



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## GFS AUSTRALIA INC



We will *PROCLAIM*  
the *WORD OF GOD* with



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**Agenda for Annual Meeting of GFS Australia Inc  
held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
at St Francis College, Milton Brisbane**

1. Welcome and opening prayers
2. Present and apologies
3. Minutes of previous meeting held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2022
4. Business arising from previous minutes
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## *Minutes of Annual Meeting of GFS Australia Inc held on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2022 by Zoom*

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**Present:** (National Executive:) Suzanne Claire (President) Noeleen Stewart (Vice President) Reverend Ann Edwards (Treasurer) Julie Somerville (Secretary) Reverend Sandra Kjellgren (Chaplain) Val Gribble, Reverend Nicole Baldwin, Chris Rooney, Bronwyn Barber (General Members)

(Perth) Carole Lovejoy, Jan McNamara, Reverend Josie Steytler, Lesley Hill, Kate Brewer

(Newcastle) Gail Orchard

(Melbourne) Helen Petering, Elizabeth Petering, Deb Wadeson, Leanne Kapetanovski, Rosemary Clark,

(Sydney) Tania Brown, Lynne Gall, Margaret Andrews, Deidree Noss, Roslyn Tildsley

(NQld) Jennifer Buckby, Reverend Janet Story, Sheri Gunton, Ann Watkins, Corinne Gannon,

(SQld - Brisbane) Reverend Cheryl Selvage, Reverend Sue Wilson, Clare Reed, Ian Russell, Dianne Bocquee, Kathleen Brecknell, Marj Wellings, Margaret Humphries, Cheryl Russell, Jen Tutin,

(SA) Janice Doyle, Karen Fagan, June Hillier, Keryn Allen

(CQLd) Pam Guy, Jacqui Keily

(Ballarat) Heather Turner, Nathalie Stevens, Wendy Veal, Val Tregenza

**Apologies:** Lesley Gee, Lesley Briggs, Kevin Bell, Di Bell, Ros Lumsden) (Brisbane), Reverend Kurt Langmead (lightning ridge) Rosemary Neave, Rt Reverend Sonia Roulston (Newcastle) Cheryl Buchanan, Dawn Ferguson, Jennie Young, (Sydney) Lillias Jensen, Linda Herley, Helen Limkin, Veronica Stuart, Ken and Ainslie Stovell (Rockhampton), Leonie Stitz, Jane Beavan (Tasmania) Val Murcutt (Melbourne) Sandra Clough (Bendigo)

Meeting opened at 10.10 am (Queensland time) with a welcome from Suzanne Claire (President) and prayer led by Chaplain, Reverend Sandra Kjellgren

**Minutes from previous meeting** held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021 by Zoom were taken as read having been circulated. Moved: Suzanne Claire and seconded Sandra Kjellgren and passed as a true and accurate record.

### **Business Arising from Minutes:**

1. National Redress Scheme
2. World council and world matters

Both these issues were to be discussed through President's report and deferred until that has been presented.

### **Reports**

**President's Report:** Suzanne spoke to her report. She highlighted that she felt she had started the year with a lot to learn and achieved much throughout the year. We continued to have Facebook, website, and newsletters to keep in touch with each other and sharing of the work that was being done. The new project for us to tackle is the "Remote Op Shops project" as we take up the world themes to consider climate change (our clothing waste being repurposed). Her theme spoke of "joy and confidence" and this was the highlight of the first symposium. The world council had been a very successful time over 3 sessions with many joining in and being challenged by the guest speakers and hearing from the world project (new and past) and other countries. We are awaiting to join the ARNRSL with 2 dioceses offering to jointly become guarantor for GFS Australia and finalizing their part to sign the appropriate documents.

Discussions followed with a question asking how we are increasing our membership. Response given that we are supporting efforts with domestic violence awareness and support and that is of appeal to younger adults. Our website offers many resources that should appeal. A concern was raised about our lack of children's ministry in many dioceses. It was pointed out that we have many children supported through GFS funding, but they are rarely seen as "GFS" (or Kidsplus+ /Kidzlink). Another concern was to have resources that highlighted the motto, prayer and that we should promote these to enable that sense of belonging. Some spoke of it being hard to come into a parish with an "outside" organisation when parishes wanted to have only their group, although they will often accept our funding. Agreed to discuss further at the next symposium.

Suzanne moved the report and Sandra seconded. Carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ann Edwards spoke to the report, her first as Treasurer. An audited report will be presented every two years (at change of President).

The lack of travel due to COVID and meeting via Zoom has seen a reduced number of transactions. Many dioceses pay the fees well after the due date and it would be appreciated if these could be paid on time. Also, to let the Treasurer know of any credits to the account, often they are difficult to know who and why they are paid into the account.

Budget notes:

- Interest remains very low
- Donations are still being received into Kathleen Bright Parker Fund
- New break up of outreach projects – split into PNG, Melanesia and a new one "Outback outreach" (in anticipation of the NT project going ahead one day).
- Travel is much less due to Covid and use of Zoom
- Marketing is an area of renewed interest (see motions later in meeting)
- Gifts are given as we rarely need to pay guest speakers etc
- Insurance is a major expense although we had anticipated a larger increase
- Audit to be done every 2 years (should see a saving)
- Note that these amounts are suggested, we may not spend all the amounts
- Although it looks as if we are in excess of spending, we have funds already and don't need to have all as income.

Question regarding us paying GST – since we are under the \$75,000 ceiling. Will look into this. Donations to Solomons and Sri Lanka (World project) are in fact expenses not income (see Profit and Loss)

Ann moved the report and Budget for 2022, seconded by Jan McNamara. Carried.

