



New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (Inc.)

**CANTERBURY BRANCH,
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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2012

NEXT BRANCH MEETING

There will be no branch meeting this month because of graduations and the next meeting is the very important annual Awards evening

Venue: St Barnabas Church Hall, Fendalton

Date: Wednesday 23rd May at 7.30pm.

Those students who have been granted Branch awards, including CFGW Trust Awards, Sadie Balkind Awards and Travel Awards will be speaking to us about their research and studies.

Supper will be served and members are strongly encouraged to attend this evening and support these outstanding young women as they tell us about their studies.

There will be more information about the speakers and their topics in the next newsletter.

REPORT OF LAST MEETING

Last month a group of about 20 members gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of the branch. They enjoyed looking at the photos and hearing about, for instance, the early days of academic regalia hire when members made the hoods themselves and the regalia was stored in members' homes and even, at one stage, in a disused wash house in Cashel St. The only NZ international Conference which was held in Christchurch in 1986 was recalled and Jean Hammond spoke of her gratitude in receiving the Suffrage Scholarship in 1993. Photos of the event are on the back page of this newsletter.

Canterbury is not the only branch to have reached 90 this year and we have received the following invitation to Wellington's celebration. Any branch member is most welcome to attend.

NZFGW Wellington Branch 90th Birthday Celebration

The New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (NZFGW)

Wellington Branch is going to celebrate its 90th Birthday at a Parliamentary Reception in the Grand Hall

on Tuesday 29 May, 5.30 – 7pm.

All members of your organisation are invited. Parliamentary Rules require that the names and addresses of all attendees are supplied before issuing formal invitations. Formal invitations will be sent to those who respond by **20 April** by mail (to the Treasurer, address below) or email (to Helen Hughes hrhughes@xtra.co.nz.) and have paid **\$30 per person** by **cheque** to: The Treasurer, Box 2006, Wellington 6140 **Direct Credit** to Westpac 03 0518 0180237 00 with Particulars: *Your Name* Reference: *Reception* entered for the NZFGW statement.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to new member Anna Thorpe. Anna is a PhD student in the Department of Psychological Medicine at the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Some dates for your diary

Open Day. On **Saturday 23 June** there will be an **Open Day** with a finger food lunch at the **Regalia Hire Rooms, 9 Creyke Rd.** This will be an opportunity for all members to visit the new premises and find out about all the hard work that goes into contributing to the success of the graduations and raising the money needed to fund the numerous scholarships and awards administered by the Trust Board.

The **Canterbury History Foundation** is holding its annual lecture on Sunday 22 July. The speaker is to be **Jenny May**, architectural historian and heritage planner.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

New Horizons for Women

Supporting education, innovation and research that benefits women

2012 Award Applications now open

- Second Chance Education and Training Awards – *for women over 27, with no previous tertiary qualifications, who are enrolled in tertiary education*
- Research Awards – *for research projects that benefit New Zealand women and girls*
- Opportunity Awards – *for a women who are changing career direction and entering a field that is non-traditional for women*
- The Sonja Davies Peace Award – *for projects that advance the cause of peace.*
- The SROW Elsie Locke Award – *for a woman who is writing or studying at a post graduate level in an area that reflects the interests of Elsie Locke.*

Applicants must be NZ Citizens (or have NZ permanent resident status) and be living in New Zealand.

To Apply

Application forms, which also have the eligibility criteria, are available from our Website <http://www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz/awards/apply-for-awards/> . If you have difficulty downloading the forms email enquiries@newhorizonsforwomentrust.org.nz

REGALIA HIRE REPORT (JEAN SHARFE)

The first of our three major graduations, CPIT, took place on 30 March. From our point of view this was a successful event. Several unsolicited comments were received on how smoothly the process of handing out regalia was, which was very gratifying. Our major concern for the upcoming graduations is how we will handle the registration files if the weather prevents us from using the tent, kindly supplied by Kay and David Holyoake. Returns for CPIT also went well although a few people had not read their handbooks and tried to return to Creyke Road, which of course was closed

Arrangements for Lincoln are in place. This will be a smallish graduation, about 420 in total divided into two ceremonies. Our main concern with Lincoln is getting the regalia back on Friday evening so we can work over the weekend to get ready for handing out for Canterbury on Monday 23rd.

