



**ACWA**  
AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY  
WORKERS ASSOCIATION

Your partner in professional practice

**In this edition...**



**Congratulations  
to ACWA member  
Rosemary Norman-Hill**

on her appointment  
by the Australian  
Government to represent  
Australia at the 56th  
Session of the United  
Nations Commission on  
the Status of Women  
(CSW56) to be held in  
New York in February  
next year.

# Unity

december edition 2011

# Contents

Feature Article	3
A message from your National President	4
Your National representatives	5
Branch news	6
Branch events	6
Vale Ian Murray, 1942 – 2011	7
Members news	8
News from abroad	9
National Office news	10

## Contact us

PO Box 42  
Flinders Lane VIC 8009

t (03) 9654 8287  
f (03) 9654 1081

## Membership enquiries:

[membership@acwa.org.au](mailto:membership@acwa.org.au)

## Skills assessment and course approval enquiries:

[assessments@acwa.org.au](mailto:assessments@acwa.org.au)

## General enquiries:

[info@acwa.org.au](mailto:info@acwa.org.au)

## Contributions and feedback

Was there something you liked or disliked in this edition? Or perhaps you have something to include in future editions? This is your newsletter and we want it to be relevant to you. Please email your comments, suggestions and ideas to [marketing@acwa.org.au](mailto:marketing@acwa.org.au)

Contributions for the Summer 2012 edition of Unity are due on 30 January 2012 and should be emailed in a word document to [marketing@acwa.org.au](mailto:marketing@acwa.org.au)

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Australian Community Workers Association. This publication is produced to connect with members and provide general information and matters of interest within the community. No liability is accepted for any decisions or actions taken on the basis of its contents.

# Queensland member appointed to represent Australia at the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Australian Community Workers Association (ACWA) member Rosemary Norman-Hill has been appointed by the Australian Government to represent Australia at the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW56) to be held in New York in February next year.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women works to achieve equal rights for women and men by developing policy recommendations for the international community. The theme for the CSW56 is the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges.

Australian Community Workers Association President, Colleen Blunt, congratulated Ms Norman-Hill on this outstanding appointment and said she would make a valuable contribution. "Rosemary brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in issues affecting rural women." "She is currently the Director of Kirrawe Indigenous Corporation and has participated in numerous forums and conferences, which have targeted the issues affecting rural women." "Rosemary has also personally experienced the devastating effects that natural disasters have had on rural women and their families, giving her an insight into the resilience of rural communities." Ms Blunt said.



"We are proud that an ACWA member has been selected to represent Australia at this important event." Ms Blunt said

Ms Norman-Hill will be one of three Australian women who will represent Australia at the CSW56 next year.

For more information on the CSW56, visit [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm)

**CSW56** Commission on the Status of Women  
27 February - 9 March 2012

Rural women  
Empowerment  
Poverty reduction  
Rural development

## A message from your National President

In early September ACWA held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Brisbane with several new appointments being made to the National Executive Committee (NEC). The new NEC held its first meeting on 29 September with a commitment to continue the positive action and sense of purpose of the outgoing Committee (refer opposite for a full list of new committee members). Congratulations and welcome to all of these representatives, we have an exciting time ahead!

At the AGM members voted on significant constitutional changes that will allow ACWA to go forward. These changes permit the Association to introduce policy that allows members to elect people who bring specialised skills and expertise to the National Executive Committee. The constitutional changes clarify membership categories and eligibility and allow the long-awaited Membership Advisory Committee (MAC) to come to fruition. The chairperson of this committee, Ben Davison, has extensive experience working with membership-based organisations and his expertise will contribute considerably to building ACWA via membership recruitment and member benefits.

Post AGM has also seen the continuation and establishment of a number of standing committees including the Finance and Risk Management Committee chaired by the Association's new Treasurer, Ketan Kale, Membership Advisory Committee and the Education Committee chaired by long-term ACWA member Claudia Cunningham. All of these standing committees meet monthly by teleconferencing and have dedicated staff members to support them in the process. Our CEO, Lynda Ford, is present at each meeting. Our Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Jennifer Thompson, resources the Publicity Officers' Group consisting of Branch representatives.

There have been a number of changes to the profile at ACWA's National Office with several staff members moving on. Since our last Newsletter was published we welcome Jesu Jacob to the position of Assessment Officer, Jennifer Thompson to the role of Marketing and Communications Coordinator, and Sha Cordingley has been appointed to the position of Policy Officer. Welcome Jesu, Jennifer and Sha. On a recent visit to National Office I was reassured that we have a talented and stable team who are working together to ensure the future direction of ACWA. This commitment by the staff, lead by our CEO Lynda Ford, ensures a firm foundation from which to work.

