

2021 Annual Report for GFS Australia Inc



GFS Australia Inc.

Annual Meeting on 8th January

2022

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Agenda for Annual General Meeting of GFS Australia Inc. 8th January 2022 (by Zoom)

1. Welcome
2. Opening prayers
3. Present / Apologies
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting (9th January 2021)
5. Business Arising
 - a. National Redress Scheme
 - b. World Council
6. Reports
 - a. President
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7. General business
 - a. Motions

Motion 1: "That GFS Australia invite MU Australia to work together with us to organise posters for distribution around Australia supplying information available to those needing domestic violence support - with both GFS and MU logos to feature on the poster."
Roslyn Tildsley

Motion 2: "That Clause 5.8 of the Bylaws be amended to read "All nominations for positions on the National Executive must include a supportive statement from their Parish Priest, except where a member is nominating for the same position in subsequent years and then only required to submit such statement every three years. Should a member of the National Executive nominate for a different position they are required to submit a supportive statement from their Parish Priest, in relation to the different position."

Motion 3: And that Clause 5.11 be added as follows "The National Executive will be commissioned at the end of each AGM" Val Gribble/National Executive

8. Any other business
 - Elections of Executive Members
9. Closing (followed by Service to Commission Incoming Executive)

Minutes of the AGM of GFS Australia Inc,

held on Saturday 9th January 2021 by Zoom meeting, commencing at 10 a.m. (Queensland time)

Present:

Executive Committee: Reverend Canon Cheryl Selvage (Chair), Rt Reverend Sonia Roulston (Chaplain), Suzanne Claire (Vice President), Noeleen Stewart (Treasurer), Julie Somerville (Secretary), Stephanie Stewart (Junior Delegate) and Canon Val Gribble, Leanne Kapetanovski - Ordinary Members)

Ken Stovell, Ainslie Stovell, Pam Guy, Jacqui Keily (CQ), Cheryl Buchanan, Deidree Noss, Lynne Gall, Tania Brown, Roslyn Tildsley, Leonie Armour, Dawn Ferguson (Sydney) Cheryl Russell, Christine Rooney, Bronwyn Barber, Reverend Sue Wilson, Lesley Briggs, Ian Russell, Margaret Humphries, Reverend Sandra Kjellgren, Di Bell, Marj Wellings, Jennifer Tutin, Reverend Ann Edwards (Brisbane) Heather Turner, Wendy Veal, Nathalie Stevens (Ballarat) Jennifer Buckby, Reverend Janet Story, Clare Reed (North Queensland) Leonie Stitz, Barbara Phillips (Tasmania), Jan McNamara, Reverend Josie Steytler, Kate Brewer (Perth) Reverend Nicole Baldwin, Gail Orchard, Anne Elsworth (Newcastle) Karen Fagan, June Hillier, Chris Barber, Jan Doyle (South Australia) Helen Petering,, Sandra Clough, Deb Wadeson, Rosemary Clark (Melbourne/ Victoria)

Apologies: Melissa Hodgetts, Jayne Deluca, Gaye Campbell, Keryn Allen, Michael Hillier, Helen Limkin, Dianne Bocquee, Alison Gilchrist, Sheri Gunton, Anne Watkins, Jeanette Nolan.

Greetings: Greetings and good wishes and prayers for our meeting were received from

Alison Jackson (GFS Ireland) Catriona Charlesworth (GFS Wales) Thembeke Pama (World President)

Minutes of previous meeting: Minutes of the previous meeting held on January 11th 2020 were moved (Helen Petering) and seconded (Val Gribble) as being a true and accurate record of the meeting. Passed.

Business arising from Minutes: Moved to general business later in the meeting.

Reports:

President's Report:

Reverend Cheryl presented her report for the 3 years, with a note that it had been written with love and prayers for GFS. Cheryl noted the extraordinary circumstances we found ourselves in as the years unfolded with events not even dreamt about, but we have managed to work our way through them and use what is available for the benefit of our society. The COVID pandemic, Lyn Vaak's sad passing, joining the National Redress Scheme, closer links with insurers, use of technology for meetings were all new challenges. The cancellation of the 2020 World Council has brought a new realisation that our Junior Delegate was continuing her role beyond the original ending of January 2021. This unusual situation has been brought about by the need to ensure that we keep our Junior Delegate position open; to be able to ensure that she will be able to attend any form of World Council meeting that is subsequently called during 2021.

The World President has called a meeting for the 16th January 2021 to hear counsel and decide on what will happen to World Council that was cancelled from July 2020 due to COVID and worldwide pandemic. After this, we may be in a better position to know of the proposal for World Council.

Cheryl proposed a resolution that would allow the current Junior Delegate to remain a member of the National Committee and able to represent Australia, should World Council meet in some form in 2021:

Resolution: In accordance with Rule 52 and Bylaw 5:11

I propose that we set the number of members for our National Committee to be increased by one for the year 2021 (taking it to 10 (ten) members).

Members voted by show and hands and this was passed.

Since that now leaves just one person nominated for each of the positions on the new National Executive, each person was declared elected. (In accordance with Rule 51 (6))

Incoming executive members are:

President: Suzanne Claire

Vice President: Noeleen Stewart

Treasurer: Reverend Ann Edwards

Secretary: Julie Somerville

Junior Delegate: Stephanie Stewart (continuing in her role)

Ordinary Members: Christine Rooney, Bronwyn Barber, Canon Val Gribble, Reverend Nicole Baldwin

Chaplain: (as chosen by President): Reverend Sandra Kjellgren

Cheryl was warmly congratulated for her term of office with many reflecting on her wise leadership.

Treasurer's Report:

Noeleen Stewart presented the Treasurer's report noting:

- Auditor's report (Attachment A) had initially reported a doubling of the figures for payments in insurance which has since been corrected and noted that the Consumer Affairs will need payment in the next year.
- Answered questions relating to the amount for Executive expenses (an amount for accommodation had been to allow some interactions and maximum working time at meeting prior to 2020 AGM), World expenses and World council deposits (were different amounts for different payments made - one being deposits and fees sent on behalf of members, the other money held by GFS Australia to go to pay travel and fees of others)
- Budget 2018 – 2020 (Attachment B) and Proposed Budget (Attachment C)
 - Noted interest received from bank deposits is a much smaller amount than previously due to low interest rates, membership is down and subsequently fees are less.
 - Questions regarding Communication Package (is for "Zoom" program)
 - Proposed budget – airfares – an unknown amount at this stage regarding the state of air travel and possible expensive flights.
 - Changes to be made to Proposed Budget
 - 1. Delete "Restructuring GFS" item for \$10,000 (as it was felt it had already been achieved)
 - 2. Rename "Communication Package" to be "Marketing and Promotion".

- 3. Amount for Marketing and Promotion to be increased from \$1500 to \$3000.
- A note was added that the amount allocated to PNG might not be used at all if no travel permitted (\$20,000).
A note was added that the amount allocated to PNG may be used only for small support issues – if travel is not permitted in 2021.
- Discussion around the deficit noted on the budget – GFS Australia's income is not the only source of funds to provide for expenses. Members wanted to have a budget note added that "other funds held are for the expenses incurred in the running of the society".

