

# NEWSLETTER

## JESSIE STREET NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBRARY

Vol 13 No. 4  
November 2002

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### PARLIAMENTARY LUNCHEON

On Monday 23 September our Chair, Victoria Rubensohn, welcomed 230 guests to our eighth annual luncheon in Parliament House. These events are becoming so popular that many attend year after year, and draw in friends with them to enjoy the pleasant venue, the excellent food, the stimulating speeches, and of course the atmosphere of friendliness and bonhomie.

The Indigenous Welcome was given by Lynette Riley-Mundine, speaking first in the language of her people, then telling us of the Aboriginal children at Yulgibar whom Jessie Street had lived and played with and who had learned to speak their language.

Marie Muir, who has been MC at our luncheons for many years, refused to give out 'Housekeeping Notes'. Women don't do housekeeping any more,' she said, 'We are mines of information.'

This year's speaker, Sandra Yates gave a frank, witty and inspiring account of her life from woe to go, through the gradual stages of early marriage and the necessity to provide for two children to the heights of the corporate world. Everyone appreciated the honesty with which she spoke of the setbacks, the discrimination and the hard work and her wry and funny remarks about the

way she had handled — or mishandled — these experiences. As one guest remarked, 'It's as though we were listening to a friend tell her story.' Many of her experiences are the sort that have happened to every woman, which made her honest appraisal of the ups and downs in her life so real. Her talk was greeted with a standing ovation.

Shirley Jones again gave the 'library address', taking the theme of 'Women and Space'. She illustrated her talk with quotes from material in the Library.

Photograph by Anita Pollard

We were delighted to welcome so many students from girls schools around Sydney. Some schools are represented year after year. For others, it was their first time at this event. The schools present were: Abbotsleigh, Brigidine College, Meriden, Queenwood, St Catherine's School, Sydney Girls High School and Strathfield Girls High School. We know they felt inspired by Sandra's talk and left feeling that one doesn't have to be a genius to reach the top of the professional tree.

The drawing of the raffle marked the end of the luncheon. This year Joyce Mang from Strathfield Girls High School drew the tickets for the third and second prizes and Natalie Berents from Queenwood

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### JSNWL FUNCTIONS

#### Lunch-Hour Talks

**Venue** The Lady Mayoress' Rooms, 2nd Floor, Town Hall

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

**Entry** \$15 (non-members) \$13 (members). Light lunch included

For catering purposes, please let us know you are coming. Contact tel (02) 9876 3927 or (02) 9265 9486 or email [shirleyjones@ozemail.com.au](mailto:shirleyjones@ozemail.com.au)

**November Talk — Thursday 21st**  
**Dr Joan Webb — Volunteer Teaching in Thailand**

Joan has had been doing volunteer work in Thailand for the last 23 years. She is presently teaching about preservation of the environment overall — the home environment, the workplace, and the natural environment.

**February 2003 — Thursday 20th**  
**Susan Steggall — From Sand to Snow and Back Again: One's Heart in Two Countries**

Susan discusses her book *Alpine Beach: A Family Adventure* the story of the ten years she, her husband John and children Zeke and Zali, spent in the Haute-Savoie region of the French Alps and their extraordinarily successful relationship with wintersport competition.

**NOTE: The March talk will be in the Southern Function Room, Level 4, Town Hall House**

**March Talk — Thursday 20th**  
**Gina Lennox — Voices from Kurdistan**

Editor, writer and film-maker, Gina Lennox, will outline the history, culture, experiences and political struggles of Kurdish men and women from Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria, based on their contributions to her book *Fire, Snow and Honey - Voices from Kurdistan*. She will also explore the ramifications of a war with Iraq from the Kurdish point of view.

## 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 sole focus on collecting and preserving the literary and cultural heritage of women.*

*The Library is named in honour of the activist Jessie Street, who campaigned for the rights of women, both nationally and internationally.*

### 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 of JSNWL.

**Location:** Level 1, Town Hall House  
456 Kent Street, Sydney

### Public Transport Services

**Trains** Town Hall Station

**Buses** Queen Victoria Building,  
George St, York St and Drutt St

## OUR LEASE RENEWED

We are very pleased to be able to tell members that our lease with the City of Sydney has been renewed. We moved into our premises in Town Hall House under a three-year lease. This expired this year and we have renegotiated a further three-year agreement with the City of Sydney, who is very supportive of the Library and its aims and objectives.

Along with the lease, a new three-year Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, outlining the working relationship between the City of Sydney and JSNWL

### Correction

Did You Notice that a date in the 'Did You Know?' item in the last newsletter was incorrect?. 1959 should have read 1859. The editor can only give as an excuse the fact that the figures 8 and 9 are very close together on the keyboard!

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drew for the first prize. Each year The House of Cerrone very generously donates jewellery as the first prize in our raffle. Shirley McGrath representing Cerrone Jewellery, spoke briefly, mentioning the number of women designers in their workshop, their support of JSNWL, a women's library, and a reminder that Christmas was at hand!

### Raffle Winners

#### First Prize

Ticket no. 4843 Jan Harrison  
(Gold ring with zircon from the House of Cerrone)

#### 2nd Prize

Ticket no 4899 Fairlie Stanish (two original watercolours by Mary Rees)

#### 3rd Prize

Ticket no. 1460 G. Jemma  
(\$200 worth of book tokens)

The two guests who collected Lucky Door Prizes were:  
Jessi Miley-Dyer and Joanna Subotic.

### Special Thanks

We thank all those whose help made the event such a success. First, special thanks to our army of volunteers who nobly help each year and ensure that the event runs smoothly.

