

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MARCH 2015



It has been a very busy month with lots of committee meetings and planning going on. My idea, when I became President, was to try and attend at least one meeting of any committees (as an ex officio) to see how they worked and it has been very interesting.

I attended the Membership Committee meeting and they have a great team and lots of good ideas to share with us. A very efficient group led by Sandii.

I have also been involved in the IWD committee this year and they are to be commended on their hard work. Our IWD High Tea was a great success and our thanks must go to the terrific organising committee headed by Lynette with her generals Kerrie and Dawn, and members Carole, Judy Brown, Lauren, Donna, Shirley, Laura and Janet. Thank you all.

Our guest speaker Tanya Swift is a remarkable woman with a great story to tell. She told me she was overwhelmed with the women in our club she had spoken to and their stories, but you just had to look around the room while she was speaking to see the audience response to her story.

Our District Conference Committee is meeting regularly and slowly it is beginning to all come together on the organisational work we have to do. The printing of the conference handbook will be done by a local printer and we are in the process of now looking for more sponsorship to help defray costs of the conference. The club was successful in getting a \$3500 grant from our local council and this will cover the cost of the Friday Night Welcome to delegates.

The committee consists of the board members and we have asked Dawn to help with the decorating of the tables for the dinner. As time gets closer there are plenty of jobs we will be asking members to help with so be prepared!!

Roz and I attended a Networking Morning with the local Chamber of Commerce where we briefly outlined the plans for the conference. We will continue working with this group for their support with sponsorship, discounts to delegates etc. and it is good to have that contact with the local businesses, both for now and in the future.

Lesley has started organising our new committee: Assistance Awards and will report at the next meeting. I am sure this is the way to go for future commitments to helping young women and the community.



Whitsunday Mayor Jennifer Whitney with President Noelene Helman at IWD High Tea



## SERVICE

### IWD

OUR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BRUNCH IS OVER FOR ANOTHER YEAR AND WHAT A DAY IT WAS. MANY THANKS TO LYNETTE AND HER FABULOUS TEAM FOR GIVING US A DAY WE AND MANY OF OUR GUESTS ARE STILL TALKING ABOUT.

DETECTIVE SENIOR SARGENT TANYA SWIFT TOLD US OF HER EXPERIENCES IN AFGANISTAN AND OF THE FAMILY SUPPORT FROM HER HUSBAND AND CHILDREN THAT ENABLES HER TO CONTINUE IN HER CAREER WITH THE AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE.

THE FASHION PARADE WAS VERY ENTERTAINING AND MY THANKS GO TO THE RETAILERS WHO PROVIDED THE CLOTHING FOR OUR WONDERFUL MODELS.

THE GENEROSITY OF COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN THIS COMMUNITY NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME, WITHOUT OUR SPONSORS, WILMAR, MORRISON NAUTICAL SERVICES, STEPHANIE BACON, WATERLINE AND GRAPHIC HOUSE AND ALL THOSE WHO DONATED TO THE SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLES WE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD SUCH A SUCCESSFUL EVENT.

IDEAS FOR NEXT YEAR ARE ALREADY COMING IN THICK AND FAST, I LOVE TO SEE THE ENTHUSIASM THIS EVENT HAS CREATED.

**KERRIE ADAM, DIRECTOR**



Zonta area 5 director Marie Cameron, Zontian MC Lynette Corne, guest speaker Tanya Swift and Zonta Club of Whitsundays president Noelene Helman.



**Wendy Downes OAM**



**Tanya Swift & Lynette Corne**



**Judy Brown raffle queen  
and IWD Committee**



**High Tea**



**Whitsunday MP Jason Costigan &  
partner Nicole**



**Glamour**



**Dawn Green & Carole Lindsay IWD  
Committee members**



**Lesley Pratchett**



**Stephanie Bacon - Ray White Table**



**Enjoyed by All**



## ADVOCACY

### UNITED NATIONS:

A story with no (happy) end, a story that needs to be told...

Persons in this drama: Peter, my good friend and mate (NOT Peter, my husband!) Beatrice, his wife Christine and Claudia, their daughters Ursula, Beatrice's old friend and school mate Sabine, Ursula's daughter and Peter's goddaughter

Switzerland, 35 years ago: Peter was my friend and best mate. We worked together, we saw each other socially, I knew his wife Beatrice quite well; Peter and I organised school camps together. We were often taken as brother and sister, me being the older sister. I trusted and liked Peter and lot and respected his intelligence and extrovert nature. His 2 daughters and son were still babies and toddlers.

