



# WOMEN'S FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE, AUSTRALIA

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## 2014-15 ANNUAL REPORT

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## From the National Office



*It is with great joy that I present our first National Report to you for the financial year ending 2014-2015. Though the report shows a snap-shot of our Australia wide activities over the last year, the mission of WFWP comes through strongly.*

*Women from WFWP are committed to:*

1. *Serving communities*
2. *Strengthening the family*
3. *Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past*
4. *Peace-building within their communities*

*This report is a testament to the heart of service and giving by all our amazing volunteers; women who serve and serve again to make our families stronger and happier and our community's safer and more connected places to live. Thank-you for your commitment and heart, thank-you for walking with me as the National President, and thank-you for supporting your local Chapter Presidents in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.*

*As a National Chapter of WFWP International, we stand in solidarity with women world-wide by carrying the mission and vision of WFWP in our hearts. We understand that it is only through substantially 'living by the logic of love' that true and sustainable peace can be accomplished, one family at a time. This is the alternative to force and aggression.*

*This year WFWP Australia has: developed a Volunteer Policy and a Volunteer Manual, worked on developing a strategic plan, opened up a WFWP Australia YouTube Channel, developed an Annual Calendar of Events for each of the three Chapters, and renamed our Newsletter into an Oceania Newsletter to representing all the WFWP Oceania Chapters of Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. We have initiated an annual walk-a-thon to raise funds to support our Island Nation Neighbours, sent off solar lights for remote villages in Vanuatu, sent off children's books to primary schools in Vanuatu and sent off sewing machines to open up new Women's Sewing Centres in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. In each of the Australian chapters we hold regular activities and network with our communities.*

*We have made new friends and new partner organisations and we are better, because you our readers, have shared in our journey.*

*Warmest Wishes,*

**Anne Bellavance**  
**Vice-president, WFWP International (Oceania Region)**  
**President, WFWP Australia**

## WFWP Australia Women's Federation for World Peace

### *Living by the Logic of Love*

**WFWP Australia asserts that the family is the cornerstone of peace in the world, and that mature couples are the foundation for strong and loving families. Our organisation encourages every woman to become a "woman of peace" through cultivating her heart, the mother's heart. To care not just for her own children but for the children of others, the children of other nations and the children of the world by developing and expressing the qualities of empathy, forgiveness, and unconditional love.**

WFWP Australia has ongoing programs in four areas:

**1/ The Global Women's Peace Network**

**2/ Bridge of Peace events**

**3/ Forums and seminars**

**4/ Service projects within the Pacific Islands.**

As an organisation of women, we adhere to the principle that by working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion; we can create healthy families and resolve the complex problems of our societies and world.

Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Island and Vanuatu make up the Region of Oceania. Within the region Australia has three chapters New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

### **We stand for:**

1. We affirm women's value in the eyes of a loving Creator, and promote a world of goodness and peace.
2. We uphold and defend the God-given rights and dignity of women here in Australia and worldwide.
3. We promote healthy and virtuous relationships within the family between husband and wife, parents and children and extended-family members. We educate and nurture young women to develop a character of internal and external excellence.
4. We embrace one global community transcending long-held barriers such as race, religion and nationality through service, education and celebration of unique differences.
5. We empower women to take the lead for the sake of World Peace in all sectors of society, utilizing their qualities of selflessness, compassion and a desire for mutual prosperity that are central to a mother's heart.



## WFWP International Mission Statement

**WFWP International was established in 1992 by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. Dr. Moon and her husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, are a remarkable couple who have worked together for over 50 years to pioneer a way for peace on the global arena. WFWP are committed to providing women with the opportunity to create lasting peace in the world, through seminars, forums at the United Nations, luncheon programs, racial and religious reconciliation projects, national and international conferences, benefits, and service projects.**

WFWP International's worldwide network of national and local chapters seeks to realise a peaceful and harmonious global family through four major activities worldwide:

- \* Service projects targeting the empowerment of women and children through supporting the UN Millennium Development goals.
- \* The peace-building "Bridge of Peace" sisterhood project that focuses on reconciliation, forgiveness and healing between people.
- \* Educational seminars and forums that seek to raise society towards a stronger moral value system.
- \* The Global Women's Peace Network is a network of women leaders who are peace builders within society. The GWPN is a project of WFWP International.



WFWP's international service projects and activities support the realisation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of:

- Eradicate poverty
- Universal primary education
- Promote gender equality - empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Environmental sustainability
- Combat HIV/AIDS, diseases
- Global partnership

WFWP is founded on the belief that a peaceful world begins in the heart of each person and in each family. Women from WFWP are committed to serving communities, strengthening the family, reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past.

As a Global Women's Peace Network, we are working together to establish a culture of heart in the family, community, nation and ultimately the world; in order to achieve genuine and sustainable peace under God.

