

MOTHERS UNION NEWCASTLE

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2023

Sharing Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening and supporting marriage and family life



Theme for 2023

RENEW & TRANSFORM

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Mothers Union Diocesan Executive 2023

Elizabeth Bissaker, President

Barbara Warland, Vice President

Gail Iles, Vice President

Laurel Brook, Secretary

Jan Garrard, Treasurer

Reverend Nicole Baldwin, Chaplain

Departmental Coordinators

Denise Brown, Promotion

Noelene Lentfer.

Overseas and Northern Outreach/Links

Rhonda Morse, Prayer & Spirituality

Barb Hayes, Publications

Lorraine Phillips, Social Issues & Action

Branch Liaison Contact

Noeline Darcy

Committee Members

Leonie Benson, Lone Members

Diane Kenchington, Magazines

Lynn Mulley, Newsletter Editor

Lyn Wickham, Coffee & Care

Denise Hird, New Born Baby Ministry

Beth Weeks, Birthday Cards

Kim Bussey, Website Administrator

Immediate Past President

Denise Brown

Life Members

Noelle Freeman & Robyn Southerden

Our Vision:

Our vision is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships.

Our Objectives:

- To promote and support marriage and family life.
- To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children.
- To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service.
- To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children.
- To help those whose family life has met with adversity.

The Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord,

We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life. Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen



FROM OUR DIOCESAN PRESIDENT Elizabeth Bissaker

During this first year as Diocesan President I found that once I got past the 'I wish' and concentrated on the 'I pray' requests, that life seemed to go along in a much calmer way. I have found that whether big or small, we all have thoughts that weigh on our hearts and minds and sometimes we are consumed with the outcome instead of the

now and forget that God is there beside us all the time.

The following passage comes to mind quite often – Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:6-7

It has certainly been an interesting time since the last newsletter and I have enjoyed visiting places I hadn't been to before and meeting up with MU members around the Diocese. Thank you all for your kind hospitality, always making me welcome and I look forward to many more visits in the future.

I have especially enjoyed being able to induct new members and present certificates for long service. Congratulations to Wyong and Singleton Branches who have celebrated significant milestones for their Branches.

Our travelling plaque is making its way around the Diocese and I thank Wyong Branch members who enthusiastically took on the project and are following the progress whilst gathering and sharing interesting information from the Branches. Please remember to pass the plaque on as quickly as possible.

Thank you to the Executive Members who have organised and been involved in Diocesan events including our Council meeting in June where Maureen Hamilton shared stories from her Camino walk. Thank you also to the Parishes who welcome us into their places of worship which is very much appreciated.

See pages 16 & 17 for some fun highlights of Maureen's Camino walk.

We were very encouraged by the attendance at our Overseas and Northern Outreach Celebrations and especially thank the Parishes of New Lambton and Kincumber. I was blessed to host the Guest Speaker, Monica Short, and know that she enjoyed her stay in our Diocese and especially encouraged by the contribution of Noelene Lentfer and Bishop Charlie on these days.

It was encouraging to see many of our members attending Diocesan events including Women Celebrating Our Faith, Anglican Women's Spring Celebrations and Quiet Days.

Sharing our faith and meeting with like-minded people at these events is a true blessing.

And the PEACE of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

May you all be blessed as we enter this Advent Season.

Love & Blessings

Elízabeth



Comedian John Branyan said, "We didn't think up laughter; that wasn't our idea. That was given to us by [God who] knew we were going to need it to get through life. [Because] He knew we were going to sometimes be anxious, and have hardship, He knew we were going to have struggles, He knew . . . stuff was going to happen. . . .

Laughter is a gift.

Thank God for the gift of laughter!