Our grateful thanks to Anita Pollard, who, in an honorary capacity, took the photos at the luncheon. Anita is a professional photographer. You can visit her website at [www.anitaphoto.com](http://www.anitaphoto.com)

We are also extremely grateful to Jan Wood, who each year makes a video of the function for our archives. Jan has set up a recording studio at her home and is doing videotaped interviews with women talking about their lives. Read more about this on her website at [www.redhotpromos.com.au](http://www.redhotpromos.com.au)

Mia Harrison from Sydney Girls High School then drew the two lucky door prizes.

This year we were unable to accommodate all those who wished to come. We know from the compliments passed that next year's luncheon will be just as popular, so we advise you to book early.

## ON SALE NOW

### TALKS BOOKLET

An attractive booklet containing the speech given at the Luncheon by Sandra Yates, guest speaker, and the short talk by Shirley Jones from JSNWL, is now on sale for \$5 (+ \$1 postage).

You can get copies at the library, or you can order by phone, fax, or email. Have your credit card details handy.

### PHOTOS

A selection of photos taken at the Luncheon will be on view on the website. Look up:  
[www.jessiestreetwomenslibrary.com](http://www.jessiestreetwomenslibrary.com)

There are some very good group photos and some wonderful 'portrait' photos. Give some to your friends at Christmas.

Prints \$6 each (+ \$1 postage). Only written orders, accompanied by payment, can be accepted.

The full range of photos can be viewed at the Library.

## JSNWL ESSAY PRIZE DINNER

Presentation of the prize: Hon Elizabeth Evatt

Guest Speaker: Wendy Bacon

Thursday, 5 December 2002 at 7.30 pm

Women's College, Carillon Avenue, University of Sydney

Tickets \$55.

Booking essential. Contact the Library on (02) 9265 9486

Limited places available so book early!

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## 50-YEAR TIME CAPSULE

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After the October lunch-hour talk given by our archivist, Beverley Sodbinow, Marlene Ardito from the Ryde-Hunters Hill branch of BPW presented a 50-year time capsule to JSNWL, in celebration of 100 years of votes for women in NSW.

Presenting the capsule, Marlene said she had thought a time capsule shouldn't be too hard to make. 'We'd just get something like a big date-loaf tin with a screw-on end and that will be that.' But it actually involved having a stainless-steel container made to exact specifications and plans. In thinking of the time-frame, Marlene realised that none of us would be around in 100 years, but present-day students are still likely to be around in 50 years. So BPW Ryde-Hunters Hill contacted five schools — city and country; private, Catholic and State. Students from the schools worked on projects to produce interesting material to put in the capsule. Various women's groups such as Jessie Street National Women's Library, the National Council of Women and War Widows Guilds also added material and there was quite a lot from ordinary women, 'because' as Marlene said 'in 50 years time, what they've got to say, what they're thinking now, the lives they're living will be history. The lives we're living now are going to seem quite quaint and full of interest.'

Beverley Sodbinow received the capsule on behalf of JSNWL. It will be put in a prominent place in the library for all visitors to see and appreciate.



Cartoon by Stewart McCrae

We thank **Stewart McCrae**, a member of the Library, who is generously donating his time, skill and expertise by producing sketches and delightfully expressive and funny cartoons and sketches for use in the newsletter.

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## LIBRARY MATTERS

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### LIBRARY NEWS

#### Visitors

We have had many interesting visitors to the Library over the last three months. One was from the Philippines and two were from London, one of whom was a librarian from The Women's Library in London (previously the Millicent Fawcett Library). All expressed great interest in the collection.

A number of students have visited us to research Jessie Street as the subject of school assignments, including a very young student from a school for gifted children who, assisted and encouraged by her mother, showed great interest in her subject and took considerable pains to select material and illustrations for her project.

Our lunch-hour talk in October attracted several visitors to the Library, two of whom have now become members.

#### New Equipment

We now have the long-awaited replacement for the work-worn computer on which we had our library system (Athena) and did all entries for Kinetica. Running on the latest Windows XP, the new computer has eliminated the need for troubleshooting, which had become a frequent feature of the past few months. Partnering its arrival is a new printer. The old computer has been retained for the purpose of searching the catalogue when responding to requests for material, and when checking duplicates among donated books.

We have also bought a Canon scanner. We will no longer have to rely on borrowed equipment to enable us to scan the text of Tapestry contributions and photos for use on the website. The Canon will also scan from slides and 35 mm film and will do multiple photos simultaneously. With the CD burner, which is part of our new computer, we are well set up to put vital records on CD.

#### Recent Donations

The YWCA Brisbane has donated a copy of *Sister Girl: The Writings of an Aboriginal Activist and Historian* by **Jackie Huggins**, who was a guest speaker at one of their functions. Jackie



has inscribed the book 'To Jessie Street National Women's Library in support of the strong sister'

We have also received from **Irene Coates**, a set of her 'Claudia' books. These are autobiographical novels, which Irene wrote from the material in her diaries.

We thank **Robyn Hanstock** for donating a copy of her thesis '*Behave Like a Lady!*': *Twentieth-Century Private Venture Girls' Schools in the Blue Mountains*. This was submitted in partial fulfilment of BA Hon in History at the University of Sydney in 2002.

*Phoebe Basson*  
Library Administrator

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## ARCHIVES NEWS

#### Visitors

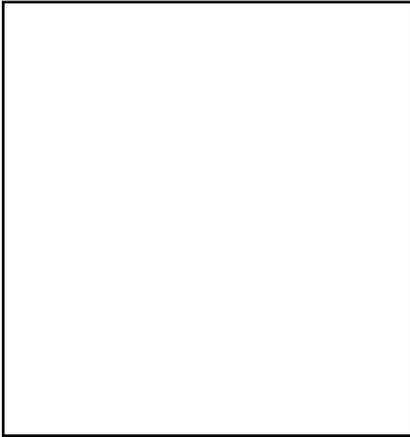
Wilga Pruden has come into the library to recount a short account of her life on to tape. This will be used as support to her personal papers which Wilga has donated to the archives over several years.

