



**Karen McKeown**

**President ALGWA NSW**

ALGWA celebrates 60 years of advocacy for women in Local Government in 2011 – Join us for a very special Conference in Blacktown May 26-28.

IWD 2011 celebrates 100 years!

ALGWA NSW encourages members to support all our colleagues who are rebuilding their homes and their lives following Australia's devastating floods and cyclones.

When women support each other, women win.



# 2011- 60th Anniversary of Australian Local Government Women's Association –ALGWA

## ALGWA NSW Newsletter

ISSUE 24

MARCH/APRIL 2011

**Australian Local Government**

**Women's Association – ALGWA –**

**1951-2011**



**Strong Women Influencing Future Trends**

2011

ALGWA CONFERENCE NSW



**Mayoral Reception:**

Thursday 26 May 2011 at the AFL/Cricket Stadium, Blacktown Olympic Park

**Annual Forum:**

Thursday 26 - Saturday 28 May 2011 at the Novotel Rooty Hill

"Featuring an exceptional program with valuable networking opportunities".

"An essential part of your professional development in 2011".

Register your interest via e-mail: [swift2011@blacktown.nsw.gov.au](mailto:swift2011@blacktown.nsw.gov.au)

Hosted by Blacktown City Council

**Act Swiftly**  
26-28 MAY 2011



Celebrating 60 Years



## ALGWA Celebrates Diamond Jubilee in 2011

**Blacktown Council is hosting the ALGWA NSW Conference May 26-28 in 2011** and they are pulling out all stops to make this a very special celebration of ALGWA's 60th Anniversary.

There will be a variety of informative and inspirational speakers, facilitated workshops, "hot spots" for delegates to raise issues and a chance to see highlights of Blacktown, which is one of the most multicultural, fastest growing and dynamic metropolitan areas.

Women delegates can join a spectacular aerial group photo which will celebrate ALGWA's 60th Anniversary and the year of the Centenary of International Women's Day.

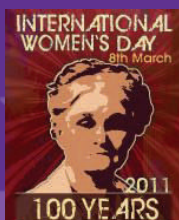
The Saturday of the Conference co-includes with the Street Parade which opens Streets Alive- the Blacktown Festival

The main Conference venue will be the Rooty Hill Novotel. Blacktown offers a variety of accommodation options.

Details and registration forms available: [swift2011@blacktown.nsw.gov.au](mailto:swift2011@blacktown.nsw.gov.au)



**International Women's Day 100 year Centenary 1911 - 2011**



**Edith Cowan MBE**

First woman to be elected to the Australian Parliament – IWD poster 2011, designed by Charmaine Chu Wen Ho, Year 11 student, James Ruse Agricultural High School.

**International Women's Day [IWD]** was declared in 1910 and the first IWD event was held in 1911. Women all around the world are celebrating this Centenary in 2011 to acknowledge women's achievements and to inspire women in the future to continue to strive for equality for women socially, economically and politically. The first International Women's Day was action by women workers demanding the right to vote and to receive equal pay and conditions.

The theme of IWD 2011 is "Celebrating 100 Years."

**IWD Exhibition to Celebrate 100 Years of women activists.**

**Parliament House Fountain Court. March 1-25 8 am –5 pm Monday-Friday**

**Curator- Jessie Street National Women's Library**

IWD events around the world



International Celebrations are being held to mark IWD Centenary. Check these, Australian and local events: [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com)

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**+ SELL RIBBONS TO HELP MIGRANT WORKERS IN INDONESIA**

The largest numbers of women migrant workers are at the lower end of the job hierarchy in domestic work and prostitution where they suffer gross human rights violations. Proceeds from ribbon sales will help protect these women.