### **Diocesan Reports**

Ballarat: gave a huge list of items knitted and made by members to be donated amongst the community (eg 91 rugs, 7 quilts, 200 beanies, 102 prem baby beanies, 140 twiddle muffs) a busy ministry and attracted 7 new members during the year.

Brisbane: Able to meet and have some outreach events, travelled to Toowoomba for weekend together in study and with Toowoomba folk. Gave to many parishes for children's events, sponsored projects within diocese and to Zephyr (looking after needs of children relocated to new schools through domestic violence trauma)

Rockhampton: concern about reducing numbers and no children's ministry groups, will be asked for vision and purpose in coming year when meeting with new Bishop.

Melbourne: members limited to zoom meetings through covid restrictions, reluctantly farewelled Leanne Kapetanovski from her roles after 20 years as secretary and later treasurer, still in discussion with the diocese around the Edith Head Hall (once GFS hostel) and this has impacted their capacity for parish support.

Newcastle: difficult to not be able to meet in person, some members - well remembered for their contribution nationally, are now in nursing homes.

North Queensland (Kidzlink): covid restrictions impacted their Mainly Music programs. Have a strong relationship with AMUA, went to Torres St (Murray Island) and have successfully rewritten the old red book to re-use with members there (and will give a variation to use with Solomon Islands in future).

Perth: excited to see a property finally purchased to use for their new GFS Centre. Is in Swan Valley and will house many different projects eg café, open spaces, allow to raise profile of GFS. No children's groups but a holiday club has been continued with great success.

South Australia: very restricted by covid for meeting, have had 2 meetings with some new people attending, and will discuss the future of their group in the coming year.

Sydney: have finally had 2 meetings in person due to lockdowns imposed by Covid. Prayer meetings by zoom were successful, changes on the board – new President (Archbishop) and his wife now as the Patron, Beecroft "Treasure" in recognition of work by Dawn Ferguson, Tania Brown recognized as volunteer of year nominee. Using Facebook weekly to inspire and inform, along with newsletters. Still in need of a chairman and treasurer.

Tasmania: able to meet most times but had to cancel World Day of Prayer meeting due to a lockdown (first in the year). Julie Somerville to retire as Chairman, Barbara Phillips to be new Chairman. Betty Dean had handed on the role of leader of Townsend group to Barbara after reaching her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Less support can be given financially but did manage to support worker at University.

### **Outreach Reports:**

Melanesia: Have continued through Covid, have a change of leadership along with change in MU, still to learn of new person. Have had contact from a leader in Vanuatu (also part of Melanesia GFS).

Prayers needed for new coordinator, establishing own organisation, and for country after the riots as a result of unrest and burning of buildings.

PNG: difficult with travelling, only 4% have been vaccinated, need for their own structure is also reflection of difficulties within Anglican church,

Looking to develop a program "Keep them Safe" that will encompass hand washing, hygiene principles and include information around vaccinations including the Covid vaccinations. (This can be an opportunity to also engage with Australian young adults as a worthwhile project to support)

**Diocesan reports and Outreach reports were presented.**

## **General Business:**

1. **National Redress Scheme:** working with Brisbane and Perth dioceses on this before we can join the ARNRSL scheme.
2. **World Council:** successfully joined with Zoom for the world council meeting in 2021, world council deposits were returned to participants who had intended going to the 2020 world council. New world project is to support GFS Cameroon's project to establish a program for girls.
3. **Motions:**
  - a. **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 moved, Seconded by Sandra Kjellgren

Roslyn shared her idea that had arisen through the break out discussion group at our final Symposium featuring Orange Day. Suggestion to have two trusted women's groups supporting the information to help those experiencing domestic violence. Discussion around the type of information to be included (nationally available information or local) printing of many different local information sheets, use toilet doors as these present a private area for using information and gathering phone numbers etc, could also go to noticeboards. Seek permission and interest from Bishops and Archbishops to support the program. Use of logo – correct one for MU is "AMUA (Anglican Mothers Union Australia) and GFS (should it contain 'formerly Girls Friendly Society') Shown the poster that is mandated to be available in Newcastle diocese.

Motion was carried.

- b. **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."* Moved by Suzanne Claire and seconded by Nicole Baldwin.

Discussion around the ease of providing the supportive statement and its relevance for now. An offer of a template that could be used to make it easier was given and will be included. Considered worthwhile to allow Parish Priest to gain understanding of roles of parishioners.

Motion was Carried

- c. **Motion 3:** that Clause 5.11 be added as follows *“The National Executive will be commissioned at the end of each AGM”*

Moved by Val Gribble and seconded by Noeleen Stewart This was just a motion to separate the previous clause and include as a separate section since it was unrelated to previous part.

Motion was carried.

**Any Other Business:** nil

**Elections:**

All positions were declared vacant.

Reverend Sandra Kjellgren was appointed for a further year in the role of Chaplain.

Nominations received:

**President:** Suzanne Claire

**Vice President:** Noeleen Stewart

**Treasurer:** Reverend Ann Edwards

**Secretary:** Julie Somerville

**General Members:** Chris Rooney, Val Gribble, Bronwyn Barber, Gail Orchard

Since only these nominations were received for the positions as above, all were duly declared elected to those positions.

It was noted that Reverend Nicole Baldwin was not seeking re-election. She was warmly thanked for her invaluable contribution to the executive and wished well in her coming year that will see her moving to a new and larger parish.

**Motion 4:**

*“That for the 2023 National Executive, the number of general members of National Executive be up to 6 so as to include the position of Junior Delegate for the 2023 World Council meeting.”*

Moved by Val Gribble, seconded by Jan McNamara.

Motion was carried.

