

The W P F Alert

Patron

The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO

February, 2015

Ambassador

Professor Jill White AM

WELCOME

Women's Plans Foundation is delighted to announce that Professor Jill White AM has agreed to be an Ambassador for WPF. This is a great honour for WPF, as Professor White is renowned for services to nursing, having built the Sydney Nursing School, University of Sydney, into a premier institution of excellence.



Professor Jill White AM was Dean of the Sydney Nursing School, University of Sydney, from January 2008 to January 2015. Previously she was Dean, Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Jill has been an inspiring entrepreneur for us, offering auction prizes of 'Tea and a Tour with the Dean' of the high tech lab at the Nursing School. Jill has enabled our annual WPF scholarship for a Nursing School student. Jill's insight, enthusiasm and encouragement are greatly valued by WPF.

Vale Joan Johnson

Joan Johnson was a founding Trustee in 2004 and Secretary from 2005 to 2007. Joan had a B.A., (Macquarie University, School of Behavioural Sciences, was past President, Australian Association of Lyceum Club., past President of the Sydney Lyceum Club. Her career included being Project Officer/Executive Officer of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services, Research Assistant, and Nursing Sister. Joan was wise, gracious and a kind friend.

The world's population is still doubling, currently every two to three generations. Climate change is evident. Women can make a key difference in managing fertility in the human family, breaking the poverty cycle and stabilising population growth. Where women have access to contraception,, countries develop.

KICKING MILLENNIUM GOALS?

2015 marks the close of the Millennium Development Goals and the launch of the new Sustainable Development Goals. In 2013 AusAID's media release read: "Australia commits to spending an additional AUD \$58 million over five years on family planning, doubling annual contributions to AUD \$53 million by 2016. This commitment will form a part of Australia's broader investments in maternal, reproductive and child health (at least AUD \$1.6 billion over five years to 2015). This commitment is subject to annual budget processes."

Due to 'budget processes', AusAID has been subsumed into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and \$11.3 billion has been cut from Australia's international aid this year. WPF's efforts are needed more than ever.

Overseas aid which builds the capacity of women is an enormously effective way of improving the stability and well-being of our neighbours in the Asia Pacific region. With access to family planning, women can develop full roles in contributing in our world.

INTO The Field with WPF Grants

CARE - Timor Leste

Save the Children - Laos

ChildFund - Vietnam, Myanmar

Marie Stopes International Australia - PNG, Cambodia

WPF Scholarships

University of Technology Sydney, Midwifery

University of Sydney, Sydney Nursing School

COMING EVENTS

Antiques HomeShow

Friday, March 20th, 5 to 8 p.m.

'The Retreat', Glebe

Host and Antiques expert John Williams

Bridge with a View

Thursday, April 16th, 10:30 to 3 p.m.

Social bridge, lunch & champagne

Harbourside home in Hunter's Hill

[invitations enclosed, for bookings see page 4]

TO HAVE OR HAVE NOT SYNERGIES BETWEEN MIDWIFERY AND FAMILY PLANNING

Midwives are at the epicentre of fertility, facilitating the best in births and understanding its tragedies. Midwives in rural areas can be the bearers of health education, as trusted people teaching it is possible to recover from one birth before the next pregnancy. This year WPF gave scholarships in the midwifery area of health in the hope of reaching many women with knowledge and access to contraceptives.



The National Council of Women's Australia Day Luncheon at Parliament House: NCW's Jane Baker at podium, WPF's Alice Oppen OAM, Awardee Georgi Shuemack, Speaker Nancy Serg OAM, University of Technology Sydney's Rosemarie Hogan, Course Coordinator.

The National Council of Women's Scholarship Awards for Australia Day went to fourteen young women meriting encouragement and support. Recognition by sponsoring organisations 'passes the baton' on to young women to energetically pursue education for the wider benefit.

Women's Plans Foundation's choice was Georgi Sheumack, a final year midwifery student at UTS. Georgi has been a volunteer in Indonesia, and writes that she "has become interested in the complex cultural and legal barriers that Indonesian women face in accessing and choosing family planning health services." She has seen the results of unintended pregnancies sometimes children who are put in orphanages because their parents cannot afford to care for them.