Budget and associated papers tabled were passed with the amendments noted above. (1, 2 and 3)

After 9 years in the position of Treasurer, Noeleen was warmly thanked for her dedication and hard work and the changes brought within this time.

Reports of President and Treasurer were received and accepted with acclamation.

Diocesan reports:

Reports from the following dioceses were presented and each had time to speak about their reports.

Ballarat: remembered two special members (Edith Yates and Donna Tregenza) who had sadly passed away in the previous year. Even with Covid restrictions the group had been extremely busy with their knitting donations to various groups.

Brisbane: were pleased to see the passing of a new Constitution, limited meetings due to COVID.

Central Queensland: group was determined to keep going, but an aging group. With a new Bishop finally appointed will begin work to inform him about role of GFS.

Melbourne: changes ahead with their Hostel and tenant, which might mean a slowing down of new projects and support. Held a strategic planning day. Sad to report the deaths of two much loved stalwarts – Reverend John Stockdale and Betty Rowlands (Deb's mother). Were able to see a promotional video presented by Helen P to Ridley College.

Newcastle: shared some low times with members in hospital and going to nursing homes, still keen to have something going for GFS but not certain of their future.

North Queensland: newsletter has been well received especially through COVID times. Still keen to pursue a window dedicated to children's ministry in the Cathedral, but not right time for it. Disappointed to cancel a workshop with a talented author. Slowly restarting groups for children with COVID-19 safe (and expensive sanitising).

Perth: highlights were the settlement of the sale of the Townsend Lodge with a service of thanksgiving, some successful children's holiday programs and the desire to focus on building up children's groups.

South Australia: had been keen to celebrate the 140th year of GFS in Australia (having begun in SA) but Covid cancelled these plans, will do something in future, keen to keep going on!

Sydney: thankful for their AGM before COVID, still no one to take on Chairman role or Treasurer (but latter has now been filled), highly successful Zoom prayer meetings, many children's groups and they are finally able to return at the end of the year, continued with newsletter, a focus on their

playgroups ministry and building this up and special project of building street libraries at a local church.

Tasmania: only one meeting before ceasing meetings, final luncheon much appreciated, Betty Dean has been leader for nearly 40 years of the Townsend group and is retiring with Barbara Phillips to step into the role.

All Diocesan reports were moved and accepted.

(During the lunch break a game of GFS Facts Bingo was played with Cheryl Russell the eventual winner. Facts such as “70” - rule 70 relates to role of Secretary, “1” GFS was in all states by 1901,)

Outreach reports:

PNG

- Val showed a slideshow presentation of all the things about PNG that they have missed in the past year due to not being able to travel.
- Highlighted a feeding program in Port Moresby that had been started to help those in absolute poverty and need (gave an example of a 7-year-old putting his only t-shirt on the ground to beg daily). It is carried out by male members due to the risks for females. The continuation of this project was to be presented as a world project to World Council, but this did not go ahead. Collins is the leader of this and was quite capable of managing money and providing a budget for the project. (Proposed \$3000 US\$) He is also working on a project to bring a training program (working in conjunction with Cheryl). Spoke of the difficulty in obtaining a bank account for an organisation, therefore the need a trusted person to use their personal account (Girika has been this person in the past).
- Meeting was incredibly supportive and quite moved by the project, to provide some interim support until a World Project could be commenced. Brisbane and Melbourne dioceses offered to take this back to their people for support.

Melanesia

- Have managed to meet in some dioceses, and even installed 214 members in one of the outer islands (Malaita) over World Day of Prayer weekend. Working closely with MU.
- Badges have been sent to the group (always appreciative of these)
- Work on their own constitution has been halted due to COVID but have every intention of returning to finish this as soon as possible.
- Disappointed not to be meeting face to face for the World Council.
- Betty Kesaka has been very appreciative of the prayers and support given by GFS Australia.

Both outreach reports were moved and carried.

General Business:

1. National Redress Scheme (NRS)

We have begun the lengthy process to register within the Anglican Response National Redress Scheme Limited (ARNRSL) - an Anglican body registering with the NRS and which will filter claims through this to the appropriate bodies within the Anglican Church.

We are now in need of a letter of financial support, a letter that will guarantee that any claims could be paid should they exceed our own funds available. The difficulty is to find a body prepared to back a national group rather than a diocesan based group (many dioceses have already included their own Diocesan GFS group such as Brisbane GFS). GFS Australia has tried approaching the Primate, Most Reverend Geoff Smith but were referred to the ARNRSL and have not been successful to date. We are seeking advice and help from the members of GFS Australia.

Deidree spoke of the lengthy and tedious process they undertook to have their Diocesan Synod provide such a letter for their diocesan GFS group.

The NRS will end in 2028 (all claims to be presented by this time, with a further year to fulfill this). GFS Australia anticipate that all claims will most likely go through the diocese but are uncertain about claims for national events such as National Camps, National Council meetings etc and so need to be joining as GFS Australia Inc.

Suggested we ask other groups within Anglican church with a national body about how they have resolved this issue. (eg AMUA)

Some dioceses offered to take this issue to their members.

2. World Council

After the cancellation of the World Council proposed for July 2020 due to Covid, we are now awaiting the next step. A suggested date was to hold the council in South Africa in July 2021, and the SA members are keen to do this.

World President has called a meeting for the 16th January 2021 to hear counsel and decide on what will happen to World Council that was cancelled to discuss the matter further, and hopefully make a firm decision about its future. The meeting hosted by Lois (next world President in USA) will be attended by Suzanne and Val (and possibly Cheryl).

Our meeting was of the firm resolution that no face-to-face meeting should be scheduled for 2021 (and possibly even 2022) due to the high risk involved in gathering a large group of people and the health risks due to COVID, particularly with countries that have not been able to reduce their numbers of infectious cases. We would support a Zoom meeting to be held at the time proposed, July 2021 and ensure a hand over to Lois as the next world president.

Concerns were raised over the lack of financial reporting – a report of financial matters should have been presented to each of the previous year's World Team, but this has not happened. Large amounts of money were sent from Australia (\$18,000 in fees from members and a further \$30,000 or so from the Pat Franklin Fund for fees for other countries' members). Concern was raised about the possibility of this being returned (or perhaps with an amount deducted for expenses as is usually done). This matter should be brought to the meeting on 16th Jan.

Consideration was given to further scenarios –

- Hold a world council in 2022 in SA and then 3-year intervals from this time
- (was thought this was leaving GFS in limbo for too long a period and could not really see that 2022 would be even safer or able to travel freely, costs of travel may be much higher. Mindful that previous pandemics have taken 2 - 2 ½ years to be controlled, this could leave even 2022 in doubt re safety of members meeting.)

