



# GRADUATE WOMEN CANTERBURY

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## NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2017

### REPORT OF THE MIDWINTER LUNCH AND SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Twenty one branch members braved the very wet weather and enjoyed a very pleasant lunch and catch-up at the George Hotel after which a Special General Meeting was held as follows.

The business of the meeting was to discuss the future of the branch and to make a decision on whether or not it should continue to operate.

Helen Heddell, Branch President welcomed members and explained the reasons for calling the meeting. Firstly, it is highly unlikely that a branch committee will be formed at the AGM in October. Secondly, there is the failure to attract younger members and the increasing unwillingness of present members to attend meetings. As a result it appears the time has now come to close the branch.

Jill van de Geer, the Chair of the Trust assured members that the very successful regalia hire operation and the Trust would continue in existence without change. The Trust operates under its own separate Constitution and is no longer dependent on the Branch.

Bernadette Devonport, the National President explained that connection with Graduate Women need not be lost as there is the opportunity to become independent members of the national body and thus be able to continue to contribute to the work of the organisation. She further commented that younger graduates no longer see the need for a structure with formal meetings and rules and prefer to share their areas of concern through social media such as Facebook. The national organisation is encouraging this with two Facebook pages in existence.

**After discussion it was moved (Helen Heddell) and seconded (Bernadette Devonport) that the Canterbury Branch of the Federation of Graduate Women Inc. be wound up.**

**The motion was carried with one abstention.**

*The Constitution states: (20.1) The Society must be wound up if the Society, at a General Meeting of its Members, passes a resolution by a simple majority requiring the Society to be wound up and the resolution is confirmed at a subsequent General Meeting called for that purpose and held not earlier than 30 days after the date on which the resolution so to be confirmed is passed.*

Therefore it was agreed that a further General Meeting would be held at the time of the Annual General Meeting in mid-October.

The Branch funds will be disposed of as stated in Rule 20.2 and suggestions of suitable beneficiaries are welcomed.

*In the event of the Society being wound up, the surplus assets after payment of the Society's liabilities and the expenses of the winding up, will be distributed in accordance with the decision of a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.*

Further to the decision on closing the branch, so that members may continue to keep up their connection with one another, the present committee has decided to organise two functions to be held next year, with the first to be in February. There will be more information closer to the time.

## **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN NEWS**

### **Report of NCW Branch Meeting July 2017 – Marlene Smith**

Bernadette and I attended the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

The wording of the 5 proposed remits for the NCW NZ AGM in September was discussed and some amendments suggested. These remits will be discussed by the branch at the next meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August. Briefly, the remits are:

1. Universal basic income
2. Gender representation in Parliament
3. Consent education
4. Mental health following a natural disaster
5. Pay equity for women with disabilities

Plans are progressing for the NCW NZ Christchurch 100<sup>th</sup> celebration to be held in conjunction with the NCW NZ Annual Conference and AGM here in Christchurch at Rydges Latimer Hotel on Friday & Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> September. A fund raising venture is the sale of flash drives (suitable for attaching to a key ring) for \$10 each.

Funds are needed for the Kate Sheppard Memorial Fund.

An action item, A Constitution for Aotearoa New Zealand, was discussed in buzz groups. Responses are required by 18<sup>th</sup> August, so they can be collated into the NCW NZ submission. The final date for submissions by the public is 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and can be done via email or the website: [www.constitutionaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.constitutionaotearoa.org.nz)

## **From the National President's Desk**

Dear Members,

In the August meeting of National Executive we focussed on the Next Steps for GWNZ and some aspects of the AGM. However, the reports from

National Executive convenors and branch presidents were also discussed. Sita Venkateswar, our Convenor International Relations, has established contact with the Nepal Association of Graduate Women and we hope to be able to support the association in its work to further education for Nepali women and girls. The Manawatu branch is particularly active in this area. As you have seen in her articles, Pip Jamieson, or Public Affairs Convenor, is acting on our behalf in coordinating responses to the Pay Equity legislation and the proposed education changes in the school decile system. There is much to do in this area and GWNZ is working closely with NCW NZ in staying alert to education issues.

