



# NEWSLETTER

## JESSIE STREET NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBRARY

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### OUR SERIALS COLLECTION

People often ask the difference between journals, periodicals and serials. There is not really any difference although common usage often makes a distinction. 'Journal' is sometimes used to make a publication sound more formal or serious as in 'Ladies Home Journal'. A 'periodical' can be published at regular intervals or intermittently. However, both of these are serials, that is, they belong to a series and are published in instalments.

However, in this article we are definitely talking about serials—the Library's serial collection. Because Jessie Street National Women's Library is accommodated in Sydney, we are sensitive to the charge that we are Sydney-centric. With time, and funding, we hope to be able eventually to properly service members in all states and territories whether they live in remote areas or in cities and towns. Meanwhile, we do our best to draw attention to the breadth of resources we hold for all Australian women. To this end we will here highlight three serials that are published especially for women in rural, remote and regional areas.

In 1994, Marg Agnew, attended the inaugural International Women in Agriculture Conference in Melbourne. She returned home to Esperance in Western Australia determined to establish a newsletter that would provide a spirit of understanding for rural women and their families. She persuaded a group of local women to write contributions that reflected their feelings on everyday experiences and with these, 1200 newsletters were printed. The distribution

and acceptance of these was very successful and Marg's ambition widened to thinking of a statewide newsletter.

Politicians were asked to support the concept of a WA Network and newsletter. Committee meetings, phone calls, faxes, lobbying, budget meetings and negotiations continued until success arrived in the form of two-year funding from the Department of Commerce and Trade and Agriculture Western Australia. A WA Rural Women's Network Reference Group was formed with a full time Coordinator and Marg's vision became a reality. The first issue of the newsletter, 'Network News – For Rural Remote and Regional Women', came out in summer 1996-97. The aim was to provide a link and a voice for rural women, reflecting their achievements, issues, interests and personal and professional diversity.

The latest issue of this quarterly newsletter, Edition 48, is now in the Library. The cover features Esperance members of the Red Hat Society—a well-known 'dis-organisation' dedicated to having fun. The newsletter's title has now incorporated the three 'Rs' from rural, remote and regional and has become the 'RRR Network News'. The state government continues its support through the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. Circulation has risen to 8,500 and this latest issue features stories about older women: grandmothers, a Cocos Island nurse, the first woman to represent the

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### JSNWL FUNCTIONS

#### Lunch-Hour Talks

**Venue:** Seminar Room 2, Ultimo Community Centre, Bulwara Road, Ultimo

**Date and Time:** Third Thursday in the month from 12 noon to 1.30 pm

**Entry:** \$15 (JSNWL members) \$20 (non-members)

**To Book:** Phone (02) 9571 5359 or email [info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au](mailto:info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au)  
Light refreshments served

#### AUGUST—Thursday 20th

**Professor Jill Roe—*Miles Franklin, Jessie Street, and World War II***

Jill Roe, author of the recent biography of Miles Franklin, talks about Miles' interaction with Jessie Street and in particular about her response to war. Miles responded to the onset of war in 1939 with horror and disgust, but by mid-1940 her position had changed. She was alive to the resurgence of feminism. She attended Women's Charter conferences, contributed to the *Australian Women's Digest*, and celebrated Jessie's 1940 appointment to UNO. An unresolved issue for her was the impact of war on women.

#### SEPTEMBER—Monday 21st

**20th Anniversary Luncheon**

**Parliament House**

**Speaker: Adele Horin**

#### OCTOBER—Thursday 15th

**Dr Carolyn Lowry—*Doris Fitton, an Independent Woman***

Carolyn will lead us on a nostalgic stroll down memory lane celebrating the Independent—cradle, springboard and showcase for the stars—and Dame Doris Fitton, regarded in her time as the 'First Woman of Australian Theatre'. Carolyn, in her doctoral thesis has re-examined the contribution of Doris Fitton (the Independent's founder and artistic director) to Sydney's theatre life during the first half of the 20th century.