## Global Women's Peace Network

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The Global Women's Peace Network is a project of WFWP International. People in our 21st century are demanding a new type of leadership. Leaders in our 'flattening world' need a different set of skills, skills that are more right brain directed; involving emotional intelligence, reconciliation, mediation and forgiveness.

Brain function and Emotional Intelligence research indicates that women have a more rich and developed emotional life. Therefore, in our new century, women will be the central axis in building a century of harmony with a culture of heart.

### Inaugural International Assembly of the Global Women's Peace Network, November 12, 2012

Cheongpyeong, Korea - The founders of WFWP International, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon; called for a new era of women's leadership for peace during an assembly hosted by the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) at the Cheongshim Peace Center in South Korea on July 16.

The assembly highlighted the need for a body of NGO leaders whose collective wisdom and judgment can complement the deliberations of the United Nations; which is a body of government representatives and is overwhelmingly male. Such a consultative body would promote healing and peace-building through reconciliation, forgiveness, love and embracing people beyond boundaries of race, religion, nationality, and language.





## Victoria, 23rd WFWP Anniversary Dinner

Good music, mocktails, balloons, Indian food, friends and family combine to make a warm, friendly and happy evening to celebrate the 23rd anniversary of the Women’s Federation for World Peace International. WFWP International was inaugurated at the Olympic Stadium in South Korea by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in April of 1992. WFWP Victoria has grown too large to run the anniversary dinner at a restaurant and have moved to the Mount Waverley Community Centre to facilitate our evening festivities.

We want to acknowledge the City of Monash for their generous support in providing the great venue and to all our business supporters who donated towards our fantastic raffle selection, many who are listed on our website. Councillor Rebecca Paterson from the City of Monash opened the evening by welcoming us to her Mount Waverley Ward. We had the pleasure of Hon. Hong Lim, state MP for Clarinda share dinner with us. Although, Hon. Lim is extremely busy (he had 8 functions to attend during the day), he is an advocate for our peace building initiatives and participates with us when we hold activities within his district.

Highlights of the evening where: the door prizes and raffles that sparked everyone’s interest to win one of the great assortments on offer; a-cappella singing by Ajak Mabilia who got us tapping with her soul moving voice; certificates of appreciation presented to our WFWP volunteers who have volunteered throughout the past year and the chance to test out the dance floor towards the end of the evening.

Thank you to all our volunteers who helped to make the evening memorable.



## New South Wales, 23rd Anniversary Luncheon & Fundraiser for Vanuatu

On April 11th, 45 women representing many different cultures and organizations, gathered at the Pron Prohm Tai Restaurant for the 23rd Anniversary of the WFWP and fundraising luncheon for Vanuatu. The restaurant was packed and with a wonderful atmosphere, Aila Willits, the President of WFWP, NSW, welcomed everyone with a warm and sisterly heart.

Jynene Helland, the former International Vice President gave a talk on the history of the Women’s Federation. Her message exemplified the spirit of women. Other leaders of the community were also recognized and especially leaders of the South Pacific Island Foundation, who had just returned from Vanuatu, shared with us the situation of the people there after the devastating cyclone that had left many homeless.

There was also a raffle and because of the generosity of the guests, the WFWP raised money for Vanuatu.

The afternoon concluded with the song: “Let There Be Peace on Earth” and as the women filtered out the door to return to their families, many expressed their thanks and gratitude to have attended the wonderful luncheon and said that they would love to come to the next one. All agreed, it was a great success.





## Queensland, 23rd Anniversary Celebration

The 23rd WFWP Anniversary was celebrated by members and close contacts of WFWP Queensland. The program started with 'Acknowledgment of Country' by Aunty Peggy Tidyman, President of Logan Elders and an honorary WFWP member.

The MC of the program was Sharon Orapeleng who is the immediate past president of Queensland African Communities Council (QACC) and the project advisor for WFWP. She expressed her gratitude to be a part of this important organisation, and recognised several key participants who are well known in the community service sector.

Mamiko Rattley, president of WFWP Queensland, welcomed participants and thanked those who brought food for supper. She reported on 2014 activities and our relief effort for Cyclone victims in Vanuatu. She announced that WFWP is now officially registered in Queensland and she listed WFWP's calendar of events for the rest of 2015.

The MC invited Mr Robert Dickinson to come forward and receive WFWP's Certificate of Appreciation for his generous donation of used sewing machines for Pacific island women's groups. Mr Dickinson spoke about the beginnings of his efforts to refurbish sewing machines hoping to support women in Pacific Island nations.

Before supper the MC had all the participants introduce themselves. We then socialised while enjoying delicious plates of food representing various cultures. Finally, WFWP Board members cut an anniversary cake. Each raffle prize donor was recognised, and then Aunty Peggy picked out tickets for 6 lucky prize winners.