Despite the pace required at this time of change within ACWA, I am mindful of the need to involve members and appeal to each of you to provide feedback to your Branch or send me an email at [president@acwa.org.au](mailto:president@acwa.org.au) at any time. This is our Association and we want to make sure it reflects the needs and vision of our members.

As we reach the end of another year I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone, members, committees and staff, for their contribution and support throughout a busy year. Allow me also to wish each and every one of you a happy, restful and relaxing festive season.

Cheers,  
Colleen Blunt  
National President



### Welcome!

If you recently joined ACWA, I warmly welcome you to your professional association. I encourage you to get in touch with your Branch Chair to find out about events for 2012 and how you can be involved. Our members are vital to the sustainability of our Association and I look forward to meeting you in the future.  
Best wishes, Colleen

# Your National representatives

## Your newly elected national representatives are...

### **National Executive Committee**

Colleen Blunt, National President

Christine van Didden, National Vice President

Roslyn Francis, National Secretary

Ketan Kale, National Treasurer

Claudia Cunningham, Chairperson, Education Committee

Ben Davison, Chairperson, Membership Advisory Committee

Alla Craigie, Delegate, Queensland / Northern Territory Branch

Darrell Meredith, Chairperson, New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory Branch

Yuanbin Wei, Chairperson, Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia Branch

### **Education Committee**

Claudia Cunningham, Chairperson

Margaret O'Brien, Committee Member

Mark Hughes, Committee Member

Sandra Woodbridge, Committee Member

Gai Hanley, Committee Member

Colleen Blunt, National President

### **Membership Advisory Committee**

Ben Davison, Chairperson

Colleen Blunt, National President

Heather Binns, Committee Member

Yohan Waththaladeniyage, Committee Member

### **Finance and Risk Management Committee**

Ketan Kale, National Treasurer and Chairperson

Colleen Blunt, National President

Christine van Didden, Committee Member

### **Publicity Officers Group**

Heather Binns, Publicity Officer

Tony Beuerman, Publicity Officer

Yohan Waththaladeniyage, Publicity Officer

## Get involved

**A number of positions on standing committees are available for Branch members to be involved with in 2012. If you are interested in finding out more information contact your Branch Chair (see page 6 for email details).**

## Branch news

All Branches held their AGMs recently and have elected new representatives, but there are some vacancies available so now is a good time for you to consider getting more involved. Contact your Branch for more details.

### Branch committee members

#### **New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory**

Darrell Meredith, Chairperson  
Elizabeth Fletcher, Vice Chairperson & Alternative NEC Delegate  
Margaret Lyon, Secretary  
Wendy Raine, Treasurer  
Tony Beuermann, Publicity Officer  
Angela Gallard, Committee Member  
Eric Trezise, Committee Member

#### **Queensland / Northern Territory**

Claudia Cunningham, Chairperson  
Rosemary Norman-Hill, Vice President  
Alla Craigie, Secretary & NEC Delegate  
Kerry Russell, Treasurer  
Christine van Didden, Assistant Treasurer & Welfare Project Officer  
Chris Clayton, Committee Member  
Colleen Blunt, Committee Member  
Kerry Clancey, Committee Member  
Heather Binns, Marketing/Communications  
Margaret O'Brien, Alternative NEC Delegate

#### **Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia**

Yuanbin Wei, Chairperson  
Clare Lincoln, Vice Chairperson  
Yohan Waththaladeniyage, Secretary & Publicity Officer  
Julie Christopher, Treasurer & Alt NEC Delegate  
Les Stewart, Committee Member  
Christine Storm, Committee Member

### New email address for your Branch

All Branches received a makeover as part of the Association's name change and rebranding process. Branches now have their own letterhead and businesses cards, as well as a direct email address:

**New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory**  
nsw.act@acwa.org.au

**Queensland / Northern Territory**  
qld.nt@acwa.org.au

**Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia**  
vic.tas.sa@acwa.org

**Western Australia**  
wa@acwa.org.au

## Branch events

### Queensland / Northern Territory WellSkills 2011 Conference



Left: Queensland / Northern Territory Branch members, and Rhee Duthie from the Gold Coast City Council, at the Branches annual WellSkills conference held in August this year. From left to right: Margaret O'Brien, Heather Binns, Alla Craigie, Chris Clayton, Kerry Clancey, Rosemary Norman-Hill, Cathy Lee, Rhee Duthie, Claudia Cunningham, and Christine van Didden.

