



United Nations Association of Australia
WA Division

FEB / MAR 2013

UNAAWA Newsletter

Firstly, a quick reminder that RSVPs for the fundraising lunch on Tuesday 26th March for the Yolande Frank Memorial Award close on Monday 25th so ring Elsie or Judith ASAP if you would like to attend. Details of the event are on page 3.

A big thank you to the many members who attended our Planning Day in January and contributed to our plans for the year. Details about our events are being developed on an ongoing basis so keep an eye on the UNAAWA calendar and this newsletter for the latest updates. It is particularly exciting that we have a new Education Working Group - please let the office know if you would like to be involved.

I have recently returned from snowy Geneva and a wonderful experience as the Australian representative at the World Federation of United Nations Associations' *Civil Society in Action for Human Rights* program (session 1). Held at the Palais de Nations at the UN, this first session forms part of a three year program designed to strengthen the effectiveness of UN Associations in the area of human rights advocacy. It is intended to help UNAs become more empowered to implement advocacy activities to advance national human rights issues and to effectively use international human rights mechanisms.

It was a very intensive program, involving dynamic dialogue with and instruction by various UN experts about UN mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review, Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies. I was also kindly adopted by the Australian Permanent Mission to the UN Geneva for the period during which the Universal Periodic Review was being held in the Human Rights Council (photo below). I will be reporting to the National Office about the program and will be sharing information about the trip with you over the next few months.

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The National President of UNAA, Dr Russell Trood, will be coming to Perth for our event on **Thursday 2 May from 6pm-8pm**. Please mark this date in your diaries - venue and booking details will be available soon. The event will focus on Australia's role on the UN stage and whether/how we can make a difference. We will be looking at Australia's new presence on the Security Council and our involvement in other UN bodies and will attempt to answer questions such as: *How can we use the Security Council opportunity to advance issues of importance? How can civil society effectively engage with the UN Security Council and other key UN bodies such as the Human Rights Council?* Confirmed speakers include Mr Michael Wood from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Finally, it is very pleasing to hear that the Australian War Memorial Council has agreed to add the names of Australian service officers killed in 'non-warlike' operations (e.g. peacekeepers) to the War Memorial's Roll of Honour. This will mean that *all* service people who have made the ultimate sacrifice of losing their life in service of their country will be recognised. This decision follows a strong community campaign, including via petitions, to have the change introduced. Congratulations to members who were involved in the process.

[Carolyne Gatward, President]

United Nations Office Geneva (UNOG)

The UN Office at Geneva (UNOG), Switzerland is housed at the Palais de Nations. It is headed by a Director-General who is directly accountable to the UN Secretary-General. With more than 1,600 staff, it is the biggest duty station outside of the UN Headquarters in New York. The City of Geneva itself has a population of approximately 200 000 people and is home to numerous international agencies including the UN & the Red Cross.

The Palais stands in the 46 hectare Ariana Park, which has been made available to the UN by the City of Geneva. The park was bequeathed to the City on the condition that peacocks should be allowed to roam freely on the grounds. The birds still wander around the park and are looked after by the park gardeners.

Of 193 UN Member States, 171 (including Australia) maintain permanent missions to the UNOG. Non member States and intergovernmental organisations and other entities may also be invited to participate as observers at the UN. Some of the issues that the UNOG and specialised agencies of the UN deal with include maintaining peace and security; promoting disarmament and non-proliferation; protecting human rights; providing humanitarian assistance; providing assistance to refugees; improving communications; improving labour standards; studying weather and climate change; allocating radio frequencies and protecting intellectual property.

The UN is keen to promote a deeper relationship between the UN and NGOs. It is considered that expanding the relationship with NGOs helps strengthen both UN and intergovernmental relationships. Of the 10,000 meetings that take place at the UNOG each year, more than half are open to NGOs. NGOs may engage with the UN through consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) or association with the Department of Public Information (DPI). More than 3,400 NGOs have consultative status with ECOSOC and over 1,500 NGOs are associated from DPI.

The first session of the World Federation of United Nations Associations' (WFUNA) *Civil Society in Action for Human Rights* program at the Palais des Nations took place from 28 January – 1 February 2013 with 20 participants from all around the world, representing 13 UNAs. UNA Australia was represented by Ms Carolyne Gatward, President UNAANA.



[Photo: Attendees and WFUNA staff at the *Civil Society in Action for Human Rights* program, Session 1. Ms Gatward is third from left.]

Article extracts & references from: <http://www.unog.ch/> and <http://www.wfuna.org>.

[TO BE CONTINUED...]

Yolande Frank Memorial Award—Fundraising Lunch

The friends of the late Yolande Frank invite you to a fundraising lunch in aid of the Yolande Frank Memorial Award 2013. The memorial award was established following Yolande's death in 2009. Yolande was an active member of United Nations Association, National Council of Jewish Women and the National Council of Women WA.

The award encourages Western Australian children to learn about the significance of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The inaugural award took place in 2010.