#### NOVEMBER—Thursday 19th

**Dr Jennifer Bryne—*The Road Less Travelled: Career Paths for Women in Science***

Jennifer speaks about her own career in science—what sparked her initial interest in science, the early influences which affected her choice to become a cancer researcher, and the subsequent challenges and rewards of combining scientific research with family life. Jennifer also discusses issues affecting career paths for women in science and, most importantly, what can now be done to ensure that these paths don't continue to be 'roads less travelled'.

### REMEMBERING PINE GAP

Jessie Street National Women's Library

invites you to an

**Exhibition of Photographs, Banners and Memorabilia**

from JSNWL Archives of the

**PINE GAP WOMEN'S PEACE CAMP, NOVEMBER 1983**

at

**The Fountain Court, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney**

**Tuesday, 1 September 2009, 5 for 5.30 pm**

**Exhibition to be opened by**

**Dr Shirley Fitzgerald**

RSVP by 21 August: Phone 9571 5359 or email: [info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au](mailto:info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au)

The Exhibition is open to the public weekdays from 1- 24 September.

## JESSIE STREET NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBRARY

The Library is open to the public  
Monday to Friday, 10 am to 3 pm

*Australia's national women's library is a specialist library with its focus on collecting and preserving the literary and cultural heritage of women from all ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.*

### Aims

- to heighten awareness of women's issues
- to preserve documents on women's lives and activities
- to support the field of women's history
- to highlight women's contribution to this country's development

### Borrowing Policy

The public may borrow items on interlibrary loan. A loan collection is available to financial members.

**Location:** Ultimo Community Centre  
523-525 Harris Street, Ultimo

### Public Transport Services

**Trains** Central Station or Town Hall Station

**Buses** No. 501 from Railway Square (Central Station) or from George Street (opp Town Hall Station)

## GETTING TO THE LIBRARY

**Location** We are situated in the Ultimo Community Centre on the corner of Harris Street and William Henry Street, directly opposite the new Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre.

**Entry** Main entrance is at 523-525 Harris Street (just beyond convenience store). Ring the bell for admittance. The Library is up a flight of stairs. The other entrance is in Bulwara Road. We are on the level, directly across the courtyard.

### How to Reach Us

#### By Bus from the city

Catch the No 501 bus in George Street opposite the Cathedral or at Railway Square near Central Station. It runs every 20 minutes and it's a 5 minute trip to the Library. The stop for the Library is opposite the Powerhouse Museum in Harris Street.

#### By Train

Get off at Central Station. To catch the bus at Railway Square, walk through the Devonshire Tunnel and up the escalator on the left.

#### By Foot from Central Station

From Railway Square, walk along Broadway, turn right into Harris Street and continue to William Henry (takes about 15-20 minutes). For a slightly shorter route, walk to the end of the Devonshire Tunnel, along the open space with the tram lines, down the lane beside the ABC building, left along Ultimo Road, and right into Harris Street.

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Country Party in the WA Parliament, a professional fisherwoman, the manager of the Port Hedland Well Women Centre, and others. One of the most moving stories is that of Doreen Green, a Kimberley Aboriginal woman who successfully campaigned to have the sale of full strength alcohol banned in Halls Creek. The next issue will focus on young women.

In such a large geographic area as Western Australia, technology is the key to connecting and co-ordinating women of the outback and so there is now an online Chat Room and Interactive Forum as well as the newsletter. See [www.rtr.wa.gov.au](http://www.rtr.wa.gov.au)

Our second serial is 'The Country Woman' – the official publication of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales. Most Australian women know of the CWA whether they live in a rural area or a city. This is a formidable Australia-wide organisation, with over 25,000 members in 15 branches around the country. The CWA began in 1922 in New South Wales and Queensland. The 1920s was a time when 'mateship' predominated and the needs of women were often overlooked, particularly in the bush. It was seen by many women, and some men, as imperative to organise an association to lobby for improved health, education and social services in rural areas, and to provide a social structure against the isolation experienced by many women living in the bush. The first annual conference of CWA (NSW) was held in Sydney in 1923; other states organised over the next years and in 1945 the state organisations came under the umbrella of the Country Women's Association of Australia.