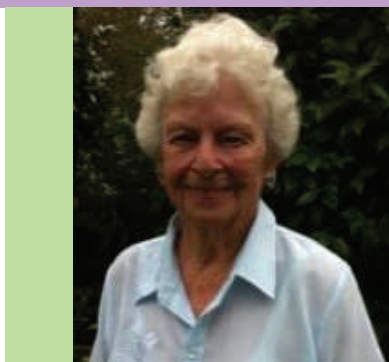
**+ ORDER RIBBONS**

## Inspiring ALGWA Women Across the Years



**Marjorie Propsting**  
ALGWA Founding Member  
Lane Cove Councillor 1949-71  
*Photo courtesy Lane Cove Library*

Marjorie Propsting was a founding member of ALGWA in 1951, the Jubilee Year of the Commonwealth of Australia. Concerned about the lack of female representation in Local Government, she encouraged other like minded women to found a group to work towards more gender equity among the decision makers for the community. She firmly believed that women brought that "necessary woman's point of view." Women were woefully underrepresented when she stood for Lane Cove Council in 1949, where she served for 22 years, including a term as mayor. Trained as a teacher, and a librarian by profession, she would undoubtedly be pleased that Lane Cove Council has honoured her by naming the Library in Greenwich after her. She would also be pleased to know that ALGWA has grown nationally, with branches now in all states and territories, including recently the Tiwi Islands. ALGWA has demonstrated political clout, influencing State and Federal policy relating to women's issues with submissions and representations. Some recent successes have been paid parental leave, paid leave for victim's of domestic violence, the 50-50 Vision Programme for Gender Equity in Local Government, and the 2010 Year of Women in Local Government. ALGWA encourages women to stand as elected representatives and offers supporting documents and advice, and has run forums in city and country to help councillors and Council staff to balance life/work demands. ALGWA organises Conferences- opportunities for women to learn from inspirational speakers and to network. ALGWA NSW offers an annual Marjorie Propsting Scholarship to honour her vision and commitment 60 years ago. The Scholarship aims to support women aspiring to excel in Local Government as councillors or staff.



**Zara Grayspence.**  
Mosman Councillor 1977-2004  
ALGWA Life Member.

Zara Grayspence became a Mosman Councillor in 1977, the first year of compulsory voting in Local Government, when they were called "Aldermen," and females were a rarity on Council. Zara sought to rectify this imbalance when her neighbours formed a committee to support her as a candidate, knowing of her reputation for hard work and believing it was important to have a woman on council, when in the previous term there had been none. Zara topped the poll. Another woman was elected the same year, but died within a short time, leaving Zara as the only woman "Alderman." Zara had retired in her early 50s from managing running her coffee shop 16 hours a day and raising her two children. She recalls that the men on council were mostly local businessmen and often saw their status as Alderman as useful. On her election, Zara received a letter inviting her to join ALGWA. With no mentor and little information available to help her step into her role on Council, she joined, and attended an ALGWA Conference in Kiama, despite opposition from the men. There, women gave her advice, such as Clover Moore, then an Alderman on South Sydney Council, to stay on her feet and keep talking over the men who rudely heckled and did not listen to her in Council. Another suggested she attend Toastmistresses to help her speak confidently. Support from other women through ALGWA made Zara a great protagonist. She became NSW President in 1981 and was honoured as a Life Member before her retirement from Council after 27 years. In the Year of Women in Local Government 2010, Zara was invited to speak at Mosman Council's International Women's Day event, as a shining example to women aspiring to enter Local Government. Zara urged women to follow her lead and put their hands up to represent their community, when women are still under represented in many councils.



**Cr. Julie Griffiths,**  
Blacktown City Councillor  
City Vice President ALGWA NSW

Julie Griffiths has been a Councillor in Blacktown since 2008 and an executive member of ALGWA even longer. As a professional Union representative, Julie has long been an advocate for women's rights in the workplace and involved in campaigns for equal pay and opportunities and for affordable quality childcare. Julie's involvement in Local Government began when she was employed by Parramatta Council in the Records Department as a Legal Documents Officer 1991-96, during which time she was elected as staff representative. In 1991 she was appointed a metropolitan organiser in Metropolitan Employees Union- MEU- representing Local Government employees in seven of the largest councils in Metropolitan Sydney. In 1998 Julie was appointed as MEU Child care organiser and Women's Officer and held the position of Director of Women's Issues, Child Care, Youth and Aged Care for the Union. Julie has shown leadership and proactive assistance to women in Local Government to participate in Branch Committees of Management to ensure women play a part in the decision making process of the Union. She has been part of a team developing a Mentoring programme for women to arrive and thrive in a political environment. Recently, Julie was one of the leaders in the successful ALGWA Paid Parental Leave Campaign. One of her passions is soccer, playing and coaching at an elite level. Presently, she is involved in organising the ALGWA NSW Conference in Blacktown and urges all women to attend in this the 60th Anniversary of the founding of ALGWA.