To conclude, Mamiko thanked all participants for their continuous support of WFWP and encouraged everyone to renew membership. It was a happy and inspiring evening for everyone.



## Bridge of Peace The 4 Steps for Peace Making in the Bridge of Peace Ceremony.

**Responsibility:** We break the chains of our resentments and anger by realising these emotions poison and debilitate us. Our attitudes, thoughts and mind-set are more essential than our external circumstances. As we take responsibility for our mind-set and determine to begin anew, we can be liberated from the effects of past or present hurt even if our basic circumstance is unchanged.

**Respect:** By recognizing the rights of the other, no matter who they are, we are able to open our minds to the possibility of a solution. Without respect, the only answer is death of one kind or another and the perpetuation of the cycle of conflict.

**Repentance:** A Personal Cease-fire: As we take responsibility, we have the strength to see our own shortcomings and our capacity to disregard the needs and situations of others. To end conflict in our own lives, we need to hold a personal "cease-fire" precipitated by self-awareness, honest assessment of our own actions and a willingness to see from the viewpoint of the other.

**Commitment:** As we embrace our partner of peace, whether new sister, spouse, friend or family member, we seal our personal commitment to one another and the tasks of self-development and peace building.





## Bridge of Peace Ceremony Commemorating the International Day of Peace

A beautiful Bridge of Peace event was held to commemorate the International Day of Peace, 2014 on September 20th in Victoria at the Aboriginal Burrinja Cultural Centre in Upwey with over 70 people in attendance. It was an honour to have as our women leaders for the event; Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone, a Mullum Mullum Aboriginal Elder in the Yarra Ranges district and Yue Ying Wang from the Aust. Chinese Women's Association. After Aunty Janet graciously opened the event by welcomed us 'to country' while Jason Wood, federal MP for La Trobe and Cr. Samantha Dunn from the Lyster Ward of Yarra Ranges also welcomed us to the Burrinja Centre and their electorate.

Anne Bellavance (WFWP national president), MC for the event introduced the theme for this year's International Day of Peace, 'The Rights of People to Peace' and presented Ban Ki Moon's message of "Let us all reflect on peace and what it means for our human family. Let us hold it in our hearts and minds and tenderly nurture it so it may grow and blossom". Anne commented that this is what the Bridge of Peace is about, it focuses on the strength of our hearts and offers grassroots healing and reconciliation. Anne then gave a short presentation on the history of WFWP activities and the Bridge of Peace internationally, within Australia and within the Oceania region.

There were many highlights of the event; John Hurley and his grand-daughter Jasmine brought along eleven white homing pigeons from 'Doves for Peace' and were symbolically released by eleven lucky volunteers. A very special orchestral performance from teachers and students of the New Eastern Arts School played traditional Chinese classical music wearing traditional costumes, with Mrs. Qian Qian Wang as the Principle and Founder of the orchestral ensemble leading. Participants met their sister of brother at the lunch tables and had the opportunity to get to know each

other's story during the buffet lunch period. Kellie Grattidge & Matthew Fagan brought the afternoon to a conclusion with a collection of ancient Celtic music and songs, having participants singing along and being mesmerised by Matthew's guitar work.

The most important section to the Bridge of Peace is connecting with a new sister or brother and pledging to join in friendship to build a bridge of peace and reconciliation between the two nations each represents and strive to be a harmoniser and peace maker in all levels of society. Comments from participants who filled out the evaluation form after the event were: "wonderful people, exciting and unforgettable, great event, truly moving". Many participants expressed that they felt the spirit of God and were visibly moved and joyful.

**Our partners for the event were Yarra Ranges Council, Universal Peace Federation, Africa Day Australia, Knox Interfaith Network, Zimbabwe Community in Australia, Nigerian Community, Doves for Peace and Paradigm Images. Thank you to all our WFWP Victoria Committee Members and volunteers whose team work made this year's Bridge of Peace a deep and moving experience.**



## Forums, Seminars & Conferences Annual General Meeting, Victoria

The Victoria chapter of WFWP held its AGM on Sunday 7 December 2014 at Belgrave Library. After a light lunch we began the AGM. The agenda included an Activities Report that reviewed our achievements, developments and activities in 2014, progress, a Financial Report and voting in new committee positions.

Our newly elected Secretary is a local lady who lives in Mount Evelyn, and our officer positions for 2015 are: **Facebook Moderator and Graphics Designer, Assistant Communicator, Forum Coordinator, and Community Development Officer.** After voting in new committee members, each participant reviewed and evaluated their role and the overall activities of WFWP in Victoria over the past twelve months. Our evaluations focused on what we have tried, what we have learnt, what we were pleased about, what we were concerned about, and finally how to move forward. We each read out our reflections, and a lively discussion evolved, one that will continue at the next committee meeting.