- Meeting in 2021 – should be by Zoom only (most supported this option)
- GFS Australia members understand the hurt and disappointment that comes after months and years of expectation and planning to host a council and how much this one offered those from other African countries the comparative ease of attending (compared with an overseas country).
- Should rely more on the opportunities that we can have from use of technology (as has been already tried through the World Day of Prayer).
- Want a transition soon to enable further world presidents to be able to plan, also need to set up world projects (currently none happening)
- Would like a certainty that deposits paid can be repaid. Would also like to see a financial statement provided to world team.
- Insurance – there is a slim possibility that our GFS insurance may repay lost deposits, but not a certainty.

Thembeka's project

Cheryl spoke about Thembeka's project that is happening in her church, Christ the King in Sophia town, Johannesburg.

Wanting to set up a heritage recognition of the church, becoming a tourist site, with use of grandchildren of important people linked to the church e.g., Reverend Trevor Huddleston, use young people as tour guides.

Thembeka invited GFS Australia members to partner with them to help set up this project. This might be something individual members may want to consider with their parish. Full information available from Cheryl and to go to next newsletter.

Any other business

1. Jan McNamara spoke of the need for us to be increasing our membership in Australia, particularly in children's and youth ministry. We need a project within our own country as well as those for overseas countries. This is where our future lies. It was referred to the next executive to make inroads into this.
2. World Project – as of now the world project in Sri Lanka is completed for funding, although it is still going ahead with great success. There is an urgency for us to have a new project and keep on supporting such activities. A delay in identifying a new world project might result in some lost momentum.
3. Suzanne Claire spoke of her vision and hopes for GFS in the coming years (normally this would have been developed during a dinner, this event was sorely missed).
 - a. Welcome given to all who participated on our new platform of Zoom.
 - b. We need to lift the profile of GFS both nationally and within many of our dioceses.
 - c. We have a missionary action, and we should be sharing this, with many aspects already reported within the Diocesan reports heard today.
 - d. We need to engage more members and to recognise our need to fulfill our tasks of offering friendship and service.
 - e. Suggested that we meet 3 or 4 times a year on Zoom to connect with each other for a prayer time and help strengthen our group. We can use our wisdom and knowledge to further our work and to move into more outreach.
 - f. We have enormous possibility for GFS Australia in the future
 - g. We will continue those matters already begun (e.g., the National Redress Scheme) and consolidate work on this.

4. Cheryl assured Suzanne that all the items pertaining to her role (bell given by GFS England, the badge of Chairman and the Australian Banner) will be passed on to her in due course, when it is possible to meet up. Likewise, Bp Sonia assured the new Chaplain that the stole worn by Chaplain will arrive in her possession as soon as possible.

The meeting ended with a service of Praise, Prayer and Proclamation led by outgoing Chaplain, Rt Reverend Sonia. The old executive was released of their duties and the new executive were commissioned into their respective roles with the assembled group promising to uphold them in this task.

The meeting ended at 4 p.m. (Queensland time).

During 2021, four Australian Newsletters, the GFS Australia Inc website, and our GFS Facebook page, have reported on the many groups run by GFS members across 14 Dioceses in Australia, these included: Kids Plus groups; GFS Groups; Townsend Groups for adults; and other GFS groups in schools and playgroups. Members have knitted, crochet, collected and packed toiletries, and donated to Ichthus camps and other children's and outreach ministries in various churches! Thanks so much to Mrs. Noeleen Stewart, Hon Vice President for her amazing technical skills on the website, Saturday Zooms and Facebook. Thank you to Mrs. Julie Somerville, Hon Secretary for her great Newsletters, fitting in all those articles and photographs.

A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a bright blue button-down shirt and a colorful patterned skirt, stands smiling next to a large, overflowing pile of donated items. The pile includes various pieces of clothing like a white t-shirt, a blue and white striped shirt, and a patterned skirt. There are also several boxes and bags, including one labeled 'Parcel Post' and another with 'Charity' written on it. A green beaded necklace is prominently displayed in the foreground. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

money raised in their Op Shops will go to their own projects. Posting in a Pre-paid VERY LARGE Australia Post satchel is the most economical at about \$17.00 each for up to 5 kg weight. Go to the remoteopshopproject.org. to see what each community needs and follow- on Facebook for up-dates. Please send our Vice-President and Secretary the photographs of you and your donations! *(Pictured is Suzanne with a collection of clothing to be sent to Halls Creek Op Shop in WA – all to fit in the bag)*

My four themes for my Presidency, related to proclaiming the Word of God with Joy and Confidence. So, our first National Zoom Meeting encouraged members to show a special item that gave them joy in GFS. I was delighted to see member's photographs and precious items and hear your wonderful stories about membership and GFS ministries. We also had great Christian Meditation led by Rev'd Nicole Baldwin, Executive Member. This led to our second Zoom. I will continue with the same themes for 2022 if re-elected as President.

The second National Zoom and others were called Saturday Symposiums; these are free on our website and available to our international members. Thank you to those who joined us internationally and across Australia. Our Saturday Symposium in May 2021 focused on prayer and Christian meditation. Also, craft was included to fill up your glass with JOY. As children of God and GFS Members, we are confident to approach God and ask Him for our needs (1 John: 2:28-3:1). This year many such prayers of mine have been answered! Break out Groups, enabled members to have their say and share their personal journey though the Covid pandemic and various lock downs across Australia.

GFS Australia was delighted to follow the World Day of Prayer Service in September 2021, written by the Northern Part of Sierra Leone. This was our third Saturday Symposium for the year. Lay Canon Val Gribble ML, Hon World Vice-President (and Executive Member, Australia) shared some wonderful photographs and gave some background information about Sierra Leone, which is on the southwest coast of West Africa. It has a tropical climate and a significant Christian minority. We admired photographs with Ms. Hannah Broderick, President, and her members wearing beautifully colourful clothing. Congratulations President and members for presenting the World Day of Prayer service and may God Bless you in your GFS ministry. Thank you to Rev'd Sandra Kjellgren, Chaplain GFS Australia, for wonderfully leading our service and your ministry to us during 2021.

Our fourth Saturday Symposium for 2021 was a busy programme, including an Orange Day theme, which is the United Nations project to help prevent violence to women and children. Thank you to Mrs. Chris Rooney, Executive Member for organizing and leading this Symposium. Our Guest speaker, Rev'd Gillian Moses summarized our Anglican Church findings and response to Domestic and Family Violence. GFS Australia now has a way to proceed further with this project. We encouraged members to wear something orange on 25th of each month to show support and awareness for this project. In addition, we have received the Girls' Friendly Society's publication: "PRAYERS OF HOPE", for "Our Sister's Against Gender-Based Violence: GFS WORLDWIDE". This is a thirty-one-day Bible study and is AVAILABLE ON THE GFS AUSTRALIA WEBSITE. Unfortunately, domestic violence is everywhere, including in our churches, so I urge you to take this issue REALLY SERIOUSLY and use this amazing resource. Members have appreciated the Saturday Symposiums, as we have all been able to connect, so GFS Australia plans to continue them in 2022.



