



New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (Inc.)

**CANTERBURY BRANCH,
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NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2012

NEXT BRANCH MEETING

There is no branch meeting in August and the next meeting will be held on **Thursday 27 September at 7.30pm in the Staff Room at Rangi Ruru**. The speakers will be some more of our award winners and those of you who missed the evening in May will now get a chance to hear about the areas of studies of these young students. There will be more information about the speakers and their topics in the next newsletter.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of Canterbury Branch of NZFGW will be held on **Thursday 25 October 2011 at 7.30 pm** at Rangi Ruru School, Hewitts Rd.

The business of the meeting will be:

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous AGM
2. Presentation of Annual Reports and Financial Statements
3. Election of Officers
4. General Business

Below is a nomination form for the new committee and new members are always most welcome. If you wish to be nominated, or to nominate someone (with their consent of course), please fill in the form below or contact Barbara Peddie 377 0246 326 5231 or Geraldine Murphy 383 3958 and we will arrange nomination.

NOMINATION FORM 2012/2013 COMMITTEE

We nominate _____

for the position of _____

Nominated by _____
(name and signature)

Seconded by _____
(name and signature)

I agree to be nominated _____
(signature)

NOMINATION FORMS TO THE SECRETARY, PO BOX 6733, UPPER
RICCARTON, CHRISTCHURCH BY 18 OCTOBER.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Sadly, the death occurred recently of our immediate past president, **Shirley C'Ailceta**. Shirley was an active and enthusiastic member with a particular interest in Public Affairs and will be greatly missed. The following obituary was prepared by committee members and read at her funeral.

Shirley C'Ailceta joined the Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women in March 2006 and quickly became involved as a member of our Tuesday morning 'Basement Team' at the Arts Centre. Her first job when she joined the Tuesday group was to catalogue the Sadie Balkind collection of books where she used her organisation and book-binding skills, as she repaired the bindings where needed.

Shirley's enthusiasm for the ideals of the Federation led her to join the Branch's General Committee in October 2006 and the following year she was elected to the position of Vice-president. In October 2009, Shirley represented Canterbury at the NZFGW Triennial Council in Auckland prior to assuming the Branch Presidency at the AGM later that month.

As president, Shirley significant contributions to the branch and was always looking for ways to make the organization relevant for members, particularly younger members. Her enduring interest in current events saw her revive the Public Affairs discussion group which had been languishing for some time. She was very concerned about the Government's cuts to Adult and Community Education and under her direction, the group wrote strongly worded letters to the four Christchurch National MPs as well as to the Hon John Key and other Government Ministers. She also spoke on the topic at the NZFGW Conference in Auckland. Other issues that Shirley was responsible for bringing to the group's attention were the role of libraries as places of lifelong learning and directions in early childhood education. She also ensured that our branch made a positive contribution to NZFGW activities. We were all sat down one Tuesday morning and firmly told to complete a NZFGW questionnaire!

If asked to nominate any one contribution that could be regarded as Shirley's legacy to Canterbury NZFGW however, it would have to be our website. It took her a couple of years of determined effort to ensure that we developed an on-line presence, but she did accomplish it during her presidential term.

Another member, **Iris Orchard QSM**, also passed away recently at the age of 92. Iris graduated from Canterbury University College in 1943 with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and had a long professional career as a Chartered Accountant in public practice. She joined the Branch in 1944, served on the committee as Treasurer and then became the Honorary Auditor, a position she held until the mid 1980s. Iris was also involved with hosting international students and was an active member and financial advisor to organizations such as Zonta, the NZ Antarctic Society, YHA and various sports clubs.

CONFERENCE REMITS

The following remits are to be presented at the NZFGW Conference in October. Members are welcome to comment and amendments may be put forward at conference.

Remit 1. On Quality and Effectiveness of Teachers.

Graduate Women North Shore

Rationale:

In the recent standoff with the schools the Government's stated intention was to do a trade-off on class sizes in order to free up money to provide further professional development for teachers - to better the 'quality/effectiveness of teachers'. Putting the class size issue aside, what was not discussed or made clear is what the Government means by 'quality of teachers'.

In 1991 NZFGW adopted a resolution that expresses concern about the Government's policy to remove the requirements that teachers be qualified, trained and registered.

The North Shore Branch believes that NZFGW, needs to have a policy that calls on the Government to specify what it means by a 'quality teacher' and proposes the following resolution.

