



New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (Inc.)

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NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2012

The Annual General Meeting of Canterbury Branch of NZFGW will be held on **Thursday 25 October 2012 at 7.30 pm** in the Staff Room, Te Koraha, Rangī 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

New members are most welcome on the committee and nomination forms are obtainable from the secretary. Nominations can also be taken from the floor at the AGM.

Before the meeting there will be another conducted tour of Te Koraha House. Those who were at last month's meeting will agree that it is an opportunity not to be missed.

At the conclusion of business **Debra Taylor- Hayhurst, Executive Director, Dress for Success** will speak about her organisation which aims to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life. Dress for Success was founded in 1997 and is an international non-profit organisation located in more than 120 cities across 13 countries.

Dress for Success serves clients by referral only, and women must have an interview scheduled before receiving clothing. Clients come from a continually expanding and diverse group of non-profit and government agencies including homeless shelters, immigration services, job training programs, educational institutions and domestic violence shelters, among many other organizations. Almost 4,500 organisations throughout the world send women to Dress for Success for professional apparel and career development services.

On her initial visit a woman receives a suit appropriate for the industry in which she is being interviewed and, if available, accessories. After a woman finds a job she returns to Dress for Success for additional clothing that can be mixed and matched to make several outfits, providing her with the foundation for a professional wardrobe.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to new members, Cindy Allison, Hayley Roud and Bryony Gibson Cornish who are all post graduate students. Sadly the death occurred recently of Nancy Ridley.

NZFGW TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Five branch members attended this combined FGW/NCW conference held in Dunedin over the weekend of 5-7 October and as well as taking part in the business sessions, enjoyed listening to a variety of speakers, including Tracey Ayre, Project Manager, Women in Engineering, who discussed the barriers women in engineering face and the actions necessary to support these women; Eileen Fegen a law lecturer with the Open University who has trained many community groups in Northern Ireland on issues of women's political participation, human and productive rights and delivered workshops on awareness of laws most affecting women, and Professor Nicola Peart, a law lecturer at Otago University who spoke on *The Impact of New Zealand Trust Law on Social Justice*.

Saturday night's event was a dinner at Larnach's Castle at which the Hon. Jo Goodhew, MP for Rangitata and the Minister of Women's Affairs was the speaker.

The remits on (1) The Quality and Effectiveness of Teachers, (2) The Alcohol Law Reform Bill and the Harm caused by Excessive Consumption of Alcohol and (3) Proposed Restrictions on Allowances to Post Graduate Students from 2013, along with a late addition on Charter Schools all passed with some minor alterations. Canterbury Branch seconded the remit on Post Graduate Student Allowances.

The change from a triennium to a biennium with National Executive members chosen from branches throughout the country proceeded smoothly thanks to the work of the National Executive and the members of the new National Executive 2012-2014 are as follows:

President: **Ann Pomeroy**, Wellington Branch
Convenor of International Relations: **Dorothy Meyer**, North Shore Branch
Secretary: **Elizabeth Eppel**, Wellington Branch
Treasurer: **Margaret Ellett**, North Shore Branch
Public Affairs Convenor: **Christine Ross**, Wellington Branch
Charitable Trust Awards Convenor: **Rowena Taylor**, Manawatu Branch
Treasurer Charitable Trust: **Lyn Howe**, Otago Branch



Branch member Judy Brooks (second row centre) listening to a speaker at the Friday evening function at the Conference (Photo taken by Jean Silver)

FROM IFUW

Call for Proposals for Workshops to be held at the 31st IFUW Conference in Istanbul, 16-21 August 2013

This is the first and only call for Workshop proposals for the 2013 IFUW Conference in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Conference theme is: Women's role in achieving a sustainable future – Education, Urbanisation, Violence and Human Rights.

Proposals are invited for workshops on:

Gender inequalities in education: a threat to sustainable societies?

1. Is the provision of quality higher education for all economically sustainable?
2. The culture of violence against women as a threat to sustainability.
3. Population, sustainability, and reproductive rights.
4. Can we have a sustainable future without women's leadership?
5. Sustaining women's health: the right to access to good health care.

Submission guidelines:

Workshops must be proposed through national federations and associations (NFAs). Each NFA may propose up to FOUR workshops.

International Federation of University Women Friendship Tour to Rwanda – Linda Robertson, National Executive PAC

In June 2012, twelve people arrived in Rwanda to take part in a Friendship tour organized by Professor Shirley Randell and supported by IFUW and the Rwandan Association of University Women (RAUW). The members of the tour came from Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. I was the only representative from NZ. Our tour leaders were Carmen from Burundi, who will soon be studying for her PhD in the US, and Francois, a recent graduate of the National University of Rwanda

Rwanda is an amazing country, and its people are warm, inviting, and forward thinking, as we learned in our eight days there. We were based in Kigali (the capital) and had very busy days visiting cooperatives, schools for girls, gender studies organizations, and institutions for women's training and education. One afternoon was spent at Shirley Randell's home in Kigali, hearing from several women who were completing their Masters degrees. This included a project on career counseling for girls and another that was developing locally produced feminine hygiene products; both had been funded by the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund and the Bina Roy Fund of IFUW.