Women's Plans Foundation has continued its support of the School of Nursing, University of Sydney, awarding a scholarship to Annika Schryver for the second year of a Masters in Nursing. Annika spent four months as a volunteer in Rwanda, and writes, "Through my work at the clinic I was able to see the huge importance and value of sexual health education, awareness of and access to contraceptive options and access to family planning counseling. Access to these resources is not only critical in addressing poverty, but is imperative in the empowerment of women within the community. With a population of nearly 12 million people and one of the highest average annual population growth rates in the region, family planning education is absolutely critical to the success and sustainability of the Rwandan population and economy."

WPF salutes the applicants for scholarships, after reading insights such as these: "A poignant scene witnessed in Zimbabwe was one of a heavily pregnant mother walking with a young baby secured to her back in a sling and three other small unkempt children trailing long behind her. In many ways this was a beautiful image yet I wondered if the joy of having another baby for this mother would possibly be overshadowed by the likelihood of having limited resources to raise the child." [Gemma Mallin] Even sadder was the account of a student who had been a volunteer in Uganda: "I heard heartbreaking accounts of the orphanage owners finding babies in dumpsters, on the side of roads, and at their doorstep, due to the inability of the mothers to care for them. One mother in the wider community had starved her disabled child to death, in an effort to provide for her other nine children." [Matilda Downey]

We hear the wisdom and prescience of young women who want to work to benefit the generations into the future

AROUND THE WORLD...

The Pope amazed and impressed populations around the world on January 20th when he stated that Catholics need not breed like rabbits. From living in Argentina, Pope Francis understands the burden of poverty and early mortality that can come from successive close childbirths. Recognition of “responsible parenting” moves the Catholic Church into a new era.

In January the ABC reported: ‘Speaking to journalists on his flight back from the Philippines, the Pope said that he once asked a mother of seven children who was pregnant with her eighth if she wanted to “leave behind seven young orphans”. “She said, ‘I trust in God.’ But God gave us the means to be responsible” the Pope said. “Some think, and excuse the term, that to be good Catholics, they must be like rabbits.”

Opposition to contraception is still dogma, however. The Philippine Government last year passed a family planning law after a 15-year battle by the Church to block state-sanctioned contraception aimed at helping the poor. The Pope still opposes ‘artificial’ contraception, speaking of the “ideological colonisation of the developing world”.

Never should the right to contraceptives be dismissed as efforts of one culture to limit procreation by another. Breeding like rabbits can be applied to the human family reaching poverty on the globe, and no individual should be denied the opportunity to plan his and her family. Abstinence and the rhythm method have had many children, and the next step needed is acceptance that “the means” are here in modern methods of contraception. Responsible parenthood in loving relationships should be possible for all.

NGOs’ EFFORTS OVERSEAS

Treasurer Joe Hockey announced in December [Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook] a \$3.7 billion cut to Australia’s international aid program, on top of the \$7.6 billion in cuts announced in May’s budget, a total of \$11.3 billion of cuts announced this year.

CARE Australia CEO Dr Julia Newton-Howes AM said despite its many statements on the need for Australian aid to be predictable and consistent, the Government was continuing to use Australia’s aid program as a piggy bank to be raided.

“The government has repeatedly emphasised the need for Australia’s aid program to be more effective and well-planned. Continually raiding the aid budget to suit short-term needs is hardly effective, nor well-planned,” said Dr Newton-Howes. “This massive cut will mean a number of programs will likely be halted or severely reduced, mid-way through their delivery. It puts at risk much of the hard-won gains Australia has made in our region, and is, to put it simply, a completely ineffective way to deliver aid.”

