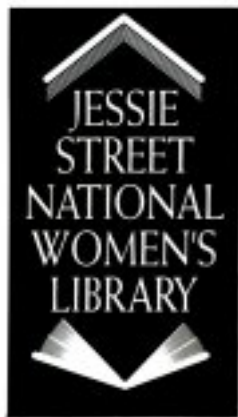


NEWSLETTER

JESSIE STREET NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBRARY



Vol 17 No. 3
July 2006

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Ultimo Community Centre
523-525 Harris Street, Ultimo

Email info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au
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INTERESTING DONATIONS TO OUR ARCHIVES AND BOOK COLLECTION

Do You Recognise This Person?

This photograph appeared on the front page of the *Milwaukee Daily News* on Monday February 3, 1913. Underneath is written:



Mrs Patricia M Street, of Sydney, Australia, internationally known suffragist, is now in America. She plans on taking an active part in the suffrage movement while in the US, and

will head the Australian contingent in the great suffrage parade in Washington on March 3. Mrs Street is the daughter of Sir Paul Eliot, former chief justice of the Australian supreme court.

This is somewhat of a puzzle. What has happened? Write to us or email your suggestions and we will print them in our next newsletter.

A copy of this newspaper was given us by Chase Livingston, a member from San Francisco, who came to the Library during a brief visit to Sydney in late May. She has donated several items to the Library, most of which she gets from online auctions and some through dealers. Chase says, 'I have been keeping my eye out for anything related to Jessie Street, Australian women's history, the suffrage movement there and international women's happenings.' She finds Australian items are rarely offered in America so do not attract high prices.

While she was here, Chase passed over several other donations. One was a copy of a letter, headed 'Shire of Echuca' and dated Nov 4th, 1896, from a worried Shire Secretary to the Mayor of Northcote. Apparently the municipalities had had wind of a proposed amendment to the constitution which would allow women to vote and were holding a Conference of Municipalities to try and circumvent this move. The letter ends '... unless steps are taken to modify the contemplated action of the Legislative, serious consequences may ensue.' How right he was!

We were also delighted to be given a small number of items by Joan Dwyer when she attended the BPW unveiling ceremony of the restored and framed illuminated addresses which commemorate Val Buswell. Most of the items were early BPW publications now almost unobtainable. Of great interest was a book, *Women in Australian Parliaments* by A.V. Smith, which lists all the women who have sat in Federal and State parliaments from the time women entered parliament. This is a valuable addition to our research collection.

The illuminated addresses commemorating Val Buswell are also rare items. These were donated by Violet Patrick's son after her death. Had he not recognised their importance, and had a specialist women's library not been here to accept and restore them, these beautiful items might well have ended up on the scrap heap.

Our archives and research collections are the richer for these donations. Please contact us if you have material you think would be of value to the Library.

JSNWL FUNCTIONS Lunch-Hour Talks

Venue: The Lady Mayoress' Rooms, Sydney Town Hall, George Street.

Date and Time: Third Thursday in the month from 12 noon to 1:30 pm.

Entry: \$15 (members) \$20 (non members),

Sandwich lunch included. For catering purposes, please let us know you are coming.

To Book: Phone (02) 9265 9486 or email info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au

August – Thursday 17th

Rosemary Block – 'If Only I had asked Auntie Esther': Oral History and the Family

Rosemary Block arrived in Sydney from South Africa in 1978 and in 1983 joined the State Library of New South Wales. In 1991 she became the inaugural curator of the Library's oral history program. In her talk Rosemary stresses the importance of recording your family's stories before it is too late, gives us insights into the process and cites examples from her experiences.

NOTE: There is no Lunch-hour Talk in September. Join us instead at the Annual Fundraising Luncheon at Parliament House on Monday, 18 September.

October – Thursday 19th

Caroline Thompson – Music for the Dance Theatre

Caroline is a composer and performer and is teaching music, as well as playing and composing for numerous dance performances. She talks about the processes of composition. Sometimes the choreographer demonstrates the dance and Caroline composes; sometimes it's the other way round. She demonstrates these processes on CD.

November – Thursday 16th

Pam Scott – My Midlife Crisis in Hanoi

Pam Scott lived and worked in Vietnam from 1994 to 2002 and again from 2003 to 2005, and has written about her experiences in *Hanoi Stories* and *Life In Hanoi*. Pam talks about the delights and frustrations of living and working in a communist country and the essential survival skills she learned there, such as how to ride side-saddle on the back of a motorbike wearing a straight skirt and high heels while carrying a wreath to a funeral.