Once again late orders are a problem for Canterbury graduation. We are not accepting any further applications until Tuesday 17th when we will accept orders in person between 10am-noon. Mail orders are processed as we have time. We think there are about 100 still to come.

It has been necessary to get Ballantyne's to remake about 40 BE hoods, which are no longer used, as BE Hons hoods for which there is an increasing demand. A new LLB Hons hood has also been introduced this year and we are having 17 LLB hoods converted for this degree.

THE NGAIO MARSH LECTURE 21012

Eric Hooper
THEATRE'S CHANGING FACE
The text and the Net

Sunday 22 April at 5-6pm Christ's College Theatre
Tickets are \$15 and may be obtained from Philippa Bates
Phone 3588763 or email pbates@paradise.net.nz

NZFGW NATIONAL PRESIDENT 2012-2015

The next President and National Executive are to be chosen from the Wellington, Manawatu and Hawkes Bay Branches. Manawatu and Hawkes Bay are not making any nominations for President; however two members from the Wellington Branch are standing – Ann Pomeroy and Joy Dunsheath. Wellington will hold an election shortly to decide on who will be the next NZFGW President.

From Dot Page, National President

Earlier this month the UN Commission on the Status of Women

<<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm>> failed to adopt agreed conclusions at its 56th session on the basis of safeguarding "traditional values" at the expense of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women. Various women's organisations have outlined their concerns in a statement which will be submitted to the UN Member States, CSW and other relevant UN human rights and development entities.

The statement may be downloaded from <<http://www.apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/Womens-Statementagainst-safeguarding-traditional-values.pdf>> and may be endorsed at

<<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dEtJcGNUbExLNExreTh2UHpHai1QRF E6MQ#gid=0>> .

INTERNATIONAL MATTERS

Claire Matthewson, CIR, National Executive, matthewson.claire@gmail.com

Who are we, what do we want to achieve, and why? Are we willing to be radical enough to survive?

From 22 – 28 February, the IFUW Board, Committees and observers met in Geneva. Over the four days, a group of 40 members participated in a strategic planning process to help answer the challenging questions "Who are we, what do we want to achieve, and why?" Outcomes underlined the urgency with which the organisation needs to change to be effective. Membership – our greatest asset – is declining worldwide while the number of potential members is increasing. Many graduate women have never heard of IFUW and even some existing members are unaware of the work that is happening within the organisation.

IFUW invites members worldwide to read the Blog about Day One of the strategic planning session and warmly welcomes your comments and input. Please visit <http://www.ifuw-forums.org/blog/2012/02/28/are-we-willing-to-be-radical-enough-to-survive/>

Dorothy Meyer (North Shore) has recently blogged this site. Graduate Women Wellington already in February had announced a major 2012 initiative to develop a Five-year Strategic Plan for the Branch. This will involve the Committee, general members and wider consultation with others. The current National Executive's commitment during the 2009-2012 triennium to make real progress on our organisational restructuring is also a direct response to survival challenges.

PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

The Public Health Association of New Zealand is pleased to announce its 2012 conference: **Equity from the start – valuing our children**, to be held 3-5 September in Wellington. This is New Zealand's premiere public health event of the year.

A number of high-profile speakers have already been confirmed, including Sir Michael Marmot, Chair of the World Health Organization's Commission on Social Determinants of Health.

The conference will feature the usual wide variety of presentations, workshops and panel discussions around equity for children and other important public health themes. A variety of innovative gateway events will also be held on 3 September prior to the opening of the conference.

Find out more about speakers, conference streams, sponsorship opportunities and submitting abstracts at <http://conference.pha.org.nz>.

**The New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women
invites you to attend its
29th Triennial Conference 2012**

***Heading for a Hundred – Strong Convictions,
Collective Action***

Our theme reflects pride in our past and plans for the future as we move towards our centenary.

The conference will be held in the St David Lecture Theatre Complex, University of Otago, Dunedin, from 5 to 7 October 2012.

In an exciting initiative, we shall be working in tandem with the National Council of Women of New Zealand, whose conference will be at the same venue over that weekend. Business sessions will be separate but we shall link up for some high profile speakers and for social occasions.

Please join us. Details of the programme and accommodation will be available shortly.

