



DECEMBER 2011

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello everyone

Merry Christmas everyone! It was lovely to have a surprise pre Christmas celebration at our November general meeting which really gave everyone a sense that the Festive Season is nearly here. The Reef Gateway hotel excelled themselves with the decorations, and it was such a lively meeting with 14 members and guests contributing to the evening, which is always very enjoyable. I think our farewell to Marie was very befitting to how we have all respected and valued her so much as a Zontian and a friend and we all look forward to keeping in contact!

Our guest speaker Yvonne Jex was inspirational and very informative so remember if you do want to take up the invitation to register here is the link: www.register4.org.au

We have got several activities still to happen in the month of December and I wish all of the committee's success with these; Pamper packs; Adopt a family; Books from birth; Picnic at Shingley Beach. We will be looking at having our next General Meeting on Thursday 19th January 2012, and with exciting plans already in place for: UN presentations on International Service Programs at our general meetings; UN breakfast meetings are back; International Women's day in March!

I am sure you will all agree we have had a sensational year and I feel this is mainly attributed to the participation of all members in our activities, and the sense that our club is going in the right direction and we have all had time to enjoy each other's company.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Cheers, Sandii



Zonta Club of the Whitsundays

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas get together at Shingley Beach 11th December midday, BYO. Please wear a Christmas Hat



International Women's Day Brunch on 11th March at Coral Sea commencing at 9.30. We will have two speakers and once again the wonderful Hansen Auction team for our auction prizes and a door raffle. This promises to be lots of fun and excitement, \$38.50 per person including a glass of bubbles on arrival.

Submitted by Janet, Director.



DATE CLAIMERS

January 9th– Board Meeting – 5.30 - at Sandii's

19 January - General Meeting – 6.15 for 6.30 starts – Reef Gateway

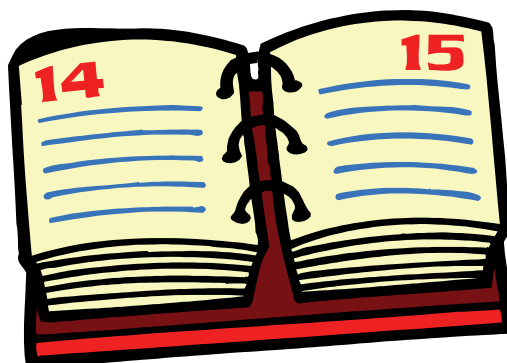
14th February: Breakfast meeting Capers 7 for 7.30 Speaker Jeff Grant from Relationships Australia

11 March International Women's Day Brunch at Coral Sea commencing at 9.30

13th March: Breakfast meeting Capers 7 for 7.30 Speaker Pam Tindall. Water Wells in Cambodia

10th April: Breakfast meeting Capers 7 for 7.30 Speaker Robyn Mitchell. A Woman's Perspective on Ethiopia

8th May: Breakfast meeting Capers 7 for 7.30 Speaker Pam Harrison An update on her work in Zimbabwe



REPORTS

SERVICE:

I would like to thank all the wonderful Zontians who contributed to the success of our many Service projects this year. To committee chairs Wendy, Judy, Carole, Roz, Connie, PJ and Judy Brett as well as committee members who beavered away, often quietly in the background, goes a huge bouquet of thanks. Together we flew high as the geese!

Merry Christmas and happy holiday to all and looking forward to doing it all again next year!

Kerry, Director Service.

Adopt a family and Pamper Packs

The committee of Janet, Dawn, Julie Micallef and I, decided to do things a bit differently this year and to not go out to local businesses for donations, based on the current economic climate. Instead we proposed to the board we raise the amount of funding from the club and seek voluntary donations from members. This was approved at the last meeting and we already have some goodies donated. If any members would like to donate to either of the projects, we need to have that by the 1st of December. A wrapping and packing day will be held prior to the 9th of December when the Christmas Hamper will be delivered to St Vincent's in Proserpine. The 12 pamper packs will be delivered to Whitsunday Crisis and Counselling Service the week before Christmas for the ladies in the Women's shelter.