The NSW newsletter began in 1938 and is published six times a year; it has an audited circulation of 11,000. As the oldest of these publications, and backed by such a large membership, it has been able to attract some impressive support. The Association Patron is Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales. The issue of October/November 2008 carries results of a membership survey about the newsletter; it reports a high level of satisfaction with the current format and information. There is an Ag & Environment Report, information about

handicraft competitions, news of various scholarships, grants and awards given by the CWA, advertisement for the CWA Disaster Relief Fund, a booking form for a National Field Day at Borenore and reports from the many State branches. Other reports come from CWA representatives on various state and federal bodies such as Farmsafe, National Rural Women's Coalition, National Rural Health Alliance, and the Rural Education Forum of Australia.

The Library's holdings of this important publication start from June 1996. We would appreciate any donations of earlier issues. For those interested in the CWA, the website is [www.cwaofnsw.org.au](http://www.cwaofnsw.org.au)

Our final serial is 'The Country Web'. Given the circulation of 'The Country Woman' it may seem surprising that there is a need for another similar newsletter. There is, however, quite a difference between the two. 'The Country Web' is a free newsletter published by the Rural Women's Network (RWN). At the time of the first issue in Autumn 1993, the RWN was a program based in NSW Agriculture at Orange to enhance opportunities for rural women. The major objective was—and still is—to provide a communication avenue for rural women enabling them to share ideas, issues, information and experiences. Today the newsletter is produced three times a year by the NSW Department of Primary Industries, with 13,000 copies circulated. Each issue deals with a particular theme: celebrations; youth; decision making and managing change; technology, finances and new directions; resilience and discovery; time out. Because of the government backing for this publication, there is a great deal of information about government grants, scholarships, training courses, policy advice, rural projects, etc. However, over 50% of the content comes from letters, articles, poems and photographs sent in by rural women.

This newsletter is full of lively stories and bush poetry that give the reader a real sense of life in the outback and rouse admiration for the women living in rural, remote and regional New South Wales. If interested in getting your own free copy, you can order on-line through the website: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn) or email to: [rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

*Jane Pollard, ex-Senior Librarian*

## Canberra Lunch-hour Talk

**Thursday 30 July 2009**

**Professor Marian Sawyer—*Snakes and Ladders: 25 Years of the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act***

Venue: ACT Legislative Assembly Reception Room (Civic Square)

Time: 12.15 for 12.30 start

Professor Sawyer is guest speaker in place of Libby Lloyd, the previously announced speaker who was unable to carry out this commitment.

## LIBRARY NEWS

### Grant Applications

#### Arts NSW

The Library, as a cultural and educational organisation, has put in an application to Arts NSW for funding. We are asking for an amount to enable the Library to employ two part-time professionals—an archivist and an administrator. Beverley Sodbinow, our previous archivist retired this year. The archivist appointed will continue with the training of archives volunteers and the preservation and maintenance of archival material to our present professional standards. The administrator will carry out general administration and supervise volunteer staff. The Library has reached the stage at which employment of professionals is crucial to its ongoing development and future viability.

#### Shopfront

Shopfront is associated with UTS and takes applications from organisations looking for a student or student group to carry out a project. This forms part of their course work. JSNWL has applied to Shopfront for a student to create a manual for updating the Library's website inhouse. If our application is successful, the student will carry out this work during the last university semester of the year.

#### Poster Collection

An initial group of 450 posters is now being digitised so we may put them up on the website. Our thanks go to Drew Sandford of UTS Printer Services for doing this job. A further number of posters will be digitised inhouse by Anita Matthews, a professional photographer who has volunteered her services.

The cataloguing of the poster collection will be the priority of one of our cataloguers, Aleit-Marei Woodward, while others will concentrate on the books and serials.

#### Books for Sale

Culling of the Loan Collection is continuing. The books removed from the collection, Australian and non-Australian publications, are in boxes at the Library for you to browse through. Many of the books are in excellent condition and may be purchased for token amounts. They cover a wide variety of topics. Have a look through next time you are in the Library and treat yourself to some good reading.