Join Us at the
ANNUAL FUNDRAISING LUNCHEON
MONDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER

GUEST SPEAKER: HELEN REDDY

Booking Form Enclosed.

We would advise booking early. Seats are filling fast.

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)

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Deputy Lord Mayor, Cr Verity Firth on the birth of her first child, a girl, born on Saturday 1 July 2006.



EMAIL MALFUNCTION

We apologise to all those who tried recently to email us and found that messages didn't go through. It was some time before we were alerted to the problem, which was caused by our hosting company in the US going out of business. After a lot of time-consuming detective work and help from Council IT staff, we were able to rectify the problem. Our email system is operating again and emails sent to info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au are once more being received.

OUR RAFFLE PRIZES

We are offering four exciting prizes in this year's raffle which will be drawn at the Annual Fundraising Luncheon at Parliament House on Monday 18 September.

First Prize is a framed oil painting by Max Mannix valued at \$1100 and donated by the artist.

Second Prize is an oil collagraph on paper, entitled *Little Red Riding Hood*, valued at \$300 and donated by the artist, Jasmin Forbes-Watson.

Third Prize is a dozen mixed wines from Dindima winery, valued at \$240 and donated by the Bell family.

Fourth Prize is book tokens valued at \$200 and redeemable at any Angus & Robertson bookstore in Australia

Tickets are \$5 each and can be obtained in books of five. Send for your tickets now. Phone the Library on (02) 9265 9486 or email info@nationalwomenslibrary.org.au Or book for the luncheon and buy your tickets on the day.

The Donors

Max Mannix is a self-taught artist, working in oils, acrylics, etchings, and pen and inks. He has spent 20 years in the outback and his experiences have provided him with an endless flow of inspiration. He has held many successful exhibitions in Australia and the USA.

Look at his website www.ozemail.com.au/~mannix9

Jasmin Forbes-Watson

Jasmin Forbes-Watson studied Fine Arts at Sydney University. She is a self-taught painter who takes as her subject matter, romance, fairytales, mythologies and the female in nature. Her preferred mediums are monoprint, collagraph, drypoint and etching and she prints with a mixture of oil paint and printmaking inks. Jasmin is a member of Warringah Printmakers Studio.

The Bell Family

The Bell family winery, 'Dindima' offers elegant French-style wines, made from grapes grown, handpicked and processed on the property. 'Dindima' in the language of the Wiradjuri people means 'group of stars' and the group chosen by the Bell family to represent their winery is the Southern Cross. This boutique winery is located 10 km west of Orange on the Cargo Road. Visit the cellar door where you will find Semillon and Chardonnay in the whites, and in the reds, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, and a Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot blend, as well as a unique fortified Muscat.

You can contact Dindima by email dindima@bigpond.com or by phone (02) 6363 3388 or fax (02) 6365 3096, or for more information look them up on www.dindima.com.au

JOIN THE JSNWL GROUP

at the Performance of

DEBBIE REYNOLDS LIVE

Thursday 10th August at the Opera House Concert Hall

and meet DEBBIE LIVE after the Performance!

Seats in the A Reserve at the discounted price of \$75

To book through JSNWL, ring Narrowcasters on (02) 9327 8897

Payment by cheque or Bankcard, Mastercard or Visa

NOTES & QUOTES

The more work I do in connection with Feminism the more I am convinced that it is only by organising women that we will get anything done. The vote is respected much more than justice and liberty.

From a letter of Jessie Street to Bessie Rischbieth, dated 10th July, 1934

CONGRATULATIONS! SHIRLEY JONES, OAM

Monday, 12 June, 2006. There was an excited flurry of emails and phone calls this day as members and friends of the Library opened their Sydney Morning Herald over breakfast. Word spread quickly that Shirley Grace Jones had been awarded an Order of Australia Medal for "service to the community through the establishment of and continued support for Jessie Street National Women's Library".

The following day, some members of the Library Board of Management joined volunteers in the Library and, raising glasses of champagne, congratulated Shirley for the recognition and honour represented by this award.