At this point, 4 break out rooms were offered with the options to join in for

1. Meditation (led by Reverend Nicole Baldwin)
2. Prayer (led by Chris Rooney)
3. Spiritual Development (Led by Reverend Sandra Kjellgren)
4. Craft (led by Bronwyn Barber)

Following the breakout groups, a service for Commissioning the new National Executive was held led by the Chaplain.

The meeting ended with Suzanne outlining some plans for the coming year, including more Symposiums, continuing the Remote Op Shop project and the next Executive meeting.

Meeting ended at 2.45 pm (Queensland time).





## President's Report for 2022

Thank you so much to all members in Australia and our National Executive who have been so wonderful during 2022 in supporting the ministry of GFS Australia and worldwide. GFS celebrated 140 years of continuous service this year in two dioceses: GFS Melbourne and GFS Southern Queensland (Brisbane). The amazing ministry of two GFS groups were commemorated with 60 years at St Alfred's (Melbourne) and 30 years in Bundaberg (Brisbane). Congratulations to those Leaders and members. Thank you to all our supporters because then we can continue our many GFS ministries in the Anglican Dioceses where we have groups and members! I trust that our members, Priests, and Bishops have had a joyous and Holy Christmas and I wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

During 2022, four Australian Newsletters, the GFS Australia Inc website, and our GFS Facebook page, have reported on the ministries of many GFS members and in Dioceses in Australia, these included: Kids Plus groups; Kids Link 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, with all those articles and photographs.

The Remote Op Shops project continued so many clothes and useful items were posted to very remote indigenous communities. This project promoted two themes in support of our World President's themes: to assist women and children in remote communities who will be affected by climate change. Secondly, the Op Shop Project reduces land fill. Many very large Australia Post satchels with good quality clothes and other household items were sent by Tasmania, Melbourne, Ballarat, Perth, and Brisbane members. Thanks for a job well done and kind acknowledgements have been posted on the Remote Op Shop Facebook page.

My four themes for my Presidency, related to proclaiming the Word of God with joy and confidence. So, our National Zoom Meeting in April 2022, encouraged members to show a special item that gave them joy in the memory of their mother. We were delighted to hear from Mrs. Jeanne Withernage (President of Sri Lanka) about her mother who was a wonderful GFS supporter. We also had great Christian presentation by led by Rev'd Sandra Kjellgren, Chaplain, about amazing women of the Bible.

The Symposium in June 2022 focused on current membership groups and formats that are successful for GFS in Australia. Thank you to Sydney, Townsville, and Brisbane members for their contributions. In August GFS Australia celebrated Father's Day and father figures. Mr. Jonathan Sargent, our guest speaker told us about inter-generational and family approaches to ministry in the Anglican Church in South- East Queensland, and how to help parents in Christian modelling and education of their children. We plan to incorporate our new insights for our future planning for GFS during the AGM in January 2023.

GFS Australia was delighted to share the World Day of Prayer from Sri Lanka's President Ms Jeanne Withanage with the leadership of our Chaplain Rev'd Sandra Kjellgren. We gain a wonderful insight to the ministries in Sri Lanka and appreciate our world-wide ministry. We know that Jeanne will be missing her husband, Lal, very much at this Christmas time and we are praying for Jeanne and her family.

An Australian Project, the Soap for Hope project was planned by Lay Canon Val Gribble, Rev'd Cheryl Selvage and Rev'd Sue Wilson. The aims included to assist GFS in PNG with washing hands with our world-wide Covid pandemic. Soap for Hope project has been generously supported with donations of money for soap and soap bags (to promote easy carrying and use in a tropical climate). Thank you to Lay Canon Val Gribble for flying up to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, to present the programme to PNG Leaders, with her suitcase full of soap bags (made with crochet or stockings), and face masks. Thank you for all your generous donations, which have been passed onto the three Dioceses in PNG and gratefully received.

Several members will attend the GFS World Council in South Africa. We are especially pleased to have chosen Ms Hannah de Soysa as our new Junior Delegate who will be commissioned during our National Annual meeting in January 2023. She leads a GFS group and a holiday programme in GFS Melbourne. Hannah gives a wonderful account of her current and past ministries with girls and university students and looks forward to attending the World Council. The World Council will be a wonderful opportunity to further the world-wide qualities of GFS and promote the gospel of Jesus Christ among our member countries. Thank you to Val Gribble for her wonderful ministry as GFS World Vice President.

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 so thank you for all your considerations. Executive Members attended a ARNRSL (Anglican Response to National Redress Scheme) meeting in August 2022, which was helpful and informative. GFS Australia has started the process of Registration with ARNRSL on the government's PRODA website. So, we are further forward in our registration as a member of ARNRSL and the process will continue.

The Australian Annual Meeting, for January 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> 2023 will be held in Brisbane. We are excited to once again be meeting in person after so many Zoom only meetings. During our time we will be holding important discussion sessions lead by Rev'd Jan Crombie to sharpen our GFS vision and explore how to share this with the wider Anglican community. We have invited Bishop John Roundhill, to share about GFS's place in the Anglican communion. Dean Peter Catt of St John's Cathedral, Brisbane, will commission our new Executive, so we look forward to another wonderful and productive year with our many GFS ministries.