## ARCHIVES NEWS

### Pine Gap Exhibition

Much of my time is now devoted to preparing material for the 'Remembering Pine Gap' exhibition, which will be opening at Parliament House on Tuesday 1 September. The items from our archival collection to be exhibited have all now been selected. Leonie Olsen, a professional curator, has taken on the role of artistic adviser and designer of the exhibition. Bridget McKern and Jan Burnswoods have worked tirelessly at the preparation of the exhibition. This has included contacting numerous women who had been at the Peace Camp to involve as many participants as possible.

Bridget McKern, Jan Burnswoods, Leonie Olsen and I took some of the material to Parliament House to check that plans for the items worked on site. We took with us a 12.5 metre banner and discussed aspects of setting up with members of staff at Parliament House. We feel that the display will be most impressive.

#### Recent Donations

**Dr Alex Byrne**, who is University Librarian at UTS, has recently donated a collection of his mother's papers to the Library. His mother, Eva Byrne, was a social worker and a leader in the development of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW and its national counterpart. We are very pleased to have this important material in our archives.

**Dr Shirley Fitzgerald**, who was at the Pine Gap Peace Camp, has donated to our archives items of personal memorabilia from that event. Included among the material are earrings made of the barbed wire that enclosed the Pine Gap installation.

We have also received material from **Lizzie Landers**, a teacher who was sponsored by the Teachers Federation to attend the Peace Camp. She has donated an article of clothing worn there, as well as a barbed-wire necklace.

Items from these two donors will be on display at our 'Remembering Pine Gap' exhibition at Parliament House in September. (See page 1 for detailed information about the exhibition.)

*Beverley Sodbinow*



### DONATIONS OF MATERIAL

We thank the following people and organisations who have so generously donated material to the Library.

Alex Byrne  
Ross Duncan  
Shirley Fitzgerald  
Leonie Healey  
Shirley Jones  
Robyn Mathieson  
Verity Norman  
Ruth Woodward

Allen & Unwin  
Simon & Schuster  
Text Publishing Company  
University of Western Australia  
Womenspeak

### NOTES & QUOTES

Hundreds of incensed women demonstrated at a protest rally held in London when senior obstetricians from the Royal Free Hospital withdrew from their patients the right to choose whether or not to have their babies by active (or 'natural') methods.

Commented one consultant: 'These women want natural childbirth, natural food, natural yoghurt, natural everything and they don't want any medical intervention at all. But childbirth isn't natural—it's about as natural as death is.'  
*The Observer, April 1982*

Dr Roger Seymour, an Adelaide zoologist says 'A mammal doesn't need a good lung to be born — it's just passively squirted out into the world.'  
*From an article in SMH, 1987*

Baby: An alimentary canal with a loud voice at one end and no responsibility at the other.  
*Elizabeth Adamson*



### NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to all our new members

Cathryn Bauman  
Daphne Degotardi  
Robin A Duncan  
Helen Harrowell  
Wendy Jacobs  
Judith Nicholas  
Sally Northfield  
Anita Reynolds  
Judith Watts

**THE LIBRARY'S TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY RECEPTION**

On Wednesday, May 27 a reception was held in the Lord Mayor's Reception Room in Town Hall House to recognise the Library's 20 years. The celebration looked back over those years, but also looked forward with the launch of a Capital Investment Fund.

Given that the evening was cold and wet it was good to have over 60 people present to enjoy the excellent finger food and generous supply of drinks. The event was sponsored by City of Sydney Council and Councillor Tornai stood in for the Lord Mayor by hosting the evening. In her speech, Cr Tornai spoke of Jessie Street's long, productive life campaigning against discrimination, intolerance and lack of human rights—in spite of carping voices telling her such things couldn't, or even shouldn't, be attempted. She said it was fitting the Library was named in honour of her as the collection holds the records of women's struggles, stories and achievements—all those things Jessie was concerned with. She said the Council, with five women among its 10 councillors and a female Lord Mayor, was proud to support the Library. Cr. Tornai concluded her speech by launching the Capital Investment Fund which had already received initial donations totalling \$10,000. She wished the Library a flourishing future while paying tribute to the founding mothers, Shirley Jones and Lenore Coltheart, and to all the volunteers past and present. She expressed a belief that the fund would ensure the continued life of the library 'and its continuing work for women who, as we know, hold up half the sky!'