Join ALGWA and support the peak body for women who are in any way interested or involved in Local Government. Councils can join ALGWA NSW for \$200 pa and benefit from discounts for Conferences, forums and courses. 45 NSW Councils have joined so far!

[www.algwa.org.au](http://www.algwa.org.au)



## Australian Women Legends Honoured by Australia Post in 2011

**Eva Cox, Anne Summers, Elizabeth Evatt and Germaine Greer** were presented with the Australia Post Australian Legends Award for 2011, in recognition of their ongoing work for women's rights.

**Eva Cox** arrived in Australia as a Jewish refugee from the holocaust. Just some of the activism in which she has been involved include the Women's Electoral Lobby, Wikked, the NSW Council for Social Services and federal childcare policies.

**Anne Summers**, a journalist and author, co-founded one of the first women's refuges in Australia.

Of this award, she said that she "hoped it will make people realise that the fight for women's equality is not over."

**Elizabeth Evatt** has had a most distinguished career. She was the first Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia

and the first woman to preside in an Australian Federal Court. Among her many prominent and important appointments nationally and internationally were Deputy President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission and a member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

**Germaine Greer**, academic and author, now an expatriate, changed the lives of countless women internationally, with her ground breaking book "The Female Eunuch" first published in 1970 and still relevant today.

Australia Post CEO Ahmed Fahour, said "These passionate individuals have worked tirelessly to champion the rights of women and they continue to campaign against obstacles that women still face today. These stamps will be a permanent reminder of the indelible mark that these four outstanding women have made in Australian society through the advancement of gender equality."

**"I hope that it will increase people's knowledge and understanding of women's fight for equality over the years. I think those of us involved in it would like to feel that we represent a whole larger group of women who have been in the same battle."**

*Elizabeth Evatt's response to her award.*

### Australia Day Stamps Legend Award 2011

recognises Australian feminists who are remarkable women, known for proactively advancing gender equality.

Two of these Legends, Eva Cox and Anne Summers, were guest speakers at the ALGWA National Conference in Ryde in November 2010.

**"Achieving gender equality requires our elected political representatives to drive and champion the policy reforms that are need to build a stronger, more productive and fairer Australia."**

**Australian Human Rights Commission.**

**The 50-50 Vision for Gender Equity in Local Government Awards** were presented to some of 128 participating councils at the ALGWA National Conference in Ryde in November 2010.

Councils are encouraged to join this innovative programme which was launched in 2010 the Year of Women in Local Government.

It is a 10 year programme with three levels which are achieved sequentially:

**Bronze, Silver and Gold.**

Silver Awards will be presented in Canberra, Old Parliament House on June 19 at the ALGWA 60 Year Anniversary Dinner.

Participating Councils will be recognised for their commitment to Gender equity for employees and for elected representatives.

Details on website: [www.50-50vision.com.au](http://www.50-50vision.com.au)



**ourcommunity.com.au**

Building Stronger Communities through Stronger Community Organisations

**Women & the Order of Australia** Business leader and social enterprise pioneer Carol Schwartz AM has launched a high-profile campaign to boost the number of women recognised through the Australia honours system. Ms Schwartz launched a new guide designed to help increase the number of women receiving awards in the Order of Australia.

Advancing Women: Women & the Order of Australia can be downloaded at [www.wlia.com.au](http://www.wlia.com.au) or at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/honours](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/honours)

**The Women's World Summit Foundation** – Calls for nominations for the 2011 special edition of the prize for women's creativity in rural life—as WWSF celebrates its 20th anniversary of honouring creative and courageous women and women's organisations around the world, who are working to improve the quality of life in rural communities.