CHAPLAINS CHATTER Reverend Nicole Baldwin

Inspired to do something

Dear friends in Christ,

As I write this, we are in the Season after Pentecost, but we are also seeing the sights of the coming Season of Christmas. Our culture does not like to wait for anything

and so rushes from one season to another, without much time to enjoy the moments we are in. Like the communities we live in, we too will be planning for the coming season, but unlike our community, we also engage in some time of expectant waiting and reflection. As we prepare for the Season of Christmas during the Season of Advent, my prayer for each of you is that you will recognise what it is that inspires you to answer God's call on your life. May we all take some time to listen to the still small voice of God as he calls us to life and ministry.

As we come to Jesus as we are, he enables us for the life and ministry that he calls us to. We don't need to have all the answers, he will guide our feet upon the path. We don't need to be good enough because we already are by his grace. We come as we are and offer the gifts we have received from God for the building up of his kingdom and for the spread of the Gospel. As we surrender our will to the will of God, the gifts we offer are perfected in the one who is perfect. There are so many ways that we answer God's call and in doing so show his love, compassion, and grace in the world.

Matthew West was inspired by the story of a girl named Andrea and her willingness to do something about orphans in Uganda who were badly neglected and who had no advocate. A student at Colorado University, Andrea decided to take up their cause and do something about improving the conditions for about 40 orphans. Together with her sister, they convinced the Ugandan government that the orphanage should be closed down and when this happened the children were given to Andrea.

Armed with a vision and desire to create a safe place for these

children to grow and learn, she brought their needs back to the United States. Today, Musana (which means 'sunshine') is a thriving orphanage in Iganga, Uganda, housing over one hundred children! Andrea is a long way from university and her family, but she is changing the world and bringing hope to people, one child at a time.

CHANGING THE

Andrea was the inspiration for Matthew Wests' song, Do Something which reminds us that when we ask God why he doesn't do something about the broken world in which we live, God's answer to each one of us is: "I did, I created you!"

The chorus goes further and challenges us "If not us then who? If not me and you?
Right now, well, it's time for us to do something.

If not now then when will we see an end to all this pain.

Well, it's not enough to do nothing, it's time for us to do something."

This song speaks deeply to me and I hope that you have the opportunity to listen to it and allow the words to rest in your very being and inspire you to do the 'something' that you can do to make this world a better place.

There is a quote that one of my daughter's found several years ago, which I believe can speak to every woman, every man, and every child.

How cool is it that the same God that created mountains and oceans and galaxies thought that the world needed one of you too.

Every person has a purpose. God has created us for a specific purpose on this earth. This idea that the same God that created everything we see in the world knew that the world would need us too, as if we were so important that the world would be different without us, is such an amazing concept. And it is absolutely true. God made every one of us for a reason. He wanted you to be on this earth just as much as he wanted the oceans and flowers and everything else in creation. You may not think you are worthy enough, but God knows your true worth and how precious you are. He knew that he was creating someone beautiful, amazing, unique, and gifted when he made you.

Let us listen and be open to the inspiration of God, that we may hear

him speaking into our lives, giving us life, sustaining us, calling us, inspiring us.

Prayerful love and blessings

Reverend Nicole



"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5



Mavis Vyner and daughter Marilyn Scott & Elizabeth



Elizabeth & Margaret Ings

Elizabeth Bissaker and Denise Brown, President and Past President, visited our branch for 14th September meeting to present membership badges to Mavis Vyner, her daughter Marilyn Scott, and Robyn Walters (absent from photo), and to present Margaret Ings with her 60 year badge.

KINCUMBER BRANCH NEWS

This is what Margaret wrote: "I started with Young Wives in 1956 and then on to Mothers Union at Collaroy Plateau. I loved the company and enjoyed it very much.

We moved to Woy Woy and I joined their MU at St Andrews and received my 50 year badge, Our branch closed due to Covid, and Irene Dunn and I were invited to join Kincumber Branch. We have found Kincumber ladies very welcoming and we are enjoying their

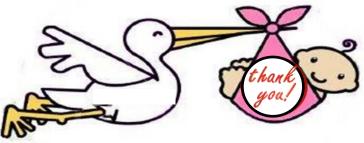
friendship, lovely services and morning tea. I loved being presented with my 60 year badge from the Mothers Union president, Elizabeth."