**Suzanne Claire, GFS Australia President**

## Ballarat:

**Chairman: Mrs Wendy Veal**  
**Secretary: Mrs Nathalie Stevens**  
**Treasurer: Mrs Helen Farnell**

**Chaplain: Fr Chris Keast**

On 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 Ballarat Diocese celebrated their 140th anniversary-140 years of continuous membership. We remember and honour those who contributed so much over this time. We continue to carry out our Motto To bear one another's burdens" and this year have supported the following projects-

- "Soap for hope" project in PNG to help stop the spread of Covid-19 by supplying pantyhose, tape, ribbons, and a donation to buy materials to make masks.
- "Remote op shop project" sending twelve 5 and 10 kilo packs of good second clothes to N.T.
- "World project in Cameroon with a financial donation to help girls gain life skills and education to enable them to get employment to keep them from crime and prostitution.
- "Lismore Anglican Church" flood victims-posted four large striped bags full of handmade rugs, children's rugs, woollen beanies, cotton bags, bought fleece rugs and tea towels.
- "Mission to Seafarer's" in Melbourne and Portland-supplying over 150 hand knitted warm woollen beanies, playing cards and stamps.
- "Anglicare and Uniting outreach" many bags of clothing, bedding, toiletries, warm rugs, beanies and scarves, women's sanitary products and groceries. Many items to Wrisc, Berry Street, Eureka Mum's.
- "School trauma departments" comfort squares, muffs, bears, toilet bags, toiletries, and toys.
- "Hospital special care nurseries and gift shop-baby and prem baby clothes and rugs. - "Residential care clients-warm, colourful knitted and crocheted rugs, twiddle muffs and capes.
- "Lid's for Kid's-collecting bottle tops (2 and 4) and bread tags.

Financial donations have been made to-World project, ABM East coast flood appeal and the Ukraine appeal, REDS, Korus Connect, "Bishops" Anglicare Appeal, Act for Peace, small change collection for 'Very Special Kid's" and "Cop's and Kid's.

Four business meetings were held during the year with our annual meeting held in February.

### TOWNSEND MEETINGS

MARCH-Day at the Begonias with guest speaker and gardener Wayne Waiters. We toured the Begonia house, learned how to look after begonias and had afternoon tea in the sunshine.

MAY-My Aged care speaker Fay gave a very informative and amusing talk. AUGUST-Leading Senior Constable Larinda Klein spoke about "Domestic Violence". October-Alex Banks-Feminist, theologian and glass artist. An amazing presentation.

NOVEMBER-Christmas end of year luncheon held at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. Boxed lunches, Christmas cake, bon bons, gifts, entertainment, Christmas message from Chaplain Fr. Chris Keast, special effort for Bishop's Anglicare Appeal prizes drawn. Presentation to two new members.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE-held on St. Michael and All Angels Day 29th.September in St. John's Church Soldiers Hill. Service adapted from service arranged by GFS SRI LANKA. Celebrant Bishop Garry Weatherill (o`ur President) assisted by Chaplain Fr. Chris Keast. Honorary member Mr. John Stuchbery served. Members participated reading the first and second readings, the Psalm, and intercessory prayers. Organist Howard Terrill. Following the service, a luncheon was held in the Parish centre to celebrate our 140th.Anniversary. 140 years of continuous ministry in our Diocese. A cake made by Tina Troughton (former GFS member and daughter of member Noelene) was cut by our oldest member Mrs. Yvonne Bown (100 years). There was a display of historical items, albums, and past uniforms.

Our diocese was represented at the World Day of Prayer symposium in October and at other zoom meetings held in June and August.

Orange days have been observed.

Four members attended Melbourne's 140th.and Blackburn's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

It is our intention to send two members Wendy Veal and Valda Tregenza to Brisbane for the National AGM from 6th. -8th.January.

Many thanks to members, their relatives, friends, and parishioners who continually supply many items made with love and care for those who are less fortunate.

Sincere thanks to members who sort and deliver these items. We provide pastoral care and a shoulder and listening ear to each other and to those in our care remembering our members who are in Nursing homes or unwell at home. Our sincere thanks to our Chaplain Fr. Chris for his guidance and support. May we walk in Faith and Hope into the future.

**Nathalie Stevens SECRETARY.**



*140<sup>th</sup>  
Celebration cake  
cutting by Mrs  
Yvonne Bown.*



*Members gathered for the World Day of Prayer and 140<sup>th</sup> Celebrations at St John's Church Soldiers Hill.*



## **Southern Queensland (Brisbane):**

**Chairman: Lesley Briggs**

**Chaplain: Reverend Cheryl Selvage**

**Secretary: Margaret Humphrey/ Minutes Secretary: Lesley Gee**

**Treasurer: Bronwyn Barber**

### Highs:

- 2020 New Constitution for GFS Brisbane was adopted at the AGM after a long process, and after having a clause inserted that will safeguard our money if GFS in Brisbane ceases to function, so that the ministry continues with the diocese as Trustees of our money.
- 2021 and 2022 AGMs in March were able to be held face to face again after Covid restrictions were lifted.
- Diocesan Projects supported: 2020 - Angel Tree Project, 2021 – Zephyr Education and 2022 – Supporting Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Fund-Raising effort to build a Youth Homeless Facility.
- Reunion/Personal Development Weekend in October 2021 in Toowoomba.
- Becoming guarantors for GFS Australia, along with Perth GFS, for the National Redress Scheme.
- The Rev’d Canon Cheryl Selvage being appointed as our GFS Chaplain and The Rev’d Kaye Pitman appointed as Chaplain Emeritus in 2021.
- Being asked by the Domestic and Family Violence Diocesan Committee in 2022 to support a Project Officer’s wages for 1 day a week. This we have done, so now as a stakeholder we have someone from GFS Brisbane on their Committee.
- The Grants program to parish and agencies. We have 2 grants, one for parishes with an ongoing Children’s/Youth Ministry with a grant for up to \$500, and the other a ‘One Off’ grant of up to \$1500 for a ‘special’ event such as a holiday program, camp, Christmas event etc.

### Lows:

- The Covid 19 virus curtailing most of our activities in 2020 but we did become proficient in Zoom meetings and online decision making via email.
- Archbishop Phillip Aspinall retiring. He has been a vocal supporter of GFS Brisbane and always thanking us for what we do in the Diocese.
- Falling GFS Membership.