We visited a number of cooperatives where the majority of the employees were women who lost husbands and children in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Many were HIV-positive. The income earned through their work ensured they could provide food, education, and healthcare for their families. Key features were the sustainable strategies used along with a vision where support, cooperation and mutual trust were essential features. This was particularly poignant in an environment where lack of trust was intrinsic to the genocide. There were a range of crafts in the cooperatives such as baskets (from water hyacinth) jewellery, toys, clothing, cards and cow dung painting (a traditional Rwandan craft). We aided the local economy by purchasing the beautiful hand-woven baskets and other crafts made by the women. An interesting visit was to a centre that supported unmarried mothers through community tourism. This included a visit to the local suburban markets and shops.

We visited two educational institutions both supported with America funding; the newly established Gashora Girls Academy and the Akilah college for young women. In both schools we were able to chat with the girls over lunch and hear about their plans. It was inspiring to hear their ideas for future employment and to hear them speak about their journey within the school system. They all had clear ideas for the future and a positive sense of self. The young ladies at the Academy were focused on university education – preferably American, although the only offer of a scholarship that they had to date was from AUT in NZ! The women at the college were planning to develop businesses in Kigali such as running a restaurant and becoming a wedding planner. Both schools were clearly aiming to equip their students with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to become leaders and entrepreneurs.

We visited parliament and were addressed by women members. Gender responsive budgeting was frequently referred to (both in this session and in other talks) and there was an impressive rule of law that meant all businesses and organizations must have 30% women (at least) in decision-making positions. There was also a watchdog group: The Gender Monitoring Office who employed about 30 people to ensure that this policy was implemented. The new and modern Ethnographic Museum was interesting and provided insights into the life and history of the people of Rwanda, and a glimpse of native dancing.

Rwanda contains many memories of the horrific 1994 Genocide by the Hutus against the Tutsis, and we visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial, with mass graves for 250,000 men, women, and children. Another memorial was a former church where Tutsis had gathered to seek refuge, until the doors were opened by the priests, resulting in 10,000 deaths. We visited the Trauma Centre for victims who are able to receive counselling even now, 18 years later. The enormity of one million deaths in the 100-day genocide period was difficult to comprehend.

In spite of the sad history of the genocide, the country of Rwanda is a picture of optimism. Our visit coincided with the celebration of 50 years of independence from Belgium, and the streets were clean and litter-free with bright black and white painted curbs. An interesting feature of Rwandan life was the requirement that everyone assisted in community cleaning on the 4th Saturday of the month. On that day, a special dispensation was needed to travel and therefore be excused from cleaning duties.

Food was a very enjoyable aspect of the tour with lunches often provided by local groups and dinners each evening at clean, modern restaurants of different nationalities, including Japan, India, the U.S., and China. During the evening meals, different members of RAUW were introduced and spoke to us about their studies. One memorable lunch consisted of bagels served in a garden setting at the African Bagel Company, set up and run by an American family. Rwandan women are taught to bake bagels on coal-fired stoves as well as parenting and budgeting skills. Apparently it was crowded on Saturday morning with bagel lovers!

We experienced a 2 day game drive in Akagera National Park where we saw giraffes, baboons, zebras, hippos, impala, water buffalo and a variety of amazing birds. Rwanda is home to half the remaining mountain gorillas in the world, and several of the group undertook the strenuous trek to see gorillas in the wild. I chose not to do this extra. I would heartily recommend this tour if it were to be offered again and would also recommend the gorilla add-on!

WORK LIFE BALANCE

This contribution was recently published in the IFUW YM Newsletter.

Sometimes, even thinking about work-life balance is not easy...

Fateme Etemaddar

In today's mobile world where an increasing number of people, compulsorily or by choice, live in countries other than their original homeland, migrants' stories and their issues are very familiar to many people. Generally speaking, migrants' lifestyles are challenging and many life issues get more complicated when they get mixed with migration issues. The issue of striking a work-life balance is not an exception. The following is a piece of my story as a migrant woman regarding work-life balance:

Two years ago my family (my husband and our son) and I left our original homeland and moved to New Zealand to make a new home here. Making a home in a new country is not easy. We were not very familiar with the New Zealand and its culture. We were far from our kin back home; therefore we could not enjoy their help and support here.

I had to work hard in the workplace and adjust to the new social norms and expectations. This caused me to work hard even at home to learn about the things that I believed I needed to know during "official work time". On the other hand, when I was at home I also had obligations to my family. These obligations not only included housework, like cooking food and cleaning the house, but also included teaching English to my family, especially my son who was not familiar with English at all. I also felt like I was supposed to play the role of a supportive and kind mother to my son and a strong and kind wife to my husband. I wanted to support them so that they did not feel upset and homesick in the new country, and to compensate for the absence of our kin here. I had to perform these obligations otherwise my family life would be impacted negatively.

Indeed, these were my compulsory family/life obligations and I felt that I was supposed to make a proper balance between them and my work obligations. However, I normally felt, and still feel, that I was not successful in doing both and a feeling of guilt is always with me. This feeling of guilt stopped me from personal fun or making plans, like doing sports or ladies gatherings with my friends and so on. Indeed I was not successful enough to make a work-life family.

Fateme Etemaddar is originally from Iran and is currently working on her PhD at the University of Otago in Dunedin. The topic of her PhD is Cultural Mobility and Cultural Tourism in Diaspora. Fateme is a Young Members' Representative on the Otago Branch Committee.