**Margo McKenzie** and **Lola Sharpe** visited the library after the talk I gave in October, as part of our Lunch-hour Talks series. Margo is an archivist and was so stimulated by what she saw of the Library on her visit, that she has become a volunteer and offered to help with the archives next year. Lola taped an oral history interview with Ruby Langford Ginibi for the Older Women's Network and has offered to join our oral history team.

#### A Very Special Donation

We are extremely grateful to **Jean Barnes**, who has very generously made JSNWL a donation of \$3750. She has specified that this money is to be used for 'archival subscription and retrieval purposes'. Over the years, Jean has sent us many donations of books and papers. We are extremely grateful for her generosity. Such donations are immensely helpful in enabling us to meet growing expenses connected with our archives work.

*Beverley Sodbinow, Archivist*



*On 18 July Commander Lola Scott, Assistant Commissioner in the NSW Police Service gave an interesting and informative talk about her life in the police force and what the police were trying to achieve.*

I'm a country girl, born and bred at Jamberoo, I was one of eight children, seven girls and one boy. My elder sister's still on the farm there and my whole family is very very close.

Policing wasn't my first choice in life. I wanted to be a PE teacher. I went to Kiama High School and unfortunately didn't get the necessary marks in the Higher School Certificate, and I was devastated. So I had to think of something else. I joined policing in 1972 and coming from a family of nearly all females, it was quite a shock to go to the Bourke Street Depot and find myself one of four women in a class of about 153.

In my career of 30 years, I've seen a lot of changes at the top, but the basic principles of policing don't change that much and what I say to people is if you're dissatisfied with what's going on in your local area, bring it to the attention of the local commander. What the community wants is to see police walking around to prevent crime and being proactive in things like domestic violence. In a lot of issues, a whole-of-government approach is what's actually needed. If I — and I use my name because I don't want to offend anyone — if I know that Lola Scott, every Friday night for the last three years was belted by her partner, we know that that is going to tie up a police car for so many hours every Friday night, impact on the ambulance services and the hospital and tie up the court system. If we case-manage these issues we should be able to stop that next assault taking place.

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## JULY LUNCH-HOUR TALK

### **SPEAKER: COMMANDER LOLA SCOTT** *“The Importance of Community Involvement in Modern-day Policing”*

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All I ever wanted was to have one stripe. I never expected to get where I am, but nevertheless I still would like to be promoted further. A wonderful role model for me was Bev Lawson, who was the first Deputy Commissioner in Australia. Her untimely death was quite devastating for me. I actually tried to contact Bev a few days before her death and they told me she was off. Since she was someone who never had a sick day, this didn't make sense. I contacted her later to see how she was but more importantly to tell her I wasn't going to apply to do a Strategic Command Course in England, because I was too tired to even put the application in. She wouldn't let me get off the phone until I had promised her that I would actually apply. I made that commitment not knowing that the next day she was going to collapse and die within 48 hours. I needn't have honoured my promise, but I couldn't do that. I put in my application and I actually went to England.

But that also had its difficulties. Bev died in January 1998, and in March, Peter Forsythe, one of my officers, was stabbed to death in the inner city. The hardest job I've had in my whole career was to tell his little boy Mitchell, who was four, that his father was not coming home again. Every time I see that little boy or someone talks about police officers dying, it takes me back to that morning.

In the early 90s I was sent to Redfern as part of the new senior management team after there had been racist and very unprofessional behaviour by police there. I had been a detective all my career and, being a woman, I had had to fight very hard to become one. I got a big shock when I learned that I wasn't going to Redfern as a detective and that I would be in uniform. Wearing a uniform was one of the hardest things to get used to, because people actually knew who you were when you were on the street. My method of policing at Redfern was to walk around, letting people get to know you, and talking to them and to shopkeepers, for example, to make sure they were feeling safe. The elderly people on pension day were being assaulted and robbed. I got this

resolved by involving a number of the local community areas. You need to engage the community if you're going to resolve issues at the local level. Redfern was quite an experience.

As a detective in plain clothes you're fairly anonymous but everyone notices you when you're in uniform. I found that when you were in uniform and wanted to cross a pedestrian crossing, you nearly caused an accident, because the traffic came to a screaming halt. But out of uniform you'd nearly get run over, so I suddenly learned the power of the uniform. But I believe power has to be used properly. You must have pride in the work that you do and in actually serving the community. My current work as Director of Strategic Operations has me and my team working on some very interesting projects that involve us at both Commonwealth and State levels and also with the business sector. One of the things we're trying to do is target-harden premises. Traditionally, banks were targeted for armed robberies. Then they put in safety glass and electronic windows and security cameras — they target-hardened their premises. So that pushed the armed robbers towards softer targets, such as building societies. Then the building societies made their premises less vulnerable and they and the banks also provided greater care and protection for their own workers, which was also very important. Now small businesses have installed ATMs and EFTPOS machines and service stations provide phone cards and cigarette machines and what you are hearing about is ramraids. In ramraids someone in a car — usually a stolen one — just drives it straight into the premises. This can be prevented by simply installing very strong steel railings that you can't get a car or even a semi-trailer through. So prevention is a matter of solving problems.

We hear all the time about drug-related crime. A lot of break and enters are committed by drug addicts. I believe that the drug addiction side of things is a health issue and that our main job, as police, is to target those actually supplying the drugs. Whatever the

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

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## AUGUST LUNCH-HOUR TALK

**SPEAKER: KIMBERLEY WEBBER**

***“Material Culture: Australian Women’s History”***

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*Kimberley Webber, Senior Curator of Australian History at the Powerhouse Museum stood in at short notice for the advertised speaker, Jennifer Sanders, who was unfortunately ill. Kimberley’s enthusiasm for her subject shone through her whole talk, which was told with zest and humour.*

The three projects I’m going to discuss today are: The National Quilt Register, the exhibition ‘Births of the Nation: Women, Childbirth and Federation’ and the book *Minding the Shop*.