(Pictured – Suzanne and Sonja and Celia packing toiletries for Homeless Women's ministry of GFS in Brisbane)

Our first Zoom World Council was attended over three days in July 2021 and very ably organized by our World President, Thembeke Pama and her Executive. GFS World Business was conducted that was delayed from 2020 due to the World-Wide Covid pandemic. We welcomed our incoming World President Mrs. Jeanne Withanage and congratulated Sri Lanka on a most inspiring World Project to teach young women spoken English for employment. There are many new GFS groups in Sri Lanka following Sri Lanka's amazing witness to God and GFS. The new GFS World Project for Cameroon was accepted: to educate 50 disadvantaged young women in employment skills, Christianity and to further GFS membership. A short-term World Project to fund a Feeding Program in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea however, was withdrawn. The application did not meet GFS World Council Rules of Management. Several Countries spoke of the merits of the Feeding Program, but Papua New Guinea needs a provincial structure to comply with the Rules of Management. During the Council, short videos from Member countries were presented. Suzanne Claire (Senior Delegate) and Stephanie Stewart (Junior Delegate) gave a precis and key points for GFS Australia and our aims for the future. It was great to meet Ms. Helen Allen New Zealand President, and Girika Sanata, President of the Diocese of Port Moresby during the Zoom World Council. Thank you to Girika Sanata, President of the Port Moresby Diocese, and the members of Melanesia for your great attendance at the World Council. Thank you to Bishop of the Free State Dintoe Stephen, who advised us to encourage both membership and new leaders! Thank you for the wonderful support given to GFS by our Bishops in Africa.

GFS Australia has been careful in its governance during the year with Risk Insurance policies observed and correspondence about the National Redress Scheme. Thank you so much for two

dioceses: Brisbane and Perth for offering to assist financially so GFS Australia can join the National Redress Scheme. The details are still being worked through, thank you for all your considerations. GFS Australia wishes to comply with obligations and respect all peoples.

Special Congratulations go to two of our Executive. Mrs. Val Gribble, Executive Member, has celebrated a significant Birthday, thank you for all your amazing contributions to GFS in Rockhampton Diocese, Australia and world-wide over many years! Rev'd Ann Edwards, Hon Treasurer, has just been commissioned as the Rector at St Mark's, The Gap in Brisbane with Bishop Jeremy of the Brisbane Northern Region in attendance. Thank you for inviting me to welcome you to St Mark's on behalf of GFS Australia.

In conclusion, this has been an amazing year as GFS was able to continue its ministry across Australia despite the difficulties with the world-wide Covid-19 pandemic. Our first Girl's Friendly Society branch was in South Australia in 1879 and welcomed young women to our shores after a very long and arduous sea journey from England. Mary Elizabeth Townsend formed GFS in England only 4 years earlier in 1875! GFS in Brisbane will celebrate its 140th year in 2022, having been formed in 1882. As with the South Australians, may we continue to be innovative with our future ministries and continue in the wonderful legacy of our inspirational members across Australia.

BLESSINGS IN GFS,

Suzanne Claire PRESIDENT, GFS AUSTRALIA Inc

Treasurer's Report

Following is the report for GFS Australia Inc. for the year ended 31 October 2021.

To reduce the cost of auditing, and due to the simplicity of the accounts, the GFS Australia Inc. Executive moved to audit the accounts every second year, and audited accounts will be presented at next year's AGM.

We continue to use the ANZ as our bank and to keep an ANZ account for World monies as we are holding some project monies and some other funds here in Australia for World Council, due to the continuing impact of COVID.

Outside of our operating expenses are donations to GFS projects. GFS Cameroon was to receive funds this year, however ANZ was unable to complete the transfer of funds to Cameroon for the World Project this year, and the funds were returned to our account, less processing fees. We will reattempt to get these funds to GFS Cameroon in 2022.

Val Gribble, Noeleen Stewart, Julie Somerville, Suzanne Claire, and I are signatories on these accounts. While Noeleen stepped down as Treasurer last year, she has continued to assist with the accounts for continuity, due to the complexity of the World Council situation and difficulties in our transfer of funds for the World Project.

Interest rates remain low, reducing our income from our investment accounts.

A few points to note on the financial statements/budget:

- A refund was received for World Council expenses, and this has been distributed to our members. The refund is higher than the amount distributed, as the President and Youth Representative were funded by GFS Australia
- GST will be claimed in 2022
- Interest remains low
- There were no meeting expenses due to travel limitations and COVID restrictions.
- Activity in PNG has decreased with the Pandemic. There are sufficient funds in the PNG account at this time, and giving is likely to resume in 2022.
- There have been a number of donations to PNG and World Accounts from GFS Diocese around Australia, thank you for your generosity

This is the first report from me as Treasurer of GFS Australia Inc. I am indebted and in gratitude to the GFS Australia Executive, particularly our outgoing Treasurer Noeleen, for their patience and assistance, as unexpected surgery and then illness meant I was unavailable for much of this year. The fellowship of this community has been a deep joy, and I would highly recommend involvement in our executive, for those interested.

With blessings,

Ann Edwards

Treasurer, GFS Australia Inc.

Diocese of Ballarat GFS

Chairman: Mrs Wendy Veal

Secretary: Mrs Nathalie Stevens

Treasurer:

Chaplain: Fr Chris

2021 has been another interrupted year. We have all had to utilize other options to keep in touch and be able to continue with our work and our meetings. Reports and cards have been sent to members during lockdown to keep them informed. Although we have been unable to visit people in residential care cards and posies have been delivered. Chaplain Fr. Chris opens each meeting with prayer. Our President is our Bishop Garry Weatherill.

The Annual meeting in February saw all members of Executive Council renominated. Business meetings have been held in April, July, October, and November. The Rev'd Christine Angus was a very inspirational speaker at our March Townsend meeting. May and August meetings had to be cancelled because of Covid-19. End of year saw 38 members celebrate with a picnic at the Queen Victoria Rotunda in the beautiful and peaceful Buninyong gardens. Members spoke about our support for ABM projects, schools' programs, a list of the handwork distributed over the year and how money was being raised to support our GFS World project in Cameroon. We had a Christmas message from our Chaplain, welcomed 4 of our new members as well as Thora (Fr. Chris's care dog.) We were entertained and had background music, received beautifully wrapped Christmas cake and gifts. Our annual special effort of 5 prizes was drawn. We enjoyed a boxed lunch and had plenty of chatter and catchup.

During the year our talented members contributions have provided warm woollen beanies for Seafarers Mission, baby and prem baby clothes and rugs to several hospitals, many rugs to residential care, clothes and other items to Wrisc, Berry Street and Eureka Mum's. Groceries, toiletries, and warm clothes to Anglicare.

Financial donations have gone to Korus connect, RFDS, Bishops Anglicare appeal, ABM water and sanitization project in Vanuatu, purchase of weighted toys for a school trauma room and a small coin collection for Cop's and Kid's and Very Special Kid's.