### New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory Branch AGM



Left: New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory Branch Professional Development day and AGM August 2011. From left to right: Darrell Meredith, Margaret Lyon, Anthony Smith, Tony Beuermann, Eric Trezise, Elizabeth Fletcher, and Angela Gallard.

### Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia Branch workshop

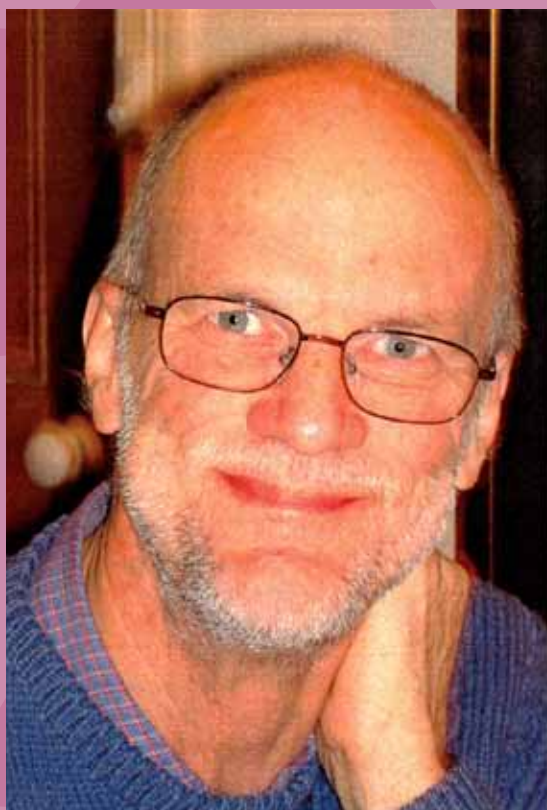


Left: Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia Branch workshop 'Working with Trauma' held 11 November in Melbourne.

## Attention Western Australian members!

Exciting developments are happening on the west coast and now is a great time for you to get involved. There are plenty of opportunities for you to actively participate and shape the future of the WA Branch. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Leonie or Karen at [wa@acwa.org.au](mailto:wa@acwa.org.au)

## Vale Ian Murray, 1942 – 2011



Ian Murray joined the Victorian Branch of the Australian Community Workers Association (then known as the Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers [AIWCW]) in 1988 and instantly took on the role of Secretary/Assistant Treasurer. From 1996 to 1998, Ian also took on the extra role of National President. Ian's dedication to AIWCW saw him retain the position of Branch Secretary until his retirement in 2010.

Ian has been a prolific writer, contributing numerous journal articles, research papers, member surveys and, in his role of Chairperson of the MAP, policy documents and position statements. He has also been a member of the Editorial Board of the *Practice Reflexions* journal.

In 1998 and under Ian's Presidency, incorporation was finally gained for AIWCW. Ian was instrumental in establishing the National Office in Melbourne and setting up systems and processes for course assessments, and assessments of qualifications for migration purposes. Ian was awarded Life Membership of AIWCW in 2001 and retired from active duty in 2010.

We recognise the extraordinary contribution that Ian made in making the Australian Community Workers Association the organisation it is today. His passion, dedication, leadership, and friendship will be greatly missed.

## Member news

### Change to the membership period

Australian Community Workers Association is pleased to advise that the membership period is changing from a calendar year to a financial year. This change is in response to member feedback that a renewal period straight after Christmas is an added financial strain as a number of household expenses occur at this time.

A renewal due from 1 July can be paid on 30 June and then be claimed back on tax from 1 July, providing an immediate financial return benefit to members.

During the transition phase, members have the option to renew for an initial 6 month period, or to renew for 18 months at a substantially discounted rate. All current members will receive renewal letters in January 2012.

For any enquiries please email [membership@acwa.org.au](mailto:membership@acwa.org.au)

## It's time to renew! Special offer for current members

**It is coming up to renewal time and we are pleased to offer our current members a sensational renewal rate of \$405 for an 18 month membership - that is a 10% discount. But if you renew by 29 February 2012, you will receive another 5% off the total cost! That gives you 18 months membership for just \$382.50\*. Plus, we will soon be revealing exceptional new benefits for you. ACWA has partnered with Member Advantage to provide you with discounts on a wide range of products and services. See the back cover for more details and look out for more news in your letter box soon.**

\*Fee based on a Full Membership category. Fees will vary on category type. Check your renewal letter in 2012 for exact information.

## News from abroad

### Institute of Welfare, UK Sally Bundock, Chair



I feel I must start this article by saying how very pleased I am to have been asked to write it. Receiving an email from Lynda Ford in June requesting that we renew the lapsed contact between our two organisations was of considerable interest to me – the earlier contact I believe being ‘before my time’.