Helen Fraser Branch Secretary



Pictured below Lesley Power, Helen Fraser, Margaret Ings, Mary Parnell, Christine Deasey.





At our meeting on July 12th at Lakes Anglican we collected Baby Bundle articles.

It was our July soup day as well and we all contributed \$10 for our lunch for the Babies.

We are now a small, but happy bunch and had a special day together

Dorothee Crowther—Lakes Anglican

A second grader came home from school and said to her mother, "Mom, guess what? We learned how to make babies today." The mother, more than a little surprised, tried to keep her cool. "That's interesting," she said, "How do you make babies?" "It's simple," replied the girl. "You just change 'y' to 'I' and add 'es'.







SMILES are the first building blocks of warm, loving and responsive relationships in a baby's world.

'We

are

now

a

but

How wonderful!



HELP TRANSFORM OUR WORLD AND CAUSE IT TO SMILE AGAIN!

TAREE MU BRANCH

Taree members Margaret Blyth and Yvonne McKellar presented a well-researched and inspiring environmental



program focused on effective recycling. Members were reminded of the importance of placement of items into the correct bins for the Mid Coast Council area thus avoiding contaminated collections, and provided with tips for a 'clean stream'.

'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Repair'

is a handy motto to remember in our daily lives.

Upcycled items brought by members included a fifty-year-old wreath made from plastic strips, a box turned inside out, a glass jar containing jam, a pretty doily adding to the beauty and efficacy of a coat hanger and a milk bottle adapted to capture fruit fly. The interesting presentation prompted a lively and valuable discussion.

The program devised by 90+ year-old Margaret was well-received by the 12 members present. Not mentioned in above paragraph, or

shown in the photo, but displayed by Margaret was a fabric-covered footstool which started life decades ago as eight ice-cream tins stacked and padded – fascinating.

Kind regards,

Leonie Benson

There is no such thing as 'away.' When we throw anything away it must go somewhere. When you put the whole picture together, recycling is the right thing to do. We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.





ST AUGUSTINE'S MEREWETHER MU

MU Link Branches.

England, and had the pleasure of meeting Mary Cockerman, the branch president of Mawnam Parish, Cornwall. Mary invited me to join her and her husband at a Sung Eucharist at Turuo Cathedral, on Trinity Sunday. At the service a full choir sang and the sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Bodmin, a lady minister. Following the special service Mary showed me around the Cathedral, including the MU display always on show in the side aisle. We enjoyed a long chat over a coffee, when I also met several other MU members, including the Diocesan MU Secretary and the Publicity Officer. Both were bewailing the mistake that was made when the Young Wives were closed. The Link

I recently visited our MU link member in Cornwall



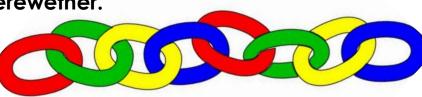


outreach. It encourages branches to share prayerful thoughts and community activities; and to foster new ideas. I pray many branches will continue to maintain links

throughout the world, both in the spirit of friendship and to keep the MU flag flying.

ministry is a great way to maintain our MU

Anne Clarke St Augustine's , Merewether.





"Everybody laughs the same in every language because laughter is a universal connection." — Jakob Smirnoff

BOOLAROO MOTHERS UNION

Fr Graham gave a special blessing to **Joy and Don** (Tyler) to mark their 70th Wedding anniversary at the MU meeting at All Saints church Boolaroo in September. Lunch followed. Friends and past parishioners joined them in celebrating the occasion.

A wonderful day was had by all.

Joy joined MU in December 1981 and Fr Graham and Don joined in February 2022.





There is a deep, abiding **joy** for those who trust the Lord that is based on much more than frivolity and circumstances. It is a **joy** based on God's salvation. He has provided forgiveness of sin and a restored relationship with Himself through His Son Jesus. That gives us a deep **joy** which circumstances cannot shake. (Ps. 126:2-3; Hab. 3:17-18; Phil. 4:7).