And the congratulations continued with letters, phone calls, flowers, etc. On Sunday, 2 July, a lunch was held at the home of Pauline O'Connor, Secretary to the Board, which both Board members and volunteers attended. Apart from the guest of honour, those present included Olive Briscoe, Christine Lees, Robyn Harriott, Pauline O'Connor, Jane Pollard, Elizabeth Mooney, Alison Storey, Clodagh Harrison, Lyn Eggins, Marie Cavanagh, Clare Daly and Roslyn Leal.

Roslyn Leal is a dedicated volunteer worker for the Library and was responsible for organising Shirley's nomination for this award. As far back as May 2005 she began contacting people to find referees for the nomination. She obviously asked the right people and the nomination went forward later that year. The referees all knew Shirley well and had worked with her for some years and knew the strength of her commitment to Library. For those unfamiliar with the story of the Library's foundation and Shirley's part in its ongoing success, the tale bears repeating.

In 1989 while attending a Continuing Education Course at Sydney University, Shirley discussed with the tutor, Lenore Colheart, the difficulty of finding resources about the lives of Australian women. The idea was born of establishing a National Women's Library, such as already existed in the UK, USA, France and The Netherlands.

From a 4-person steering committee in 1989, to the official launch in 1992, to the present Board of Management; from an initial donation of 500 books to the current collection of over 10,000 books, journals and significant archival deposits, Shirley's unwavering dedication has propelled the Library's growth. She is the only foundation member still involved

and while currently on the Board as Public Relations Officer, has served in every capacity. Over the years Shirley has been able to attract distinguished sponsors and patrons, initiated fundraising activities – including the Annual Parliament House Lunch – and by her networking skills, in 1998 persuaded the City of Sydney to provide accommodation for the expanding collection.

Shirley has energetically devoted countless hours of unpaid work to the Library. Her belief in the value of maintaining the history of Australian women's lives in accessible resources has created a professionally organised, internationally recognised library. In 2001 Shirley received an Edna Ryan Award for services to the Arts. Now, as the recipient of an award within the Order of Australia, her contribution is acknowledged to be outstanding. All members and friends of the Library are pleased and proud that Shirley has gained the recognition she deserves and are delighted to offer her their congratulations.

*Jane Pollard
Board Member and Senior Librarian*

I would like to thank Ros Leal for nominating me for an Australian Honours award and those who spoke for me as referees. I also want to pay tribute to all the volunteers who have worked with such commitment, especially those whose work spanned years. It is the dedication of the volunteers that has enabled the Library to develop from its small beginnings into the valuable resource it has now become.

Shirley Jones OAM

INVITATION TO A PLANNING MEETING

The Board of Jessie Street National Women's Library is holding a special planning meeting on Saturday, 21 October from 10 am to 1 pm in Seminar Room 1 at the Ultimo Community Centre, corner of Harris Street and William Henry Street. (Enter building via Bulwara Road.door.)

As well as reviewing what we have achieved since the last special planning meeting in May 2005, we will focus on a small number of high priority issues, such as securing and building financial support, promoting the Library and its public profile, and raising community awareness, as well as seeking partnerships.

Please join us in a structured session to put your views on our future priorities and directions.

Jozefa Sobski, Chair of the Board

INTERACTION WITH THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Jessie Street National Women's Library is becoming actively involved with the Council groups in the Community Centre, notably the Ultimo BranchLibrary. At the moment, we have a small promotional exhibition on display in their new display cabinet just inside the entrance to the Ultimo Library. The exhibition outlines the aims of JSNWL, what we hold in our collections, and includes a number of books with information about them. Our new promotional brochures, along with an information sheet and copies of our latest newsletter, are out on a table for library users and visitors to pick up.

Vassiliki, the librarian in charge of the Ultimo Branch Library, has suggested we might like to look through books they are culling from their shelves to see if any that we don't already hold fit our collection policy. She has noted a number of books she thinks might be suitable. We are grateful to Vassiliki for her forethought and generosity. We are also looking at the possibility of holding future functions in collaboration with the Ultimo Library.



UTILISING FASHION
It may be indefinitely extended as the family increases.