Submitted by *Wendy Downes*

Books from Birth is at 19th October

Signs displayed at Expo resulted in several people offering books.

Logo, label, covering letter and intro completed, thanks to Angela for all hard computer work. Sue and Dawn offered their laminating services for when we need them.

Scissors, tape have been donated

Angela and Judy went to Zonta Bowen on 12th October; they are interested in coming to any of our "special meetings" and would like to find out more about our Health Expo and Book Club.

Local libraries contacted and are all interested - Cannonvale have given us 20 books already.

Hamilton Island State Library School sending over 23 boxes of books (courtesy of Fantasea)

Ongoing negotiations with Primary school to see if they can assist.

A box will be put out at all Zonta general meetings for members to put books in.

A very successful meeting on 19th Angela Joan Sue Judy Noelene and Dawn attended with apologies from Kerry and Christina.

We have covered approx 120 books with labels and sorted a box of 80 books (10kgs) to be sent to Bikerton Island in Arnhem Land.

It has been suggested that we have four hour meetings and people can stay for as long as they can.

Bring a plate maybe from 3 till 7pm. yesterday was both social and productive as we packed books while carrying on meeting reports and discussions. What do general members feel as we need lots of people involved even if on an irregular basis? Several people are taking boxes of books home to cover, if anyone would like a box to cover this can be arranged!!

A Sample box of books taken to Zonta meeting: 15 baby books, 50 pre-school books, 15 school age books, 2 magazines, an introductory half page laminated letter and an evaluation sheet.

Speaking with Aunty Marie the other day and she said there is a great need for books and as there are so few books in some communities that the children become bored with reading them. Hopefully Books from Birth may be able to alleviate this.

Thanks to everyone for all the support but please, we do need more as the books start rolling!

Submitted by *Judy Brett (Chair)*



REPORTS

Birthing Kit Assembly Day

In October we organised our 4th annual Birthing Kit Assembly Day at the Proserpine High School. Preparation by my wonderful husband, cutting cord and folding plastic, was invaluable. We were able to start straight into the kit packing as soon as the students arrived, with the help of our wonderful folder Judy.

Altogether 9 Zontians offered their assistance plus 15 students from Yr 10's "My Other Mother" study group and the Yr 11 and 12 school leaders took part. It was great to see the obvious enjoyment they were getting from this exercise. A short presentation was made to the group before they commenced so that they were aware of the importance of their task.

We are fortunate to have a teacher and Youth Health Nurse at the school, who are keen to keep this program running on an annual basis. The current cost of the kits is \$2 which is now double the original cost, hence total cost \$1200. This is currently funded by our club and we now have a new local business "Crocodile Cafe" who are raising donations towards this project, after seeing the Birthing Kit display material at Healthy Lifestyle Expo.

The Zonta Birthing Kit Foundation recognises that many of their supporters share our desire to enable long term sustainable change and wish to support not only the provision of birthing kits, but also training programs and the establishment of in-country kit initiatives. They are now making it possible to do both, with the choice of the following Assembly Day donation options:

\$2 per kit donation: donation will partially fund the cost of supplies and transport of the kits with the Foundation funding the balance

\$3 per kit donation: fully funding the cost of supplies and transport of the kits and also contributing to sustainability projects

A long term solution is the most desirable outcome for the Birthing Kit Project and they are very quickly reaching their quota of \$2 kits available for this financial year (ending 30 June 2012), so maybe this is food for thought.

Wendy Downes, Birthing Kit Coordinator

ORGANISATION, MEMBERSHIP & CLASSIFICATION:

When asked "what is Zonta? "What do you do anyway?" it's often hard for us to thoughtfully reply.

Judith Anderson, District 22 PR and Communications Chair, has some suggestions:

- It works through the United Nations. (*The average listener won't understand "It has consultative status with the United Nations", so this is best avoided*).
- We've celebrated our 100th birthday. (*They might not remember '1919' as the year in which Zonta was established, but they will remember that the organisation has reached a venerable age*)
- Zonta means 'honest and trustworthy'.
- It has more than 31,000 members in over 1200 clubs in 65 countries. (*Work out way of remembering these figures*).