That NZFGW calls on the government to specify what is meant by 'an effective teacher' by identifying:

- *The academic qualifications teachers need to have;*
- *The recognised institutions that provide the training programmes that trainee teachers need to complete;*
- *The professional knowledge and skills that teachers need in programme planning, classroom management, teaching, and assessment;*
- *The ongoing training that will be provided to ensure that teachers continue to improve their teaching skills, develop expertise in their curriculum areas and keep up to date with new developments in their field;*
- *The supervision that will be provided for teachers to ensure that standards are met and maintained;*
- *The systems that will be in place for the support and monitoring of individual teacher performance.*

Remit 2 on The Alcohol Law Reform Bill and the Harm caused by Excessive Consumption of Alcohol

NZFGW (Otago)

That, in view of the vast harm caused by alcohol in New Zealand society, particularly to women, young people and families

1) NZFGW write to the Minister of Justice, expressing disappointment at the slow progress through the House of the Alcohol Law Reform Bill and the changes made to it that will lessen its impact, and urging her:

(i) To advocate for a high priority to be placed on this Bill

(ii) To rule out further changes that weaken the intentions of the Bill and go against the wishes of the majority of those who made submissions on it.

2) NZFGW write to the Minister of Women's Affairs asking her to consider the increasing harm caused to women by the excessive consumption of alcohol in New Zealand when debating and voting on the Alcohol Law Reform Bill.

3) NZFGW encourage branches to write to their local bodies asking them to tighten liquor controls within their areas.

4) NZFGW encourage branches to write to local Tertiary Institutions citing the serious harm to young female students caused by excessive alcohol consumption and asking what their Institution is doing to address this matter.

Remit 3 on Proposed Restrictions on Allowances to Post Graduate Students from 2013.

NZFGW Executive

That NZFGW urge the Minister of Tertiary Education to reconsider the changes to Student Allowances, effective from 2013, particularly those removing postgraduate student eligibility and exemptions to the 200-week lifetime limit.

Notes:

The Government's 2012 Budget included the following cohort of changes relating to Student Loans and Allowances from 1 January 2013:

1. Freezing the parental income threshold for student allowances until 2016
2. Removing exemptions to the 200-week lifetime limit on student allowance
3. Removing postgraduate eligibility for the student allowance (except for four-year honours degrees)
4. Increasing the student loan repayment rate from 10% to 12%.

Items 2 and 3, which generally remove access to the student allowance for those in postgraduate study, would seem to run counter to the need for New Zealand to develop a strong and innovative knowledge economy. Pre-budget announcements predicted that the student allowance cuts will affect approximately 5000 students in the first year.

People in long-term degrees or postgraduate studies will no longer be able to seek an extension to their allowance. Students studying medicine, for instance, will experience a seven-year cap on their loans and a four-year cap on their allowances. Students in long-term degrees will remain eligible to borrow more heavily

from the interest-free student loan scheme. However, given Items 1 and 4 of the above changes, increasing student debt as well as the required percentage rate for repayment, hardly seems conducive to the domestic retention of graduates as they enter the workforce.

Loss of access to the student allowance is likely to affect female postgraduate students in particular. Many female postgraduates are studying while supporting a young family; making it more difficult to fund that study cannot help but impact negatively on their choice of postgraduate study.

The changes may well also discourage students from lower socio- economic backgrounds from taking up a longer-term professional course after completing a general degree. Under the new system, people who gain entry this way (20% - 25% of medical students, for instance) would have their allowance cut very early in their training.

OTHER COURSES/TALKS

Workers Educational Association

What's going on in the world of finance?

Starts 22 August, 10.30-11.30am, 4 Wednesdays, at the Canterbury WEA, 59 Gloucester Street - All welcome \$16 or \$4 per session

- 22 Aug **Defusing the debt bomb: Lessons from the Global Financial Crisis** –
Raf Manji, Director, Sustento Institute
- 29 Aug **Accounting for Asset Sales** – Bob Miller, Department of Accounting and Information
Systems, University of Canterbury
- 5 Sept **What lies behind the Consumer Price Index (CPI)?** – Geoffrey Naylor
- 12 Sept **Socially responsible investing** – Dr Jędrzej Białkowski, Senior Lecturer, Economics and
finance Department, University of Canterbury

Plans for the Rebuild

Continues 22 August, 1.30-2.30pm, at the Canterbury WEA, 59 Gloucester Street - All welcome - gold coin donation