Australia, 4 years ago.: Peter emailed me that his daughter Christine, now 30 years old, wanted to visit and stay awhile. He indicated that she was mentally fragile as she just ended a troublesome relationship. Christine arrived and from the start Peter (my Peter this time!) realised that this was a very troubled young lady. She misbehaved like a teenager, had terrible mood swings and at times abused us verbally. It was just after the International Women's Day, when I had my presentation, that I finally got her to talk. **IT WASN'T THE RELATIONSHIP THAT WAS THE PROBLEM, BUT HER FATHER!** From the age of 5 Christine was sexually abused by her father. When she went to tell her mother, the way a 5 year old would, she was told by her mother that she was a liar! Where does a 5 year old girl turn to, if her mother doesn't believe her? So the abuse continued and Christine never told anybody, until she caught her father trying to abuse his then 2 year old granddaughter by Christine's sister Claudia. The past came rushing back, Christine again confronted her father and mother and told her sister about the incident. Their reaction? Claudia made sure that her daughter was never again alone with her grandfather, Beatrice was still in denial and so was Peter, the abuser.

Switzerland, 3½years ago: As always during my visit to Switzerland I caught up with Ursula, a friend of many years and a very good friend of Beatrice. I told her about Christine, because I couldn't just forget what she told me! **JUST A MONTH PRIOR TO OUR MEETING HER DAUGHTER SABINE, 36YEARS OLD, TOLD HER MOTHER THAT SHE HAD BEEN RAPED BY PETER, HER GODFATHER!** Ursula was devastated. She knew that her daughter Sabine had been sexually molested, but Sabine never told her by whom. She told her mum that the incident felt like a pussy boil that couldn't be touched. Once open, there was no way of knowing what would happen... But after my story Ursula and I realised that our good friend Peter was not only a paedophile, but probably had destroyed the lives of more young girls than we initially thought. After a short investigation we found 5 young women who had been abused by Peter when they were children and staying with Peter and Beatrice. They were all good friends of the family and nobody suspected anything. Ursula and I had to go to the police, which we did the next morning.

(Continued next page)



## ADVOCACY

Police investigation in Switzerland: except the attempted abuse of Peter's granddaughter, all other abuses couldn't be pursued by the police as the period of limitation had expired! (They have changed the law since, but the new laws – no limitation on child sex offenses – were not retrospective.) The police did interview Peter, but of course he denied everything. Claudia, his daughter, didn't want to testify against her father and Christine was too troubled to be a reliable witness. Peter is an important member of his community; he is a lawyer, sits on numerous committees and had a very high job in an insurance company. So the whole thing blew over. Ursula and I were left angry and frustrated. Ursula was worried about her daughter and very angry that her ex-friend Beatrice had never spoken out all these years. We knew that Beatrice was aware of what was going on, but stuck her head in the sand!!

Last week in Switzerland: interview of Sabine in the biggest women's weekly in Switzerland. The interview was supposed to be about her newest film to be released in March 2015, but the interview took an unexpected turn: Sabine started to talk about her abuse. Here is a translation of some of her words, basically the beginning of her interview: "I don't know if what I am going to say is what you want to hear, but I am going to say it anyway. You can decide whether you want to publish it or not: at 5 years of age I was sexually abused (by her godfather) and the man filmed the incident. I repressed this memory for years and took refuge in dance. My parents thought: our daughter is a bit special, an artistic type... I never told them anything, because I wasn't quite sure whether it was only in my head or real. When I was 19 I did my first film. In one segment I played a young woman who was physically harassed – in front of the film cameras, just like it happened when I was five years old! Everything came flooding back: the abuse, the filming. Only now could I tell my mum, but not who he was." She goes on that this abuse and her way of dealing with it, was probably one of the reasons she became a dancer and then an actress. The abuse never leaves her, but it is part of her life. She made her trauma her gift of acting, identifying herself with the roles she plays. At the beginning it was the valve she needed to get rid of the hate she felt against her abuser. For her, acting is better than psychoanalysis.

I had to share this story with you all. There is a young woman who used her pain to become a great actress. But it took her 35 years to publically tell the story! The only satisfaction I have is that a lot of people in Switzerland will know what happened and a lot will put two and two together. Peter, now in his sixties, won't get away with it anymore. I'll always be angry that he never got punished, that his wife didn't stand up for these kids who trusted him and her, that I misjudged a person so utterly and completely! He left a trail of damaged women on the way, one being his daughter Christine.

**Submitted by Christina della Valle**



## Birthing Kits & Training in Tamil Nadu



When Dalit (untouchable) women in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu give birth they must select one of two risky choices. They can either have their baby at home or go to a government hospital. At home this will probably mean giving birth on a dirt floor in a dwelling with no running water. The trip to hospital is little safer. Under supply or corruption have left the hospitals with huge infection risks in the form of dirty mattresses, unclean scalpels, no gloves, soap or clean ties.

The Birthing Kit Foundation of Australia (BKFA) supplies birthing kits to and has educated over 1,000 traditional birth attendants in Tamil Nadu. Each one now takes a kit along for every birth she attends, whether it is for use at home or as a back-up when she accompanies a mother in a government facility. A traditional birth attendant armed with a birthing kit can be a life saver wherever a birth takes place.

Education programs in Tamil Nadu, funded by the Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia), make sure more than just the traditional birth attendants get the message. Husbands and caretakers get involved and find out how they can play a part in a clean, safe birth or act as a back-up if a woman does need hospital support. Adolescent girls are also being educated on the health challenges they face when they become mothers. For the first time whole communities in this state now understand the importance of a clean, safe and healthy birthing environment.