* Members are professionals or businesswomen. (*Unless you are specifically asked, avoid a lengthy explanation of members having to be in a decision-making position and having to be invited to join*).

The thrusts of Zonta's four current international projects – improved health, better education, economic independence, and ending violence:

* Zonta helps women and girls to become better educated so they can earn more and become economically independent.

- Zonta helps to give women and children access to quality, affordable health care
- Zonta is committed to ending violence against women and helping survivors of violence to rebuild their lives.

* Zonta provides educational awards to women in aerospace-related sciences and engineering, business and public affairs.

Give the International website address (Zonta.org) to learn and invite them to an event or meeting.

P.J., Director OMC

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UN/Advocacy:

Two directions on gender equality:

British Prime Minister, David Cameron, is understood to be supported by CHOGM in his push to declare that a monarch's first child will be the next in line to the throne, regardless of gender.

"The idea that a younger son should become monarch instead of an elder daughter, simply because he is a man, just isn't acceptable anymore," Mr. Cameron said.

Meanwhile, in Libya, the new leader, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, has just re-instated the importance of Sharia law. This stance will overhaul the marriage laws and make divorce unlawful. This will mean that men can still take up to four wives but the previous veto of the first wife will no longer exist. Also "divorce is contrary to Sharia law and must be stopped," stated Jalil.

Submitted by Robyn Mitchell

Zonta International Project 2010-2012 biennium

Towards elimination of obstetric fistula and reduction of maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity in Liberia

The following story will tug at your heartstrings and remind you why we are supporting ZI projects

Abebush was married for two years when she became pregnant. She went into labour in her village and delivered a stillborn child after 5 days of labour. When she regained consciousness she found she was leaking urine and faeces from fistulae both to her rectum and bladder. Her husband divorced her and she went to live with her widowed mother who was very poor. Abebush's mother looked after her as best she could. For the last 6 years, Abebush was kept in a little hut. She was fed once a day. All that time she lay curled up on the floor and after some time her legs became locked in contractures in the foetal position. She is unable to straighten her hips or knees or flex her ankles. She was found by a partner Non Government Organisation which brought her to us in Bahir Dar. She was in a pitiful state. She was completely emaciated weighing barely 30kgs. She cried in pain every time she moved as her bones rubbed on the bed. She was very depressed. The first time she smiled after arriving at the centre was when my young son William came to cheer her up. William calls her the 'tired lady'. Abebush is only about 20 years old and has spent almost a third of her life locked away in a little room. She has now been moved to our main hospital in Addis Ababa where she will receive much love, care and treatment to prepare her for the fistula surgery which hopefully will cure her and give her a new life. Dr Andrew Browning

Submitted by Roz Jennings



The UN committee has decided to recommence breakfast meetings at Capers. Starting February 2012, these will be on the second Tuesday of the month 7 for 7.30am until 8 – 8.30am so time to have breakfast and coffee and get to work afterwards.

We already have our speaker programme lined up for the first part of the year so mark these dates in your 2012 diary now!

Tuesday 14th February: Speaker Jeff Grant from Relationships Australia

What a way to start Valentine's Day but this talk will be more than just Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus. I have heard Jeff speak before he is very entertaining and interesting. We all know that happy, healthy relationships with friends and family improve our well being.

Tuesday 13th March: Speaker Pam Tindall. Water Wells in Cambodia

Pam is a wonderful woman who is devoted to her project of installing water wells in Cambodia to provide safe drinking water for the villages, especially for the women and children. Prepare to be inspired and to find out more about this very interesting country!!

Tuesday 10th April: Speaker Robyn Mitchell. A Woman's Perspective on Ethiopia

This is bound to be a fascinating talk as Robyn will have just returned from her trip to Ethiopia and I know her talk and photos will be amazing. She has arranged a visit to Addis Ababa and the fistula hospital which is the focus of the book, "Hospital by the River" and of our film evening film, "A Walk to Beautiful".

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UN/Advocacy (cont'd):

Tuesday 8th May: Speaker Pam Harrison An update on her work in Zimbabwe.