### Future Plans:

- Proceed with developing Policies and Procedure to supplement our new Constitution, some are in place while others are still being worked on.
- To continue to support parishes to provide Children’s/Youth Ministry by having Grants available for them to access each year.
- To continue to give two Bursaries each year to students at St. Francis

Theological College, who have a passion for Children’s/Youth Ministry.

- To continue to support a Chaplain at the Children's Hospital by paying her wage for 1 day per week.
- To support the Domestic Violence Project Officer for the next three years, then review depending on the Dioceses support.
- Continue to support GFS World Projects.

## Yours in His Service

### Lesley Briggs – Chairman



*Presentation of Life Membership to Canon Reverend Cheryl Selvage (Chaplain) with Bishop Roundhill and Chairman, Mrs Lesley Briggs at the 140<sup>th</sup> Celebrations and World Day of Prayer service*

*Cutting the 140<sup>th</sup> Birthday Cake for GFS Brisbane – Lesley Briggs, Lesley Gee and Ann Daddow*



## **Melbourne:**

**Chairman: Debra Wadeson**

**Secretary: Val Murcutt**

**Treasurer: Philip Wadeson**

### **Introduction**

Underlying this report is a strong sense of optimism for a revival of the development of Parish Support Packages. We are committed to continue God's work with the valuable resources and support of devoted members. Thanks be to God!

This year we offer further thanks to God for 140 years of continuous GFS ministry in this Diocese. To commemorate this occasion and the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of GFS at St. Alfred's Blackburn North, a joint celebration was held on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2022.

### **Annual Highlights**

**GFS Australia Inc.:** During 2022 we continued via zoom to attend various National meetings; the AGM in January and Symposia every few months throughout the rest of the year.

**Melbourne AGM:** It was exciting this year to meet in person after the remoteness, but helpful online facility of Zoom. Our secretary, Val Murcutt and treasurer, Philip Wadeson agreed to serve in these important roles for a further twelve months.

**Edith Head Hall:** Our negotiations with the Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation (MATC) concerning the ownership and future use of our property are making some slow progress. However, there now seems to be recognition that GFS Melbourne Inc. holds an equitable interest in the property and fair recompence is appropriate. Until this matter is resolved, GFS Melbourne is still unable to offer further Parish Support Packages for Children's Ministry Workers. We remain optimistic that in 2023 the much-valued packages will once again be available.

**Parish Support Packages:** Since 2015, 20 parishes across the Diocese have employed Children's Ministry Workers (CMWs), assisted by funding from GFS/KidsPlus+ Support Packages, totaling in excess of \$520,000. We give thanks to God for sufficient finances to maintain the existing grants, while future support packages are on hold. Our Liaison Officer, Helen Petering, continues to manage and provide valuable support to the Parishes we are funding.

**GFS Branch:** St Alfred's Blackburn North – This group of both primary and secondary girls continues to be a vital, expanding ministry within the Parish. Weekly themed and bible-based programs are developed by the leaders to enhance the girls' knowledge and skills. This year the focus has been on Heroes and Heroines of the Faith – Jesus being the Super Hero. The branch members also donated items in support of the NT Remote Op. Shop Project.

**Big Combined Birthday Party:** Over 150 people enjoyed good food, lively carnival games,



memorabilia displays and wonderful reunions. Past and present GFS members from across Melbourne and the State of Victoria, their families, KidsPlus+ connected churches and friends reacquainted with old friends and made new ones. We were pleased to welcome GFS Australia President Suzanne Claire as our special guest.

A Thanksgiving Service was one highlight of the afternoon, in which both past and present members took part. Reverend Karen Winsemius, our own home grown, past Australian Junior Delegate, presented an encouraging message of hope for the future.

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

### Summary

As an organization we truly value the support and enthusiasm of every member. We continue to commit our work to the Lord, sure that it will succeed through faith, prayer, and commitment.

**Debra Wadeson**  
Chairman, GFS Melbourne Inc.

*Photo below: Past and present members and leaders of St Alfred's GFS Blackburn North.*





*Photo above L-R: Elizabeth Petering (current St Alfred's leader), Dot Steel (first St Alfred's GFS leader), Dedra Wadeson (GFS Melbourne Chairman) cutting the birthday cakes*

## **Central Queensland:**

### **GFS Coordinator/Secretary: (Lay) Canon Val Gribble**

2022 has been a challenging year for our members following our annual meeting early in the year. We discussed with the Bishop our declining membership and what we saw as our future. He challenged us to meet monthly for the next six months, to pray earnestly both at the meetings and privately as to our future and what we could continue to offer our diocese.

We diligently met and have been able to provide the Bishop with the statement he required at the end of the six months and also to present it to Synod.

We surveyed our membership and realised that of the 25 financial members only 13 were able to be physically active – the remaining members are either frail, in care, or live away from Rockhampton. Since that activity one of the members who has faithfully served GFS in this diocese for many, many years, died unexpectedly, and our active membership was further reduced. We also farewelled Anne Green, who was a past diocesan Chairman and well known throughout the province.

We listed what we wanted to do and compared that with what we felt able to do and realised there was now a considerable difference. This seems a simple statement, but it did require much thought and prayer as we came to grips with our abilities as ageing members. After much discussion and prayer, we prepared an interim plan for our future.

We are forming ourselves into a Townsend Group, we will meet quarterly, we will endeavour to hold various fundraising events for our projects and help with diocesan projects, we will consider visiting aged homes (but with the necessary training) and will continue our strong prayer life together. We have taken on board information and advice from Ballarat members, and this will be part of our consideration. We are all committed to continuing our membership of GFS and all that entails.

