

Bush Fire

July 2023

PWANZ UPDATE

Greetings to you all. We are still meeting every fortnight, and although we have ticked off many tasks, we still have a few things left to do. Our main task is to get to the accounts and other papers (minutes and receipts) and send them off to Timaru.

We have heard that some people haven't been receiving *BushFire*. Please email Ruth (pwanz2016@gmail.com) or Lois (lois.robertson@outlook.com) to make sure you're on the mailing list and are fully informed.

LOST BUT NOW ARE FOUND

We have managed to track down both the big freestanding **PWANZ banner** and the 50-year celebration **quilt**.

The quilt was created with squares painted or sewn by many of you and is a lovely reminder of our national connections.

These two items will be displayed at GA23. If you have any other mementos that you could lend for this, please contact Mary Gibbs.

FINANCES

The Finance team (Sandra Waldrom, Katherine Sutherland, and Ruth Steven) is working through all the accounts (at least 10 of them!), organising disbursements of our Mission Funds, and preparing to return

any surplus funds to PCANZ as per our Terms of Reference (Clause 16.2).

This includes \$25,000 earmarked for a Women's History that will be kept for a future project.

Approximately \$70,000 of Mission money will be shared between Christian World Service for an overseas project and a project in New Zealand.

PWANZ AT GA23

Accommodation, registration, and travel bookings have been made for Mary Gibbs and Mavis Duncanson. The PWANZ report has now been sent and will be printed in the official Assembly Business booklet.

Mary has also been in touch with Rev Rose Luxford, Moderator Designate, and discussions on how the Assembly can acknowledge PWANZ are underway.

PWANZ DEVOTION

Rev Rose Luxford, Moderator Designate, has provided a devotion especially for PWANZ groups.

It includes a reading, prayers and hymn suggestions, as well as a personal reflection on PWANZ in her life.

This is included as an attachment to this edition of *BushFire*, as it is too large to replicate here.

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FAAOLATAGA LEASI

Kia ora! Talofa lava! Greetings!

It has been a remarkable journey of discourse, engaging with Presbyterian communities with the unwavering dedication of women's groups from various churches, and there are two moments that resonate deeply with me.



The first is our authentic fellowship of Wahine Whakapono of Te Akapuāho in 2018. It marked a significant milestone as we connected and fellowshipped for the first time, joining hands with the NZ Methodist Women. This experience exemplified the spiritual and relational strength of sisterhood in faith.

The second moment is my humble delegation alongside Rev. Pamela Tankersley (with Ecumenical Women) at the United Nations CEDAW convention in NYC in 2013.

As my journey (former president) comes to completion after full terms of leadership in 2022, I am humbly filled with gratitude and reflection on the numerous theological and ecumenical experiences we encountered. We have created a lasting legacy of faith, unity, and empowerment, so please accept my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering dedication, prayers, and trust.

Although we may be closing a chapter in fulfilling God's mission for women, we do so with hope and anticipation. It provides us with a sacred 'space' to reimagine and discern where God is leading us. The profound truth found in *Isaiah 43:19* speaks to us of the beauty and hope that arises from endings, as they pave the way for new beginnings.

Remember, God is constantly at work, bringing forth fresh insights of missions in unexpected ways – all we need is faith. And as we move forward, let us treasure the memorable *taonga* of what makes us unique as women of faith no matter what.

Faaolataga Leasi

MILESTONE OCCASION FOR FIRESIDE GROUP

It was a milestone occasion for St Andrew's Matamata Fireside group when it celebrated its 65th birthday during the weekend of May 27–28.

With long-time president Carol Metcalfe at the helm, past and present members, along with women from the Church family, celebrated Fireside's life and success over the years.

A 40-strong group gathered for a catered lunch in the blue-decorated church hall on the Saturday. Past members were honoured, and Fireside's history shared.



Entertainment was provided by the talented Jobe family, with Shirley Jobe-Williams cutting a special celebration cake on behalf of the Golden Girls – Joyce Wheadon, Val Raynel and Shirley – all of whom have had continued membership for over 55 years.

To Jenny Brown's accompaniment, the gathering enjoyed singing a medley of songs encompassing the past six decades.

There were reminiscences aplenty, much laughter, and lots of hugs as old friendships were renewed and new ones established.

On Sunday there was a special church service with Fireside members participating and Robyn Wylie giving the message which included a tribute to Fireside, sisters and the work women do in the parish.

It was a wonderful weekend celebration to honour those who have gone before and those who continue to fulfil the Mission Statement 'To unite and support women in prayer, study and fellowship, friendship and service'.

Frances Beattie
Secretary, Fireside Group



Past and present Presidents, current committee members, and Golden Girls



Wall of Memories paid tribute to late members

RAE SIMPSON

After 56 years involvement in PWMU, APW, and more recently PWANZ, it appears that we are approaching the end of the road with what I thought would go on forever.

When I began, there were almost no women elders and other than teaching Sunday School, leading Bible Class or deaconess work, PWMU was an area where women could serve our church.

In our Dunedin days, I recall visiting a parish with no women in the Sunday congregation and it was then that for the first time, I recognised a place for women elders. Fifty-five years on and after holding various positions in six Presbyteries and Presbyteries, closure seems likely.

Being conservative, I was slow to pick up lay preaching but over the years I have been involved in both and found it rewarding. Added to that, although women were joining the eldership and training for ministry, it was less acceptable for a minister's wife.