Since inception of the prize programme in 1994, 365 Laureates have so far been awarded for their commitment and creativity with a cash donation of \$US1000 each.

Nominations Close: March 31, 2011

Profiles of Laureates and more information on their website: [www.woman.ch/nomination-guidelines](http://www.woman.ch/nomination-guidelines)



**Lara Giddings - Congratulations on becoming Tasmania's first female Premier. She was the youngest female Australian parliamentarian at the age of 23 in 1996.**

## Women Leaders Still Stereotyped in Media-

As with many women politicians, Lara Giddings has had to bear the brunt of clearly sexist remarks and attitudes. On her appointment as Premier of Tasmania in January 2011, a female reporter asked this question at the Premier's first press conference. "As a single woman taking on the role, are you concerned perhaps that you're giving up the potential to have a family? Is it compatible?"

And *The Australian* carried the headline "Leftist Lara Giddings Still Looking for Mr. Right."

Lara Giddings had to defend herself many times as a woman taking on the role as head of her state and answer many personal questions which would be highly unlikely to be asked of a male Premier.

Lara Giddings was Treasurer and Attorney General, with fifteen years experience as a parliamentarian. Her focus was undoubtedly, as she stated, on critical matters in her state, such as unemployment and the state budget and economic problems. Where were the serious questions?

Consider the media coverage during the devastating floods in Queensland when the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard and the Queensland Premier Anna Bligh were daily in the news as they responded to the crisis. A number of references were made in the media comparing Gillard unfavourably with Bligh, comparing their dress and hairstyles as an indicator of their ability to cope with the situation.

**Anne Summers**, in an article in the Sydney Morning Herald, headed "Hairstyles the Least of Leaders Worries", writes "...even as the numbers of women assuming positions of political leadership grow, so does the trivialisation and the double standard. You might have thought that with a female Governor General and Governor in NSW, a female Prime Minister, three female High Court Judges, a female Deputy Opposition leader and now, three female Premiers, we might have reached sufficient critical mass for clothes and marital status not to matter. Apparently not."

"It is one of the great paradoxes of current Australian society that as the numbers of women in public life grow, we seem to become more anxious about whether they are "real" women; whether they are married and have children."

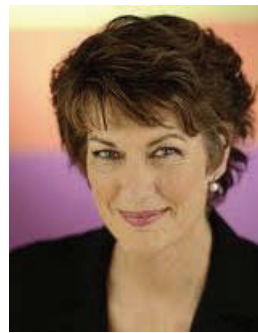


**Geraldine Doogue, well known host of ABC's Compass, will join the National Rural Women's Coalition for a very special International Women's Day event on March 8th 2011.**

**This will be a Webinar, that is, a live interactive webcast, which will include all women living in rural and remote area of Australia. It will coincide with a national morning tea.**

**This National Rural Women's Coalition event is supported by local councils and shires and further information is available from their websites.**

[www.nrwc.com.au](http://www.nrwc.com.au)



**Congratulations Darriea Turley on your re-election as National President of ALGWA at the Ryde Conference in November 2010!**

**Darriea has been National President since 2008 and was previously ALGWA NSW President**

**She is a Councillor in Broken Hill.**

**Always a passionate advocate for women's rights and for women involved in Local Government, Darriea has issued a report as National ALGWA President:**

[www.algwa.org.au](http://www.algwa.org.au)

## ALGWA NSW supports Status of Women Advisory Committees

ALGWA urges women involved in Local Government to set up Status of Women Advisory Committees. The Councils which have done so already include Ryde, Gosford and Blacktown.

The example set by the City of Ryde could inspire and assist you to take the initiative to your council.

The primary role of the Status of Women Advisory Committee in Ryde is:

\* To promote the status of women in the LGA;

\* To encourage a "sense of place" for women in the LGA;

\* To foster active participation from women in the LGA to develop a centralised local networking hub;

\* To hold events and support other organised women's events by external groups throughout each year, including International Women's Day, which provides a forum for women to voice their concerns and discuss local issues.