I am not continuing as Coordinator/Secretary from next year and this was known by all members as we worked through our future. We have one member considering taking on this role next year. Of course, if we do not have any Coordinator, that raises the question as to whether we can continue as a Townsend group.

Like many other dioceses, we have been active in this diocese for over a century (first branch in 1884) and believe we have offered much to the diocese in the past. Please pray for us as we enter a new era being GFS in the Anglican Church Central Queensland.

**(Canon) Val Gribble, Coordinator/Secretary.**

**Newcastle:****Coordinator: Rev'd Gail Orchard**

We have continued to hold our meetings by Zoom this year due to the age of our current members and the distances that need to be travelled. We also found that by meeting this way we can meet more regularly. Technology does present some difficulties for some of our ladies, but it seems to be the best way for now to all get together.

Our monthly Zoom meetings have enabled us to keep in touch with each other and to share any prayer points that occur. We now have 3 of our former long-term leaders (Kath Reynolds, Joan Nicholson & Heather Bedford) in Nursing Home Dementia Units which means that we have them constantly in our prayers. We also have another leader (Evelyn Turner) who is virtually housebound as well.

We were able to get together for lunch twice this year in our beautiful Lake Macquarie at one of the local clubs. This has been a good opportunity to relax and physically interact with one another. It has also been wonderful in these post Covid-19 times to know that we can still see each other.

We have had a couple of our members reach significant milestone birthdays this year with Evelyn turning 90 in November and Margaret Kenning turning 80 in the last couple of weeks. It was a joy to celebrate with them.

Nicole, Sonia, and I will be going to Brisbane for the GFS Australia Annual General Meeting again this year so look forward to catching up with everyone again.

**Gail Orchard**

## **North Queensland (trading as Kidzlink NQ):**

**Chairman: Jennifer Buckby**

**Secretary: Anne Watkins**

**Treasurer: Jenny Nolan**

**Chaplains: Rev'd Janet Story, Rev'd Dr Sharon Hayston**

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The major highlight for us has been the steps we have taken to change how we delivered our Kidzlink NQ ministry across the Diocese. This was presented at our Synod in September last year and was well received. A Leaflet setting it all out is available for you today.
- We continued to offer financial assistance through grants of \$100 to the children's ministry in various Parishes across the Diocese. (This has now changed in view of how we operate now.)
- Production of our quarterly Newsletters which are very well received continues with Editor Clare Reed.
- We are well supported by both of our Chaplains, the Rev'd. Dr Sharon Hayston and the Rev'd. Janet Story.
- Our by-monthly Prayer Leaflet continues to be produced by Mrs. Anne Watkins and this is a valuable resource to assist in our prayer life.
- Our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev'd. Dr. Keith Joseph is very supportive of all we do so that is certainly a bonus for us.
- Our excellent relationship with AMUA.
- Our continuing efforts to begin a Mainly Music program at the Northern Beaches Mission District in Townsville.

### **CONCERNS**

- We continue to be concerned about the number of Parishes who have not resumed a children's ministry since the beginning of Covid.
- The lack of people prepared to begin and maintain a children's ministry.

### **PLANS**

- To continue to promote our 'new' way of supporting children's ministry across the Diocese.
- To continue our plan to install a stained-glass window in the Cathedral to highlight children's ministry across the Diocese.

### **PRAYER POINTS**

- For children's ministry across the Diocese to be revitalised and grow.
- For people to come forward to accept the role of a leader in our ministry to children and their families.

**Jennifer Buckby - President**





North Queensland group



*The 2022 Team from Saint Barnabas Kidsplus, Whitsunday AS  
Lorri, Janeen, Jane, Shanelle, Sophie (member 2010-22), Janet*



### **MER (MURRAY) ISLAND, TORRES STRAIT**

*The new Office Bearers for Mer Island GFS Branch are: President: Ms Cathy Marou, Vice-President: Ms Marilyn Marou, Secretary: Ms Malita Blanco, Treasurer: Ms Carmen Noah. Their first meeting was held on Monday 15th June and chaired by Fr. John Noah.*



*Kari Morphy with Mainly Music at Saint Luke's Sarina*



## South Australia:

**Chairman – Mrs. Janice Doyle**

**Secretary – Miss Karen Fagen**

**Treasurer – Miss Chris Barber**



A small band of members continued to manage GFS in South Australia in 2022.

The team was able to meet regularly and discussed the business matters generated by GFS Australia and any local issues. We participate in project where possible and are all very involved in our local parishes in encouraging and supporting women. Chris Barber has a strong connection to MU and the Australia Church Women and reports at each of our meetings and we also try to support these organisations.

GFS in South Australia gathered former members to a luncheon in October but the

luncheon planned for May had to be cancelled for health reasons.

Two former State Chairman (June Hillier and Janet Cartridge) are keen to support GFS but both have more ill health which prevents them from being active.

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

Thank you to the National Executive for your work.