Rod Kirkman, MC, then introduced Jozefa Sobski, Chair of the Library's Board of Management. Jozefa spoke of the peripatetic first ten years of the Library from the Trades Hall to the Teachers Federation building to the NSW Writers' Centre, then, under the patronage of Council, to Town Hall House in 1999. Finally Council offered the present wonderful accommodation in Ultimo Community Centre. Jozefa pointed out that the Ultimo precinct is an artistic, media and educational hub that includes the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney Institute of TAFE, the ABC, and UTS with which the Library has an Memorandum of Understanding. She spoke briefly of the Library's collection as 'a specialist collection of books and materials which promote and preserve the cultural heritage of Australian women'. While recognising the changing role of libraries she declared that JSNWL was 'aiming to march with

the online trends, but preserve what cannot be 'webbed' and 'cyberspaced'. She said that contributions to the Capital Investment Fund would raise the Library's profile and enhance the capacity of its volunteers and Board to continue its important work. She concluded by thanking Cr Tornai, the Mayor and City of Sydney for hosting the event, and also thanked the staff of Ultimo Community Centre and all the Library's volunteers.

The MC then introduced Jane Pollard, who recently resigned as Senior Librarian but who had advocated the establishment of a Capital Investment Fund while serving on the Board. She was given the task of persuading those present to open their wallets and donate generously. She spoke of past struggles to get funding, including corporate sponsorship; the Library, she said, was concept-based and an incomparable resource of great wealth and benefit to all Australian women and must be protected. The Capital Investment Fund would provide it with an income to enable it to pay for its day-to-day operating costs and provide the continuity and efficiency necessary to its future.

Jane then asked guests to raise their glasses in a toast: 'To the Library – a long and healthy life.'



*Cr Tornai, who stood in for the Lord Mayor as host of the event.*



*Guests raising their glasses in a toast to the Library*

Photographs by David Jenkins

**COMPETITION AWARD LUNCHEON**

On Wednesday 17 June, Jessie Street National Women's Library and Inner Wheel District 51 held a luncheon at Canada Bay Club to announce the winners of the competition 'Weaving Women's Stories'. The function was attended by over 60 people, two of whom had travelled down from Queensland especially for it. There was an air of obvious anticipation as guests mingled and got to know one another before proceedings began.

Chris Kirby, Extension Chairman of District A51, opened proceedings with a short talk about the establishment, aims and work of Inner Wheel, and Shirley Jones then spoke about Jessie Street National Women's Library objectives. Everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet luncheon, after which guest speaker Libby Gleeson, gave a heart-warming talk on the importance in her own life of hearing stories from her mother and grandmother and the tremendous importance of women's story-telling. She finished by reading an excerpt from her recently published book *Mahtab's Story*.

A hush descended as the time came for the winners to be announced. It was unfortunate that the two prize winners were unable to be present to receive their prizes in person. The prizes were book tokens worth \$500 and \$200. The first prize was donated by the Canada Bay Club and the second by The Constant Reader bookshop.

- First Prize: Michelle Brock of Queanbeyan
- Second Prize: Amanda Hodder of Sydney

Shirley Jones read two short extracts from Michelle's story which told of her reactions, as a young girl and as a young woman to the death of a small brother. She then read a statement Michelle had written in lieu of being able to accept the prize in person.

The raffle was drawn at the end of the luncheon and the proceeds of just over \$400 went to the Library.



## MAY LUNCH-HOUR TALK

**SPEAKER: ANGELA BADGER**

*Charlotte Badger, Buccaneer*

*On Thursday, 21 May, Angela Badger, an English emigrant to Australia in the early 70s, entertained her audience with colourful episodes from her book about English transportee, Charlotte Badger (no relation). Angela encouraged us to record our own stories.*

Charlotte Badger was exceptional: our first successful female escapee, our first—possibly only—woman pirate, and the first white woman resident in New Zealand.

