

South Pacific Area

By Mary Janes

The 9 million members of ACWW, living in 71 countries, are divided into 9 geographic areas for administration purposes. Each Area has a President elected for a 3-year term. In this issue the focus is on the South Pacific Area, whose President Jenny Mitchell is currently serving her second term. At the centennial celebrations in 1997 Jenny mentioned that in her branch of the Country Women's Association of Australia, more children attend meetings than adults!

Membership

A quick look at a map of the South Pacific shows that this area is made up of hundreds of islands. Some are politically independent; others are protectorates of larger countries. Member countries of ACWW include Australia, Christmas Island (Kiribati), Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Western Samoa. There are a total of 35 societies in the 11 countries in the South Pacific Area.

ACWW Representation

Three world presidents have called the South Pacific home. Dame Alice Berry from Australia was first elected in 1953 in Toronto, then re-elected in Ceylon in 1956. In 1977 Dame Raigh Roe of Australia was elected President in Nairobi. Valerie Fisher, also from Australia, was first elected in Kansas City in 1989, then re-elected in The Hague.

Special Activities

Societies celebrate World Rural Women's Day on October 15 in a variety of ways. Some hold special functions in cities, including displays. In 1998 societies in Australia distributed anti-domestic violence kits for rural women. Other societies hold "bring and buy stalls."



Some societies provide scholarships and bursaries to encourage medical students to get practical rural experience by going to the country. Others sponsor women from Papua New Guinea to attend the South Pacific Commission Training College in Fiji to learn about home economics, family health, horticulture, crafts and small business management. In South Australia, training sessions include first aid and basic mechanics for aboriginal women, as well as pattern designing and dress-making.

In Australia the promotion of wool is a major project. It was the Country Women's Association (CWA) that lobbied successfully to have a woman appointed to the Australian Wool Board since 1974. Many members have contributed knitted products to "Teddy's for Tragedies" and to the children of Chernobyl.

Projects funded by ACWW in the South Pacific include literacy, shade cloth housing, growing orchids in stones and pots for income generation, beekeeping and honey making, water tanks, pre-school facilities and leadership training.

Special Projects

More information about the childhood health-care project in the South Pacific Area may be found in the April, 1999 issue of *The Countrywoman*. This project in Papua New Guinea is one of the 23 ACWW development projects initiated in 1997. Another was the teaching of materials/textile production at the Nungalinga College in Australia. This and other projects are described in the 1997 ACWW Annual Report.

ACWW International Quilt Block Competition



The Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) Triennial Conference Committee and the Ontario Coordinating Committee (OCC) invite you to enter an International Quilt Block Competition. The Competition is being coordinated by the Thunder Bay District in the Northwestern Area of Ontario.

The blocks will be made into quilts, wall-hangings and cushions and will be raffled with the proceeds going to Conference 2001.

The Competition rules are as follows:

- there is no entry fee
- all blocks become the property of ACWW/OCC
- size - 14 inches finished (the worked area to be 13 1/2 inches square, the remaining 1/2 inch will form the seam allowance)
- material - 100% cotton (please pre-wash)
- colour - principal colours to be light to medium blue and rose on a white background (other colours may be used in conjunction with the principal colours)
- design - pieced or applique or trapunto (a member may enter one of each design)
- please do not quilt the block
- each entry must include the member's name, address, phone/fax number, email address and the name of the Society in a sealed envelope securely attached to the back of the block
- blocks will be judged on workmanship and colour combination
- prize money for the top five blocks is \$20, \$18, \$16, \$14 and \$12
- Entry Deadline: to arrive by March 1, 2000

Send To: Leila Pettigrew, 1665 Merlye Ave., Vickers Heights ON P0T 2Z0.

Putting the Fun into Fund Raising

Silver Maple WI celebrated WI Week with a Soup and Bingo Lunch. The group earned extra money by selling the leftover soup and biscuits, and two families received "Meals on Wheels."

Everyone participated in "The Number of Pickles in the Pickle Jar Contest." (We've also guessed how many raisins were in a pie!) There were draws for prizes and Bingo Games as long as there were millennium quarters and cookies to be won. The Lunch was a great social time and money was raised for FWIO.

Submitted by Lorna McGrath, Silver Maple WI, Simcoe Centre.