The World Day of Prayer service celebrated by Fr. Chris with guest preacher The Venerable Michael O'Brien and assistant preacher Fr. Thomas Edalay was celebrated on St. Michael's day with 20 ladies attending. (Covid-19 restricted numbers.) We had beautifully printed service booklets. Four members participated doing reading and the service was adapted from the service organised by Sierra Leone.

In recognition of "Orange Day" and the elimination of domestic violence against women and children our group supports several schools with sensory squares and muffs with various soothing tactile items attached. These are used in nurture rooms to help calm, comfort, and help victims to focus and attend to tasks at hand where cuddles are no longer allowed. We hope that is some small way our efforts will help lift the burdens of others.

Prayer Points: We were saddened over recent time with the loss of Donna, Edith and Alma Egan a long-time member and supporter who died on our World Day of Prayer. Member for many years Mrs. Rita Lakey has moved to Albany.

The positives in this difficult year

- Electronic communication has been good. Zoom meetings and e-mails are a great way to keep in touch.
- Our Chaplain is very supportive (even though he doesn't like brussel sprouts).
- We are blest with new members.
- The continuous supply of beautifully crafted rugs, knitted items etc. which are donated from members, families, friends, and others such as Probus members, help us to carry out our Motto to "Bear one another's burdens".
- We have devised unique ways to raise money for our World Project in Cameroon.
- Everyone is looking forward to a more normal year in 2022.

With love and blessings from all Ballarat members, **Nathalie Stevens, Wendy Veal** (Chairman)



Ballarat GFS Group at their end of year picnic at Buninyong Gardens



Ballarat quilts – just some of their handiwork given to those in need throughout the year

Diocese of S Q (Brisbane) GFS

Chairman: Mrs Lesley Briggs

Secretary: Mrs Margaret Humphries

Minute Secretary: Mrs Lesley Gee

Treasurer: Mrs Ros Lumsden

Chaplain: Reverend Canon Cheryl Selvage

Emeritus Chaplain: Reverend Kay Pitman

Highs:

- Covid-19 restrictions eased so we could meet in person for all of our meetings.
- Two Outreach Events were able to be held, the first in May where we visited The Barracks, and the second on September 29th where we celebrated the GFS World Day of Prayer at St. Augustine's at Hamilton on St. Michael's and All Angels Day. We followed the service by having lunch together. Both events were well attended and provided a great opportunity for fellowship for past and present GFS members.
- Working on our Policies and Procedures to complement our new Constitution.

Lows:

- Not being able to hold a World Council due to the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Headquarters Townsend Group declining rapidly due to the age of its members - either going home to the Lord or entering Aged Care facilities.
- Not many 'One Off' grants being applied for due to Covid restrictions this year.

Joys:

- The Rev'd Canon Cheryl Selvage being appointed by our Archbishop Phillip as the new GFS Brisbane Chaplain and The Rev'd Kaye Pitman being appointed as GFS Chaplain Emeritus.
- Group grants being well used and helping many parishes support their Children's/Youth Ministries.
- Continuing to support MEC with Grants of \$2000 for each of their four Ichthus Camps for Children and Youth in the Diocese that were run this year.
- We continue to pay the wages for one day per week for a Chaplain to the Children's Hospital.
- Providing one Bursary this year to a Formation student and using the second Bursary to support two Interns from the Community of the Way based at St. Francis Theological College.
- Supporting a Diocesan Project which for 2021 was Zephyr Education Inc. which supplies children from low-income families (often from single parent families who have escaped Domestic Violence) with school necessities.
- Southside Townsend Group going well with members meeting bi-monthly, usually in someone's home. Have changed from meeting for dinner to meeting for lunch as many members don't like driving at night (we're all getting too old!)
- Having Julie Summerville joining us for meetings and Townsend fellowship when she is in Brisbane.
- Archbishop Philip thanking and acknowledging GFS Brisbane, at the Diocesan Synod, for what we do in the Diocese.
- Margaret being interviewed about GFS and having a big article in the Diocesan magazine, "Focus" Magazine, well done Margaret, we are so proud of you.

It gives me pleasure to present our report for 2021 to GFS Australia. **Lesley Briggs (Chairman)**



Brisbane - Lesley Briggs making donation to assist Zephyr Education Inc at AGM



Group who travelled from Brisbane to Toowoomba for gathering with GFS members

Diocese of Central Queensland (Rockhampton) GFS

Chairman/Organiser: Canon Val Gribble

Secretary: Canon Val Gribble

Treasurer: Mrs Pam Guy

Membership has declined further in 2021. One of our members, Gail Jones, who was a member when Val Gribble was a young leader in Rockhampton in the early 1960's and then with Val and June Olive, opened a branch at Parkhurst (rural area close to Rockhampton) in the 1990's died suddenly in February and we miss her presence amongst us. Others are experiencing health difficulties and our active membership is now around 15. It is a continuing challenge to consider our role in this diocese and our new Bishop will be asked to help us to see a way forward early next year.

We no longer have any children's groups in the diocese.

We were without a GFS Treasurer for a short while, but Pam Guy has taken on this role and we are most grateful. Without a Treasurer it would have been difficult, under our guidelines, to continue as a group.

We also have very limited access to ZOOM which means that attendance is very limited at the Symposiums. But members are kept up to date by email (and by post) regarding world and national matters.

We were able to gather for our first 2021 outing in December; a Christmas luncheon and time to catch up with friends and share information. *(See pictured below)*

We can say we are still here and with prayers and planning hope to see a way forward in 2022.
(Canon) Val Gribble, Diocesan Organiser and Secretary.



Diocese of Melbourne GFS Inc

Chairman: Debra Wadeson

Secretary: Val Murcutt

Treasurer: Philip Wadeson

Introduction This year of 2021 is remarkable, in that we have continued to function, through the wonder of electronic media. God's work continues with the valuable resources and commitment of devoted members. Thanks be to God!

Annual Highlights GFS Australia Inc.: The Triennial Australian Council Meeting was held via Zoom, 9th January 2021. It was certainly an interesting way of attending and voting for our new President and executive committee.

Melbourne AGM: This was conducted via Zoom, 20th February 2021. It was with reluctance we accepted the resignation of our dual skilled Treasurer/Secretary, Leanne Kapetanovski. Leanne served as Treasurer for over 20 years as well as adding the role of Secretary for the past 6 years. We are truly grateful for her commitment and service in two such demanding roles.

GFS World Council: Last year's postponed meeting was rescheduled and conducted via Zoom from Johannesburg, South Africa, over 3 days in July 2021. We attended, together with many others who observed live screen on Facebook. It was inspiring to be able to participate through this medium.

Edith Head Hall: We are currently continuing to negotiate with the MATC (Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation), concerning the ownership and future use of our property. Until this matter is resolved GFS Melbourne is unable to offer any further Parish Support Packages for Children's Ministry Workers in the diocese.

Parish Support Packages: Our Liaison Officer, Helen Petering, continues to manage and support the current Parish Children's Ministry Workers (CMWs) funded by GFS/KidsPlus+. Since 2015, over \$500,000 has benefitted 20 Parishes within the Melbourne Diocese.