If you are interested you may wish to participate in our facebook discussions. They are producing some lively comments.

### **AGM**

Advance notice: Our 2017 AGM will be in Christchurch on Saturday 28 October. A draft agenda will be out before the end of this month. However, the AGM will be short and just a few hours in the middle on the Saturday.

### **Next Steps for GWNZ**

We are progressing well on our discussion on the next steps for GWNZ. Thank you to those who commented on my item in the last newsletter. National Executive is beginning discussions on the next phase, which will involve you again, and we welcome comments. We will be taking the 'what matters' items and determining outcomes, measuring indicators and key action steps. Over the couple of months to our AGM, here in Christchurch on 28 October, through branches, the Independent Members network, Facebook and this newsletter, we shall be showing you these items and encouraging your responses. Then, at the AGM, we shall have workshops that will finalise our programme for the coming few years.

No matter what, GWNZ remains active here and overseas advocating on behalf of members eager to see continuing progress in the educational opportunities for women and girls.

***Bernadette Devonport***

# WANTED:

**Members with expertise in facilitating discussions to lead the discussion on GWNZ's Next Steps project. Interested? Please contact the National President for further information!**

## Next steps in GWNZ

We are almost half way in our two year term for the current National Executive and Strategic Plan 2016-2018 and this is a good time to reflect on what GWNZ is doing. Our work in providing awards and scholarships for women in tertiary education is ongoing and remains as strong as ever, as is our interest and commentary on issues affecting women in education here in New Zealand and overseas. However, there are, and should be, changes in how we operate as an organisation, so National Executive is focussing on ensuring that our voice in the community is simple, clear and united.

To that end, National Executive is asking you for your comments on the results of our reflections. We had no difficulty determining our purpose and what matters to women and education.

### Our purpose

Empowering women and girls through education, here in New Zealand and overseas.

### What matters

1. *Quality/effective knowledge & lifelong education access for all women and girls*
2. *Educated women and girls having a well-informed voice that is respected & listened to*
3. *Women and girls acting together to make a positive difference in their communities that follows enabling access to education*

### How do we know when we have achieved our purpose and achieved what matters?

At this stage in our reflections we are considering these measures:

#### Women and girls-

are aware of the need to act together to make a positive difference on education issues in

their communities; participate in lifelong learning value and participate in tertiary education network to research and speak on education issues

### Timeline

During August we encourage you in your branches and through social media to think about the outcomes we wish to achieve. We shall be sending you a document very shortly that sets out more fully what we are wishing to focus on for the second half of our current National Executive term (and provide the starting point for the next Strategic Plan). At our AGM in October we will finalise the results of our reflections and consultation.

## GWNZ NEEDS TO HEAR FROM YOU

"It seems obvious that a group of people with diverse individual expertise would be better than a homogeneous group at solving complex, non-routine problems. [...] This is not only because people with different backgrounds bring new information. Simply interacting with individuals who are different forces group members to prepare better, to anticipate alternative viewpoints and to expect that reaching consensus will take effort"

[<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter>].

The New Zealand Institute of Directors [IOD] notes, "Boards are at their best when they are distinguished by diversity of thought and capability. The Institute of Directors in New Zealand (IoD) has long held that diversity of thought and perspective in the boardroom improves business performance and innovation. We know diversity is important to boards – over 60% of directors told us diversity was a key consideration in making appointments in 2014 and 2015"

[<https://www.iod.org.nz/Portals/0/Governance%20Resources/Getting%20on%20board%20with%20iversity.pdf>]. And in the same way the strength of GWNZ is through the diversity, experiences and perspectives we all collectively bring into our discussions and decision making.

National Executive recognises the challenges some individuals and branches face in ensuring they have input into decisions GWNZ makes and wants to make it easier to hear all the various views and suggestions so that well informed decisions can be made.

The GWNZ Closed Facebook page is forum that is not restricted by location or time, and is open to all GWNZ members who can access a computer, mobile phone, laptop, tablet or i-Pad.

Members can request access at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GraduateWomen>, or contact Loren at [Rutherford.loren@gmail.com](mailto:Rutherford.loren@gmail.com) who will provide guidance on how to get started.