We are both welfare organisations who have stood the test of time. ACWA has grown steadily over the years and adapted well to the changes within the world of welfare within the community. Institute of Welfare (IoW) has trod a different path in that its size has fluctuated with the changes within welfare in the UK as the years have passed. At the present time we are in a period of rebirth and regrowth and hope that our link with ACWA will help us to achieve this. We held our 66th AGM/Networking Event at the House of Commons on 12 September and our President, Professor Cary Cooper CBE, delivered a spirited and enthusiastic speech.

IoW was founded in 1945 as the professional organisation for welfare practitioners undertaking a broad range of social welfare roles within national and local government departments, voluntary welfare agencies and within the private sector, either as

employees or volunteers. Until 2004, IoW was greatly involved in welfare education and hope to be again in the future. There have been a number of changes within welfare delivery in recent years in the UK which has affected IoW. There has been a substantial loss of welfare officer posts in government departments and the growth of telephone based services (Employee Assistance Programmes).

To survive the changes and move forward IoW has needed to change and broaden its membership and activities to encompass all those engaged in people support and guidance in the very broadest sense, whether utilising welfare and/or counselling skills, to assist with health, welfare and well being issues in the workplace or a social setting.

IoW continues to promote the status of all practitioners by establishing high standards of knowledge, skills and conduct. The Institute is committed to ensuring that high levels of professionalism and competence are continually maintained by way of:

- Providing quality Continuous Professional Development events
- Rigorously maintaining Codes of Ethics and Practice to which members recommit annually.

IoW’s Board is totally focussed on improving the quality of service delivery to members on all fronts. We are also working towards being a recognised voice within the community and media on all aspects of welfare. We currently have some way to go but we are fully committed to creating a much brighter future for IoW to benefit both members and the community as a whole.

Finally, it is our hope that the link with ACWA will enable both our organisations to move forward. Exchanging ideas and knowledge from our two sides of the world can only be for the greater good. So thanks for the opportunity to write this article. We’ll be in touch!

## National Office news

### CEO Update

#### Lynda Ford, Chief Executive Officer

The community services and education sectors are experiencing unprecedented and rapid change. In addition to changes recommended to the Vocational Education and Training sector in the Productivity Commission's Research Report released in April 2011, ACWA like most organisations is trying to keep up with the plethora of structural and service delivery changes to the community services sector.

These changes are generally positive for the sector and its clients/consumers and will result in transformed sector structures, community services operations and relationships.

#### Structural reform

The Federal Government has announced four major areas of structural reform affecting the not-for-profit sector:

1. Establishing a not-for-profit regulator
2. Reforms to taxation and regulation (including harmonisation of legislation)
3. Creating a statutory definition of 'charity'
4. Reducing reporting and other red tape

#### Service delivery

2011 has seen a number of Federal Government reports and strategies released which will change practice in the areas of aged care, disability, mental health, hospitals and allied health care, employment, finance for the not-for-profit sector, housing and volunteering.

Each will, in some way, enhance individual choice but may lead also to increased commercial and transactional relationships between organisations and clients/consumers. So far these types of arrangements have not been a feature of the not-for-profit sector. What will this mean for you as a service provider and for your organisation? Will there be increased requirement for compliance despite a particular reform focus on reducing red tape?

#### Take the time to influence policy

As a sector, we have been asking for many of these changes for many years – it's just that they are happening all at once! Accessing information and understanding where each of these reforms is up to will be an ongoing challenge for human service organisations. To make keeping up to date a little easier, ACWA has created a page on its website ([www.acwa.org.au](http://www.acwa.org.au)) containing links to the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission, Treasury, Productivity Commission and others.

We know you're busy doing what you do, but take a few minutes on a regular basis to review the structural and service delivery changes occurring in Australia to ensure that your organisation is aware of the direction and potential impacts of proposed changes. Taking some time now to influence the creation of the structures you will be working in from 2012 onwards will assure a better tailored and more realistic response from decision-makers who look to you as a practitioner for guidance.

We encourage you to reflect on and have input into as many of the reviews as possible. Most of the feedback forms are very easy to complete and have questions to guide your response. You can answer some or all of the questions and your views will still be considered. Have your say – on behalf of yourself, your organisation and your clients/consumers.

#### What's ACWA up to?

ACWA has provided feedback to a number of government papers and inquiries this year and we will continue to do so where it directly affects our members, approved courses and domestic or international students who desire to work in community-services related occupations in Australia. We need your support on a regular basis to make sure that what we say is what you want us to say. We will regularly release surveys seeking your comments through the News section of our website. We look forward to seeking your views and developing our national policies as a result.