The afternoon concluded with our organisational mentor Michelle Dunscombe, from Governance Mentors, leading us through the big picture and the key elements of a strategic plan and the strategic planning process. She then facilitated a brainstorming session during which time we used butchers paper to document our vision for the organisation in three years time. Interestingly each group came up with similar ideas.



### Strategic Planning

On Saturday 17 January the WFWP Victorian Committee gathered for a one-day professional development workshop. We began with a Committee Meeting to plan for the upcoming Walk-a-thon to support our Pacific Island Neighbours, and to decide on a strategy for marketing the event. After a short break, John Bellavance gave a workshop on IT skills. He instructed us on how to use Google Drive in order to store and share our organisation's documents. After a light lunch, Michelle Dunscombe, our organisation's mentor, joined us for a strategic planning session. Michelle ran us through a couple of activities to determine the talents and strengths that we each bring to the organisation, and we discussed why we joined the WFWP Committee.

Michelle then provided us with a brief outline of what a strategic plan comprises, and we brainstormed possible objectives to work towards over the next 3 years. These objectives were in alignment with the 4 major goals of WFWP International. It is a work in progress, with some homework for us to complete before our next meeting in February to continue with the strategic plan. It was good to come together and share our ideas, to have a laugh and to develop our skills and knowledge in the area of strategic planning. We welcome anyone who would like to share their strengths and talents with us, and to further the development of WFWP in Victoria.



## Seminars across Victoria

### ▪ Africa Day Australia Family & Youth Forum

African Australian Leadership within the fields of culture, social development, law, business, politics and youth entrepreneurship presented at a day long forum at RMIT University in the city. The May 16th forum kicked off the week-long celebration of Africa Day Australia activities. For more information visit [www.africadayaustralia.org](http://www.africadayaustralia.org)

The day was actually two forums combined; the morning session focused on the Family with a theme of 'Empowering African Australian Families: Sharing Success & Challenges', while the afternoon session was Youth focused with a theme of 'Changing face of the African Australian Youth in Australia'. The Forum is part of the week long celebrations centered on the UN recognised day of Africa Day. Speakers inspired all the attendees to feel empowered to change their own lives and the lives of others. Africa Day is the annual commemoration of the 1963 founding of the Organisation of African Unity, known as the Africa Union and comprises 53 African nations.

Each year, Africa Day is an opportunity to celebrate the continent's achievements and to reflect on its challenges; such as armed conflict, climate change, and poverty. The African Union is now in its 53rd year. WFWP is a partner of Africa Day Australia (ADA). Anne Bellavance (WFWP National President) is one of the founding ADA committee members in Melbourne and WFWP Victoria supports the day by providing a beautiful morning tea spread of sweet and savory delights. The Forum committee members were extremely grateful to the WFWP ladies who supported the forum by providing homemade biscuits and cakes. WFWP members also were active at



## Seminars across Victoria

### ▪ Peace Building Seminar

Friends and guests of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) gathered at Monash University in Melbourne for a seminar on the 'Principles of Peace Building.' This introductory seminar was the first in a series of five seminars that aim to explore the principles of peace building. Also in attendance, were some of the members of the UPF Victorian Peace Council, a Council that was recently established and which met for the first time earlier in the year.

Some participants remarked that the peace building principles has the potential to provide the necessary shared, universal values that are needed to bring people to the table when they harbour opposing, extreme points of view. The principles can also offer an alternative for young people who may be seeking extreme options due to their heightened frustration with the current political system. Five people received their Ambassador for Peace awards and joined the international club of Ambassadors for Peace under UPF.

- 30th May 2015





## Seminars across Victoria

### ▪ WFWP in the City – Her Story

This season 'WFWP in the City' held the bi-monthly 'Her Story' at the Multi-cultural Hub in the city of Melbourne. It is an opportunity to hear the spiritual journey of women from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Each story gives wisdom, strength and connection for the participants. The stories are being collected to form a book on Her Stories – a spiritual journey that will be published on line in the near future. We have been honoured to hear the stories and the favourite recipes of Lucy Versteegen, Gai Scrivens, Ingrid Hindell & Miti Tangianau.

During Ingrid's story, she offered a message about becoming empowered. Ingrid gave this insight through a story about a friend who offered to help clean her house. Ingrid went to the bathroom and saw her using Ajax cleaner on the bathtub. Ingrid explained to her friend, "yes, the bath could be cleaner, but my husband and I prefer not to use harsh chemicals." Her friend tried to keep her ground, but Ingrid repeated her response again without raising her voice or showing anger or frustration until her friend complied with her wishes. Ingrid explained the empowerment steps as:

1. Begin your sentence by acknowledging what the other person just said with "yes, .."
2. Use 'I could' instead of I must or should;
3. Use 'I prefer' instead of I want.