- 22 Aug **A 100 Day Housing Plan for Christchurch** –Glenn Livingstone, City Councillor,
Burwood/Pegasus Ward
- 29 Aug **Access to Where and for What Activities? The Christchurch Rebuild and Revival** – Chris
Kissling, Emeritus Professor of Transport Studies, Lincoln University
- 5 Sept Ariana Smith, Senior Advisor, Christchurch Central Development Unit

Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement – Philip Ferguson

Saturday 25 August, 1-4.30pm, at the Canterbury WEA, 59 Gloucester Street - All welcome \$14

This course surveys the Jim Crow period of segregation in the United States, the rise and evolution of the civil rights movement, the role played by Martin Luther King and the evolution of his politics, including the relationship of King and Malcolm X. Dr Philip Ferguson currently teaches history and world affairs in Bridging Programmes at the University of Canterbury.

For further information or to enrol, phone 366 0285, or see cwea.org.nz

New Horizons for Women Trust

Supporting education, innovation and research that benefits women

Invitation to the Christchurch Awards Ceremony

The **New Horizons for Women Trust** warmly invites you to
the Christchurch Awards ceremony on
Saturday September 8, 2.00 – 3.30pm
at the Macmillan Brown Centre
University of Canterbury.
(Entrance through the Arts Road)

This year we are delighted to be able to present 4 Second Chance awards and 2 Research
awards to very deserving and inspiring women

Refreshments will be served

The awards ceremony is jointly hosted by
PACIFICA Women and the Zonta Club of Christchurch North

We look forward to sharing this special occasion with you

Please RSVP by Wednesday 5 September to marg.lees@xtra.co.nz, Phone 03 358 4747

Charter Schools

The implementation of charter schools is an important educational undertaking with the stated outcome of raising the educational achievement of those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Education for empowerment is a central pillar of the IFUW programme for action, so of significance for NZFGW. Many questions have been asked about what is a 'charter' school and why we might need them. This initial summary will address these questions using government sources.

On August 2 2012, the Education Minister Hekia Parata and Associate Education Minister John Banks announced the framework for the New Zealand Model of Charter School¹. They will be initiated in 2014 and be called: Partnership Schools/ Kura Hourua Initiative. Essentially the model of a charter school will be used but they will be designed to work in New Zealand's education system to address the needs of those who are not reaching their potential in the current structure. The intended government priorities for these schools are: "Māori, Pasifika, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with special education needs"².

Charter schools are a collaborative venture between the education, business and community sectors to provide new opportunities for students to achieve education success. As described by Mr Banks: "they will be a partnership between the Crown and the school's sponsor and between the sponsor and the community"¹. Research from overseas has been evaluated to provide recommendations for the NZ system with a focus on their potential to lift academic achievement from minority or low socio-economic background.

*"Partnership Schools/ Kura Hourua are fully-funded schools outside the state system, accountable to the Crown for raising achievement through a contract to deliver a range of specified school-level targets. They have more freedom over how they operate, so they can innovate to better meet the needs of their students, and achieve their targets. This includes greater flexibility over curriculum, qualifications, employment, hours of operation, and school leadership."*²

Legislative changes will be introduced to Parliament later this year in order that these schools can be introduced. The rationale for their implementation is that they will be effective in engaging learners who are struggling to meet the governments targets related to NCEA levels (see¹). The plan is to bring together the education, business and community sectors to work in innovative ways to meet the learning needs of these students.

This sounds positive so what are the concerns? The following is a summary of some issues that have been raised. The Partnership Schools/ Kura Hourua:

- Could be governed and run by private companies to make a profit
- Could employ unqualified teachers and set their own salaries
- Could take over, or compete with, local schools
- May do worse or no better than mainstream public schools ie. there is no evidence from overseas experiences that they would improve New Zealand schooling
- Are strongly associated with competition and productivity, which are concepts associated with neo-liberalism and with ACT party ideology, so an interesting question that arises is: how will their success be measured?

There are other issues that are important to consider, including the divide between what teachers want and what government is promoting. There are many educational arguments about this venture and it is hoped that all NZFGW branches will contribute to a discussion on this planned innovation by sharing expertise and responding to government announcements. (NB: The Otago Branch already has a discussion document that it is happy to share with others.)

¹<http://beehive.govt.nz/release/ministers-announce-framework-partnership-schoolskura-hourua>

²Partnership Schools/ Kura Hourua Initiative: Working Group <http://partnershipschools.education.govt.nz/FAQs>

NZFGW TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE UPDATE Lorraine Isaacs, Local Arrangements Committee

NZFGW's Triennial Conference, 5-7 October in Dunedin, is shaping up to be a must-attend event.