*Compiled by Pip Jamieson, Public Affairs Convenor*

## **Katherine Yates Mid-Term Fellowship Report June 2017**



As of 1st June 2017, I am officially one year into my PhD in Engineering Geology at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch NZ.

The primary purpose of my research is to examine the

soil-water characteristics and soil microstructure of Banks Peninsula loess and explore how they contribute to the shear strength and stability of loess slopes. Loess and loess-derived soils are comprised predominantly of silt-sized grains, and cover much of Canterbury, New Zealand (Figure 1). These soils are very sensitive to changes in moisture content, which can be problematic for slope stability and have implications for land use and development. The results of this research will inform future development in loess-covered areas, and will improve the understanding of the behaviour of loess with respect to how changes in moisture content affect shear strength.

For the first six months of my PhD I focussed on my literature review, and compiled a draft journal article on a review of the geotechnical properties of loess in Canterbury, NZ. This paper was submitted to an academic journal, Engineering Geology, toward the end of 2016. Since the

submission of this paper the focus of my work has been split between laboratory work and field work. The focus of my fieldwork has been on developing a robust design of subsurface monitoring equipment to be installed a slope site near Akaroa, Banks Peninsula. The purpose of this equipment is to capture soil moisture data that allows me to examine the behaviour of the loess during rainfall events. My fieldwork also includes some subsurface investigations and stratigraphic mapping of road cuttings in loess soils.

The laboratory component of my work to date has included the assembly of a triaxial apparatus (Figure 2) for testing the shear strength of loess soils with varying moisture contents. During this time I have developed a sound understanding of how the apparatus functions and will begin testing samples in the next few months. I am also looking to spend some time at a soil-testing laboratory at the University of New South Wales in Sydney to undertake similar testing using a more advanced apparatus.

At the present time I am working towards my confirmation examination in June/July. This requires me to submit my literature review and a plan for my forward workload. In addition to this I am required to prepare a presentation of my work completed to date.

Aside from my PhD work, I have also been involved in the Civil Defence geotechnical response to the 14 November 2016 Kaikoura Earthquake. My involvement in this led me to visit Kaikoura several times post-earthquake and assist in the monitoring of landslides activated by the earthquake. I also was involved in the coordination of the geotechnical response in the Hurunui District. My involvement in the response was challenging but very rewarding and allowed me to apply my skills in a way that positively contributed to the Kaikoura community post-earthquake. I finished working with Canterbury Civil Defence in January 2017. Thank you to Graduate Women New Zealand for their scholarship. This has enabled me to pay for expenses to undertake my research including purchasing equipment for my field work.

## **Kylie Sutcliffe – Susan Byrne Career Change Awardee**



I was fortunate to receive the Susan Byrne Memorial Career Change Award for 2017. My first career was in libraries and book publishing. I left school intending to study psychology,

but found the pull of literature and arts faculty parties irresistible. I completed a BA in English Literature at Victoria University in 2001 and worked in Wellington's public libraries on and off for a decade, between patches of travel and a foray into full-time parenthood at age 23. I loved working with stories, connecting people with stories, and hearing about how the stories they read affected the stories they lived and told about themselves.

Keen to get my hands dirty, I completed a Diploma in Publishing (Applied) at Whitireia New Zealand in 2011. At the end of the course I was awarded the Andrew Mason Prize for Most Promising Editor and a Publishers' Association of New Zealand / Creative New Zealand internship with Awa Press, an independent non-fiction publisher based in Wellington. I worked with Mary Varnham and the team at Awa for three years, the last two as Production Manager. It was a thrill to be on the making end of things. A highlight was working with Rebecca Macfie on her 2013 book *Tragedy at Pike River Mine: How and Why 29 Men Died*. What a privilege it was to work with a masterful writer on an important book that filled a gap in New Zealand history. Talented editing, design, and typesetting professionals brought the book together, and we hit the reprint button five times – rare in publishing these days.

This rarity, as it happens, contributed to my decision to leave the industry. While the picture is not as gloomy as painted by some, publishing is a hard place to make a living, especially if family responsibilities keep one tied to Wellington. Also, my interest in mental health remained, and my son was at an age where more demanding study seemed possible.