I came across Charlotte in a book about female pioneers, with a surname the same as mine. She was described as a harlot from the slums of London transported to NSW in 1801, who 'leered up at the judge from the dock of the Old Bailey'. I was disgusted: we Badgers aren't like that! So began my long journey to discover who she was. As it turned out, she was no relation of mine. But she was a survivor whose eventful life story cried out to be told. My book about her, *Charlotte Badger, Buccaneer*, is fiction, an imaginative realisation of her life using known facts and drawing on contemporary sources. I put it in the first person for dramatic impact.

Charlotte was convicted in 1797 at Assizes in Worcester of stealing four guineas to get her sister's warm winter dress out of pawn and help her starving family. She was one of a group of six women and six men in the dock on the day of the trial, their crimes ranging from theft of a loaf of bread to murder and rape. They all got the same sentence – seven years in New South Wales. In Australian history, women were either saints or sinners: Charlotte was neither, just a simple, illiterate country girl caught up in the drama of her times.

Soon after transportation to Sydney in 1801, Charlotte had a baby at the Female Factory, Parramatta. She became a devoted mother, unlike others who deserted their children: over 1800 orphans then roamed Sydney streets. She also formed a lasting friendship with another woman, Kitty.

In July 1806, Charlotte, her baby Anny, Kitty, and two male convicts, were sent on to Van Diemen's Land by the ship *Venus* under command of a tyrant, Captain Chace. Imagine how completely lost they felt, possibly never having seen a map, illiterate, and going to 'Demons' Land! I created a picture during the voyage of first mate on the *Venus*, Benjamin Kelly, an experienced American whaler from Nantucket, musing to the women: 'natives ... on islands seem fiercer than those ... [living] on mainlands ... Some are real savage ...

gobble you up as soon as look at you ... Fuegians down near the Horn ... in winter ... choose between eating their dogs or the old women .... they cooks up the old women.'

Kelly fell in love with Kitty. Infuriated, the captain had her and Charlotte flogged. Flogging women was most unusual. When a second flogging was ordered, Kelly and others refused. On arrival at Port Dalrymple in Van Diemen's Land in early August 1806, after Captain Chace and loyal members rowed ashore with their papers, Kelly and others hoisted sail and made off.

Tensions between the mutineers themselves brought about disaster. Kelly was an honourable seaman intent on saving Kitty, on finding an American ship and on returning to Nantucket. By contrast, second mate Joseph Redmonds, a pirate at heart, wanted a life of plunder.

A Proclamation of Piracy in the 'Sydney Gazette' 18 July 1806 described Kelly as: 'chief mate, 5 foot 7 inches, pock-marked, thin visage, brown hair, auburn whiskers, says he is an American'. Redmonds was 'seaman (second mate) a mulatto 5ft 6 inches, stout, broad nose, thick lips, hair tied. Holes in his ears, wears large earrings', the very picture of a genuine pirate as we all know.

Kelly set course for the Bay of Islands in New Zealand, sure they'd find an American whaler. The worst thing would be to fall into British hands but they found only British ships at the Bay of Islands. Kelly steered the *Venus* down the coast to a Maori village he knew of, and they settled in there. Imagine the horror Kelly and the others felt on waking one morning to find that Redmonds, becoming impatient, had sailed away in the *Venus* with his cronies. He now ran along the coast, plundering native settlements. He kidnapped two young girls and afterwards put them ashore in alien territory where they were killed and eaten. Soon every Maori clan turned on them, the *Venus* was captured and all were killed.

Alone in the Maori village were Kitty, Kelly, Charlotte with baby Anny, and a sick convict, Lancashire. Kelly, desperate to find a safe ship, made his way through the forest to the Bay of Islands but, captured by the British, was eventually taken to England and hanged. British sailors also caught Lancashire and took him to Sydney where he also was hanged. Kitty pleaded with the Maori chief for protection but made the mistake of clutching at his cloak. That was taboo. She was promptly killed.

Charlotte now on her own was under strict Maori guard. She managed to escape one night with Anny and make her way through the forest to the Bay. A native craft was pulled up on the shore, so under cover of darkness she clambered aboard and hid with Anny under some mats. She was lucky to find a Tongan craft. At this point in her story, I was in a quandary: letters to the (British) Colonial Office in 'Historical Records of New South Wales', say nothing about Tonga. What would it have been like for Charlotte?