NZFGW, P.O Box 6566 Dunedin North, Dunedin 9059, New Zealand, email:
cathytimps@xtra.co.nz

First of the Few: an Unsuitable Degree for a Woman? From Dot Page

My longstanding research interest in our academic forbears has led over the years to many enquiries as to whether a particular woman, often a family member, was the first to achieve a particular degree or enter a particular profession. One such enquiry came through our website last year. The niece of Jean Isabel Paul, who had died recently in Tasmania, wondered if she had been one of the earliest New Zealand women graduates. All graduates of the University of New Zealand (that is to 1961) are listed alphabetically at <http://shadowsoftime.co.nz/university.html> so it was not difficult to ascertain that Jean Paul had graduated M Com from Canterbury in 1938 and BA from Auckland in 1949 - in contrast to the order the family had thought she had achieved the degrees.

There were a few women Bachelors of Commerce by 1938, but Jean Paul proved to be the first to go on to a Master's. She did not use her commerce training in the business world, however. She became a teacher, first specialising in commercial practice in Westport, then teaching more general subjects, often including mathematics, in Auckland and later Tasmania. Widowed just fifteen years after her marriage, she used her teaching career to help educate her two daughters, both of whom hold doctorates.

With so many of our young members working towards their PhD, the question of who was the first woman to gain the degree in New Zealand surfaces periodically. It did so last year when the postgraduate residential college at the University of Otago, Abbey College, decided to name a reading room after Margaret Di Menna. She had gained the degree from Otago in 1954, the first woman to do so through the University of New Zealand. Her thesis on 'Yeasts of the human body, their nature and relationship' was in the evolving discipline of microbiology.

The year 1954 may seem late for the first woman to gain a doctorate from the University of New Zealand, but the establishment of the degree had been far from smooth. The University first suggested it in a letter to the Premier in 1906, but no action was taken until after World War One. It was part of a whole raft of initiatives in this period of post-war expansion and optimism. The University, as its historian J.C. Beaglehole put it, was 'intensifying and expanding the scope of its work' in a process that included reforming the BA degree, raising the age of matriculation and establishing postgraduate scholarships in Arts, Science and Law. The PhD however, established in 1926, was adjudged a failure and discontinued in 1930, after the award of just nine degrees, because of the difficulty in setting a uniform examination standard. It was only in 1944 that the PhD was reinstated, one aspect of an enhanced emphasis on research that was a key feature of the post-war period. It remained uncommon until the 1960s.

Margaret Di Menna, therefore, with her MSc in 1948, and PhD in 1954, was by no means late in the field. Her earliest publications appeared while she was still a graduate student and she has remained an active, highly respected and frequently cited researcher, with a formidable list of publications, ever since. From her base at the Ruakura Soil Research Station of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (as it was for most of her time there) the flow of articles kept coming. To single out a couple only: in 1954 a study of 'Non-pathogenic yeasts of the human skin and alimentary tracts' was published in the *Journal of Pathology and Bacteriology*: it was reproduced in the online version of the journal in 2005. Her work in McMurdo Sound led to an important article 'Ecological investigation of yeasts in Antarctica soil', in a book she co-edited and which was published by the American Geophysical Union in 1978. She was lead researcher in articles that appeared almost annually. In 2006 her colleagues paid tribute in their newsletter to 'Agresearch's 82 year old scientist', still hard at work.

Speaking at the naming of the reading room at Abbey College, Dr Di Menna dismissed her pioneering role as 'just a matter of me being there at the time', but there is no reason at all to accept that modest assessment.

From other branches

North Shore recently listened to Professor Jenny Dixon who gave an overview of housing issues in New Zealand. She said that in NZ we need 20,000 to 30,000 new houses a year to meet current demand, but current construction is below 15,000 a year. Rates of home ownership are falling. Between \$11-22 billion will be needed to fix the leaky homes crisis. Building regulations are fragmented. In Christchurch 10,000 homes were damaged placing huge demands on housing in the Christchurch area. Auckland is expected to experience 60% population growth, yet has a 90,500 housing shortfall. The urban city limits are closely controlled and the resultant restricted supply of land results in rising prices. It now costs 5.5 times the average salary to buy a house and incomes have lagged since the global financial crisis. Research is needed to monitor housing markets in urban areas and to guide solutions to the major challenges ahead.



The 90th Birthday Cake



Jean Hammond cutting the cake



Members chatting and looking through some of the historical records