

MOTHERS' UNION NZ

In the Anglican Province of AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIA

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Newsletter No. 76
November 2019



Above: Celebrations of 100 Years of the Mothers' Union outside St Barnabas Cathedral Honiara. A model of MV Southern Cross, one of many ships bearing that name which keep in touch with the Province's Diocesan centres in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Below: Some of a huge crowd celebrating the anniversary in Honiara. Right: Joan Neild with Dorothy James Siep and Anne Salilui and some of the young Girls' Friendly Society who performed a lovely 100th Anniversary song item.



From Joan Neild, Provincial President

Dear Members and Friends,

Greetings to you all at the time of the year when we feel great anticipation for the coming of what is good. I have been greatly encouraged by the events and developments in Mothers' Union that I have experienced at home and abroad in recent months, and look forward to further fruitful achievements for us all in 2020.

The Tongan Mothers' Union turned 60 this year and Margaret Wilson and I were invited to attend the celebrations in September. It was wonderful, with all sections of society having special services and lots of amazing food out with MU members and at feasts after church services. While in Tonga I commissioned Her Royal Highness Princess Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu Tuita, Princess Royal of Tonga, as Patron of MU in Tonga, and Archdeacon Colleen Cowley kindly agreed to be MU Chaplain in Tonga.

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Continued from the front cover . . .

Early in October I travelled to Honiara in the Solomon Islands, where the Melanesia Mothers' Union was born 100 years ago. Mrs Emily Sprott, wife of The Revd Randolph Sprott, had started Mothers' Union on the island of Ysabel. The Church of England at that time sent out three clergy and their wives to assist peacemaking by the Melanesia Mission.



At the inspiring centenary celebrations more than 2000 members were present. The planning for food and lodging had been thorough and everything ran like clockwork. Members from outlying islands had run savings schemes to get themselves there. Some of the air fares were from charter airlines and very expensive but they did it themselves. So I think they should be amazingly proud that they achieved such a great four days of celebrations with all running beautifully. What a thrilling time everyone had. At a civic reception at Government House, the Governor General of the Solomon Islands, Archbishop Sir David Vunagi, the former Archbishop of Melanesia, was enrolled as a full member of Mothers' Union. His wife Mary said he was very excited about it.



Commissioning in Tonga. L-R: Joan Neild asks the princess to be Tonga's Patron. The Commissioning: Joan Neild, Princess Pilolevu and Archdeacon Colleen Cowley. A formal portrait of Princess Pilolevu, Tongan dignitaries including Amelia Tu'inukuafe, and Joan Neild and Margaret Wilson. 60th Birthday Celebrations: Amelia Tu'inukuafe and friends. Hospitality and fellowship.



A new proposal for Polynesia has been made by Jeanette Lawrence our zonal representative from Mary Sumner House and our zonal trustee Revd Canon Libbie Crossman, and approved by Archbishop Cama. There will be Diocesan Presidents and a leadership team for each country's groups, as has every diocese within Aotearoa New Zealand. Island nations are geographically separated by a lot of ocean, and it is too expensive for them to afford to travel regularly to each other's islands to be able to work as one body. The new form of organisation means that Pacific Island nations will have the opportunity to operate independently in their own area and make their Mothers' Union experience more special. Mothers' Union has been in Polynesia for at least 60 years, and we feel that it is a better way forward for all in our Province to have the same format.



The most recent highlight in Aotearoa New Zealand has been our Provincial Conference and Council Meeting, well described by Diocesan President Raewyn Skipper on pages 2-3.

I am looking forward to going to Australia for the Australian MU Council Meeting. It will be good to learn from what Australia is achieving and to renew friendship with members I have met before.

As I step up soon to sign the new Affiliation Agreement documents, I pray that you are all with me, so that our Provincial role is clear and strong. Mothers' Union is for everyone, women, men, young, single, married, whoever - Mothers' Union is for you. Our current Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace Justin Welby stated at a service in 2016 to recommission Lynne Tembey as Worldwide President "There is also such a need for global women's groups. And you (Mothers' Union) are among the most embedded, the most effective, the most widespread. There are few that can rival you – if any." As we enter Advent, let us pray together that we may be strong in our work for families.