**Submitted by Wendy Downes, Chair**



## BOOKS FROM BIRTH

Letters have been sent to all the services to enquire whether they wish us to continue sending books to them through 2015.

Our local library and families have been wonderful in collecting and donating through 2014

Zontians helping with the project have changed each month for various reasons but for the project to succeed we need at least four people at each “workshop” usually held the first Wednesday of the month between 3 – 5 pm at my place.

Helping with Books from Birth could involve:-

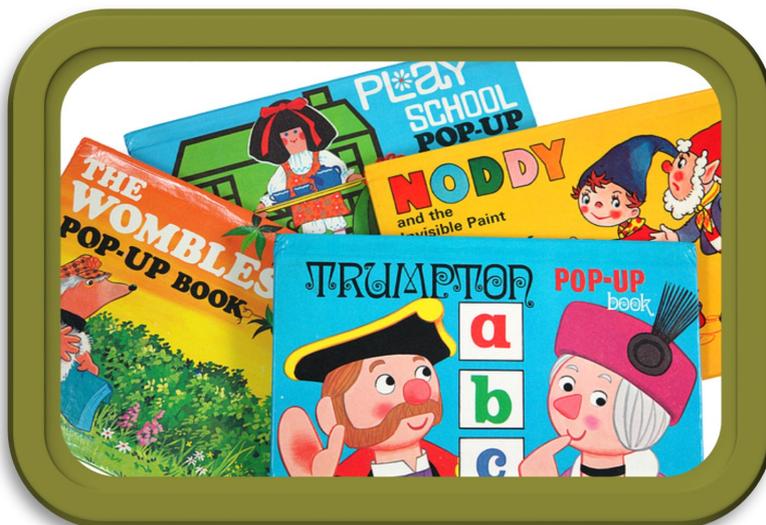
- \* collecting books
- \* sorting, repairing and putting on our stickers
- \* packing boxes
- \* finding empty boxes
- \* delivering boxes to the Post Office or to their destinations or
- \* making the essential afternoon tea!

Depending on the replies from the services Zonta as a club needs to consider whether we continue with this project.

Apart from the immeasurable hours of time, the monetary cost this year has been around \$500 (ask the treasurer) as many boxes were hand delivered.

My thanks go to all who may have contributed in any way through 2014 and I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with time to read.

# Children's Literature



Judy Brett, Chair



## MEMBERSHIP

Membership have had their first meeting of the year and ready to get things underway. They are all looking forward to a very interesting year ahead.



### KNOCK KNOCK MYSTERY DINNER

The last Knock Knock Mystery Dinner was a huge success with Hostess Roz giving a “Valentine’s Roast Dinner with or without Tom Cruise”. There were 11 guests including the hosts in all. **“A Touch of India”** is our next event in April. Details will be revealed at the March General Meeting. Make sure you take note of the date and get your name in early. You don’t want to miss this one. Remember, if you would like to be a hostess for a Knock Knock Mystery Dinner, it’s easy. Just send an e-mail to the Zonta Club hotmail address. Just let us know the date, time, the number of guests you would like to have and how much you will be charging. It is a good idea to theme your event. i.e. Theme for you event i.e. Pizza Night, Picnic, BBQ or a 10 course Italian dinner it’s all up to you. We take it from there.

### Z-CLUBS

Sandii has the Z Clubs project underway by distributing material to all potential committee members. Now it’s time for a meeting to discuss the process and start looking at the next step. Anyone interested in being on the Z-Club committee that hasn’t already put their hand up please contact Sandii.



**Looking for something different to do this year.** Why not join our Book Club or Aqua Aerobics. These groups are always looking for new members to participate.

### BOOK CLUB

For the Book Club, please contact Kerry Kenyon on 4946 1460 or 0417 778 409. They meet on the last Wednesday of every Month. Venue varies from month to month.



### AQUA AEROBICS

For Aqua talk to Laura Morrison on 0409 396 204. It’s never too late to get fit.



**Connie Riley, Director**



## Date Claimers

<b>MARCH:</b>	1 <sup>ST</sup>	IWD at Waterline, Shingley Beach – 10 AM
	10 <sup>th</sup>	Board meeting
	19 <sup>th</sup>	General meeting– Reef Gateway – 6.15 for 6.30 start
	25 <sup>th</sup>	Last Wednesday Book Club. -- 5.30pm
<b>APRIL:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup>	Board meeting
	16 <sup>th</sup>	AGM - Reef Gateway – 6.15 for 6.30 start
	29 <sup>th</sup>	Last Wednesday Book Club. -- 5.30pm
<b>MAY:</b>	2-3	Area meeting in Mackay
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Board meeting
	24 <sup>th</sup>	Changeover – Venue etc TBA
	27 <sup>th</sup>	Last Wednesday Book Club. -- 5.30pm

### Birthday's February

Mae Secomb – 6th  
Lauren Haack – 12th  
Cath Fernbach – 13th



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