### ▪ WFWP in the Hills Workshops

During the WFWP in the Hills bi-monthly workshop, participants practiced their public speaking skills. During the presentation session, we had the privilege of meeting our WFWP organisational mentor, Michelle Dunscombe, with the CEO of Governance Mentors, Natalia Perera introducing Michelle. The WFWP Victoria committee has decided to work with Governance Mentors for one year. Governance Mentors is a not for profit organisation funded through the state government that supports other NGO's in their organisation structure, financial structure, social media, outreach work etc. The WFWP committee has decided to work on developing a strategic plan together with our mentor. Michelle will speak at our Annual General Meeting in December, followed by WFWP members beginning the development of a three year strategic plan.



## Seminars across New South Wales

### Annual General Meeting, NSW

The annual meeting started with reports and brainstorming about WFWP 2015 activities, with a focus on synergy as a national chapter and building cooperative efforts with the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification and the Universal Peace Federation. The meetings were conducted over two days. Women's Federation NSW met on Sunday April 5th in the Mercure Hotel, Sydney CBD.

It was attended by the Australian President of WFWP, Anne Bellavance (who is also the Oceania Vice-President of WFWP International) and representatives from the Melbourne and Queensland chapters plus the NSW board members and WFWP members supporting the Sydney chapter. The meeting started with a welcome to members for their time for coming to Sydney from Queensland and Melbourne and appreciating Anne for her consistent leadership and care for the Australian chapters and also for connecting to our Island sisters in the Pacific. We had an opportunity to talk warmly about our personal experiences and learn more about each other. We discussed how to make use of the resources available on our WFWP website, Google Drive and the videos on our YouTube channel.

It was decided to support the Vanuatu relief this year through the proceeds raised through our Support our Pacific Island Neighbours Walk-a-thon. The NSW chapter will organise luncheons, the walkathon in July and empowering women round table meetings. During the meeting, WFWP NSW organised to conduct a series of workshops for board members by studying the founding ideas of the WFWP and reaching out to other women's peace organisations in preparation for the launching of the national level Global Women's Peace Network in Sydney, NSW, in September 2015 during the week of the International Day of Peace. I would like to thank all the ladies for attending and thank Anne Bellavance, who is working hard to lift up and professionalize WFWP Australia so we have more power to support our local and Pacific Island's friends.

## Women's Circle



WFWP, Sydney had a Women's Circle October 6th, 2014. We welcomed back Brenda Okada, her husband, Masaya, and daughter, Celine, from Vanuatu. They travelled to support our Women's centre on Tanna Island in Vanuatu. Celine is a passionate designer and talented pattern maker and she conducted lessons in the use of electric sewing machines. Earlier WFWP, NSW Chapter sent 20 secondhand sewing machines to Port Vila, Vanuatu, which were donated from Ingleburn High School in Sydney. WFWP Vanuatu donated 7 machines to Tanna Women's centre and is waiting for other Women's centres to have electricity connected in order to donate the remaining sewing machines.



## Seminars across New South Wales Volunteer Policy Workshop

A workshop to develop a WFWP national volunteer policy was held in Sydney on Sunday August 3rd. Anne Bellavance (national president) ran the session, similar to a session held in Victoria the previous week. The goal was to gather input from the majority of WFWP members throughout Australia so that collectively we develop a national volunteer policy, especially as we are all volunteer members.

The session began with each member sharing one inner strength and one skill they bring to the work of WFWP. Anne then explained the purpose behind developing a volunteer policy and the Australian standards required for organisations taking on volunteer assistance. We broke up in small groups to brainstorm the positive and negative aspects of volunteering as an individual and as an organisation. The points that each group brought up, were then viewed by everyone to select the key positive and negative aspects of volunteering with WFWP. These key points will be compared with the comments shared by the Victorian members and a national policy will then be drawn up for feedback from the national membership before it becomes policy. This will then be placed on our website for viewing.

The conclusion of the workshop was an analysis of what we are proud of, what we have done well, what we can improve and finally what next? Aila Willitts (NSW president) will use these comments to develop WFWP activities in NSW and stimulate discussion at the Sydney based meetings.



## Seminars across Queensland Annual General Meeting, QLD

On 3 December 2014 at Sunnybank Hills Library, WFWP Queensland held the first AGM with 5 Voting Members and 5 Associate Members. First the report on activities in 2014 was presented in a PowerPoint presentation. Then the Treasurer reported on finance.

The election of the Management Committee followed, see page ENTER PAGE NUMBER for results. After the AGM we enjoyed time together exchanging gifts and sharing Christmas food.