***'We should always have eyes to see the best in people,
a heart which forgives the worst, a mind which forgets the bad
and a soul that never loses faith in God.'***

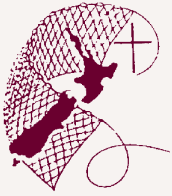
Together let us walk in the light of Christ, holding hands around the world in our 85 countries and with over four million members.

God bless you all today and always.

Joan Neild, Provincial President.

Artist Joan Miles.





Mothers' Union News from Aotearoa New Zealand, Polynesia, and around God's World



Our Provincial Conference in Hamilton



On Friday 18 October members of Mothers' Union Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia gathered at the Cathedral in Hamilton for our Provincial Conference. The Cathedral site was a lovely, quiet and peaceful setting and we were well looked after by the Mothers' Union of Waikato/Taranaki Diocese. We were given an official greeting – Mihi Whakatau by Tainui – The People of The Waikato, opening prayers were said and Joan Neild welcomed all who were attending.

Over 30 members gathered and an apology was received from the Venerable Carole Graham from the Diocese of Christchurch who was unable to attend due to the death of her dear husband the week before. Our thoughts and prayers are with Carole at this time. It was terrific to have Adi Tukana with us from Mothers' Union in Fiji. Most of us had met her when she attended the two Muloa conferences.

Archbishop Sir David Moxon was our Guest Speaker at the Conference Opening and he gave a wonderful address touching on Luke Chapter 1 verses 39 – 56 about the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth and felt that it was really the first meeting of a Mothers' Union. He also spoke on the importance of Prayer in our work and the continuance of this great organisation no matter what the situation may be. He spoke about the "Babushkas" the Russian grandmothers, who throughout a time when worshipping God openly was not allowed in Russia, never stopped making candles to sell and never stopped praying. He also spoke of his own grandmother and how her persistent prayers for him have had such a powerful impact on his life. He gave a very encouraging address.



The Revd Anne Kennedy (The Provincial President of Australia) attended the conference as one of our Guest Speakers and it was lovely to re-connect with Anne after meeting her in Brisbane earlier in the year at the Muloa conference. She spoke about the recent trip she and Joan went on to Rwanda, the amazing work going on in the African countries and the love and fellowship of these Mothers' Union members. Later in the conference Anne also told us of the work Mothers' Union is doing in Australia and the enormous distances the Diocesan Presidents travel to reach all their groups.

A very successful Provincial General Meeting was held under the guiding hand of Archbishop Emeritus John Paterson. We proceeded through our agenda very smoothly with good healthy discussion on certain topics as they arose, including amending our constitution to be in accord with that of MU worldwide.



It was a lovely time at the conference having fellowship with each other, catching up with members we had not seen for some time, exchanging ideas and making new friends.

'Auntie Tina' of Hamilton welcomes the people as they arrive. Former NZ PPs Anne Carpenter, Margaret Wilson and Rosemary Bent with the current PP of Australia, the Revd Anne Kennedy. Selecia Ronolea is an accomplished Flautist. Judith Pidgeon and Jocelyn Leef of St Andrew's Kohimarama-Orakei Branch. Valentine Ling-Ronolea, the Diocesan President of Waikato-Taranaki with daughter Selicia, who both worked so hard to make the conference a success.



Two new members were admitted to Mothers' Union and on the Saturday evening we had a wonderful time of fun

as each Diocese put on a small item. Great fun dancing, with our Polynesian ladies really showing us how to enjoy ourselves with plenty of island dancing.

We spent time in prayer and also in group discussions throughout our time in Hamilton, and many members attended the Cantata Vespers in the Cathedral on Saturday evening. The conference concluded with a service in the Cathedral on the Sunday morning and morning tea in the hall followed this. All in all, a very successful time.

Raewyn Skipper. *Auckland Diocesan President.*

The Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki



Fiona Martin.