Our very own Pammy will give us an update on the incredible work she is doing in Zimbabwe. She heads off soon to Africa and will be there for a couple of months. I know how much we loved her last talk a couple of years ago.

Stay tuned because we have even more speakers lined up for the middle of the year. These breakfast meetings are such a wonderful start to the day.

Roz, United Nations Committee Chair.

MEMBER NEWS:

From Eunice

I'm almost back, with 2 weeks exactly before I am once again in Mackay, and I can't wait. Still in Melbourne doing the migration agents course and recovering, sort of, from a wonderful birthday celebration in Bali a couple of weeks ago. We all loved our villa; absolutely everything about it and it was well worth the money. Atmosphere and staff service were outstanding. I've attached a photo of the surprise birthday celebration put on by the staff there for me.

I'm looking for a quiet life living in my 'cottage by the sea' in Mackay, but will still be keen to get involved in the community again as well as do some graphic design work (as in Airlie Zonta) and see if I can do some migration agents work and some English teaching, but no one activity full-time.

Love Eunice



Awards for Michelle and Libby!

(As reported in the Whitsunday Times 24/11/11)

“Whitsunday women Libby Edge and Michelle Bourke have been recognized for their dedication to the region.”

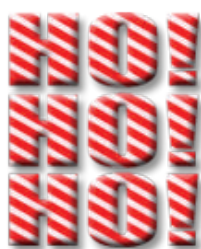


Libby won the Regional Achievement & Community Award for Environment and Land Care. Michelle received an Achievement Award in the Community of the Year category for the tireless fundraising efforts of Cannonvale Kidz Early Learning Centre where she is a director. Libby was also chosen out of 5000 entrants as one of four finalists in the Local Hero category for the



Australia Day Awards last Saturday.

Big congratulations to both of these amazing and talented women!



MEMBER PROFILE

The Life and Times of Wendy Downes

My life began in Worcestershire, England, towards the end of WW2 with one sister 18 months my senior. Our mother was an epileptic and also a diabetic and died in her early 40's from a series of brain tumours – I was 11. When I was 12, Dad married our live-in housekeeper and our life then changed quite a bit. She was a



trail blazer with a sad past and a war time

background, running a factory in Birmingham. We then moved to Huntingdonshire (now part of Cambridgeshire) and managed a 16th century country pub for 4 years. I was attending Grammar School and helping out in the pub, plus picking apples and plums in the fruit season. After leaving school after year 10 (GCE O Levels, for the poms amongst us), I worked for a year in a construction company as assistant wages clerk, before it was decided that we should emigrate to that wonderful country on the other side of the world (Australia) with wide open spaces, glorious beaches and sun bronzed bodies. My sister had just married at age 18 so stayed behind in England.

So....as £10 POMS (free for me) Mum, Dad and I came to Australia, by ship, to start a new life – penniless. However we did have my maternal mother's brother and family living in Brighton Beach so it was no real hardship for us. Dad and I both managed to secure jobs straight away, me in an engineering factory, where I was the only girl – known as a Girl Friday in those days, doing everything that needed to be done. I was with them for 10 years and only left as I had by then met and married John and we had bought our first home on the other side of Melbourne. After the birth of our 1st son Justin, and pregnant with our 2nd son Tim, John was transferred to Hobart with the medical company he worked for and we spent 2 lovely years there.

Transfers for John continued within the medical profession and we were then relocated to Auckland for 5 ½ years. This was a wonderful place to bring up young children and it was there I returned to the workforce as well as started my sporting career and volunteerism. John and I started playing squash and I kept going playing competition and loving it, while John couldn't find the time anymore due to travelling all over the place with his job. However he also started me running and shortly thereafter he went overseas for 6 weeks, didn't run whilst away, and came back not fit enough to keep up anymore. John stopped running but I went from strength to strength and hence he is responsible for my running addiction of 33 yrs, with some amazing achievements of which he is very proud. Somewhere in the middle of all this I managed to be diagnosed with laryngeal cancer and went through radio therapy treatment, and in my recovery period I started a cottage industry with an Air NZ steward, which included one of my few talents – knitting Aran sweaters for export. We had lots of outworkers and a good market, including Australia. I also co-founded a voluntary organisation "The Cinderella Society" which involved collecting scraps of fabric and making clothes for needy children. It was so rewarding! Another job transfer took us across to Sydney for 2 years where we lived in the Western suburbs and I worked for a building society and it was here that I furthered my running career and within a very short time was doing my first marathon and winning races.