### ■ UN World Interfaith Harmony Week

**12 February 2015, Sunnybank Hills Library in Brisbane**

Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and Believing Women for a Culture of Peace (BWCP) hosted an annual event to celebrate UN World Interfaith Harmony Week.

There were about 45 participants, mostly community leaders from Brisbane. The MC for the program was Steve Evans, senior member of UPF Victoria. Aboriginal Elder, Aunty Peggy Tidyman, President of Logan Elders, gave an Acknowledgement of Country. Local Councillor, Kim Marx, welcomed everyone, before we were greeted by the three hosting organisations.

Mamiko Rattley, representing WFWP & UPF, thanked all the participants, especially the panellists. She explained that one of UPF's key goals is to promote peace through interfaith harmony. She announced the UN's motto for this year: Multi-religious Partnership for Sustainable Development. Then Wendy Flannery, Coordinator of BWCP, outlined her efforts to promote a culture of peace through interfaith harmony among women following her first hand experience of 9/11 in New York.

The main focus of the program was the panel discussion on the theme, 'Local programs and emerging initiatives to foster interfaith harmony' with four outstanding panellists who work tirelessly to promote interfaith harmony at the grassroots level. The panellists were Paul Saver of UPF Brisbane, Ronit Baras of Together for Humanity, Ricky Lashand of the Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue at Griffith University and Wendy Flannery of BWCP. They each spoke about their own programs and activities, and there was an array of engaging questions and answers as well as good will and energy.

In conclusion, we all agreed that we need to work with young people so that they can develop an open and inclusive mind to create a more harmonious society. As role models in the community, we need to work together to support each other.

We hope to continue working together and to extend this type of forum, even to the world!



## Seminars across Queensland

### ■ Culture of Healing Circle workshop

On October 25, 2014, The Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the Logan Elders held an Aboriginal "Culture of Healing Circle" workshop. The event was held at Murrigunyah Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Women (Murrigunyah) in Logan and was facilitated by Aunty Peggy Tidyman. Aunty Peggy is the President of both the Logan Elders and Murrigunyah.

The MC of the workshop, Mamiko Rattley Chair of WFWP Queensland, welcomed everyone and invited Aunty Peggy for 'Acknowledgement of Country'. Mamiko briefly reported on WFWP's aims and activities. Then the 15 participants introduced themselves. Before the main topic Aunty Peggy presented a history of Aborigine people and culture with a map of Aborigine tribes. She emphasized the importance of circles and asked everyone to remove shoes because the ground rejuvenates and regenerates us and brings us into connection with Mother Earth.

Aunty Peggy said, "In this modern materialistic world we have lost our intuition and connection to our past, each other and nature. Therefore it's vital for us to connect to the four key elements of nature and then intuitively know who we are and understand what we are going through in our heart in order for the healing process to work." Then she explained each of the four elements of life: Fire, Earth, Water and Air in detail to help us understand how they connect to our lives.

Aunty Peggy took us outside and showed the four elements, which were set up outside the centre of Murrigunyah. She suggested we have miniature symbols of those four elements in our home to help us to be aware and connect with them in our daily life. For example: burning candle - Fire, a potted plant - Earth, a small water fountain - Water, wind chime-Air. All participants were very grateful to Aunty Peggy for her sharing of the precious culture of the Healing Circle with us.

To conclude the workshop Mamiko thanked Aunty Peggy and said that WFWP will keep providing opportunities like today for women to learn skills to heal and grow so that we women can be active promoters for a culture of Peace in our family, society and world.



## Seminars across Queensland

### ■ Interfaith Prayer & Walk for Peace

Women's Federation for World Peace hosted an Interfaith Prayer & Walk for Peace with 2 other organisations, Universal Peace Federation and Believing Women for a Culture of Peace. This timely event was initiated by WFWP's supporter State MP, Freya Ostapovitch.

We organisers were determined to make it inspiring. With so much conflict and war in many places, the world more than ever needs prayer for peace. It was particularly meaningful that we could hold this event at the time of the UN International Day of Peace.

The walk started at Queens Park in the heart of the Brisbane CBD, with Aborigine Elder Aunty Kerry Charlton offering Welcome to Country and blessing of the event. Freya Ostapovitch MP welcomed and thanked the participants. We walked toward State Parliament House for several blocks behind a slogan banner with peace music playing. Many participants carried peace lanterns. It was a beautiful Queensland spring day. To set the atmosphere, Mr Demont Dorgan sang a peace song.

Participants were encouraged to write on paper their own prayer for peace and attach it to the Prayer Tree. At the destination, Speaker's Corner next to the Queensland Parliament House, we held a program. 7 different faith leaders (Christian, Jewish, Islam, Buddhist, Hindu, Baha'i, Spiritualist) offered moving prayers for peace. Then we all said a common prayer in unison and attached own prayers for peace onto the Prayer Tree. Leaders of the 3 host organisations (WFWP, BWCP,UPF) thanked everyone and shared peace statements. To finish the program we sang together 'Let There Be Peace on Earth'.