Our MU year has been a bit tossed and turned about. So much has happened through the year. We meet once a month for lunch at a local cafe and on the alternate month we do a 'God slot'. Yes, we enjoy going out for lunch together but I think it would be fair enough to say that we love our 'learning about God' times even more. Our Rural Dean always leads an interesting discussion and our group always encourages and inspires one another with their responses.

Our last topic was euthanasia. I was not too keen on the idea but nonetheless! Most of those present gave heartfelt comments on their thoughts which was followed by Archbishop Philip Richardson's You Tube presentation - well worthwhile watching.

<https://www.anglicansocialjustice.nz/resources/2019/further-resources-on-end-of-life-choice-bill>

We are rather sad that our Rural Dean, Peter Barleyman is retiring/retrading because he has been a true shepherd to us.

Also, the money our group contributed to our Taranaki youth to attend the Easter Camp Central Regions Easter Camp at Feilding was well spent. Mosaic Youth is going from strength to strength. Camp is an important springboard for our young ones to spend three – four days in camp to explore the Christian faith and then continue attending youth group through the year.

Finally, thank you to those who have prayed for our daughter, Elizabeth, and supported us with wisdom, txts, phone calls, kindness and practicalness, the last point demonstrated by Margaret Kenna's visiting Burwood Hospital with Eliz's favourite fruit, mandarins, when I returned home a couple of times for a few days.

Elizabeth is comfortably walking and is now on the long trail of rehabilitation. Stamina will probably be always a problem. She resumes nursing studies at the end of March 2020. Out of our ordeal, we certainly can't say enough to everyone to THINK SEPSIS if you are feeling very unwell. It is totally OK to ask your doctor this. Even though we did everything we could to get medical help in good time, it was a close call as to whether or not Elizabeth would be able to walk. It is only by God's grace that this recovery has happened. A heartfelt thank you to everyone.

Fiona Martin, *Leader of Stratford Branch.*



- The Diocese of Auckland -

Representative members from all Auckland Branches always attend an annual Council Meeting, and this year the meeting was held in October at St Jude's Avondale. Attendance at the meeting by Revd Iga Mokole and his family who are now all members of the recently reopened MU branch at Holy Trinity Church, Otahuhu, was very special.

Other highlights included the enrolment in Mothers' Union of Namuaimana Fagamalama Matalavea, daughter of Archdeacon Taimalelagi, and the presentation to Fina Heath of a 25 year badge. Fina has actually been a member for some 40 years, but had not already received the badge.



Raewyn Skipper.



1. Fina Heath, Leader of St Jude's, Avondale with Filisi Beswick, Auckland Diocesan Treasurer. 2. Emilie Aldwinckle, former DP of Auckland, Provincial President Joan Neild and Revd Iga Mokole participate in the enrolment of Namuaimana Fagamalama Matalavea as a MU member. 3. Emilie Aldwinckle, former DP of Auckland, Archdeacon Taimalelagi Fagamalama Tuatagaloa, her daughter Namuaimana Fagamalama Matalavea, Provincial President Joan Neild and Revd Iga Mokole, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Otahuhu.

Avondale. On Monday 4 November, Joan and I joined the members of St. Jude's, Avondale for their own AGM. It was a lovely morning and a great time of fellowship. I never cease to be amazed when groups say to me: "Oh we are only a small group," and I hear and see the amazing amount of things they achieve. This is the Power of God moving amongst you all. Well done to you all and keep Praying without ceasing.

Christmas Party. In recent years we have had The Summer of Hope Christmas Party at Mrs Margaret Wilson's home in St. Heliers. I want to acknowledge the wonderful warmth and love with which Margaret welcomed us to her home and provided us with this time of fellowship and enjoyment. Thank you so much Margaret. However, Margaret has now moved from this home into a new abode at Grace Joel Retirement Village and no longer has the room to hold this party.



This year Mothers' Union Auckland is celebrating 130 years so we are going to have a Service of Thanksgiving at Holy Trinity Otahuhu on SATURDAY (yes Saturday) 30 November followed by a "knees up" in their new Parish Hall.