GFS Branch: St. Alfred's Blackburn North still flourishes, meeting in person when possible or via electronic media during Covid lockdowns. The leaders design and provide exciting programs, which engage the participation of both primary and secondary schoolgirls, enhancing their knowledge of the Gospel.

Even through the exceptionally difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic, they not only looked out for themselves, but also crossed international borders to support and assist their GFS sisters in Uganda. As a result, GFS Uganda were able to purchase 200 chicks so the children of Katwade Village School and GFS could learn to raise the chickens and then use them as a source of income to assist them in purchasing their schoolbooks.

Pat Franklin Foundation: We are grateful to accept bequests and donations to the Foundation, which ensures continued support for recipients' applications for funding.

Vale: In April 2021 we were saddened to hear of the death of Diane Moseley. Diane joined GFS as a child and continued through until adulthood, assisting her mother as a leader in their Parish Branch. She faithfully served GFS Melbourne on the Executive and various other committees.

Summary More than ever, in these Covid times, we commit our work to the Lord, sure that it will succeed through faith, prayer, and commitment.

Debra Wadeson, Chairman GFS Melbourne Inc.

Diocese of Newcastle GFS

Chairman: Mrs Gail Orchard

Well, this year was indeed another year of adapting to the ever-changing Covid-19 pandemic and the disruption that it brought to our plans for the year. We endeavoured to hold a couple of meetings before deciding that we needed to try another means of getting together.

We gathered in our own homes for the GFS Australia AGM by Zoom due to concentration of the pandemic in the local region at the time. Once again it brought home to us how much we valued meeting together in person.

We were able to join with the rest of GFS Australia for the Zoom Prayer meetings during the year. Once again it was lovely to be able to catch up with friends both physically and via the Internet. Listening to the reports from other Diocese as to what their concerns were and how they had worked to overcome them gave us an idea of something that we could do here in Newcastle. As a result, later in the year we started the monthly prayer meetings by Zoom for those who were able to attend and have been able to hold 3 meetings which have been well received.

Sonia, Nicole and I were able to participate for the GFS World Council by Zoom enabling us to get together with many friends from around the world. It was lovely to be able to participate in such a historic meeting and hopefully the pandemic will enable us to physically get together soon in a physical presence. We are certainly members of a worldwide community, and this was brought home to us as we sat in our homes.

We were able to catch up with some our members in December when we ended the year with a luncheon. For those who were able to join us it was lovely to be able to share a meal together and physically talk to someone. Everyone expressed their hope for a better year in 2022 and even though similar sentiments were made last year we hoped that we would be able to hold meetings in person next year. **Gail Orchard Chairman**



Diocese of North Queensland GFS

trading as KIDZLINK N.Q.

Chairman: Ms Jennifer Buckby

Secretary Mrs Anne Watkins

Treasurer: Mrs Jenny Nolan

Chaplains: Reverend Janet Story and Reverend Dr. Sharon Hayston

HIGHLIGHTS

- We were able to continue with our quarterly Newsletter which has been very well received across the Diocese and in other Dioceses as well. It is beautifully produced by Clare Reed and has excellent contributions from both of our Chaplains, Rev. Dr. Sharon Hayston and Rev. Janet Story.
- Our bi-annual Prayer Leaflet continued to be produced by Anne Watkins and this is a valuable resource to assist in our prayer life.
- Our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Keith Joseph, is very supportive of all we do so that is certainly a bonus for us.
- Some branches began again during early 2021 but many still have not resumed since the beginning of Covid. We are able to support those who have restarted.
- Our excellent relationship with AMUA.
- The success of the GFS group on Murray Island. Their members continue to be very keen and are quite a large group of around 30.

CONCERNS

- The number of children's ministries that have remained closed since the beginning of Covid.

PLANS

- The continuation of the Diocesan Newsletter which always offers grants to Parishes to enhance their children's ministry.
- A specific planning meeting in late January 2022 to look at the way forward for 2022.
- To finalise the incorporation process.
- Again, look at a design for a window in our Cathedral in Townsville highlighting children's ministry in the Diocese over the years.

PRAYER POINTS

- For more children's ministries to re-commence in 2022.

Jennifer Buckby, President



North Queensland Mainly Music group in action



Group in Torres St learning about the Motto as they made a bookmark to take home during their "Coming of the Light" celebrations.



Diocese of Perth GFS

Chair – The Reverend Josie Steytler

Deputy Chair – Neil Starkie

Secretary – The Reverend Alison Gilchrist

Treasurer – Lesley Hill

I write with the good news that after nearly two years of searching we have finally found a place to call our own and be our new headquarters as we move forward into the next chapter in the life of GFS here in Perth.

The property is in the Swan Valley, an area which was chosen because of the urban growth corridor. This corridor has seen a significant increase in new properties/families in the last five years so offers GFS the potential to connect with many young families in the coming years. The address of our new property is 4380 West Swan Road, West Swan. It is a 3-bedroom, one bathroom, brick and tile house on 4 acres of land. It will need to be renovated before we can commence our ministry in the area (any property we bought would have needed renovations to meet Shire requirements).

Here is what we're planning to do at GFS FRIENDSHIP CENTRAL in the next few years -

GFS wants to create a multi-purpose Community Hub with a heart and purpose, which we will call FRIENDSHIP CENTRAL.

The centre will connect with a broad cross section of the community and will encompass –

- a new base for GFS headquarters, providing office space as well as a place where members can gather and meet (this may include Mothers Union office space, if they would like to join us in the building);
- a Café (60-80 people), which will be the heart of the centre and a source of income. A place where people can meet and ministry happen eg Conversation Central, Memory Café, Dead Curious Café, Café Church, Mums & Bubs Groups, Mother/Daughter High Tea.
- multipurpose areas for various activities eg MOPs, Mainly Music, Kids Plus group, Prayer/Meditation Space, Budgeting, IT for Seniors, Cooking on a Budget, Bella/Strength programmes, Pamper A Nanna, Aboriginal culture, Arts, Crafts, Men's shed, Fundraising eg Share the Dignity. Also offer spaces for community use eg Exercise groups, AA.
- one large space/auditorium (150-200 people), may also be a source of income eg. Holiday Club - access to outdoors needed with children's play area, blessed to be a Blessing Dinner. Rent out for conferences, community groups.
- office spaces to rent out to others who may want to help the community eg lawyer, accountant etc.
- recreation space, both passive eg stretch, yoga, pilates. And active eg basketball, volleyball, badminton, walking, pump & jump bike space.
- will be a centre where we support events like *Orange Day – End Violence Against Women*, *Share the Dignity*, *Pamper A Nanna*, *Dressed for Success*, *Zonta House*, *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, *Recycling Bins*.