So first, the National Quilt Register. This was compiled by the women of The Pioneer Women’s Hut, Tumbarumba to celebrate the Centenary of Federation. This marvellous museum, run by volunteers, is about an hour from Wagga and documents the lives of ordinary Australian women through the largely domestic artefacts that survive. They have fantastic collections of things like aprons, teatowels, doilies, domestic tools and, of course, quilts. Not only can they show you the quilts, but they can also tell you about the women who made them and the families that used them. The Register records all surviving quilts that were used in Australia from 1788 until 1965, the period when the women were making quilts for use in the home. They have documented over 2000 quilts. Through local quilting organisations they got women to register their quilts, tell the story about it, describe it, and send in photographs. They then scanned these and entered all the information on their website.

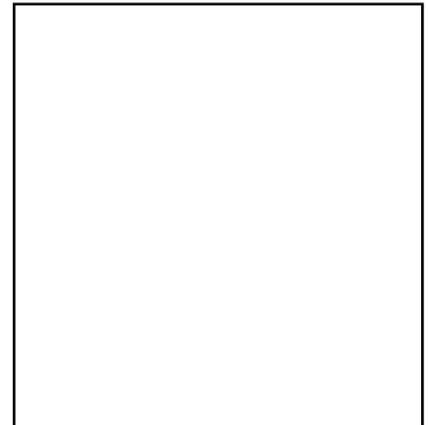
The National Quilt Register prompted me to undertake research into the very fine collection of quilts held by the Powerhouse Museum. One of these we call the Logo Quilt. When we acquired this in 1988 we were told it was made by someone called Granny Brown from the area around Yass, and that it had been given to Elizabeth Swan in the late 19th century. From this it was assumed that it had been made about then. We were also told that, because the coat of arms has the kangaroo and the emu pointing the wrong way round, the quilt was meant for the suffrage movement. I’ve always been a bit sceptical about this. When we embarked on some research on the quilt, Sue Shaw, a student of

mine, turned up some interesting information..

The Yass local paper printed an article Sue wrote about the quilt and Granny Brown. Through this we were put in touch with Una Braby, Granny Brown’s granddaughter, who had a similar quilt. It turned out that Granny Brown was Amelia Brown who arrived by ship with her husband and seven children in Sydney in 1857. They settled on a small property outside Yass. The story attached to Una’s quilt was that it was made by Amelia on her voyage to Australia, which makes sense because a woman with seven children did not have a lot of leisure time in the home in the 1850s. Una Braby’s quilt had a cockerel in the centre instead of the coat of arms, but many of the fabrics match, and the stitching looks the same, so we assume the Logo Quilt was made in the 1850s also. This is a good example of a piece of material culture that had one story attached to it but research turns up a very different story. The Quilt Register is full of stories like this, of the triumphs and tragedies of women’s lives.

The second thing I’m going to talk about is an exhibition called ‘Births of a Nation: Women, Childbirth and Federation’. We used the exhibition to explore childbirth in 1901. Childbirth is little written or talked about and it’s hard to find women’s stories about childbirth until fairly recently.

Two of us took this small travelling exhibition by van to 15 different places in NSW. In each town, we installed it ourselves in collaboration with the local museum or historical society, which provided relevant material from their collection to incorporate into the exhibition. We reproduced a panel that talked about childbirth and Federation in Cobar or Hay, wherever, and we developed a walk. The walk is particularly interesting because it explores the surviving material evidence of women’s lives in the town. Towns when they do historical walks usually focus on public buildings and men’s lives, because most public history is men’s history. We wanted to look at women’s influences in towns, so our walks took us to places like the CWA hall, churches, schools and the cemetery.



The exhibition provided a marvellous opportunity to revive the often forgotten history of midwives in country towns, where the local doctor often features in the museum, but women, midwives and local nurses are very rarely remembered. There were women like Lottie Hasty, who studied obstetrics in Melbourne and after the death of her husband in 1914 returned to Wagga. Affectionately known as ‘the rabbit-trapper’ because her mode of transport was a bicycle with a hurricane lamp in front, she never lost a life. Or Granny Duncan, who delivered over 700 babies successfully in Temora. The exhibition walk reminds one of the tragedy that often accompanied childbirth when one in ten babies died and 72 mothers out of every thousand died. One of the earliest headstones in the Wollongong cemetery is that of Elizabeth Jane Ryan, who died on Christmas Day 1889 after giving birth to twins. She has a very beautiful headstone with a fine inscription. Very tragically, her son Michael died a few weeks later and her daughter Elizabeth at six months. Cemeteries are a rich record of the town and the women and children in it and they are a very good reminder of women’s history.

The third project I’m going to talk about is a book called *Minding the Shop*. It is really a study of surviving traditional stores in Australia, that is stores like the butcher, the baker, the greengrocer, the draper, the haberdashery store. In many country towns the growth of supermarkets has meant these stores are increasingly disappearing. I’ve done a lot of field work in NSW and Victoria looking at these traditional outlets. It’s been a fascinating project in terms of women’s history because it’s the women who served behind the counter who

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## NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to our new members

Suzanne Baker  
Wendi Balbi  
Dawn Bruce  
Diane Calder  
Gwen Clarke  
Rosemarie Gates  
Belinda Gemmell  
Su Hanfling  
Jan Harrison  
Rajbaljinder Kaur  
Janice Leonard  
Pam Liell  
Georgina Napier  
Cass O'Connor  
Colleen O'Sullivan  
Nicole Pagnozzi  
Therese Phillips  
Debra Richards  
Kim Ross  
Armanda Scorrano  
Colleen Sheerin  
Annie Tollafield

## 2003 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held on Saturday 22 March, 2003. Details of venue and time will appear in the February 2003 newsletter.