The Revd Iga Mokole has generously offered to accommodate us for this. It is on Saturday because so many of our younger members work during the week and Saturday is a better day for them. Mark this date on your calendars and we will send more information on this. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible attending this gathering. Please pray for Archdeacon Tai as she is waiting on knee surgery and is hoping this can be done before the end of November.

Love and Blessings: Raewyn Skipper, *Auckland Diocesan President.*

PS: Some significant birthdays: Congratulations to two faithful and hard-working members of MU for more than 60 years, Vera Green and Elizabeth Kidd. **Avondale:** Vera, now a Diocesan member and resident of Selwyn Village, Pt Chevalier turns 95 on 22 November.

St Barnabas' Mt Eden: Elizabeth, Leader of the Branch had her 90th birthday on 5 November.

Well done Papatoetoe and Pukekohe Branches! In a recently received newsletter from Mary Sumner House, we learned that in October in the UK, Mothers' Union was for the first time a sponsor of Prisons Week. An article in the newsletter described the prisons work which UK Mothers' Union members do as 'incredibly varied'. 'Some members are inside prisons interacting with prisoners, showing love and acceptance and helping prisoners to feel valued and to have hope. There are other members who support prisoners as they leave prison, providing sturdy bags containing clothes and toiletries to help them get restarted with dignity on their journey back into life on the outside.' Mothers' Union members in Papatoetoe do helpful work like this, too.



Wrapped Present

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Members support the people teaching women prisoners needlework and enable young men prisoners to sew strong backpacks (pikau, in NZ). These are issued to young people having to leave their home for a while for their own safety. Members provide sewing materials for the needlework and also all kinds of useful things for the contents of the finished bags. Following Papatoetoe's example, other Branches have joined in donating items for the bags.



Pikau

By working through 'The Angel Tree programme', UK MU members have helped prisoners connect with their children through Christmas gifts. Requests come through prison chaplaincies, and Prison Fellowship works with Mothers' Union members to source and wrap gifts suited to each recipient and then sends them to prisoners' families. For some years now, St Andrew's Pukekohe branch has also contributed each Christmas time to the Angel Tree Trust. In New Zealand this organisation arranges for prisoners to be able to give their children modest Christmas presents that prisoners themselves have suggested. So, well done Papatoetoe and Pukekohe Branches!



- The Diocese of Wellington -



Ann Desmond.

Throughout our Diocese, local meetings vary from Quiet Days, fundraising events or interesting speakers on a huge range of topics, including - Teen Parent Unit, the Youth Wairarapa Services and Open Home Foundation, 'End of Life choices'; Mission and Outreach - both locally and overseas, and 'Roots of Empathy' an evidence-based primary/intermediate school classroom programme to raise social/emotional competence and increase empathy.

Levin A sad duty in June for a number of long-standing MU members was to participate in the de-consecration service for St Mary's Levin, held in the hall, as a result of recent earthquakes. Phyllis Thompson, MU Member was one of two who tolled the church bell to signify the end (access was granted to the front porch for a few minutes to allow this to happen). This was significant as Phyllis had rung the bell at the opening.

We pray that they may hold joyful memories of the past as they look forward to new expressions of faith in the community of which they are a part, in the knowledge that God's love is still with each of them and us.

The MU Group in Levin no longer meets but the members have become Lone Members and are still very faithful.



St Mary's Anglican Church Levin parishioners Phyllis Thompson and Annette O'Brien rang the church bells for the last time.



Neil Hansen.

This photo is of Neil Hansen with the Prayer Quilt which was made for him, lovingly knotted with prayers for Neil's recovery by our Prayers & Squares Group members. Many of the 'main' members are also MU members. It was also knotted by several congregations both in our parish at Kapiti and Neil and Cheryl's Parish of Epiphany in Masterton. Neil continues to recovery - albeit slowly. It is now over four months since his stroke and he still continues to have problems with his sight. We pray regularly for Neil, and for Cheryl as this change has greatly impacted how they live. Thankfully, their faith sustains them each and every day.

