of great promise".