We are calling now for any notices of motion members may wish to have put at the AGM. These must be given in writing and reach the Secretary by Friday 8 February 2003.

Note: The rules for AGM procedures are strict. Amendments from the floor cannot be accepted.

## JESSIE STREET

There has been a gratifying amount of interest shown in Jessie over the last few months.

### Jessie — A Rebel

The ABC did a story on Jessie which went to air on 'New Dimensions with George Negus' on Monday 21 October in a program entitled 'Rebels'. The program looked at several Australians who 'pursued paths that set them apart from their peers and society.' Interviewed for the program were Sir Laurence Street, Jessie's younger son, and Dr Lenore Coltheart who is currently revising Jessie's autobiography for the Street family. In August, the ABC spent two hours in the library filming books, posters, photographs and other items to provide background stills for the program. The Library's portrait of Jessie was used to introduce her story. The ABC had obtained some interesting film footage of Jessie, which has been promised to JSNWL, along with a copy of the program. These will be valuable additions to the information we already hold on Jessie.

We informed as many members as possible, Australia-wide, about the program. We hope most were able to watch it.

### A Toastmaster's Talk

A recent visitor from the Central Coast came to the Library to get information on Jessie. Members of her Toastmasters group were giving speeches on the subject of 'People who have Made a Difference' and she wanted to talk on a woman, to help counterbalance the preponderance of talks on men. She went away with ample material and a great interest in the Library.

### Jessie and the 1967 Referendum

Another ABC program which will feature Jessie is being made by the Indigenous Programs Unit in Sydney. They are doing a documentary on the women involved in the 1967 referendum campaign, of which Jessie was one of the initiators. We were able to give the ABC information and they recorded an interview with Lenore Coltheart in the Library itself after the Parliamentary Luncheon on 23 September. The Indigenous Programs Unit did some informal interviews with members of Jessie's family and some other guests, in the foyer of Parliament House before the luncheon. This program will probably go to air early next year. As soon as we are informed, we will let members know the date.

### A School Project

Mimi Zou is in year 12 at Sydney Girls High School. Becoming interested in Jessie Street through attending the Parliamentary Luncheon with her school last year, Mimi chose to write an essay on Jessie for her HSC History Extension course. She called her essay 'A Tribute to Jessie Street: Feminist, Social Reformer and Peace Activist'. Mimi was awarded a mark of 100% for her essay and came first in this subject in her school.

Mimi did a lot of research for the essay. She read voluminously, went to the National Library in Canberra to look at original documents and interviewed Sir Laurence Street and Dr Lenore Coltheart. Mimi has donated copies of the essay to the Library. They are a valuable addition to the material we already have on Jessie's life and work.

### Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting was held during the Sunday Afternoon Talk in the Marconi Room on Sunday 28 July 2002. The following motions relating to the Constitution were passed unanimously.

(1) that the first sentence of Clause 28c be amended to read:  
Nominations for the Board (Executive and ordinary members) must be received by the returning officer no later than 14 days prior to the AGM.

(2) that Clause 32a be amended to read:  
The quorum for an Annual General Meeting shall be no fewer than ten (10) members present in person (being members entitled to vote under these rules at an AGM).

### New GPO Box Postcode

Please Note: Australia Post, after changing GPO Box postcodes two years ago, has now asked us to revert to the previous code — 2001. This will apply from January 2003.

## TEN-YEAR MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES

The following members, who have subscribed to JSNWL regularly since 1992, have now been sent their 10-year Membership Certificates. We have received letters from two members and a telephone call from another, complimenting us on the appearance of the certificate and expressing their pleasure in receiving it.

Nancye Armour  
Margaret Bettison  
Meredith Burgmann  
Ita Buttrose  
Lenore Colheart  
Anne Conway  
Evelyn Doyle  
Hilda Fairley  
Edith Gilmour  
Lorna Gilmore  
Kate Grenville  
Julie Harris  
Annemarie Hellmann  
Wendy Kerr  
Maureen Kingshott  
Ellen Lintjens  
Leila Loveday  
Sheila McClellan  
Hilary McPhee  
Verna Morgan  
Rosa Needham  
Zula Nittim  
Ros Pesman  
Gretchen Poiner  
Robin Porter  
Zorica Rapaich  
Michele Sacco  
Betty Searle  
Marie Tulip  
Rosalind Wallis  
Joan Webb  
Jan Whitford  
Suzanne Wynyard

Our grateful thanks go to **Wesley Harriott**, who very kindly printed the Certificates for us as a donation to the Library.



Stewart McCrae

## DID YOU KNOW that ...?

Two women, from two different countries, in two different centuries, were basic to the development of the computer? They are Ada Lovelace, founder of scientific computing, and Grace Hopper, one of the first software engineers.

**Ada Byron**, Countess of Lovelace born in London in 1815, was the daughter of the poet Byron and Anne Milbanke. The marriage was short-lived and Ada was raised by her mother. She was entranced by mathematics and at the age of 13 produced a design for a flying machine. In 1833, she met Charles Babbage, who became her lifelong friend and correspondent.

Professor of mathematics at Cambridge, Babbage had, in 1834, produced plans for a kind of calculating machine — an Analytical Engine — and enlisted Ada as translator for his article on it. She worked hard on the article and appended a set of Notes to it.

Ada not only understood Babbage's plans for the device, but she saw its promise as what we would call a general-purpose computer and she foresaw future developments, including computer-generated music. Her contributions to science have been resurrected only recently.

*The Bride of Science: Romance, Reason and Byron's Daughter*, a biography by Benjamin Woolley, published in 1999 by Pan Books, is in JSNWL's collection.