May you renew and experience the joy of knowing Jesus Christ today!





7 Decades of Memories 840 Months of Happiness, 3,652 Weeks of LOVE 25,568 Days of Wisdom, 613,632 Hours of Laughter, 36,817,920 Minutes of Fun 'Mark and I love the Anglican church deeply and are excited about what Jesus has done and is doing for us. Thank you for being wonderful and listening. I pray that God blesses you and all around you and that you flourish in God's goodness. I look forward to hearing your stories about how God cares for you and others with you.' Dr. Monica Short

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Thank you. Photograph by Dr Monica Short. Used with permission.

OVERSEAS AND NORTHERN OUTREACH CELEBRATION REPORT 2023.

Two successful ONO Celebrations were held one on Monday 7th August at New Lambton with 67 ladies in attendance and on Tuesday 8th August at Kincumber with 46 ladies in attendance.

Our Guest Speaker Dr. Monica Short from Canberra [wife of Bishop Mark] was an excellent speaker.

Monica spoke on her experience at the Lambeth Conference and the people she met, and how some were interested in getting to know more about Jesus. Always opportunities to spread the gospel.

My thanks to Elizabeth for offering to accommodate Monica over the two days. I have received many positive comments from both days. And the fellowship had over lunch was warm and welcoming.

Over \$2000.00 dollars has been raised for this ministry and I thank you all for your generous support in raising money in support of ONO. Please keep ONO on your programs and continue to raise funds for this important ministry. With Thanks

Noelene Lentfer
ONO Co-ordinator





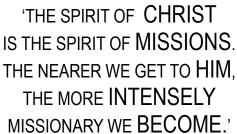


















NEWS FROM GLENROCK M.U.

On Wednesday 16 August, we had the great pleasure of admitting two new M.U. members to our wonderful group at Glenrock M.U. Kahibah. Laurel Brook, Diocesan Secretary admitted Jann Lockett and Anne Cook,

We now have 22 financial members.

Laurel was also our guest speaker on this day giving us words of encouragement and wisdom followed by a great singalong of old time favourite hymns accompanied by Laurel on the piano. A great day enjoyed by all.

Jane Conway, President Glenrock M.U.





Laurel, Jann and Anne







Oh, How wonderful! I have a spare page to fill. ● ● (I hope I haven't left anyone's news or pictures out).

Smiling is infectious

You catch it like the flu When someone smiled at me today I started smiling too I walked around the corner And someone saw me grin When he smiled I realised I had passed it on to him I thought about the smile And then... realised its worth A single smile like mine Could travel round the earth So if you feel a smile begin Don't leave it undetected Start an epidemic and get the world infected



A short update on AXEL.

- → He turned 18!
- → He graduated Year 12 (with a certificate in Construction)
- → He got his 'P's.
- → He got a job!
- → He's talking more instead of grunting!

He's been kind of transformed! ⊕ ⊕ ⊕

(Still can't get him to **SMILE** but working on it!) ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ (Maybe he'll read this magazine!!)

Seriously praising God for above outcomes and changes.

MIRACLES HAPPEN. 😏 😊 😊





Dear God,

As I stumble through this life, help me to create more laughter than tears, dispense more cheer than

gloom, spread more cheer than despair. Never let me become so indifferent, that I will fail to see the wonders in the eyes of a child, or the twinkle in the eyes of the aged. Never let me forget that my total effort is to cheer people, make them happy, and forget momentarily, all the unpleasantness in their lives. And in my final moment, may I hear You whisper: When you made My people smile, you made Me smile. Amen

HAND STANDS ARE BELIEVED TO BE THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO TURN A FROWN UPSIDE DOWN.



A day without laughter is a day wasted.

'Day.....by day.....by day' - Maureen Hamilton.