I completed a Graduate Diploma in Science (Psychology) at Victoria University in 2015 and was awarded the Joseph Samuel Beaglehole Prize for the top-achieving 300 level student, along with a Victoria Graduate Award to assist with

post-graduate fees. In 2016 I completed Honours papers in criminal psychology and conducted my first research project. This year I started a Post-graduate Diploma in Clinical Psychology. I am in my element. I'm learning practical skills: how to speak with clients, administer measures, and take care of myself in stressful situations. My brain is buzzing. I'm learning to read literature critically and apply knowledge to formulate ideas in a clinical setting. Here is another opportunity to think about stories, and to help people to author their own.

The Susan Byrne Award is making such a palpable difference to my year. Without the need for part-time work I can focus on study and parenting – luxury! I hope to do the award and GWNZ proud. As for next steps, I am in discussion with Professor Marc Wilson about possible PhD research under the umbrella of the Youth Wellbeing Study, a project about the wellbeing of young New Zealanders and rangatahi, with a specific focus on non-suicidal self-injury. If this goes ahead I will defer out of the Clinical programme for two to three years to conduct research. Specifically, I am interested in the gap between what we know of best practice for young people and what is delivered in the real world, particularly as relates to resourcing and policy. I hope to write a useful sentence in a conversation we should all be having: how do we give Aotearoa's young people the best chance at healthy, fulfilling lives?

### **NCWNZ Conference 2017**

#### **Gender Equal NZ: A Shared Understanding**

2 pm Friday 15 September - 5 pm Saturday 16 September

at the Rydges Latimer Christchurch

Registration \$260

Christchurch NCW Branch Centennial Dinner \$65 (Friday evening)

Registration: [ncwnz2017.lilregie.com](http://ncwnz2017.lilregie.com)

Accommodation: [www.rydges.com/private-page/national-council-women/](http://www.rydges.com/private-page/national-council-women/)

More information:

[www.ncwnz.org.nz/members/conference-2017/](http://www.ncwnz.org.nz/members/conference-2017/)

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**GWNZ AGM**  
**28 October 2017**  
**Christchurch**

**REBECCA LYNCH AWARD**  
**Applications close 31 August**

Go to <http://www.gwnz.org.nz/> click on Awards, then Branch and Regional Awards, scroll down to Nelson and click on Rebecca L. Lynch Memorial Scholarship, and follow the instructions. The opportunity for young New Zealand women to study for a year at the University of Idaho has been provided for over 30 years by Alice and Maurice Lynch to honour the memory of their daughter Rebecca who died aged nine in a motor vehicle accident in Kenya in 1983. The Lynch's lived for a long time in Christchurch during which time Maurice flew for the United States Marine Corps as part of Operation Deep Freeze. Rebecca had had two of the happiest years of her short life in New Zealand, so her parents decided to help give Kiwi women a start through the award. Award winners who must be single undergraduate women under 24 years of age may study in whatever field they like. The award funding covers non-resident tuition fees, registration fees and room and board costs. The Lynch's other daughter, Lisa Lynch, lives in Nelson. She chairs the Rebecca Lynch Scholarship Selection Panel, with the selection process administered by the Nelson Federation of Graduate Women Charitable Trust. Alice and Maurice Lynch were both made Honorary Members of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2016 for this service to New Zealand women.

**Iceland: A feminist paradise**

'When an entire country unites behind an idea anything can happen'

For some insights into the achievements of this amazing country go to:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/oct/24/iceland-best-place-to-be-women-equal-gender-maternity>

Iceland is using its education system to empower women and support men and women achieve gender equality. The article explains that this country of 330,000 people has 19 primary and nursery schools which train girls to use their voices, achieve physical strength, and have courage. Also 90% of Icelandic fathers take paternity leave. The effect is profound: "Research shows that, after taking the three months' leave, fathers continue to be significantly more involved in childcare and do more housework. Sharing the parental responsibilities and chores from the beginning, it seems, makes a difference".

*Our thanks to Hannah Macris for locating this article from the Guardian*