We believe that this event inspires each participant to keep praying for those who are suffering in the world so that peace may come to them in the near future.

It reminded all of us that we need to make effort to be tolerant and reach out toward people of different religions and backgrounds in order to have a peaceful and harmonious society and world that is unshakable by any negative force. We are grateful to the 50 or so participants including speakers and faith leaders who graciously spoke and offered prayers to support this event.



## Service Projects for the Pacific Islands

### Support our Pacific Island Nations Walk-a-thon

WFWP Pacific Island development projects focus on capacity building; empowering women with leadership, support, skills and knowledge to run and maintain the following projects. Financial support is an important component; these projects would not be possible without the vision and generous support of WFWP members, volunteers, friends and partnership with local providers.

What a fun way to launch the 'Support our Pacific Neighbours WALK-A-THON' by challenging the 1000 Steps Kokoda Trail in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges National Park. The track is nestled in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges on the outskirts of Melbourne. Saturday March 7th was our 'walk off'. The walk-a-thon was a whole community family event in partnership with FFWPU, UPF and the YFWP. Considering the hot summer and the rainy nature of Melbourne during all the other seasons, the 1st Saturday of Autumn was chosen as the date for the annual walk-a-thon event.

Walk-a-thon participants registered before the walk-off and assembled behind the starting banner, as 11am drew near. The siren sounded and they were off; some participants enjoying the uphill exercise while others challenged the track to make the fastest time. As a family activity, participants came from different cultural backgrounds, walks of life and age groups, including special needs, children, youth, adults and seniors.

A big feature was the support of new found friends and old friends, as they made their way up the mountain. This was not the end though, at the top of the track at One Tree Hill Picnic Ground; participants registered their walk time and enjoyed entertainment and a hearty BBQ lunch. As the finale of the afternoon, first, second and third place winners were presented with their ribbons.

*"Years ago our Australian soldiers walked in the Pacific Islands during a time of war and were supported by our Pacific Island Neighbours. Through this walk-a-thon, now Australians walk to support them."*

*-John Bellavance (vice-president UPF, Australia).*



### Providing solar lights for remote villages in Vanuatu (Island Lights Project)

The goal of the walk-a-thon is to raise funds for the WFWP Australia projects within the Oceania Island nations. WFWP Australia has undertaken practical service projects within the Oceania Island nations since 2003. These include Books for the Islands, Sewing machines sent to support the Women's Sewing Centres and Character Education programs for youth. At present, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have active WFWP chapters within their nations.

This year, funds raised from the walk-a-thon will initiate the Island Lights Project, with the pilot initiative targeting the remote villages of Tanna Island, Vanuatu. How did this project come about? One of our WFWP committee members, Dianne Simboro went to Tanna Island as a guest speaker for a health and wellbeing seminar put on for the village women of Tanna Island. Dianne asked the ladies what their needs were and the strong reply was, "we need lighting so our children can do homework at night and we can run businesses from home". Since then, WFWP Australia has been working to raise funds to send high quality portable solar lighting to support the women of Lamnatu Village and other similar remote villages. The village is home to 340 people in 43 households and 15 family groups.

A key goal of our WFWP Island nation projects is to empower the local women within their communities. For the Island Lights Project, the women will be responsible for ensuring each family and school child has access to the solar lights.





## ■ Women’s Sewing Centres- Vanuatu

Five years ago manual sewing machines were donated by WFPW Australia to the ladies in Imaelone Village, Western Tanna. The women used them while sitting on mats on the floor of their women’s centre. Recently, Ingleburn High School in Sydney upgraded their sewing room machines and graciously donated their used machines to WFPW Sydney, through contact via our National website our state president, Aila Willitts. They were then transported to Vanuatu. FFWPU missionary/New Village Movement co-ordinator Rev Jong Dueg Yoo was then able to arrange for electricity to be connected to the community centre in the village. With our arrival a ceremony was held to officially present the seven machines to Tess, the wife of the Taffeta Province President, Nakau Natuman, on behalf of the village.



There was great excitement as men brought tables from homes in the village to be used as work tables. Women quickly covered them with colourful clothes, the machines unboxed, put in place and plugged in. Celine began with the basics, filling the bobbin. The sound of the bobbin filling caused shrieks of delight to explode from all the women. Threading the machine correctly was a very serious affair and then came the time to sew, again shrieks of delight and wonder at the speed of the action.