Cut short again, we were transferred to Jakarta so sold up yet again (totally) and headed off for what was to be a reasonable spell overseas as expats. We loved it and I became involved in fundraising activities for the ANZA group (Australia, New Zealand Assoc), plus was responsible for finding recipients for the funds - medical aid, self help programs etc. This too was extremely rewarding. I also continued my running (and squash) and ran with the Hash House Harriers once a week through the paddy fields.

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MEMBER PROFILE cont'd:

Our expat time was cut short unfortunately as John was offered a job back in Sydney so after 2 years we returned to Sydney, this time for 14 years, living on the Upper North Shore. I worked for 13 yrs for a Civil Engineering company, joining before computers and using the old IBM typewriter. Starting as receptionist I moved into PA/executive role as the company grew and thoroughly enjoyed working for the busiest and most travelled man I know – also the most demanding, so life was always a challenge.

Our first year back in Sydney I joined the Sydney Striders Marathon and Road Runners Club and became secretary in the first year (for 5 years) then President for 2 yrs. At the same time John and I (together, again) took up sailing at Middle Harbour Yacht Club - twilight sailing which was fantastic. Addiction set in again and I went on to racing every weekend and conquering some long off shore races too. I also became involved in a new event called the 3 Ports (sailing and running event) which I ended up “assisting” with (to put it mildly) for 7 years. It was also in Sydney that I added to my sport addiction by learning to ride a bike again in my late 40's, taking up duathlons and representing Australia at the World Championships in Hobart. Then learning to swim at age 50 and taking up triathlons, which I confess was not one of my better achievements.

Whilst in Sydney, John and I (together, again) started skiing when we were 50 (that magical age!) only because our eldest son was living in Whistler and it was “payback time”. We have amazing memories of Canada and all the ski resorts we stayed in (thanks to Justin) and, more recently, our China experiences, where he now lives with his wife and our beautiful granddaughter Hayley.

Life was good for us in Sydney but there comes a time to reflect on the “rest of our lives” and in 1998 we decided on a sea change to Airlie Beach, after experiencing 3 wonderful charter boat holidays in the Whitsundays. How to settle comfortably in a sleepy tourist town?? Easy....buy a business! So Management Rights won out and after selling up yet again, we bought Management Rights at Mediterranean Resorts where we stayed for 6 years and 24/7 – what happened to the semi-retirement we had envisaged?.

Within the first years, whilst at Med Resorts I managed to get involved in a few new initiatives in town; co-forming a Triathlon Club in 1998 and staging the first Airlie Beach Triathlon within the first year – I was Club President for 7 years and Race Director for 11 years. I was a Zonta Charter Member in 1999, as Vice President and then stand-in President within the 1st year; I was a charter member of SKAL Whitsundays and also initiated the local branch of QRAMA – Resident Accommodation Managers Assoc. I was also involved in organising the 1st Relay for Life and Run for a Cure, am still involved in both, and have therefore, for the past 8 years, been very involved with Cancer Council Qld. Zonta and CCQ are my passion but I also assist Variety Qld (via the Old Bags Lunch). After selling our business in 2004 I have managed to stay pretty busy and still work in the accommodation business as well as anything else that comes my way, including Cruise Ships visits. I love my life and what is available to keep me happy and involved in our community. I still swim, cycle and run regularly and love a skydive from time to time (obviously) - our recent holiday in Las Vegas gave me another opportunity to do this.

Life is too short to sit still and MY bucket list is very long, many items including running a race somewhere, and I have ticked some off recently – China, Vietnam, South Africa, Las Vegas – more to come in 2012 and 2013 – watch this space!