Ann Desmond, Wellington Diocesan President

Church of the Epiphany, Masterton. On Tuesday 5 November our Epiphany branch celebrated 71 years of Mothers' Union. We were blessed by wonderful hot weather and great turnout of members. Our church service was around renewing our Mothers' Union promises and then to our hall to have an interesting talk from Michael Bennett, who had been a wine maker for several of the big wineries in Auckland and Hawkes Bay before he retired.

Past branch leader, Marjorie Neven again came up trumps with our birthday cake. Marjorie also bakes a Mothers' Union cake for each baptism family at Epiphany. Such a wonderful ministry from which we all benefit.

We now head into the end of year with our Advent meeting in December - and yes we do keep advent in our service and not Christmas. The theme for our meeting will have a Noah's Ark theme with members bringing stories/memories of an animal in their life.

Cheryl Hansen, Branch Leader.



Epiphany Committee: Dawn Murray, Jeannie Stewart, Bev Kirby, Kay Griffin, Cheryl Hansen and Marcia Davies.

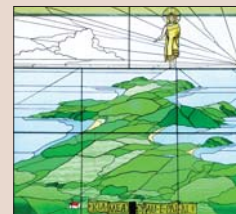


- Te Haahi Mihingare ki Te Taitokerau -

Greetings from the Far North - Ata Marie E Wahine Ma!

We have a regular service at Peria and Whatuwhiwhi. We always include in the service Mothers' Union prayers. We work with our ministers, and take part as mothers. We have a few mothers that come. Our priest in charge is very helpful, also our chairlady. I am very grateful for Stephen Brooker who arrives with lots of goodies. We are expecting him to come again early in December. There are so many around us that are in need. I am ever so grateful also when I get the Mothers' Union panui from Maggie in Papatoetoe. I photocopy them and give them out.

God bless you all, Nga Mihi, Norma Stephens.



- The Diocese of Christchurch -

We have not met for some time but three of us intend to meet in a couple of weeks to talk about our future as Mothers' Union in Christchurch.

The photo shows that I am standing on the edge of the Clutha River where the Tuapeke Mouth ferry, the only ferry on the Clutha River, operates still. It crosses from one side of the Clutha every day to Tuapeke Mouth. Some 25 punts used to operate on the Clutha River. Now there is only the Tuapeke Ferry left in service. It has an Historic Class One classification and is close to where members of my family are buried.

Please pray for the future of our few members in Christchurch.

With kind regards, Margaret Kenna.



Much has been achieved throughout our province in 2019

Over the past two years, Mothers' Union in our part of the world has joined in the worldwide MULOA renewal - Mothers' Union listening, observing and acting. We celebrated the first of the Muloa get-togethers for our Zone C last year in Auckland and a second in Brisbane in January this year, attended by a team from New Zealand and the Pacific. The third was part of the business at the World Presidents' Council held in Rwanda, Africa, in June.

This Muloa process has provided the first opportunity for us all, worldwide, to be consulted about our own situations, and our visions for our movement worldwide into the future, 2020 and beyond. 'Metamorphosis' has emerged as the word to describe it all as we look to our future as an organisation. Like an emerging butterfly, the Muloa discussions are developing into endeavours as we go forward, supporting families on the street, praying with purpose, transforming without and within, strengthening Church and community links and helping to grow membership.



This year our members have shown their support for Mothers' Union endeavours as they usually do, including for the Anglican Trust for Women and Children, and for people in need in the Far North. This same caring is carried out by all Dioceses in our Province and benefits all, but is directed to those areas in need, e.g. AFIA (Away from it all) holidays in Wellington help those who are unable to afford holidays to freshen up their families. In meeting other organisations at Synod, at Church services, and at various meetings, I have been very glad to hear of the work our members have done, and how they have helped many. This work is putting our aims and objects into action - Christian care for families.

Thank you to all members in the Province for your hard work, and blessings be upon you all through the Christmas and summer holiday season. May you return refreshed and ready to continue the work of Mothers' Union!

Joan Neild, Provincial President.

Joan in Honiara, Solomon Islands.



From Katherine McIntyre in Portsmouth, UK.



Katherine is welcomed warmly by an English Member.