Janice Doyle - Chairman





## Sydney:

**Chairman – Jennie Young (December appointment)    Vice Chairman –  
Secretary – Lynne Gall    Treasurer – Cheryl Buchanan (Acting)**

### Highlights

- **AGM** - was held via Zoom on Saturday 5th March. 17 members were in attendance. After the annual report and the budget were accepted, a proposal for the bequest to GFS Sydney from the estate of Lyn Vaak was presented. The proposal was to re-connect with Arundel House (the former GFS Hostel). It included financially assisting up to 3 residents in need with 25% of their accommodation costs to stay at Arundel House.
- **Women's Ministry Committee** have organised 2 events for the year a Winter Lunch and a Christmas Celebration. The Winter Lunch was a wonderful day of fellowship, food, friendship and fun. We sang uplifting hymns and heard about the GFS World and GFS Australia Projects and also about Mary Elizabeth Townsend's life. We heard about our own project Arundel House. There was lots of chatting, eating and reminiscing too. Our Christmas Celebration will be held in December and we hope it will be just as successful as past years.
- **Prayer meetings** – Our Monthly Prayer meetings have continued. It has been a real privilege to pray for our members and their families, our GFS groups, kids clubs and playgroup leaders
- We welcomed **Cailey Raffel as our new GFS Sydney Patron** We feel blessed that God has answered our prayers and gives us encouragement through our Archbishop's wife, who is a former GFS leader.
- **Children's Groups** are getting back to normal operation. Additional to their weekly activities; St Mary's & St Clair Anglican Church were able to hold a Holiday Club with the theme- 'Building on the Right Foundation'; Oakhurst Christ 4 Kids held a Fun Day with a Theme "Lost and Found"; and Camden GFS were also able to hold a 3 day branch camp. Our Playgroup committee was able to organise a Teddy Bear Picnic at St Mary's Church. All were successful events.
- **GFS Sydney projects** - Beecroft Street Library is nearly ready for installation. We are currently collecting suitable books and bookmarks/leaflets to fill it. Arundel House project – we have been able to financially support one resident at Arundel House for the second half of 2022. Unfortunately, the building needs immediate renovations and will be closed in 2023. We are currently searching for alternative avenues to continue to support students with their accommodation.
- **Around Sydney our quarterly Newsletter and Prayer Guide** - We have continued to produce our Newsletter and Prayer Guide each quarter. We are grateful that these publications are supported by many contributors and from messages we receive, they are appreciated by members both from Sydney and beyond.
- **Online content** - We have continued to use our GFS Sydney Facebook PAGE and Facebook GROUP to actively promote GFS. Our Website now has a new section of resources for Playgroup leaders and an online GFS Leader training workshop. We now have a new leader who was able to complete her GFS training via our online GFS Leader Training Workshop and was commissioned on 20<sup>th</sup> November.
- **A Special Visitor to Sydney** 3 members were able to visit Lady Mary Vunagi, wife of the Governor-General of the Solomon Islands and her private secretary, Elizabeth, while they were visiting Sydney in June. We enjoyed having afternoon tea together and to hear of the situation with GFS in the Solomon Islands.

➤ **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.

➤ **GFS Australia Projects** – “Remote OP Shops” and “Buy Soap, Give Hope 2022” Projects. Our members were delighted to be able to support these projects during 2022. We all feel it is important to support our neighbours in Australia and PNG and so to fulfil our motto.

➤ **GFS World Project in Cameroon** - GFS Sydney has also been able to contribute to the World Project and we are pleased to receive reports from GFS World that the project is going so well.

#### **Concerns**

- We are still looking for a new Treasurer. Although Cheryl Buchanan has been our acting Treasurer, her health issues are causing concern and we need someone else to take on the Treasurer’s role.

- We are also actively seeking a new 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**

- Our GFS branches, groups and playgroups are able to continue to meet and are able to grow.
- A new GFS Sydney Chairman - Jennie Young has been nominated as our new GFS Sydney Chairman. The process has taken some time but hopefully she will take up her new role in 2023.

*Visit to Sydney by Lady Mary Vunagi from the Solomon Islands. Mary is a supportive and keen member of GFS and her husband is now the Governor-General of the Solomon Islands.*





*Christmas lunch 2022*

*Women's ministry group meeting together in April*



*Camden Children's camp*





## Tasmania:

**Chairman/Treasurer: Barbara Phillips**

**Secretary: Sandra Fogarty**

The year started with the commissioning of Barbara Phillips as the new Diocesan Chairman. A special service was held in St James' the Apostle New Town on 27<sup>th</sup> February with the Assistant Bishop, the Rt Rev Dr Chris Jones presiding. It was a very special occasion with GFS members, friends, and family attending. I was presented with a certificate from GFS Tasmania and a very special one from the Bishop, The Rt Rev Dr Richard Condie.

Julie Somerville's 22 +years' service as Diocesan Chairman from 1999 until 2022 was acknowledged with the presentation of a certificate and gift from GFS Tasmania.



The Southern Townsend Group resumed regular bimonthly meetings in February after two years of limited face-to-face contact due to Covid. The group members are a very dedicated, faithful group of senior ladies, all aged in their 80's and 90's who were either GFS members or leaders. They jumped into the Remote Op Shops Project with great and spent a couple of afternoons sorting, folding, and packing clothing and linen. Six boxes have been forwarded on, and I'm very pleased to report that all reached their destinations safely. We were very blessed to receive a

HUGE amount of donations from the St James' Garage Sale when it finally closed its doors on 19<sup>th</sup> March. The Rector and parish members were very keen to hear about the Remote Op Shop Project and only too willing to support it.

The Townsend Group celebrated its 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August. To mark the occasion, we gathered with members and friends for lunch at the Riverfront Motel. This was not only a birthday celebration but a time to thank God for being able to gather in a social setting after the restraints of Covid.



We ended our GFS year on 19<sup>th</sup> November with a celebratory lunch where 26 members, family and friends met for a time of fellowship over a lovely meal. Anne Davis, Anne Richardson, Jean Cox and Leonie Stitz were unable to join us because of distance, and in a couple of cases, health issues, but they were forefront in our thoughts. We are thankful for the technology that allows us to keep in contact by phone and email.