Through May/June 2017, over the course of 42 days I walked the Camino Frances, a pilgrimage journey from St. Jean Pied de Port (in France) to Santiago de Compostella (in NW Spain).

Was it difficult? Yes, it was. How far did you walk? I walked 600 of the 800kms. There were sections that I travelled by train, by bus, and by taxi. Wasn't that cheating? No. Like other Camino walkers, at first I felt that I was cheating, but torrential rain, electrical storms, sickness,

and time restraints made changes to my plans necessary. I travelled by myself so it was up to me to be safe, stay healthy, and arrive in each location able to acquire accommodation for each night's stopover.

In 2022 I put together the diaries that I had written up each night of my Camino, added many scenarios and stories, and had a book published 'Day...by day...by day'.



Every day of my Camino was special but Day 24 was my favourite day. For most of the 6kms. from Boadilla del Camino to Fromista, the walk is on a country road beside a canal. I am by myself, with several other walkers hundreds of metres behind me, and no one ahead of me. I think that I am having the most enjoyable, and peaceful, walk. There are so many house martens twittering about (like swallows). I've even heard a cuckoo bird, as well as frogs croaking, the rustle of the leaves in the plane trees, and the canal rippling along beside me. It is so, so peaceful.

Later that day I meet up with an Italian family and their beautiful OLD English Sheepdog, Beckett. Mumma is the one walking, for a week, on the Camino, and because her son and daughter are concerned about 'Mumma walking alone', they are spending several days with her. Mumma is happy, son and daughter are happy, I'm just not sure that Beckett is quite so happy.

Another afternoon I am again walking alone and the brown, gravel dirt road changes back to white stones. The heat coming off this surface smacks me in the face. There is a breeze at my back, and small, white butterflies keep me company. Further along, not one of the trees beside the roadway throws any shade my way. Again, the butterflies play with me – they hover in the

shade of the trees, and when I walk by, they dance around my face. It is so much fun.
And no, I'm not going crazy! (....cont'd over page)

DAY by DAY! WE DON'T 'HAVE' A GREAT DAY, WE 'MAKE IT' A GREAT DAY! (DON'T TAKE LIFE SO SERIOUSLY— YOU'LL NEVER GET OUT OF IT ALIVE!)

Wherever you go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine.









When you arrive at your accommodation each afternoon/evening it is vital that today's clothes are washed and dried in readiness for the day after tomorrow. A pilgrim only has two sets of clothing. What happens if the washing doesn't get dry. It's not unusual to see pilgrims with their washing hanging from their backpacks, socks, undies, bras. Not a problem, we're all friends here...

From the village, Herrerias, you can ride a horse the 8.2km trail up the mountain to O'Cebreiro.

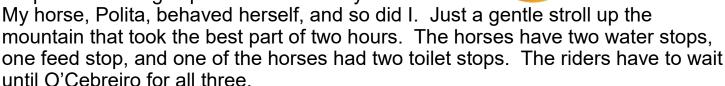
'Maureen, when were you on a horse last?'

'About 2 years ago.'

'And where was that?'

'In Geelong, Victoria, on a carousel ride.'

No previous riding experience necessary.



For the uninitiated, it's a long way up, sitting on a horse's back. When Polita stopped, and she did several times, there was no way that I had the strength to pull on the reins to keep her mouth away from the grass. It was suggested that I give her 'a kick' with my feet. Well, when your legs are short, there is no way to tuck your feet in under the saddle and 'kick' the horse.

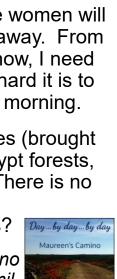
On Day 42 I write...I've had quite the interesting night. Having claimed the last bed in the albergue/hostel, of course it is a top bunk. I am in bed by 9.15pm, and I wake just before midnight when nature calls. In the dark, I gingerly make my way down the ladder, using the bunk next to me for balance. When I think I've reached the bottom rung I take one more step...then crash!