**Grace Murray Hopper** (1906-1992) graduated PhD from Yale in 1928 and married in 1930. She taught mathematics at Vassar until 1943, when she joined the Women's Emergency Service in the navy as a lieutenant. In 1944 the navy sent her to join the research team working on a Computation Project at Harvard University. The professor in charge greeted her by pointing to his electromechanical Mark I computing machine, and saying 'Compute the coefficients of the arc tangent series by next Thursday.' Hopper learned to program the machine and put together a 500-page 'Manual of Operations for the Automatic Sequence-Controlled Calculator' in which she outlined the fundamental operating principles of computing machines. She continued her work at Harvard and with various institutions in the military, private industry and business. In 1983 she became Admiral Hopper.

Grace was one of the first software engineers. She invented the compiler, the intermediate program that translates English language instructions into the language of the target computer. Her work foreshadowed enormous numbers of developments that are now the basis of digital computing, including sub-routines and formula translation.

*continued from page 4 — Lola Scott*

media and talkback radio might say, the criminals are not in charge of the streets here in NSW. Your police service is and will continue to be. Shortly there'll be what they call 'policing accountability community teams' in each of the local area commands. I'm co-ordinating that across the state

An important messages I want to pass on, and I guess this comes from my experiences in life, is if you don't succeed at first you don't throw the towel in. So what I say to people is: it's up to you what path you walk in life.

Even though I've been in policing 30 years I still get a buzz out of going to work and the day that I don't have that enthusiasm, that's the day I'll be hanging up the boots.

*Transcription and summary by Shirley Jones*

## BOOKING FOR LUNCH-HOUR TALKS

We are very pleased to welcome so many newcomers to our lunch-hour talks. They are becoming more and more popular and rightly so.

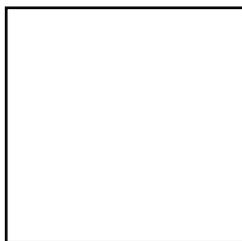
However, we would urge members to let us know beforehand that they are coming. At the October talk we had quite a number of unexpected members turn up. We were, as always, very pleased to see them, but it did cause some problems with the catering.

You can book by ringing (02) 9876 3927 or email shirley.jones@ozemail.com.au After 8 am on the morning of the talk, please ring the library and leave a message there.

*Shirley Jones  
Public Relations Officer*

## THUMBNAIL SKETCHES OF THE CHAIR, VICE CHAIR & SECRETARY

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### VICTORIA RUBENSOHN CHAIR

Victoria was elected Chair of JSNWL in 2001. She holds BA and MA degrees from the University of Sydney and an LLB from the University of New South Wales. She was admitted to the NSW Bar in 1983.

A short biography on the Board's Chairwoman is a difficult thing to write, not least because it immediately becomes long if all Victoria's activities are to be included. Just a small selection includes executive positions with numerous associations, such as the Communication and Media Law Association, the International Institute of Communications (Australian Chapter), the National Film & Sound Archive, Canberra, and the Fred Hollows Foundation. She has been a member of the Board of the Australian Institute of Political Science, the Copyright Society of Australia, the Australian Copyright Council, and the Royal Television Society (UK). In May 2001 she was conference rapporteur and session co-chairman at the United Nations Conference on Disaster Communications. What further experience is needed to Chair our Board?

Victoria speaks on our behalf to all levels of government and industry with commitment and authority. One of the many great attributes that Victoria brings to the Board is her complete and detailed interest in every detail of the Library's functioning. She can always be relied on, not only to turn up, but to help at any activity the Library is involved in. Board meetings, however, are not for the faint-hearted. Victoria arrives as a whirlwind and leaves as a tornado, having often dealt with a jam-packed agenda.

We are fortunate to have acquired the expertise of such a talented and, thank goodness, good-humoured woman to Chair the Board



### CHRISTINE LEES SECRETARY

Christine was elected to the Board at the 2001 AGM. She took on the arduous, almost full-time, job as Secretary at a time when the Library has never been busier. Whether it be organising mail-outs, convening the Essay Prize judging or dealing

with every aspect of organising the Parliamentary Luncheon, her tenacity and efficiency have seen her rise effortlessly to every challenge. In addition to her daily administrative tasks she has also been responsible for the restructuring of our volunteer database to ensure that all offers of help are recorded and followed up and has been active in preparing and submitting a number of grant applications.



### JANE WADDELL VICE CHAIR

Jane has been Vice-Chair since 2000. She is a registered general and psychiatric nurse and a fellow of the Institute of Practice Management. She was Mayor of Hunters Hill Municipality from 1995-96 and a Councillor from 1995-1999. As an

executive member of the Australian Local Government Women's Association (1997-2000) she carried out projects including mentoring of rural and isolated female councillors, and addressing aspects of bullying of female elected representatives and non-elected women. She is also co-author of a UN Report on Status of Women in Local Government.

Jane brings to the Library extensive experience in local government with a strong emphasis on the role of women on Council. During the No Aircraft Noise debate Jane experienced first hand just how many levels there are below Reasonable on the Decent Behaviour Scale. As Vice Chair and Public Officer she is a great ambassador for the Library, very approachable and always willing to speak on our behalf — even from the back of a truck, as she did at the IWD Rally. She contributes to all levels of Library activity, from her forceful control of the occasional Board meeting to acting as MC at the Sunday Afternoon Talk and as indefatigable seller of raffle tickets to any breathing creature within her orbit. In addition to being a member of the Pine Gap Exhibition sub-committee, she is also organising the Essay Prize Award Dinner for the inaugural Essay Prize Writing Competition. Jane has taken a leading role in negotiations with the Department for Women over funding and is active in seeking sponsors for our various projects.

The defining characteristic of all our Board members is good humour and Jane has it in abundance.