We will have a grand opening for all GFS members once we have completed the renovation. We look forward to our members wonderful support as we move forward and live out the GFS motto to "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." *Galatians 6:2*

The Reverend Josie Steytler (Chairperson)

Diocese of South Australia GFS

Chairman: Mrs Janice Doyle

Secretary: Miss Karen Fagan

Treasurer: Miss Chris Barber

A small band of members continued to manage GFS in South Australia in 2021.

The team was able to meet regularly and discussed the business matters generated by GFS Australia and any local issues.

A successful luncheon was held in May, and we gathered together former members and enjoyed a time recalling our GFS experiences, but we were unable to find anyone who wanted to join the management team.

In November we held a World Day of Prayer Service (slightly delayed) led by Fr Michael Hillier followed by a luncheon. Once again enjoyed by all.

GFS again was contacted by the Adelaide Diocese regarding a second claim under the National Redress Scheme. GFS SA falls under the umbrella of the Adelaide Diocese who are managing the situation for us.

We find the National Zoom gatherings very good, and we do try to join, they are very informative, and it definitely helps us feel a part of the GFS family.

Thank you to the National Executive for your work.

Janice Doyle Chairman



Diocese of Sydney GFS

Chairman: - Vacant
Secretary: Lynne Gall
Chaplain: Vacant

Vice Chairman – Jennie Young
Treasurer – Cheryl Buchanan (Acting)

Highlights

➤ **Women's Ministry Outing** How delightful it was to be able to get together again after 15 months of no face to face events! What a pleasure it was to be able to go to the Rooty Hill Retirement Village where we could all be in the community hall –which had every feature that we could wish for. We all chatted and had a lovely time catching up with one another. Leonie was able to pass on the Vice Chairman's badge to Jennie, something we had not been able to do in our online Zoom meeting.

➤ **Prayer meetings** – Our Monthly Prayer meetings have continued each month in one form or another. It has been a real privilege to pray for our members and their families, our GFS, kids club and playgroup leaders dealing with the vagaries of lockdown. As we continue to pray for the work of GFS and our members we can say with Paul, "We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you." 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4

➤ **AGM** - The Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom on 13th March. 23 members were in attendance. Some members visited other members on the day to assist them with the technical complications of logging on via Zoom. Thanks to those members who gave up their time and talents to enable more members to join us.

The annual report and the budget were accepted. New Office Bearers and Board members were duly elected.

At the conclusion many thanks were given to Leonie, Alison and Tania for serving on the Board for many years. Also Deidree expressed gratitude to Dianne Davies for her encouragement and support during her time as our Patron and assured her of our continued prayers.

➤ **Dawn Ferguson was recognised** She was honoured to be nominated as one of the 10 "Beecroft Treasures" at a dinner by the Beecroft Rotary Club in November 2020. Dawn continues to be a "Treasure" in GFS Sydney as she makes and sells jams to raise money for the GFS world project. Last year as there was a lockdown in Sydney; Dawn could not sell the jams at her church in Beecroft. That didn't stop Dawn! She quickly set up a stall on her front porch. People soon came when they knew her jams were available. She has raised \$1000 and donated the money to help the GFS world project. Dawn - You are an inspiration to us all!

➤ **Tania Brown was honoured** in 2021 and received recognition at the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award Ceremony (Outer Western Sydney) via Zoom for her work in GFS. Tania was nominated by GFS Sydney for her dedicated work to GFS. Many thanks to Tania for her continued dedication to GFS.

➤ **dioGFS Sydney Facebook PAGE and Facebook GROUP** GFS Sydney has both as well as our website. We have been actively trying to promote GFS with these online tools. Our Facebook PAGE is to reach out and connect with a wider audience/community and a way to promote GFS to the world. Anyone can LIKE or FOLLOW our PAGE. Once someone has followed the PAGE future posts can pop up in their Newsfeed.

Our Facebook GROUP is a closed group which means anyone can find the group in a search but not the content or what is posted. Our GROUP offers a way for members to share, support and interact with each other. People need to request to join our GROUP. Only once the administrators approve a person then they become a member, and can see any posts or comments in the GROUP.

Our website continues to be a useful resource for members and a promotion tool for the public that visits it.

➤ **Around Sydney our quarterly Newsletter and Prayer Guide** We have continued to produce our Newsletter and Prayer Guide. We have been encouraged with this aspect of ministry by members sharing articles and ideas to put into the newsletter.

➤ **GFS Australia Zoom Saturday Symposiums** Our members have enjoyed being able to join and participate in the GFS Australia Symposiums. They have been thought provoking and educational. We are grateful to those who have co-ordinated them and produced such a varied programme.

Concerns

- A new GFS Sydney Chairman – we pray that God will raise someone up to take on this position.
- We have had a number of people resigning from their positions. We now need a Treasurer again, a Patron, and a Chaplain. We pray we can find people to step up and take on these important roles.
- Our membership has been declining and our members are ageing – we pray that a new generation of members are encouraged to join GFS and share their love of Christ.

Some plans ahead

- We hope to be able to meet again face to face soon especially for our AGM in March.
- Our GFS branches, groups and playgroups are able to meet again and continue to meet in 2022.
- To find a suitable project to extend God's Kingdom with the bequest from Lyn Vaak.
- To develop a new Strategic Plan to enable us to extend the work of GFS in Sydney.

Lynne Gall (Secretary)

Pictured is Tania Brown on her presentation as a nominee for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award for her work with GFS in the Outer Western Sydney area. Well done!





Christmas lunch together to end a year of lockdowns and Zoom meetings

Diocese of Tasmania GFS

Chairman: Julie Somerville

Secretary: Barbara Phillips

Treasurer: Barbara Phillips

GFS in Tasmania has had few restrictions from the Covid guidelines and for this we are extremely grateful. We were able to meet bimonthly from February. The exception was in October when Tasmania went into a snap lockdown just on the weekend planned for the World Day of Prayer celebration. We had planned to have Catherine Williams as a guest speaker. Catherine works for the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students. With the FOCUS Group at the University of Tasmania. She works a lot one-on-one with female international students from non-Christian backgrounds as well as mixed group activities. She will now come to our February meeting. Our members still have very strong feelings about the money held in the Lodder Bequest and the Mercer Memorial Fund being tied up by the Diocesan Council with only a small amount able to be accessed so at the June meeting it was voted unanimously that we donate to support Catherine's work at the university. Members are very conscious of the fact that we have not been able to provide financial support in the way we were before funds were tied up.

At the February meeting a presentation was made to Betty Dean in recognition of her 30+ years as leader of the Southern Townsend Group. It was a celebration of both sadness and joy, but she felt that it was time to step back and just be a member of the group she loves so much. Barbara is now the new leader of this group with Sandra Fogarty as deputy. We spent the April meeting catching up on GFS Australia and World news, our new Australian constitution, the new countries joining GFS World.

We celebrated our 34th anniversary with a lunch at the Cascade Visitors' Centre in August which was attended by all members and a couple of friends of members. End of year celebration was at CBar Restaurant on the boardwalk of Bellerive Marina. It was a beautiful day to celebrate with members and friends. Such gatherings are even more precious in our Covid times.