CITY OF SYDNEY COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION

Last year we were pleased to receive a grant from the City of Sydney to raise awareness of the Library within the local community. We were unable to produce the promotional material until the Library had moved from Town Hall House to the Ultimo Community Centre. Now at last settled and organised in our new premises, we have had brochures printed and distributed. These inform members of the community of our presence, our aims and what we have to offer them. Copies are being distributed to nearby educational centres – University of Technology Sydney (UTS), TAFE, and the University of Sydney – as well as to organisations like the Powerhouse Museum

MAY LUNCH-HOUR TALK
SPEAKER: JENELLE BRANGWIN
Not Mad, Just Sixty

On 18 May, Jenelle Brangwin gave an enthusiastic audience a fascinating account of her travels, at age 60, along the old Silk Route in tandem with another couple. Questions and comments came thick and fast afterwards attesting to the great interest her subject had aroused.

The trip we did in 2001 with Clif and Angie Barker was conceived in 1990. We wanted to drive from Lahore in Pakistan to London, following the old Silk Route, which is a network of tracks and roads going from western China to Turkey.

Clif bought and fitted out two Kombis, got carnets for them and made arrangements to get them through the various countries. We wanted to see Pakistan then travel the Karakoram Highway across the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush into the western part of China. From there we were going to Kashgar and then through Turkistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran to Turkey, then through Europe to London. Timing was essential. We couldn't go across the Himalayas before May when the pass is opened, and we wanted to be out of the desert areas by the end of July when it gets too hot to travel. Except in the cities, we camped throughout the trip -- under mountains, in olive groves, on cliff sides, in the desert, everywhere.

It was in Pakistan that we first encountered the position of women in Islamic countries. In the cities there were lots of women in brightly coloured dresses visible everywhere, but in the northern part of the country, women just didn't seem to exist. Married women spent their lives inside their family compound. In some of the stricter areas they only leave twice in their lives -- once for their wedding and once for their funeral. Angie and I had the occasional problem at markets, but on the whole we met with wonderful friendliness and help, both here and in Iran.

The women in Iran are very well educated, very friendly, always talking and always visible on the streets. For courtesy we wore the shalwar qamiz which practically covers you, and sometimes all the Islamic women would go into fits of giggles when they saw us. Although dressed correctly, we obviously didn't look the part. You still saw older women in chadors billowing down the street; the slightly younger women wore a long tunic with long pants and the scarf around their heads with just a little bit of hair showing; and the really young ones were daringly wearing jeans underneath short tunics, and the scarf was getting further and further back on the head.

It was in the north of Pakistan, that we first became aware of the Taliban. We saw them marching down the streets with banners, and music blaring and drums going and truckload after truckload of boys and men. It was quite frightening. Pakistan is a very poor country; there's no infrastructure, and so much corruption that most of the money goes into the army and people have lost hope. No wonder they gravitate to the Taliban who are telling them that things will get better if they believe in Allah.

From Pakistan we went further north and hit the Karakoram Highway. [At this point, Jenelle read from her book. Here is a portion of what she read, summarised.] 'The Karakoram Highway was a joint Chinese/Pakistan endeavour, connecting the two countries through some of the most spectacular but inhospitable country in the world. The road follows much of the ancient Silk Route. It took us several days to reach the 4730-metre-high pass. Driving conditions were horrendous, buses and trucks speeding crazily towards you and often it was only possible to overtake on bends. The sheer drop to the Indus River below made driving nerve-wracking. At one stage rocks came hurtling down the mountainside towards us, and waterfalls splashed across the road, beautiful but treacherous.

'The Highway certainly lived up to its reputation for grandeur. The huge Himalayas were rearing on our right; around us and ahead were the snowy Karakorams. As we travelled further north we reached a magical spot where we could see three of the greatest mountain ranges in the world meeting above us; the Himalayas, Hindu Kush and Karakorams. Below us was the roaring confluence of the Indus and Gilgit Rivers.'

The Highway took us through into China. We were only there a few days, and under armed guards the whole time. In Kashgar, a centre of the old Silk Road, the old part of the town hadn't changed in hundreds of years, with narrow little alleyways and no traffic at all. From Kashgar we went into the 'stans'. Kurdistan is extremely poor, but with beautiful mountains. In Uzbekistan you get into the desert, but it's here you have Samarkand and Bukhara, the main highlights of the Silk Road. Samarkand has only a relatively small area with the old and beautiful buildings left. The tiles and the art work are magnificent. In Bukhara you can walk through the old town as it was. It's not quite as breathtakingly stopping-you-in-your-tracks as Samarkand is, but I preferred it.



We had great trouble getting through Turkmenistan. One of the problems with these countries is the amount of corruption and bribery before you can get anything done. We spent three days actually crossing Turkmenistan and four days in queues.