I'm on the floor on my back. Lights go on, and women come from everywhere. I think that they think I've fallen out of bed, the way everyone makes a fuss makes me think I'm being tended to by the United Nations. I don't understand any of them, and they don't understand me. Still, everyone helps put me back to bed after my bathroom stop.

Later in the night nature calls again...but I can't get out of bed; all those women will come running to my aid again. Despite my efforts, the urge will not go away. From a very young age, each of us learns to control our bladder. Now, right now, I need to urinate. I get my towel, bunch it up, and sit on it. Do you know how hard it is to 'go' in that position? A long, long time. There'll be washing to do in the morning.

In the Galician province of Spain there are many stands of eucalypt trees (brought to Spain for the paper industry). I am surrounded this morning in eucalypt forests, and then the path veers down to an underpass across the main road. There is no one around, and I just can't help myself – I let out the best 'cooo-eeee', and then I get the giggles. Can you get high on the scent of eucalyptus?

(**Thank you Maureen** for sharing some fun highlights of your amazing Camino walk with us. xo What a wonderful experience. © (I don't think I would be smiling much if I walked over 600k's! - I like the sound of the train, bus or taxi!) Maureen's book is a great read, some pictures included.)



WHEN GOD GIVES YOU A NEW BEGINNING, DON'T REPEAT THE SAME MISTAKE.

THERE'S A HOLE IN MY SIDEWALK (An Autobiography in five short chapters.)

CHAPTER ONE

I Walk down the street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I fall in.....I am lost.....I am helpless. It isn't my fault.

It takes forever to find a way out.

CHAPTER TWO

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I pretend I don't see it.

I fall in again.

I can't believe I am in this same place. But, it isn't my fault.

It still takes a long time to get out.

CHAPTER THREE

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I see it is there.

I still fall in....it's a habit....but,

My eyes are open.

I know where I am.

It is my fault.

I get out immediately.



Whatever you do, do it all for the



CHAPTER FOUR

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I walk around it.

CHAPTER FIVE

I walk down another street.



One can change their clothes, their hair, their house, or their relationship. However, the same experiences will keep on occurring

if one does not learn to change their mind.



"God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit – thank you that you have delivered us from our former ways of thinking. You are inwardly renewing us day by day. Help us to see the big picture: that we are not what we will be, but we are not what we once were. Holy Spirit, fill my heart so that I can

become more like WINGS LAS Jesus each day.

* Hope * Love The Good News: If you feel happy on the inside, your cheerful soul will be reflected on the outside.



AMUA NEWCASTLE DIARY DATES for 2024

February 16 th -18th 19 th	AW Lenten Retreat Executive Meeting	9.30am	Catalina Rathmines Cessnock
March 1st 8th 31 st	World Day of Prayer First Council Meeting Easter Day	10.00am	Windale
April 8 th (Monday)	Lady Day	10.30a.m. service	Cathedral
May 20 th 22 nd	Executive Meeting MUWW President visit	9.30am TBA	Southlakes Baulkham Hills
June 11 th -13 th 21st July	Diocesan Wave of Prayer 2 nd Council Meeting	10.00am	TBA
August 9 th 19th	O/NO Celebration O/NO Celebration Mary Sumner Day Executive Meeting	9.30-10.00am 9.30-10.00am 9.30am	Cardiff Lakes Anglican Barb Warland's home
September 3 rd	Anglican Women Spring Celebration	10.30am	St Peter's, East Maitland
October 21 st TBA	Executive Meeting Diocesan Quiet Days	9.30am	Leonie Benson's home
November 15 th	Annual General Meeting	10.00am	Merewether

We all get the exact same 365 days. The only difference is what we do with them. \odot \odot



'It is Christmas
every time you let God love others
through you....yes,
it is Christmas
every time you SMILE at your brother
and offer him
your hand.'

** Mother Teresa*



DON'T MISS the DEADLINE

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER
19th February 2024

WEBSITE: www:munewcastle.org.au