Christine came to Australia from England in 1980 via such exotic places as Germany and Turkey, following her husband's career in the RAF. This may be where she became an avid reader of books of all genres!

Christine began her career as a primary school teacher, developed an interest in helping migrants to learn English and obtain work, and retired as Sydney Regional Co-ordinator of Language and Literacy programs in ACE (Adult and Community Education), having gained a post-Graduate Diploma in Adult Education. Like all good Board members, she has more than one string to her bow. For a number of years she has been president of a management committee for the Lilian Fraser Garden in Pennant Hills.

Christine's commitment, efficiency and unfailing good humour are hallmarks of her outstanding contribution to the Board.

## VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR

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Over the last few months, we've had an encouraging increase in the number of volunteers offering to help JSNWL in various ways — with specifically library tasks and also with other tasks, including the oral history project, writing Fact Files, helping at functions, writing book reviews and helping with our website. We are pleased to welcome our new volunteers as part of our team.

One of our new volunteers is Wendi Balbi, who attended the Parliamentary Luncheon, offered to do volunteer work and arrived at the library the following morning. She has been working enthusiastically with us ever since. Wendi has agreed to become Volunteer Co-ordinator for JSNWL and with her particular background is eminently suited for the task.

Wendi has a BA from Sydney University and has lived and worked in the UK, South Africa and Australia with positions in industry and publishing. She spent three-and-a-half years of her retirement with SOCOG as a volunteer, interviewing volunteers, placing them and supervising protocol assistants. She enjoyed the friendships made, the positive mindset throughout the organisation, the international contacts she made and not least, the Games themselves. As Protocol Manager at the Paralympic Sailing Event Wendy was involved with hosting guests on a daily basis, with luncheon and tea on the harbour and a grandstand view of the racing.

In 2001 Wendi managed the Secretariat for the 'International Year of the Volunteer' at Volunteering NSW and raised a team of 500 volunteers, an electronically-based team called the 'Sydney Show Offs' to cover Sydney-based events.

Although the scope of her work with JSNWL is rather smaller than she has been used to, Wendi appears to be enjoying the challenge it presents. She has already been in touch with some of our volunteers and will be contacting others in the near future.

*continued from page 5*

usually owned the shop. This particular sort of retailing tells you a lot about women's lives and experiences.

Near Wellington in NSW there is a store which was run by the Knuckey family for a very long time. When interviewed Miss Knuckey said 'Everyone served in the shop from 7 o'clock. Both Dad and I are successful business people. I'd already taken over when I was 15. It was just a bit of luck for Mum and Dad that I was so strong.' She was there every day, 7 days a week, 7 in the morning till 12 o'clock at night. Except during the war when a troop train regularly called in at 6 am, so she opened the door at 6, because they were just opposite the railway station. 'The police asked us if we would like to run the rations for the Aborigines. We accepted the offer and we ran the rations for many years. The Aborigines used to say "Mr Knuckey, have you any small goods, saveloys?" or "Have you got any clothes for a little girl?" Dad would say, "No, I don't stock them" and they would say "Oh well, we'll wait till you get them in." and that's what filled the shop up.' Miss Knuckey spent 65 years behind the counter. She speaks very warmly about her Aboriginal customers. Because of the Aborigines, no Europeans came there and they really became the Aboriginal shop in town. The business has slowly run down, but the shop is still there.

In Kandos, on the western side of the Blue Mountains in NSW, Mrs Kieren opened her sweet shop after her two sons were born. She worked from 9 am till 8 pm, 7 days a week. 'The old residence was in the back and the children were school age when I went into the shop — 4 and 7. I sold groceries, fruit and eggs. There weren't supermarkets in those days and I had

all the trade down that end of town. I bought two fridges and a showcase and I kept up a mixed business for 30 or 40 years. Always ran it by myself. If you run it with your husband, he wants to own it.' The store is still there and although she's now in her 80s, unbelievably, she still runs it.

I hope it's clear from my talk that material culture is very valuable in understanding women's history, but it's also important to remember that material culture always remains essentially inscrutable. We'll never know exactly why Amelia Brown chose to stitch a coat of arms as the central motif in her quilt, or why Elizabeth Ryan died in 1889. Objects do not speak for themselves and there will always be much that we will neither know nor understand about them, but that does not mean they are not a very rich resource.

*Transcription and summary by  
Shirley Jones*

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## THE WEBSITE

We now have a hit button which records the interest shown in our website. An analysis for the month of September 2002 shows the total number of hits as 12,070. With recorded sessions, we found, strangely, that most viewers were from the US (270 sessions) while Australia itself notched up only 180 sessions. However, we are finding our website is drawing in new members.

Of the 18 sessions recorded for Europe, 8 were from Germany, 5 from Hungary, but only 1 from the UK. In Asia, China was the country most interested in us, with 14 of the 36 sessions recorded, Hong Kong the next most interested though a long way behind with only 5. We are slowly drawing international interest!

## NOTES & QUOTES

The following quotes were contributed by Robin Porter who found them in a copy of the *Scrutineer and Berrima District Post*, dated 13 December, 1893.

Women who wish to retain their beauty are advised not to wash, work, worry, read, think, laugh, cry or sleep too much.

The women electors of New Zealand have wisely voted for good men.

Scolding women used to be ducked in a pond in the rude old days. This arrangement has now been abandoned, for the dual reason that there isn't enough water and all women are ducks.

## DONATIONS OF MATERIAL

We thank the following people, organisations and publishing companies for donating material and other items to the Library.