Details of Yolande Frank Fundraising Lunch are as follows:

Tuesday 26 March 2013
 11.30am Uniting Church Hall
 Crn Starr and Archer Street Carlisle
 Accessible by public transport, parking available
 Cost: \$20 for lunch payable at the door.
 Raffle 3 tickets for \$5. Bring and Buy table

Guest Speaker: Artist Yana Vodesil-Baruffi whose project is to paint 50 leader women in WA. All are inaugural members of the WA Women's Hall of Fame. The finished exhibition will tour WA regions and later eastern states to raise money for the Children's Leukaemia Foundation. Yana paints with a palette knife and her work is exceptional. Many of her paintings will be on display.

RSVP essential by Monday 25 March 2013 [for catering]
 Phone: Elsie Tester 94447548
 Judith Parker 95272438

This event is arranged on behalf of UNAAWA by the friends of the late Yolande Frank.



*[2012 Yolande Frank Memorial Award—Highly Commended Category Winner
 By Sarah Tucker]*

International Women's Day

This year NCWWA organised a lunch to celebrate International Women's Day. The lunch was co sponsored by UNAAWA and by the Council of African Women.

Elsie Tester was at the entrance, selling raffle tickets near a table full with wonderful prizes. Joan Mann gave the “Welcome to Country”, highlighting the fantastic contribution that Sue Gordon made to the Sister Kate project.



[Photo: NCJWA table of attendees at the IWD Lunch]

The speaker for the event was Sue Gordon AM, retired magistrate of the Children's Court.

Sue gave an excellent overview on domestic violence in WA and the improvements in the Aboriginal and wider communities when dealing with this important issue. She told us briefly about the hardship her grandmother and mother went through as young Aboriginal women—and how difficult and painful it was for her to be forced out of her home at the age of four and meeting her mum again 30 years after this.

The lunch was delicious and the company excellent. Dr Dawn Butterworth thanked everyone and thanked UNAAWA and Elsie very much for co-sponsoring the event and organising and running the raffles.



There was a diverse group of women and it was a terrific networking event and celebration.

*[Ester Steingiesser,
UNAAWA Executive]*

*[Photo L to R:
Ester Steingiesser,
Dr Dawn Butterworth &
Sue Gordon]*

Women in UN Peacekeeping

A vital component to tackling violence against women in the UN mission areas is having more females serving in the operations. Deployed in all areas – police, military and civilian – women have increasingly become part of the UN peacekeeping family.

In 1993, women made up 1 per cent of deployed uniformed personnel. In 2012, out of approximately 125,000 peacekeepers, women constitute 3 per cent of military personnel and 10 per cent of police personnel. They also constitute around 30 per cent of the 7,500 of the international civilians working in peacekeeping and special political missions.

The underrepresentation of female police officers presents a challenge when it comes to tackling violence against women in the field, according to Cameron Sigley of the UN Police Division, who noted that one of the core components of an effective police force is being representative of the community you serve.

“If you’re not, that really puts up all sorts of roadblocks and barriers to truly effective policing and genuinely addressing the issues, the concerns – be they criminal or social – that your community has,” he said.

In addition to developing a toolkit for UNPOL on tackling sexual and gender-based violence, the Police Division has made a major push to recruit more female police officers for UN missions through an initiative known as the Global Effort. Launched in 2009, the initiative seeks to have women represent at least 20 per cent of the UN police force by the end of 2014.

The impact of deploying female police officers has already been seen in Liberia, where, following the arrival of an all-female police unit (FPU) from India, women not only felt more empowered to report abuses but also queued up to join their own police force.

There are currently two other all-female FPUs, both from Bangladesh, serving with the UN missions in Haiti and DRC.

Ms Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, has also stressed the importance of having more women, both in the ranks of peacekeeping missions and in decision-making positions within countries.



[UN Photo/Marco Dormino]

“One thing is certain: We need more women police, peacekeepers and judges. Studies show that women report rape more when there are women police officers,” she said.

“It is very simple – we need to give women the confidence, the trust that they will be treated fairly, justly! Women serving on the front lines of justice strengthen justice for women.”

*Extract from
UN News Centre article,
8 March 2013.*

Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust

This day was commemorated in Perth on Tuesday 29 January at the Jewish Community Centre. Co-hosted by the United Nations Association of Australia (WA), the Holocaust Institute of WA, the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (WA) and the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of WA, it attracted about 60 people, including representatives of numerous Jewish and other organizations & religious groups.

Judith Parker AM DSJ hosted the event in the absence of the Western Australian Division President of the UNAA, Carlyne Gatward who was in Geneva for a World Federation UNA program. Mrs Parker welcomed Bob Kucera, Chairman of the Friends of Israel Association and his wife Sue; Tony Tate President of the Jewish Community Council (WA) and other heads of organizations.

It is customary to hear United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's message at this occasion: this year's theme was 'Rescue During the Holocaust: the Courage to Care', a tribute to those who protected victims of the Holocaust at enormous personal risk. The SG observed that while certain individuals, such as Raoul Wallenberg, became widely known for their often brazen acts of humanity in rescuing thousands from certain death, the world must never forget those unsung heroes who rose above the evil of their times to save individuals.



The feature film 'Paper Clips' was shown, and all present were moved by the spectacular efforts of the children of a small southern American school to take a lesson about tolerance in 1998 and convert it to a Holocaust memorial project that became a monument in the Middle School of Whitwell, Tennessee.