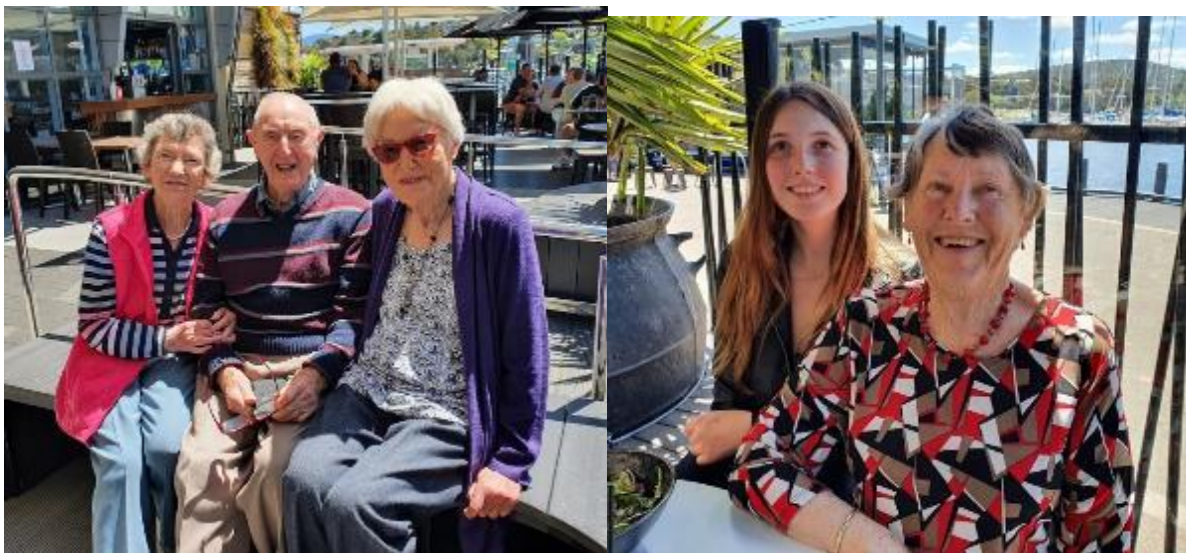
Our members remain faithful to GFS but each year that passes brings more health and mobility challenges to many of them, but they all look forward to getting together as the Townsend group. It was sad to lose Beryl Pridham and Reverend Rosemary Perrott-Russell during the year and just recently, on 8 November, Mary Suhr. All these women have given long and faithful service to GFS in various ways and will be sadly missed.

In looking forward to 2022, there will be a big change in leadership. Julie has decided that it is time to retire from the role of Chairman of GFS in Tasmania after 22 years in this role and allow a local person to take the reins. It has been difficult to return to Tasmania when GFS is happening with all the changes of COVID and so it is time to relinquish this role. My heart will always be in Tasmania and with the many GFS friends who live there. Mrs Barbara Phillips has agreed to take on the role and this will be communicated to the Bishop for his approval.

Julie Somerville Chairman and Barbara Phillips Secretary/Treasurer



Presentation to Betty Dean of a beautiful patchwork cushion made by Barbara as she retired from leader of Southern Townsend group after 30+ years of service.



Betty, Jim and Jane and Elaine and her granddaughter all enjoying the sunshine at the final dinner for 2021

Outreach Reports - *GFS Melanesia*

Again, this year, we have been impacted by COVID and the restrictions this has imposed on our lives.

World Council was due to be held in person in 2020 but instead it was held as a Zoom meeting over several days in July 2021. The bonus was that more members were able to participate even if remotely. It was a great delight to see around 8 GFS Melanesia members seated around the computer and resplendent in their new uniforms of bright green t shirts sharing in the world council. Although the time difference meant it was quite late starting, they were able to join in for most of the time. It was used as a promotion tool and other key members of the Diocese of Central Melanesia had been invited to share this event to see the place of GFS at World level.

In October we learned of a change of leadership in GFS and in MU in Melanesia. We are quite sad to see Betty Kesaka leave the position of GFS Coordinator as she has been a very capable, efficient, and charming person in this role. GFS has been growing in both numbers and confidence under Betty's leadership. We have built up a good rapport with her and look forward to meeting and building the same relationship with the next GFS Coordinator. The new MU Provincial President has been appointed and we welcome Mrs. Rosemary Sahu. We are waiting to hear of the newly appointed GFS Coordinator. Many would have returned to their home villages by now and so this role should be filled as next year begins.

I have had some communication and a request for some resources from GFS in Vanuatu. Dyana was a participant in our training in 2018 and has gone on to start GFS in Vanuatu, in Port Vila. She currently has 30 members – 24 GFS and 6 Townsend members. We are trying to help her with some resources and in particular her request for a GFS handbook. (pictured below are the GFS girls from Dyana's group)



We continue to pray for the Solomon Islands. Although out of the news now, the effects of the riots and fires in Honiara in November will cause great disruption and harm to the lives of many for quite some time to come. We were told of how the fires and riots started close to the Diocesan headquarters and to the MU hostel in which we have stayed on our visits in Honiara. Much of the shopping area was destroyed with now a great need for restoring livelihoods and produce for people.

Julie Somerville

Gail Orchard (consultants to GFS Melanesia from GFS Australia)

GFS PNG REPORT

The team has not been able to visit PNG this year, of course, but we keep in touch as best we can.

Vivian Jirega the President of GFS in Popondota diocese continues to struggle. There has been a major problem with accessing their bank accounts and we have been in contact with the manager of the bank at Popondetta. This means that Vivian manages to keep power on at GFS Haus and to pay for the water by selling her craft at the local market. After discussions at World Council regarding the lack of a provincial structure and further discussions at national level, it was decided at the beginning of the year that Cheryl and I as consultants would not be as closely managing what happens in GFS PNG, and that it was time to put their years of training into practice. The major brief for the three dioceses was to try to form a diocesan structure. This has proved to be extremely difficult and communication with the only branch in New Guinea Islands diocese has not been possible at all. It remains a major problem, as we move closer to the next World Council.

A camp for around 40 girls was held in Popondetta during the mid-year holidays, a first and very successful. Many of the girls walked long distances to attend.

Little has happened in Port Moresby mainly due to COVID restrictions. It has been impossible to keep the Feeding Program going due to these restrictions, but the money is being held safely until it can start again. Girika Sanata, the GFS Coordinator for the Diocese of Port Moresby was hoping to distribute some food and masks before Christmas.

Please continue to pray for GFS in PNG.

- There are major challenges with the Anglican church of PNG and this flows to GFS.
- It may be possible to visit in 2022 although part of our agreement is that we must be invited, and the dioceses are to work out our program and what teaching they want to receive.
- Pray also that people may be encouraged to be vaccinated (currently there are only 4% fully vaccinated)

Thank you for your ongoing support for GFS in PNG. It is truly a call to mission and to service.

Reverend Canon Cheryl Selvage

Canon Val Gribble

(Consultants to GFS PNG from GFS Australia)