Jean Barnes  
Baiba Berzins  
Irene Coates  
Jan Fraser  
Edith and Lorna Gilmour  
Ahmed Hammoud  
Robyn Hanstock  
Anne Henderson  
Mary Hutchison  
Jane Innes  
Shirley Jones  
Betty Mount-Batten  
Meredith Trevallyn-Jones  
Lesley Walter  
Mary Weston  
YWCA Brisbane  
Mimi Zou

Bantam Books  
Cambridge University Press  
Clouston & Hall  
Department for Women  
Duffy & Snellgrove  
Gary Allen Pty Ltd  
Hale & Iremonger  
Hodder Headline  
Lothian Press  
Pan Macmillan  
Pandanus Books  
Penguin Australia  
Picador  
Random House  
Real Woman Project  
Spinifex Press  
Transworld Publishers  
Unity Press  
University of Queensland Press  
UNSW Press  
Viking Press

Parliamentary Education and  
Community Relations (NSW)

We also thank Jane Pollard and Shirley Jones for donating a much-needed bookcase.

## ADVERTISE THROUGH THE NEWSLETTER

Send your advertisements in writing to our GPO Box address or email or fax them.

Or discuss your requirements with the editor by phoning (02) 9876 3927

### **Space Charges**

Members/friends: 6 x 3 cm = \$15  
6 x 4 = \$20      6 x 5 cm = \$25  
Special rates for  
corporate advertising

## MONETARY DONATIONS

We are grateful to the following people for their donations. Although the number of donations is not great, the amount donated is extremely generous.

Jean Barnes  
Jill Cahn  
Sandra Killick  
Janice Leonard

We especially thank Jean Barnes, who sent us a cheque for \$3750 to go towards work on our archives.

## **A PLEA FOR DONATIONS**

**Even with the help of volunteers,  
keeping the Library operating  
on a daily basis is expensive.  
Please donate what you can and  
help us to achieve our objectives.**

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

### **Suzanne Bellamy**

#### **OPEN STUDIO — 2002**

November 22 - 24, 10 am - 6 pm  
Exhibition, Sale, Studio Visit  
(associated art event of Braidwood's  
Quilt Weekend.

Visit Suzanne's rural print, sculpture and ceramic studio  
Drive 12 km east of Braidwood along King's Highway, turn left at Northanger Road and follow signs for 1 km.

(02) 4842 8000  
sbellamy@goulburn.net.au  
www.skybusiness.com/suzannebellamy

### **WAIG — Lane Cove Women's Action and Information Group**

Weekly functions held at The Meeting House, 25 Stokes Street, Lane Cove.  
Cost \$5 per session. Free child care.  
To book ring 9427 1841

### **Discussion Group - Term 4**

**18 Nov** — Medieval Religious Women  
An introduction to nuns, anchoresses and mystics of the Middle Ages.

**25 Nov** — Book Group: A Discussion on biographies.

**2 Dec** — Asylum Seekers: What happens to women asylum seekers when they arrive in Australia? What should our response be?

**9 Dec** — Book Group: Reading and discussion of Kate Grenville's *Joan Makes History*.

### **Society of Women Writers NSW Literary Luncheons**

Dixson Room, State Library, 12 for  
12.30 p.m. \$25 (non-members),  
\$20 (members)

### **Wednesday, November 13**

Speaker: Steven Herrick, 'Poetry to the Rescue'.

Herrick, an award-winning writer of books for children and teenagers, has actually earned a living as a poet for ten years.

## NEWS OF MEMBERS

**Mary Potter** is now back from a 3-month 4-wheel drive trip in the Kimberley. In a postcard we received while she was away she said 'today we leave our camp on the King Edward River to make a 225 km return diversion to Kalumburu to refill the propane gas. A few weeks ago we had to make a 688 km return diversion to Broome because the sole of my right boot came apart — a vital piece of equipment that had to be replaced. So we are well into 'Kimberley time' (and distance). The really great extent and extreme ruggedness of the northwest country doesn't dawn on one until seen from a low-flying aircraft. It is awesome and beautiful — breathtaking.'

We congratulate **Mimi Zou**, a year-12 student at Sydney Girls High School who has been awarded an Order of Australia Certificate of Commendation for her services to the school and the local community. Her school nominated her for the award, which will be presented to her at NSW Parliament House on November 20th. Mimi, an enthusiastic member of the library, joined after attending the Parliamentary Luncheon in 2001.

We were sorry to hear of the death on 22 September 2002, of member **Vivienne Patricia Graham**. Patricia joined the library in 1992 and continued her membership until 2000. She has left a small bequest of books to the Library

## MEMBERSHIP/VOLUNTEER FORM

Name .....(Ms/Mrs/Miss)

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Tel (h) ..... (w) ..... Fax .....

Email ..... Date ...../...../.....

Member \$45  Concessional \$20 (unwaged/pensioner)

Donor member \$100  Life member \$500

Organisation \$100

I wish to make a donation of \$ ..... (Donations over \$2 are tax deductible)

I enclose a cheque/cash/money order for \$ .....

OR Please charge \$ ..... to my  Bankcard  Mastercard  Visa

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date .....

Signature .....

I was introduced to the Library by .....

**Auto Debit An Auto Debit Authorisation** saves you time and trouble and saves JSNWL time and money on processing your membership.

I authorise JSNWL to charge this, and all future membership renewals as they fall due, to the credit card number given on this form.

I authorise JSNWL to deduct the amount of \$ ..... annually as a donation.

Signature .....

### Volunteers Required

**I would like to help with** (tick where appropriate)

Fact Files  Oral history  Web pages  JSNWL functions

Book reviews  Newsletter mailout  Tapestry project

## WOMEN'S RECORDS

Jessie Street National Women's Library wishes to contact women with archival material of interest to other women.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Tel (h) ..... (w) ..... Fax .....

Email (please print) .....

Do you hold  records of an organisation or association (if so please name)

.....  
 personal papers  other (please specify)

Please return forms to

**Jessie Street National Women's Library GPO Box 2656 Sydney NSW 2001**