In Iran the people went out of their way to help us. When we tried to camp at night they'd say, 'Come and sleep in our mosque. Sleep in our barn. Sleep in our house.' Camping spots were hard to find, because Iran is either desert, or intensely cultivated. The only night that we had a bit of a fright was in Iran. We'd actually found an oasis, and had water and shade close to our camp. About one o'clock in the morning we could hear voices and people moving around. When we peered out we could see figures with Kalashnikovs. Then there was banging on the door and Chris stuck his head out and said 'Tourista. Australia'. The men got such a shock that they staggered back mumbling among themselves and Chris said 'Goodnight' and banged the door. We discovered next day that they were police looking for mujihadeen in the area.

One of the things we loved in the course of our trip, was the carpets. [Here is a small portion of what Jenelle read.]

'Entering a carpet shop is merely the first part of the adventure. Shoes were removed at the doorway and then we were free to walk over the carpets as they were unrolled in front of us. We sat on them, reclined on them, had tea on them, and discussed the state of the world on them. We were able to have our money changed, send emails and download our webpages. ... When we walked out with a rug under our arm, we had bought a complete experience.'

We came home with a lot of memories and this is what I wrote in my book.

We had driven 20,000 kilometres over some of the worst roads in the world in some of the most inaccessible regions. We had shared visions of a better future with people who had shared their freely-given hospitality with us; we had eaten with them, laughed with them, enjoyed a moment in time with them. We had had a wonderful time. We weren't mad. We were just sixty.

*Transcription and abbreviated version by
Shirley Jones*

JUNE LUNCH-HOUR TALK

SPEAKER: OLIVE BRISCOE

Working as a Volunteer in Tanzania

On 15th June, a most enthusiastic audience welcomed guest speaker, Olive Briscoe. She spoke about the experiences she and her husband had had particularly in Tanzania, where they had worked incredibly hard, but had had a wonderful and fulfilling time. She fielded a lot of questions after the talk.

My husband, John, and I decided we would like to contribute to a community through volunteer work which would combine the work with travel. But how do you decide where to go? John is in Rotary at Epping which offers many volunteering opportunities abroad, so we found ourselves part of a volunteer group in Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu.

We worked in a newly-established eye hospital there and found ourselves expected, in two weeks, to get an unpainted, unprepared building ready for its official opening. The work was physically hard – painting, cleaning, electrical work, plumbing, and unpacking and setting up equipment – and as we did not work with the local people, I did not find the experience rewarding.

In Vanuatu, we met Monica who organises the finances in Australia for a school in Tanzania called The School of St Jude. This is run by Gemma Sisia from the NSW North Coast. She had taught in Uganda, married a Tanzanian and resolved to start her own school in Arusha, the capital and gateway to the famous game parks. We were interested in going and six weeks later we joined a party and were on our way.

Tanzania is on the east coast of Africa just below Kenya. We arrived at Nairobi and travelled for five hours by local bus to Arusha, spotting our first wildlife -- ostrich, gazelle and giraffe. The school, unexpectedly, is surrounded by trees, many from Australia, which provided much-needed shade. The local school system gives poor children no hope for an education. They are taught in Swahili, and tested in English in years 4 and 6, and failure means they get no further schooling. Only 2% of children go on to high school. Gemma is very mindful of the lack of opportunities for poor Tanzanians. Her motto is 'Fighting Poverty through Education'.

Our party of 11 were involved in all facets of the school from day one. Gemma runs the school using volunteers and local teachers. She employs local mothers to cook big pots of food each day, providing lunch for the children and teachers as many have walked for two hours to catch the school bus and have not eaten

anything. In 2004, there were 350 students at the school and by the following January there were another 180. We were involved in selecting those 180.

The guys had the job of building the trusses for a new roof on one of the classroom blocks. All material had to be brought from town and they spent a lot of time negotiating and measuring every piece of wood. Wood is expensive and you don't waste it. They taught local volunteers how to build trusses, something they had never done before.

Some of the jobs done on a regular basis were outfitting the children with their uniforms and fitting shoes onto children who had never worn shoes in their life. We also organised an art room and a computer room. Two of our experts reconfigured the computers to make the system work better, which is vital for sponsorship communication. Sponsors receive information three times a year on how their child is progressing, so record-keeping is vital to maintaining donations.