I found a wonderful book in Sydney's Dixon Library: *Tongans* by William Mariner published 1817. William at 14 had been apprenticed to a pirate. Sailing south along the American coast, his pirate captain invited local dignitaries aboard, then held them to ransom. The ship rounded the Horn and continued across the Pacific. William, asleep when they arrived at Tonga, came up on deck to find the whole crew with heads bashed in. The Tongan chief took a liking to William who spent four years there. He described Tongan life in great detail. Tongans did not believe women should work and fed them before men; the main drawback was cannibalism. William, who was prevented from leaving, finally killed his guard and swam out to a whaling ship anchored offshore. I used William's account to paint Charlotte enjoying ten years of decent life in Tonga and her eventual escape, when she had to evade her kindly captors. Finding an American whaler, she reached San Francisco with daughter Anny. Beyond that I did not research.

Charlotte's story demonstrated how an ordinary woman managed to cope with transportation. Far from being a harlot, she was a determined mother and a most capable human being. Her story might well have been completely overlooked except that the sharing of surnames interested me.

In writing this book I have also taken the opportunity to preserve other stories. For instance, I've described ancient Aboriginal seal-catching, a practice called 'beguiling of the seals', and woven in some oral history imparted to me by a friend. A few years ago a New Zealand TV company, filming a historical documentary, were thrilled to read about Charlotte, saying New Zealand did not have many exciting women in its past.

There are many, many such stories still untold. I do urge you all to seek them out, especially oral accounts while they are still available, and to record them for posterity.

*Transcription by Helen Ruby  
Abbreviated version by Margot Simington*

## INTERACTIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

### **Diana Temple Memorial Lecture**

The first in the series of annual lectures to commemorate the life of Diana Temple will be held in the afternoon of Thursday 22 October in the Jubilee Room, Parliament House. The speaker is Professor Mary O'Kane, NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer.

If members and friends would like to receive an invitation to this event, please contact the Library on (02) 9571 5359, or email: [info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au](mailto:info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au)

Jessie Street National Women's Library is co-sponsor of this event, along with the University of Sydney, ANZAAS and WISENet (Women in Science Enquiry Network).

### **Chinese Women's Stories Project**

After the untimely death in 2008 of Henry Chan, the Chair of the Chinese Australian Historical Society, the project encouraging Chinese Australian women to write their memories of their lives was put on hold.

In order that their history is not forgotten by their families or the community, Jessie Street National Women's Library and the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia have agreed to revive this project and to make contact with women who wish to record what they have experienced.

Contact people are: Daphne Lowe Kelley, Michelle Cavanagh and Sybil Jack.

You can contact them by email on:

[lowekelley@bigpond.com](mailto:lowekelley@bigpond.com)

[michellecav@cia.com.au](mailto:michellecav@cia.com.au)

[sybil.jack@bigpond.com](mailto:sybil.jack@bigpond.com)

### **Talk to the Chinese Group at the Ultimo Community Centre**

On Tuesday 2 June, I had the pleasure of joining the members of a Chinese group at the Ultimo Community Centre to talk and show photographs from a trip I did via Argentina to Antarctica in November 2007. I travel with a friend, Pat Clark, who took the striking photos of Antarctica's wildlife and scenery. I was grateful to have the Centre's linguist, Jane Goldsmith, to translate my speech and answer the many, and sometimes strange, questions. There were queries about the photos that showed Pat and me, because of the glare, wearing sun glasses and a balaclava cap. Jane had to assure the audience that we were not bank robbers!

The Manager, Raphael Hung, said that the group were very happy with my talk and asked me to give another. I will join them later this year to talk about another trip Pat and I made together.

*Elizabeth Mooney, Volunteer*

### **The Google Book Settlement**

The Google Library Project is an ambitious endeavour to scan the materials in the extensive collections of several major university libraries, among them Oxford, Stanford and Harvard. This Project has been the subject of a major US class action lawsuit which has resulted in the Google Book Settlement.