Our financial position is very tight due to the holding of nearly all the money from our Lodder Bequest and Josephine Mercer Memorial Fund by the Diocesan Council for the Redress Scheme. Members are very unhappy with the amount the DC has frozen as it has meant and will continue to mean that our ministry is severely curtailed. Despite this, members voted overwhelmingly in June to send \$5000 to the National Anglican Relief and Development Fund for Ukraine. A small donation was also made to the World Project.

We were able to support the new Playgroup Ministry at St James' by funding the purchase of program material produced by GFS Sydney. The Playgroup is founded on Christian principles so the Christian focused material from Sydney was the perfect resource material.

Overall, 2022 has been a difficult year for some of our members. General health issues, falls, and the loss of one member's husband just a few weeks ago have all been situations to overcome., the power of prayer is undeniable. All our faithful group were able to gather together for the final get together for the year. I pray that 2023 will be a year of blessing for GFS in Tasmania and every other GFS/KidsPlus group.

**Barbara Phillips**

**Diocesan Chairman**

## **OUTREACH REPORT**

### **SUPPORT FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA GFS**

During the long COVID period when we were unable to visit PNG, Cheryl, Sue, and I have tried to keep in touch with what is happening in GFS in PNG. Good contact has been made with the new diocesan branch at Kokopo, New Guinea Islands and a small grant has been sent to them as a new diocese.

The Soap for Hope program was a brainchild of Cheryl, after talking with medical professionals who had visited PNG on the best way to assist in the COVID crisis and ongoing. Hand washing and mask wearing was the advice given. We thank everyone who contributed. It was a highly short-term project. As GFS Australia we funded a visit to Port Moresby by me in July. As I was accompanying my grandson's home – their first visit since beginning of 2021, it was an opportune time for me to meet with the Presidents of GFS in the three dioceses. My son kindly offered his training rooms and with Girika Sanata (POM), Vivian Jirega (POP) and Estellah (NGI) we spent a valuable 3 days together.

At the 2021 Virtual World Council, the USA challenged the role of Australia in GFS PNG and the fact that there was no provincial structure for GFS. It was an unfair challenge and resulted in PNG withdrawing their application for a short-term World Project - but did highlight the need for a provincial structure. So, we worked hard in Port Moresby on this issue and came up with a simple structure, copying the structure used in Japan, where the management of GFS in the country moves from diocese to diocese each three years. Port Moresby began this arrangement on 1.10.22 and Popondota will follow in 2025.

We also did training in promoting the use of the soap and holders (used stockings became a great soap holder as well as many that were made in Australia and there was ample money given to allow soap to be purchased in each diocese. A group of women in Rockhampton had also supplied 50 kits under the Days for Girls program. Of course, we could distribute hundreds of these but getting them to PNG is the problem. But the three leaders were trained in their use, and they are distributing them where they see the major need.

Hundreds of girls came to Popondetta for the World Day of Prayer gathering in September. Father Isaiah presented a two-day workshop on personal development and MU and Clergy Wives members joined in the service. Vivian is required to finish her Presidency next year and this is a source of concern as there are no likely candidates for the role, many who would want to do it, but without skills. This is a serious prayer point.

As GFS Australia we had advised all members that we would not be visiting again unless we were invited and unless the members advise why they need us to visit. A challenge! I already have an invitation for the team to attend next year's WDOP. But this is a difficult time for us, and we will talk about it next year.



There are funds over from the cancelled 2020 World Council (from Pat Franklin Fund and from the Travel monies refunded) to enable Girika, as Diocesan Coordinator to attend World Council.

Thank you all for your ongoing support. We have been supporting PNG GFS for over 20 years now and sometimes we do wonder whether we see much progress, but GFS is growing and now MU in Aipo Rongo diocese has made enquiries about commencing GFS in that diocese. Please keep praying and supporting.

**(Canon) Val Gribble on behalf of and with  
The Revd Canon Cheryl Selvage and The Revd Sue Wilson.**

*(pictured – relaxing in POM and Estellah with the girls )*



## OUTREACH REPORT - GFS MELANESIA



We were pleased to welcome a familiar and hardworking member of GFS in Melanesia into the role of Coordinator. Mrs Minnie Kiriau was appointed in March 2022. Since then, she has been able to visit GFS in many of the different dioceses – a not so easy task as this involves much travel by boat to these remote islands.

Sadly, we noted the passing of Minnie's husband, George in August 2021. George was a former Secretary General of the Anglican Church in Melanesia and had been quite supportive of the many MU projects, particularly the positive parenting program working alongside Minnie as she also has been instrumental in these programs. We pass on our condolences to Minnie and her family.



The work on the GFS constitution has been progressing despite the Covid situation. It is to be presented to the General Synod and to Mothers Union for their approval. It is hoped that this can soon be adopted proclaiming a new era for GFS in Melanesia.

We are hopeful of a representative attending World Council of GFS although at this stage it seems it will only be one representative to go.

During the year we were delighted to see the Prayer book produced in North Queensland for distribution to the indigenous groups there, has been shared with the Melanesian GFS members. A request had come for some materials to use, and Jennifer responded only too keenly to share their material with them. Jennifer Buckby was instrumental in organizing a shipment of books to be with the GFS. We are very grateful for their willingness to share and to cover the costs of printing and postage.

In August Mary Vunagi and her husband David, Governor General of Melanesia, visited Sydney for his much-needed operation. It was lovely that some of our Sydney GFS members could catch up for afternoon tea with Mary while her husband was recovering. Mary is a former Chairman of Provincial Mothers Union in Melanesia is very supportive of GFS with a long association with the Melanesian GFS. When Julie and I were last in Honiara Mary was very impressed with the growth of GFS and encouraging in the plans for taking GFS out to the regions. Thank you to Lynn Gall for arranging the visit and I am sure that she appreciated the contact.

**Gail Orchard and Julie Somerville**