"Listening and observing, hearing reports on their activities, a Mothers' Union started by women prisoners behind bars, Mothers Union for children, a rousing address by World President Sheran . . .

"Mothers' Union can be whatever we want it to be. We must share in the Mission of the Church if we are to grow. Thanks to my Niue Island friends, I wore my floral wreath proudly as a member of Polynesia Aotearoa NZ, creating interest in our work amongst Pacific peoples."

Katherine with Sheran Harper, Worldwide President.

"In September I had the opportunity to attend the Mothers' Union AGM in Portsmouth where Mary Sumner had addressed the Congress in 1885.

"The meeting was in the Guildhall, a magnificent structure rebuilt after being bombed in the Second World War - a symbol of resilience with a strong foundation. Being among those strong resilient Mothers' Union members from the UK and Ireland, with the foundation of love of God and family was inspiring for a girl from 'down-under'.



Katherine walked in Mary Sumner's footsteps in Portsmouth.



The NZ Mothers' Union Provincial Team Directory and Contacts

Provincial Chaplain: The Most Revd. John Paterson,
PO. Box 87255, Meadowbank, Auckland, 1742.

Provincial President: Mrs Joan Neild, 493 Hibiscus Coast
Highway Orewa, Auckland 0931 rjneild@xtra.co.nz,
Phone +64 (0)9 426 3647 or 027 290 7732.

Provincial Treasurer & Media Officer: Mrs Katherine McIntyre,
PO Box 11394, Ellerslie, Auckland 1542
katherine@maxnet.co.nz Phone 09 578 1511

Auckland Diocesan President: Mrs Raewyn Skipper,
19 Larne Ave, Pakuranga, Auckland 2010
Phone 09 576 3418 raewynskipper@gmail.com

Waikato & Taranaki Diocesan President: Ms Valentine Ling-Ronolea, Flat 3/8 Anzac Parade, Hamilton Central 3204.
Phone 07 838 0399 weekends, or 021 051 3667
saleau85@yahoo.co.nz

Wellington Diocesan President: Ann Desmond,
4 Wedgewood Grove, Raumati Beach, Paraparaumu, 5032
Phone 04 297 0506 or 022 494 1775.
anndesmond4@gmail.com

Christchurch Diocesan President: The Ven. Carole Graham
PO Box 21, Oxford 7443. grahamc@caverock.net.nz
Phone 03 312 1553 or 027 204 8047

Newsletter, Facebook and Website

Fresh items of news, letters and contributions from dioceses & branches are invited for the next newsletter in February 2020. Please send these **no later than 31 January 2020** to:-

The Provincial Secretary: Janice Cheeseman, 14 Cecil Rd, Epsom, Auckland 1023. Phone 09 630 4127 or 027 271 5950
Email: caseus@xtra.co.nz

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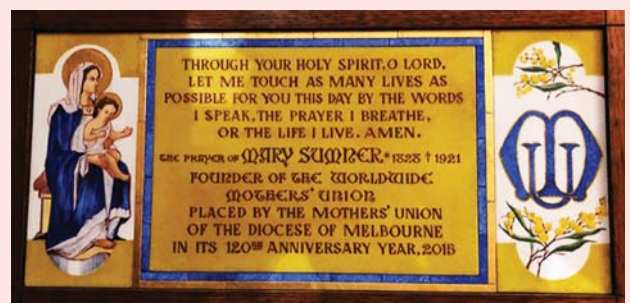
Margaret Wilson MNZM



Margaret Wilson, past Provincial President and faithful member at St Andrew's Kohimarama -Orakei, received the award of MNZM from the Governor General, Her Excellency The Rt Hon. Dame Patsy Reddy. Margaret is second from the right in the back row.

Denise Wood QSM

Denise Wood, a faithful MU member at St Mary's New Plymouth, has received her QSM from the Governor General, Her Excellency The Rt Hon. Dame Patsy Reddy.



Earlier this year Revd Dr T.P. Cheeseman spotted this plaque depicting Mary Sumner's prayer, in St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne and kindly took a photograph of it for us to enjoy.