No matter what you were doing you downed tools at 10 am every day and we all spent half an hour hearing the children's reading. This was fun as we got to meet and mix with new children each day, plus the locals and teachers. Some of us with teaching skills taught the local teachers how to make reading fun and the children began to understand what they were reading. Seeing the smiles on their faces was magic.

Selecting the new children for the next year was difficult. Each Friday 250 children would line up outside the gate, pencil in hand, to be tested in English and maths. Our first Friday Gemma told us that our job was to do the English testing. If they got past the English test they were then tested for maths and if successful were told to come back the following day, Saturday, with their parent and evidence of their work at their current school.

The school's reputation is so high and children's chances of an education are ordinarily so slim that people will bring false papers and lie about their material circumstances. On that Saturday only ten of the 250 children tested met the criteria. Then five children were put into each bus with one teacher and one volunteer. Our job was to see if they were poor enough to be accepted into the school. Living in a home with a concrete floor, running water and glass windows eliminated them. To be accepted, they had to be from one-roomed mud huts. We found these huts so dark, it was difficult to see the form we needed to fill out and I wondered how any child



could do the set daily homework. That first Saturday only two of the five children met the criteria. Telling the mother her child was not accepted was very emotional for us.

Gemma has found that each child accepted needs to have a high level of motivation. She is rationing a very scarce resource and cannot afford to waste it. The children come into the school on a one-month probation period. If they perform well, they are given a school uniform, shoes, hat and bag and are photographed in their new uniform and at home with their family.

Having a teaching background I was asked to design an induction program for small groups of children who would not start school until the following year. I had a group of six and found that these children had never seen stairs and were too frightened to go up them to the library. So I made a game of it. Up three stairs, down two. It took 10 minutes to entice them up to the library. Their eyes were as big as saucers when they saw the number of books.

Our group slept in tents in the school playground and each night security was provided by two Masai and three apparently savage dogs, which were released at 11pm. You made sure you had been to the toilet and were in your tent before that time!

Gemma made sure that we also did the tourist things. She organised visits to the town where, at the Masai market, we saw warriors dressed in red and wearing sandals made out of old car tyres. A group of Americans climbed Kilimanjaro. Our group visited Kilimanjaro at sunset and went on a trip to three of Tanzania's famous game parks -- Serengeti Plain, Ngorongoro Crater and Lake Manyara. One of our most memorable days was on the Serengeti Plain where there were zebras as far as the eye could see, a sight I will never forget.

Will we go back again? YES! Did we feel that we had contributed as volunteers? YES! Did we have an unforgettable experience? Definitely!

Abbreviated by Shirley Jones from notes supplied by the speaker

**MAY LUNCH-HOUR TALK
SPEAKER: MARION HALLIGAN**

The Benevolence of Murder – Death, Guilt and Happy Endings

On the 4th of May we were pleased to welcome local author Marion Halligan to the Canberra lunch-hour talks series.

Marion's published works include numerous novels and books of autobiography, travel and food. She has also published stories in magazines, journals and anthologies. In the recent Queen's Birthday honours she was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), in recognition of her amazing contribution to Australian literature.

Marion spoke about her latest novel, *The Apricot Colonel* and provided us with an insight into the intricacies of character development, the structure of a detective novel and the depth of background research required. She discussed the importance of matching the conversation style of the character to the character's age, but ensuring the dialogue and slang used does not date.

Members of the audience availed themselves of the opportunity to ask Marion questions about her novels and writing techniques. A number of the members admitted to staying up late to finish reading *The Apricot Colonel!* Marion revealed that she considers it an even higher compliment if the reader reads a book slowly, not wanting it to end.

Copies of Marion's latest novel were available for purchase and signing on the day, much to the delight of fans, with a percentage of the sales going to the Library. Marion also kindly signed a copy of her book for the Library's collection.

Many thanks also to JSNWL Canberra volunteers Margaret Pender and Patti Kendall for their ongoing support with catering.

*Norelle Woolley & Amy Rhind
Canberra Talks Co-convenors*

**JULY LUNCH-HOUR TALK
SPEAKER: DR MICHAEL FLOOD**
Men's Roles in Building a Feminist Future

On the 6th of July we welcomed researcher Dr Michael Flood to the Canberra lunch-hour talks series – the first time we have had a male speaker.