*[Photo:
Joan Motta, NCJWA WA
Judith Parker, UNAAWA and
Rena Hendelson,
Holocaust Institute of WA]*

For those of us who were privileged to hear school Principal Linda Hooper speak at a UIA Women's Dinner in Perth a few years ago, the message was doubly reinforced that people can change their perceptions about others and drop their prejudices. Ms Hooper and her staff epitomized the twin virtues of caring and sharing – caring enough about the project to envisage the acquisition of an authentic railcar from Germany and create a monument, and sharing the experience of being part of the project with the entire population of her town.

In concluding the event, Judith Parker spoke briefly about the Yolande Frank Memorial Award for school children in Western Australia – the competition to illustrate a chosen clause from the United Nations Charter of Human Rights. The UNAA was a passion of the late Yolande Frank, a Holocaust survivor and long-time member of NCJWA. This competition will run for its 4th year in 2013.

Attendees of the function went away wearing paperclips – the anti-Nazi symbol of support and defiance worn by people in Norway where the humble object was invented.

[Article by Sue Levy of NCJWA (WA)]

'Australia and the UN' Video

Have you checked out the video "Australia and the UN" yet? In partnership with AusAID, National UNAA launched this short video which profiles the history of the UN and how Australia works to advance the UN's goals.

"It is our hope that this video will showcase Australia's long and proud history of supporting the United Nations. It makes a strong case for us to continue our support to ensure the UN can meet current challenges such as the conflict in Syria; progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and beyond; and tackling some of the problems without borders such as climate change, and disarmament" says UNAA Executive Director Elizabeth Shaw.

UNAAWA makes a very short but memorable appearance just before the 7 minute mark of the video. To view, the link is:

<http://www.unaa.org.au/unaa-releases-video-australia-and-the-un-to-celebrate-un-day.html>.

News from other Organisations

CARAD (Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees) is holding a quiz night on Saturday 4 May (7pm start) at the North Perth Bowling Club. Tickets are \$25 full price/\$15 concession. Tables of 8 with BYO nibbles. For more information, please contact Rosanne on 0403 577 288. On-line booking is at www.trybooking.com/43942.

United Nations - Important Dates

February

- 4 Feb— World Cancer Day
- 6 Feb— Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation [WHO]
- 13 Feb—World Radio Day [UNESCO]
- 20 Feb—World Day of Social Justice
- 21 Feb— International Mother Language Day [UNESCO]

March

- 8 Mar— International Women's Day
- 20 Mar—International Day of Happiness
- 21 Mar—International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 21 Mar—World Down Syndrome Day
- 22 Mar—World Water Day
- 24 Mar—World Tuberculosis Day [WHO]
- 24 Mar—International Day for the Right to Truth about Gross Human Right Violations
- 25 Mar—International Day for Victims of Slavery & the Transatlantic Slave Trade



For more information, visit <http://www.un.org/en/events/observances/days.shtml>

World Cancer Day [WHO]

World Cancer Day is marked on February 4 to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection and treatment. Cancer is one of the most misunderstood diseases in the world. It is estimated that two thirds of people in Australia will either suffer the disease or know someone close who will be diagnosed in their lifetime.

So what is cancer? It is a term used for diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and are able to invade other tissues. Cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph systems. Cancer is not just one disease but many diseases.

There are more than 100 different types of cancer. Most cancers are named for the organ or type of cell in which they start. For example, cancer that begins in the colon is called colon cancer, cancer that begins in the liver is called liver cancer, etc.



This year World Cancer Day focussed on informing the public about the myths and real facts about cancer. The four main myths are below:

Myth 1: Cancer is just a health issue

Truth: Cancer is not just a health issue. It has wide-reaching social, economic, development and human rights implications.

Myth 2: Cancer is a disease of the wealthy, elderly and developed countries

Truth: Cancer does not discriminate. It is a global epidemic, affecting all ages, with low- and middle-income countries bearing a disproportionate burden.

Myth 3: Cancer is a death sentence

Truth: Many cancers that were once considered a death sentence can now be cured and for many more people their cancer can now be treated effectively.

Myth 4: Cancer is my fate

Truth: With the right strategies, more than one in every three cancers can be prevented.

So please spread the message, particularly about the focus of this year's World Cancer Day - myths and misconceptions about cancer. The fact sheets and other information can be found on the official World Cancer Day website at www.worldcancerday.org.

We can also lobby our local and State governments and create action groups to help aid the cause. Finally, simply making donations to cancer charities is a vital key to hopefully one day finding a cure for cancer, and every little bit helps.

References

www.cancer.gov; www.worldcancerday.org

[Max Fouda, UNAAWA member]

Further Resources

- **The United Nations Information Centre for Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific:** <http://www.un.org.au>
- **The United Nations Youth Association Australia (UNYA) WA Division:** <http://wa.unya.org.au/>
- **For international updates, sign up for UN Wire:** http://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/index.jsp
- **For national updates, sign up for the UNAA newsletter UNity:** <http://www.unaa.org.au/subscribe.html>