Its theme is “Heading for a Hundred – Strong Convictions, Collective Action” and some stellar keynote speakers strengthen that theme: Dr Eileen Fegan, consultant in Gender, Legal and Women’s Human Rights (Formerly lecturer in Law at Oxford University and Queen’s University Belfast); Linda Sissons, CEO of WELTEC Polytechnic; and Professor Nicola Peart, Professor of Law, Otago University.

Those who were inspired by Eileen Fegan’s address at the IFUW Conference in Mexico City in 2012 are delighted that she has agreed to come.

The St David’s Lecture Theatre Complex is a great venue for this conference, which is combining with the National Council of Women’s Conference to make for a really special occasion. And it’s not all talk – breathtaking Larnach Castle is where the Saturday night dinner will be, an appropriate follow up to the Mayoral reception the night before.

Early Bird registration at \$175 (excluding Conference dinner) is a steal; after 14 September, registration costs \$210. You must book by 20 September, so hurry and get your registration form from: www.nzfgw.org.nz/conference2012.html or contact the branch secretary on 3833 958.

From Meghan McIlwain, NZFGW Fellow

(Meghan was awarded a Fellowship in October last year. Her PhD project aims to determine biomarkers of treatment-resistant schizophrenia.)

At the end of 2011, I completed the Doctoral Academic Career Module provided by the University of Auckland. This module is designed to encourage doctoral students to undertake an academic career and provide a foundation for their first post-doctoral position. Only twenty doctoral students from across the University are inducted into this module each year and I felt very fortunate to be selected. This was a fantastic opportunity for me as a postgraduate student and I received excellent feedback from the course coordinator. I hope to teach the module again this year along with a couple of lectures that I have been asked to give for the undergraduate students.

Recruitment has certainly been the rate limiting step in my study and I am told that this is often the case. During my PhD, I’ve encountered many setbacks that have delayed recruitment, including lengthy (but very necessary) locality approval processes, waiting on MRI scanner hardware to arrive (or be relocated to a new building) and a patient population that can at times be difficult to engage with due to feelings of paranoia or other residual symptoms. I think that the wonderful by-product of doing a PhD is that you end up learning a lot about yourself and how you cope with adversity and uncertainty. A PhD is a marathon of motivation and I’m constantly reminded of the importance of resilience, flexibility and perspective. Fortunately, I think I have been able to cultivate these qualities and that is why I continue to enjoy the challenge of my research.

Since the beginning of the year, I have recruited a further 18 participants into my research project, which aims to determine biomarkers of treatment resistant schizophrenia. This makes a total of 61 participants in my study and the target is 80. Approximately five patients that I recruited were not able to complete the tests that we administer as part of our study and indeed the MRI scan is the most challenging part. Participants are required to lie quietly in the scanner for 1 hour and 15 minutes. This would be difficult for many people, particularly those who are claustrophobic. For the patients in my study who have not been able to complete scanning this has usually been due to accelerated motor behavior, which makes the images blurry and unusable. I hope to reach my target of 80 completed data sets by the end of the year.

I have completed first-level analysis of my proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy data (1H-MRS) for the participants I have recruited so far. This type of brain scan allows compounds of interest to be studied *in vivo*. I have been invited to present my preliminary findings at a New Zealand Schizophrenia Research Group (NZSRG) meeting, where I will formally acknowledge the support and the fellowship that I have received from the NZFGW. I presented at this conference last year and received an NZSRG research award. This year I have been asked to be on the NZSRG executive committee as an early career researcher.

Data analysis of my diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) data has also progressed considerably in the last six months. DTI scans allow you to study the integrity and structure of white matter tracts in the brain. I attended the FSL (FMRIB Software Library) course in Auckland in May 2012 provided by the Functional MRI of the Brain (FMRIB) group at The University of Oxford. These researchers are world leaders in the analysis of MRI images and attending this course allowed me to make connections and show these experts my own data to receive customised analysis advice.

When I’m not working on my PhD I continue to participate in service oriented activities at the University including the “Meet a Scientist” programme for secondary school students. I am also a member of the North Shore Graduate Women committee.

I hope to complete recruitment and data analysis by the end of 2012. I intend to present my results at the International Congress on Schizophrenia Research in Orlando, Florida, USA in April 2013.