Dr Michael Flood is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University. His research is an examination of the sexual cultures of young heterosexual men. Michael has had a long involvement in pro-feminist men's activism, through groups such as Men Against Sexual Assault, and campaigns such as the White Ribbon Campaign and others.

Michael spoke about reasons why men have a crucial role to play in fostering gender equality. He discussed how men can contribute to a feminist future, the dilemmas of involving men, and the principles and strategies that should guide men's participation. He also shared his own experiences of pro-feminist activism, talked about the mistakes he had made and the lessons

he had learned.

Members of the audience were eager to ask Michael about his research and his views on feminist issues, which stimulated great discussion. We sincerely thank him for his frank, compassionate and open conversation with JSNWL Canberra guests.

Many thanks also to JSNWL Canberra volunteers Margaret Pender and Patti Kendall for their ongoing support with catering.

We had a number of new attendees at the July talk who were interested in finding out more about the Library and how they can be involved, which was wonderful.

The next talk is scheduled for September 7, speaker to be announced

*Amy Rhind & Norelle Woolley
Canberra talks Co-convenors*

We are saying farewell to Norelle Woolley, co-convenor of the Canberra Lunch-hour Talks, who will be living in Singapore for six months and then plans to travel. When she returns to Australia she will be located in Melbourne. Norelle has been a tower of strength on the Canberra JSNWL team and we wish her well for the future.

**COMMEMORATING
VAL BUSWELL OAM**

Over 30 people attended a ceremony at the Library to commemorate Val Buswell on Saturday 20 May. This was organised by Marlene Arditto of BPW Ryde Hunters Hill, of which Val had been a dedicated, long-term member. This branch of the BPW, which has recently closed down, made a donation to the Library towards a project which would be a fitting memorial to Val Buswell and her work. At the suggestion of Beverley Sodbinow, our archivist, and with the approval of BPW Ryde Hunters Hill, the Library had two illuminated addresses professionally restored and framed.

Guests included long-time BPW members, members of the War Widows Guild of Australia NSW, members of JSNWL including the Hon Meredith Burgmann and the Hon Jan Burnswoods, and others who had known and worked with Val. Everyone was very complimentary about the Library's new premises and very interested in the collections.

After drinks and nibbles, Marlene talked about why the guests were gathered that day, Shirley Jones spoke briefly about the Library and its aims and Val's committed support and Kay Loder gave a eulogy to Val, outlining her career and her work for women. A very warm and energetic person, Val is sadly missed by all her friends.



*Beverley Sodbinow
giving a short talk
about the illuminated
addresses. These are on
the wall behind her.
Between them is a
plaque in memory of
Val Buswell OAM.*

Marlene then unveiled the two illuminated addresses after which Beverley Sodbinow briefly outlined their history. They had been found by Violet Patrick's son after her death and donated to the Library. They are true works of art and guests crowded round to view them and to read their inscriptions. An information leaflet about them was distributed to guests.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Helen Ruby is visiting her son on his farm on an island in Denmark. She has been helping put up fences, hand-feeding the sheep and trying to acclimatise to 20 hours of daylight per 24. She is very happy to be getting to know her two grandchildren, William and Emma, but says there are difficulties since neither of them speaks English!

Congratulations to **Ellen Lintjens** who has completed the degree of Master of Public Administration through the Australia New Zealand School of Government. The School was established in 2003 to assist governments to build the skills of their senior management. Ellen was one of the 40 senior managers chosen each year from the NSW public sector to undertake the degree.

SPECIAL GIFTS

To keep the Library operational we need to raise approximately \$70,000 per year. So far we have always been able to cover our costs, but as the Library grows, so do the expenses. We are very grateful to all those members who have made a higher-than-usual donation to the Library as a Special Gift. We are hoping that Special Gift donations will enable us to recoup the \$12,000 it cost to buy the new compactus required to house our growing Research Collection. The Gifts are tax deductible. Please keep them flowing in.

DONORS

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MONETARY DONATIONS

Many members make donations to the Library when they renew membership. We are grateful to all who support us in this way. These donations are valuable in helping us meet the Library's day-to-day running costs. Thank you. We appreciate your support.

Nancye Armour
Patricia Bellamy
Jenny Keller
Patti Kendall
Yota Krili
Lyn Newton
Marlene Smith

MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL / DONATION FORM

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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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To keep women's words, women's works, alive and powerful -- Ursula Le Guin