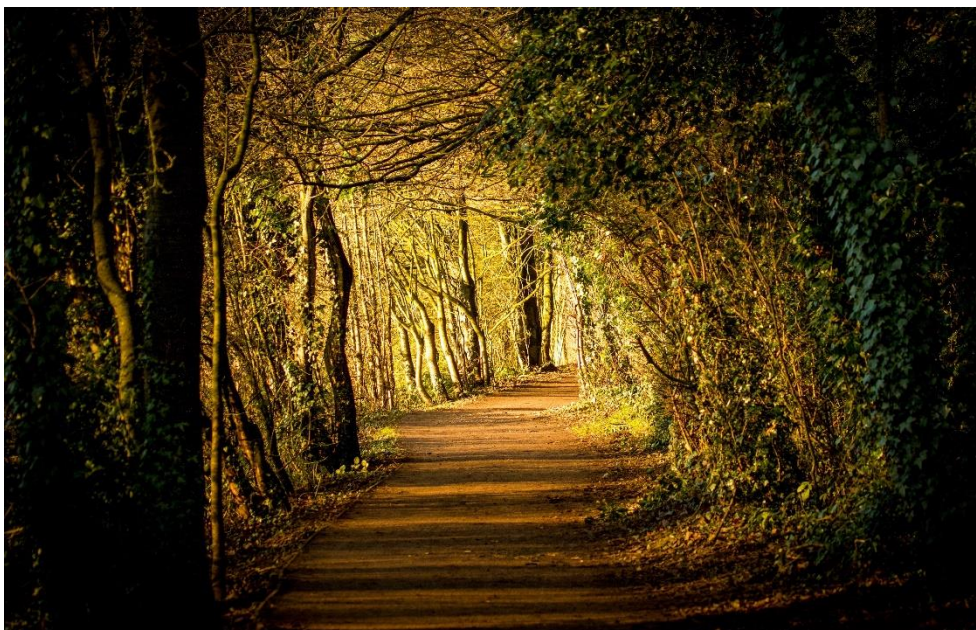
Although we had families in our parishes with two members on the session or parish council; it wasn't right for a minister's wife to be involved. I have experienced resistance to hesitation to being appointed to parish positions, so it came as quite a surprise when one of our elders nominated me for parish council.

After thirty-five years of parish life and seventeen years of retirement as well as closure of our closest Presbyterian church, it's good to be able to slow down. I wonder what my future holds or how many years of continuing to do service are left for me.

I also enjoy retirement and will continue to do what comes my way while I have my health. We live one day at a time.

Rae Simpson

lestrsmpson@xtra.co.nz



WHO ARE YOUR WORKING GROUP?

We asked four questions of the women in the PWANZ Working Group.

1. Tell us something about yourself – your early life, training, employment.
 2. What are your hobbies and interests?
 3. What do you do in your Parish?
 4. Do you have a favourite saying?
- Here's what we found out about them.



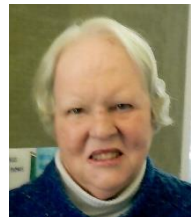
MARY GIBBS,
CHAIR

1. Registered nurse who trained and worked at Napier Hospital until 1991, when I transferred to Wellington to work at the NZ Nurses Organisation as a Professional Nurse Advisor. I'm widowed with three daughters and five grandchildren, all living in Wellington too.
2. Reading, gardening, travel, walking, crosswords.
3. Currently serving Elder, represent our Fellowship Group on Council, Chair of Fellowship Group, on Sunday duty roster (Bible reading, morning tea, offering...)
4. **I lift up my eyes to the hills, my help cometh from the Lord**
(paraphrase of Psalm 121:1–2)



SANDRA
WALDROM,
FINANCE

1. Queen's Guide, Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, young mother in Singapore, accountant for Auckland-based retail franchisor, NZ Stock Exchange.
2. Handcrafts, cooking, hiking, reading.
3. Finance, Social committees, mentor, Craft group.
4. **Trust and obey.**



KATHERINE
SUTHERLAND,
FINANCE

1. Lived in Wellington all my life. Retired Girl's Brigade Officer, Toastmaster, climbed Mt Taranaki in 1976.
2. Reading, overseas travel, gardening, knitting, photography, NZSO.
3. Treasurer of Fellowship Group, House group member, Stitches group, help at Dixon St Flats Coffee Bar.
4. **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.**



JUDITH DUNLOP,
MISSION

1. Grew up in Apiti, where all the women in my family were very involved in PWMU and APW. Graduated as a teacher in 1964 and still teach part-time. My mother (Evelyn Nicholson) is featured in *Braided River of Faith (No.5)*. Very involved in the international organisation Inner Wheel.
2. Gardening, reading, sewing, crochet, writing.
3. Registered lay preacher, licenced to serve sacraments, lead services in local Rest Homes, play the organ, do the flowers, lead the women's group, on Pastoral Care, Team and Property, and Finance committees, responsible for Prayer Vine, involved in Girl's Brigade, chaplain for 19th Wellington.
4. **If you don't ask, then you cannot be told no.**



CAROLYN
GOUDSWAARD,
MISSION

1. Lived in Masterton, Feilding, Blenheim and Wellington. Girl's Brigade Officer, nursing, involved in APW, reliever in early childhood centres.
2. Sewing, knitting, making cards, reading, walking.
3. Elder, Pastoral Care, organised collectors for DCM Foodbank Appeal.
4. **Love many, trust few, always paddle your own canoe.**



LOIS ROBERTSON.
COMMUNICATIONS

1. Dental nurse, grew up in Cambridge, have lived in Rotorua, Te Whaiti, Horohora and Wellington. Involved in APW, Playcentre, CAB, JP, NCW, local issues.
2. Sewing, knitting, gardening, reading.
3. Pastoral, most positions on parish roster system.
4. **What I am is God's gift to me. What I become is my gift to God.**



THANKS

To all those who have taken the time to contribute to this edition of *BushFire*, including Elizabeth Gibbs for the editing and layout.

If you'd like to contribute to future editions, please contact Lois Robertson on lois.robertson@outlook.com