## Staff updates

We are pleased to announce the recruitment of two new positions at ACWA, Policy Officer and WA Membership Team Leader.

Sha Cordingley has been appointed to the position of Policy Officer, based in Melbourne at our National Office. Sha has extensive experience in the community services sector beginning as a youth worker and moving through to roles as CEO of Volunteering Victoria, Volunteering Australia and most recently as CEO of Rideability Victoria (formerly Riding for the Disabled). Sha has presented at conferences in Australia and internationally, written policy for all of the organisations she worked for, as well as writing books and for journals. Sha was also the Editor of Volunteering Australia's journal the *Australian Journal on Volunteering*. Sha has a Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne Uni and an Associate Diploma in Welfare Studies.

We also welcome Karen Quick from Western Australia who has been appointed as the WA Membership Team Leader. Karen will assist with membership and marketing in WA. Karen has over twenty years experience in sales and marketing and has held high level positions at 3M Australia and Employment National, as well as successfully running her own consultancy, Quick Ideas. Karen also has extensive experience dealing with local and state government departments, and building networks in the human services sector. Karen has a Bachelor of Applied Science and a Graduate Diploma in Sales and Marketing.

We welcome both Sha and Karen to ACWA.

Please visit our website to download the latest organisation chart. Go to 'About us', 'Structure and operation'.

## National Office news

### New image for ACWA

Since July the Marketing Team has been rapidly updating all documents, letters, and brochures to reflect our new name and logo. The website has also undergone some tweaks with further development expected in 2012. You can now download the full Strategic Plan 2011-2014 on the website, as well as the Annual Report 2010/2011. Go to 'About us', 'Structure and operation'.



### National Office new home



Before...



After...



### Interested in promoting ACWA?

The Publicity Officers Group identifies networking and promotion opportunities for Branches and works toward promoting membership of ACWA in a variety of ways. If you are interested in getting involved, please email your Branch.

### Assessment Team news

#### David Sharma, Assessment Coordinator

The Assessment Team has been very busy in the last quarter of 2011. Assessment Officers Leonie and Jesu have been working hard to develop and build on existing relationships with Education Providers in Regional Victoria. They gathered some interesting information about issues confronting training providers in rural areas that will aid further improvements to the course approval process.

We ran successful workshops in Queensland and Victoria to inform education providers about the changes that have occurred at National Office, in particular the new streamlined processes for course approvals. The workshops were very successful and we plan to deliver more in 2012.

The Assessment Team is also working closely with the Education Committee to draft Practice Standards for the Sector and work on developing a National Strategy for Education Provider engagement in 2012.

### Education Committee planning day

Below: Members from the Education Committee and ACWA staff at the planning session on 29 October. From left to right: Mark Hughes, Jesu Jacob, David Sharma and Claudia Cunningham.



## One sentence challenge: How do we define a community worker?

This edition we've asked Suzi Quixley to give us her definition as part of our ongoing discussion about the definition of a community worker:

*Driven by the motto 'participatory democracy in practice', community workers use a variety of tools (including negotiation, conflict resolution, empowerment and advocacy) to build inclusive communities which function to meet the human rights of all their members - particularly disadvantaged community members who might otherwise be marginalised or excluded.*

### About Suzi

For more than 30 years, Suzi's outstanding contributions to community services include practicing, thinking, writing and teaching in a range of disciplines including women, children, young people, refugees and HIV-affected groups. Suzi now spends much of her time editing/research/writing for non-government organisations in Australia and internationally, training/organisational development with community organisations in Adelaide, and undertaking professional supervision with a variety of community services industry workers.

## The Biography Program



The Biography Program is a new not-for-profit initiative that trains and supports volunteer biographers to help people in aged care write and publish their life stories.

Everybody has a story to tell and The Biography Program enables the lived experiences of older people in nursing homes to be known, affirmed, valued and celebrated.

The Biography Program provides free training and ongoing support to volunteers, preparing them for their new role.

[www.thebiographyprogram.wordpress.com](http://www.thebiographyprogram.wordpress.com)



*Coming soon!*



## ACWA MEMBER BENEFITS PROGRAM

ACWA has recently formed a partnership with Member Advantage, a leading provider of member benefit programs. As a valued member, you will soon be able to enjoy exclusive discounts on a range of lifestyle, travel, shopping & financial services all year round!



For more information, contact Member Advantage on **1300 853 352** | [info@memberadvantage.com.au](mailto:info@memberadvantage.com.au)