Men stood and wandered around in the background, quite curious and a little in awe of what their women were experiencing. Everyone was very eager to have their turn at this new-fangled machine. Many women proved to be quite adept and soon the sound of the racing machines filled the air as one by one they were taken over. Brightly coloured fabrics seemed to suddenly appear from nowhere, as some women rushed home and returned with eyes wide with determination and intention of sewing new curtains, new dresses and new tablecloths. There seemed to be no stopping them. Celine and I are both collectors of fabric and knitting/crochet yarns, so we took along two large bags full to share with the women as well. For those not at a machine we began to teach them to crochet, suggesting that they start with simple squares, recommending them as good cleaning cloths. When we returned the next day great progress had been made with the crocheting but cleaning cloths were not the desired end product. Everyone wanted a bag. *Continued>*



## Women’s Sewing Centres- Vanuatu Continued

On the first day we held a four hour session before packing up for the day. The following day we held a six hour session interspersed by lunch which had been prepared by the women. The bag of fabrics and notions was unpacked on this day. The women were initially hesitant to investigate but quietly and surely each piece of fabric was taken by the end of our session with skirts, cushion covers, shirts and curtains, all in the process of being made. Embroidery settings were shown to one lady who sewed and sewed until unfortunately her machine burnt out.

All in all it was a wonderful experience for all. To provide an activity for women to gather together and be productive is a wonderful thing. While caring for their babies, toddlers and small children, they can create items for their families, for gifts or for sale. To hear the sound of women chattering and laughing as sewing machines buzzed and children played and cried in the background was truly a joyous experience. Even the local dogs gathered around us and one puppy slept while resting its head on a skein of yarn.

Many of the women’s eyesight seemed to be poor. At one stage one pair of glasses was being handed around and shared to aid in the threading of needles and even crocheting. To this end I ask members

## ■ Books for the Islands

WFPW Australia initiated the ‘Book for the Islands Project’ in 2008. Since then, WFPW has shipped thousands of boxes of children’s books to local primary schools in Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Samoa. Many of the Island nations do not have libraries for their primary schools, and WFPW Australia has worked towards expanding the resources of libraries by supplying good quality children’s books in either the English or French language. In partnership with UPF Vanuatu, books have been donated to schools recommended by Ambassadors for Peace in Vanuatu. In our 2014 shipment, 600 books were sent to the Fresh Wota Bilingual School (elementary school) in Port Vila. This school sent a thank you letter to WFPW Australia. Another set of books went to a child care centre in Port Vila.





## ■ Women’s Sewing Centre- Shepparton, Vic.

*The Women’s Sewing Group is a SECCI (social education, employment and cultural integration) pilot project that focuses on multicultural women and disadvantaged young people in order to access human capital (skills & education), social capital (connectedness and tolerance) and economic capital (employment, mentoring and coaching).*



It was a beautiful summer day in January when Gai Scrivens (WFWP Community Development Officer) and Anne Bellavance (WFWP National President) travelled up to Shepparton to meet with Dr. Mimmi Ngum Chi Watts (WFWP patron) and the Women’s Sewing Group of Shepparton. Anne and Gai took with them five sewing machines and a sewing box that had been kindly donated to the WFWP sewing projects by members of the Victorian community via our website.



The room was already abuzz, with children playing and entertaining themselves alongside their mothers who were sewing and designing African style clothing, using vibrant African printed fabrics. Some of the teenage daughters also came to learn the skills. The managers of the sewing group are Hadija Hussein, Helena Netan and Gertrude Lenda, and Gertrude is also the group’s sewing teacher.

There are approximately 40 ladies who are members of the group, most are new Australians who have come as refugees to Australia. The origin countries represented in the group so far are Congo, Burundi, India, Sudanese, Kenya and Somali. The types of clothing made are women’s and girls’ dresses, skirts,

tops and the Hijab. The women hope to open up a store front in a few months once they have sewn enough stock to display. The African style inspired outfits are made of 100% cotton and are cool to wear during warm days. It would be great for the general public to have access to purchase this style of clothing.

The group meet on Monday’s and Wednesday’s during the holidays, and on Saturday’s during the school term. The women presently meet at a local community hall, but are looking for permanent venue and a kind venue donor. If you know of anyone in the Shepparton area who would be willing to hire out their venue for the not-for-profit Women’s Sewing Group, please let us know so that we can pass on the information.

The idea of the Women’s Sewing Group came from Rashidi Sumaili in collaboration with Dr. Mimmi Watts. Rashidi is a Project Office for the Local Learning Employment Network (LLEN) in the shire of Goulbourn Murray, and he has been instrumental in developing programs such as: youth leadership (giving access to education and employment training); the Global Mission Hub (to create education and employment opportunities); and the state Government initiative, Getting Down to Business (promote youth enterprises).

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Pacific Island Nations Walk-a-thon

2014 Upwey Bridge of Peace Ceremony

2014 Clayton Bridge of Peace Event

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