Dr Newton-Howes said, “Australia’s growth and prosperity are inherently tied to the health and prosperity of our closest neighbours, of which 18 of 20 are developing countries. Today’s cuts demonstrate, despite Australia’s recent efforts at the G20, that the Government is looking to further isolate itself from like-minded nations, most of whom are increasing their aid budget, despite being in far tougher economic positions,” she said. “International aid is one of the most cost-effective investments in the security and stability of our

MSIA: CEO Recognised for Work on SRHR in Australia: Maria Deveson Crabbe, CEO of Marie Stopes International Australia (MSIA) was named the Victorian State winner in the Community and Government category at the 2014 Telstra Business Women’s Awards. She was recognized for her pioneering work in bringing mifepristone to Australia, improving access to safe abortion services for all Australian women. Her strategy of establishing a not-for-profit pharmaceutical entity (MS Health) to register mifepristone has been instrumental in raising Australia’s international standing in sexual and reproductive health care. [From Asia Pacific Alliance bulletin 19/12/14]

ChildFund: WPF is impressed to note that, in addition to the programs we support in Myanmar and Vietnam with child spacing and contraception options, ChildFund has introduced a Youth Reproductive Health Centre in Ethiopia.

Save the Children in Tamworth will host WPF Chair Alice Oppen at the March meeting to speak about WPF’s contribution in the holistic work of Save’s Primary Health Care Project in Luang Prabang and Savahoury



Guests in the evening on the verandah; hostess Pauline Markwell

Tribute to donors and sponsors for delicious dishes and Christmas Wishes (raffled):

Gold Wish voucher (\$400)– Otto Ristorante, Woolloomooloo
 Red Wish vouchers (\$200)– Apollo, Potts Point; Cho Cho San, Potts Point; Longrain, Surry Hills; Elizabeth Bay Cellars, Elizabeth Bay
 Green Wishes (\$150) – Fratelli Paradiso, Potts Point; Popolo, Rushcutters Bay; The Gazebo, Elizabeth Bay

Contributing to the evening: Elizabeth Bay Cellars; Phamish Vietnamese Café, Darlinghurst; KukThai, Woollahra; Alimentari, Paddington; Gipsy Espresso, Potts Point; Black Star Pastry, Newtown; Nina’s Chocolates, Gymea; Thomas Dux, Paddington.
 Special thanks to hostess Pauline Markwell, speaker Dr Angeline Low, creators Anni MacDougall, Juju Kalek, Ros Espie and our many other contributors to a very international Celebration through Food.

The **CHRISTMAS Celebration through Food** was enjoyed on December 4th by a full house, with appreciation of morsels from many cultures and countries.

For events in March and April, see invitations enclosed. Use the form below or book online, www.womensplans.org

Donations build the Trust Fund, enabling recurring grants for continuing programs. Grants are made to Australian-registered international NGOs for the inclusion of family planning in their program delivery structure. Your donation will make an increasing difference for future generations.

**Donations form: post to WPF, 3 Madeline St., Hunter’s Hill, NSW 2110, tel. (02) 9817-5175
 womensplans.org with PayPal facility
 A tax receipt will be posted**

Donation (a tax deductible receipt will be sent): \$ _____
 Event: Antiques HomeShow: Number of tickets _____ @ \$100 ea Subtotal: _____
 Bridge with a View: Number of tickets _____ @ \$50 ea Subtotal: _____

Name(s): _____ Total: _____

Address: _____

Telephone & email: _____

Card: Expiry: /

Mastercard / Visa Name as on Card: _____

Signature: _____

Patron: The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO

Trustees: Carolyn Blanden, Joanne Epp PhD, Dr. Eleanor Freedman, Alice Oppen OAM, Helen Sheffer.
 Events Committee: Miranda Baker, Linda Cameron, Jenny Hall, Marjorie James OAM, Jeannette Kalek, Anni MacDougall, Margaret Milne, Alice Oppen OAM, Trish Procter, Helen Sheffer.
 Development Consultant: Pauline Markwell. Pro Bono: Siobhan Sellick of Prosperity Advisers Pty. Ltd. provides accounting services; Stuart Cameron of UBS assists with investment for the Trust Fund; Baker & McKenzie are our Pro Bono legal adviser; Nina Krstic for CBA; Julian, Felix and Kate Oppen contribute design and website; Bel Smith provides administrative support.

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