Dr Alex Byrne, the UTS Librarian, gave Board members on 14 July an insight into the legal complexities, commercial and access opportunities offered by the Project as well as its impact on small specialist libraries. Over seven million books have already been digitised. The Settlement awards to Google only non-exclusive digitising rights to books published on or before 5 January, 2009.

Board members posed a number of questions, among them: Will the impact on small libraries be destructive? Will the internet become an instrument for privatising knowledge that belongs in the public sphere? Will those who use the Google digital library find their privacy invaded?

Dr Bryne on the whole is optimistic about the impact on a small niche library like JSNWL. He answered our first question, by suggesting that JSNWL could digitise personal papers in the archives collection. Such personal papers are not covered by the GBS. We could also possibly partner with other major international women's libraries to ensure good and early coverage of books by and about women. He stressed that copyright remains with copyright owners and that there will be no change to providing access to printed materials. The Project would create a considerable asset for Google which it might package and sell at some future date. 'The internet has vastly expanded access to information and knowledge, but we must guard against corporate hegemony' were Dr Byrne's parting comments. 'We must be continually vigilant!'

Members expressed their appreciation to Dr Byrne for his valuable insights and professional viewpoint.

*Jozefa Sobski, Chair of the Board*

### **PROMOTIONAL TALKS**

#### **Raising Awareness of the Library**

##### **Talk to Oaks Historical Society**

I was invited, by the Oaks Historical Society, to give a talk about Jessie Street National Women's Library, and on 1st June I duly turned up at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre, between Camden and Picton. Following the Society's monthly meeting, I spoke for about 30 minutes to an audience who showed keen interest in the Library's history, collection, and special projects.

I found not uncommon confusion about the Library's name: was Jessie Street a place or a person? I was a little surprised few knew of Jessie and her role as a lifelong supporter of women's rights and her fight against discrimination and for peace. Several of the women members were interested in the Tapestry project and in the work the Library has done so far with the Chinese and Vietnam communities. Some were interested in using JSNWL resources for their own research.

In open discussion after my talk, similarities between our two organisations were remarked upon, especially the need to find funding for digitisation and other projects. They considered our archives and poster collection made us as much a museum as a library and suggested we should be eligible to apply for project funding from Museums Australia. It is cross-fertilisation of ideas like this that make such occasions worth while.

The evening concluded at 9:30pm with a delicious supper and many expressions of good intentions to visit the Library and also to attend the Lunch-hour talks.

*Jane Pollard, ex-Senior Librarian*

#### **Talk to Avalon Ladies Probus Club**

In October 2008, I gave a talk on the JSNWL library collections to the Ryde Ladies Probus Club. This was very well received and, as a result, I was invited to talk to Avalon Ladies Probus Club on Tuesday 7 April, 2009. The talk took place after their monthly meeting, at which about 70 members were present. I took with me 30 copies of promotional material, which unfortunately weren't enough to meet the demand. However, photocopies were made and everyone who wanted the material had a copy.

I titled my talk 'Do Women Have a History?' emphasising the Library's book, archives, posters and serials collections as repositories of women's history, and talking about those little-known facets of women's history, of which almost nothing appears in school curricula. The talk stimulated a lot of questions, including ones on Jessie Street and her work. Many members afterwards thanked me for the talk and quite a number announced their intention of joining. Several women asked about donating material, some of which sounded very interesting.

As a result of the talk I have been invited to address the Narrabeen Book Club at a date to be arranged. The Club meets each month and has about 60 members.

*Shirley Jones, Public Relations Officer*

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We thank all those who have made generous financial contributions, usually when renewing subscriptions. These donations help pay for the day-to-day running costs of the Library.

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## MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL / DONATION FORM

I wish to:  join the Library  renew my membership  make a donation

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- Member \$50  Concession \$25 (pensioner/unwaged)  
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 I am willing to have my name published.  I wish to remain anonymous.

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### Become a Volunteer

- I would like to help the Library by becoming a volunteer  
(You will be contacted so that an interview can be arranged.)

The membership year runs from January to December.  
Members joining after 1st October are financial until December of the following year.

Please forward the completed form to:  
Jessie Street National Women's Library GPO Box 2656 Sydney NSW 2001

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