Since its inception in late 2009, the Ryde SOWC has been actively raising issues of significance regarding women's health, safety, gender equality in Local Government, child care, arts and culture, employment and training, connecting women's networks, issues affecting women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, domestic violence, career issues and International Women's Day.

The Committee has had an instrumental role in Council's commitment to participating in the White Ribbon Day programme in saying No to violence against women, with council engaged in the process of becoming a White Ribbon Community and developing White Ribbon Day Ambassadors.



## ALGWA supports “Go Red For Women Leadership Award”

Go Red For Women is the National Heart Foundation’s programme to raise awareness of heart disease as a women’s health issue and promote healthier choices.

ALGWA supports this programme and took the opportunity of the National ALGWA Conference to ask for submissions from women involved in Local Government who had made a difference in the health of their communities. The Awards for the most outstanding efforts were presented during the Conference. Amy Johnson was the national award winner. She was acknowledged for her outstanding work as a Young Parents programme Co-ordinator, managing the Widening Circle Programme at Lachlan Shire Council in NSW Central West.

The Programme aims to improve the health and well-being of young Aboriginal parents aged 12 to 25 years and their dependent families, helping to close the gap between young parents and services.

Amy Johnson received \$1,000 for the Lachlan Shire programme and a plaque to recognise her outstanding success.



“Go Red for Women Award” National Winner **Amy Johnson** and **Hannah Baird**, National Manager of Engaging Women—National Heart Foundation, with National ALGWA President **Darriea Turley**, pictured at the presentation at the Ryde National Conference in November 2010.



**Heather Chapman** was Highly Commended.

A Community Development officer at Yarra City Council, Heather was recognised for her commitment to improving the health of her diverse Yarra community through encouraging physical activity, education and social inclusion.

Heather has been instrumental in designing and delivering a range of programme initiatives which directly contribute to building healthy heart outcomes in the community.

With her passion, personal drive and commitment, she has been able to increase the participation rates in the programme, which now has over 400 members.

**Dr. Lyn Roberts**, National Chief Executive Officer of the National Heart Foundation said, “We are pleased to have had the opportunity to collaborate with ALGWA on the Go Red For Leadership Award recognising a female champion leading successful healthy heart initiatives in Local Government.” Heart disease remains Australia’s biggest killer of women. More than 11,000 women die each year from heart disease, but the good news is that it is largely preventable. Other winners included Allison Hamblin, Maya Spannari, and Kurst Delmas.

Their stories are available at:  
[www.goredforwomen.org.au](http://www.goredforwomen.org.au)



**Cr. Anne Connon, Mayor of Mosman**, welcomed ALGWA NSW executive members to Mosman for their meeting in February 2011. Items on the agenda included organisation of the ALGWA NSW Conference in May, the 50-50 Vision Gender Equity Programme, Mentoring programmes for women and the implications of the paid parental leave on women council staff who are often part time or lower paid employees.

Also discussed was the Year of Women in Local Government 2010 and the fact that this put us on the map with immediate outcomes and how we can ensure that this long term vision for women is pursued.

This year marks 60 years of ALGWA’s representation of women in Local Government and it is the 110th anniversary of International Women’s Day. The ALGWA website has information and links to encourage all women involved or interested in Local Government to celebrate these two important events.

Send photos and news of your celebrations to our Newsletter.

Editor Denise Wilton: [deewill@zip.com.au](mailto:deewill@zip.com.au)

*Back row L-R* City Vice-President-Cr. Julie Griffiths, Cr. Jackie Greenow, Helen Cooper, Cr. Denise Wilton, NSW President Cr. Karen McKeown, Cr. Vicki Scott, National President Cr. Darriea Turley, Cr. Gabrielle O’Donnell, Cr. Jennifer Lecky.

*Front row L-R* Bev Spearpoint, Mayor Anne Connon, Cr. Fadwa Kebbe.

## ALGWA Book Corner— “The Female Eunuch” by Germaine Greer

First published in 1970, this was one of the most influential books to come out of the new wave feminism movement of this era.

It brought fame and controversy to its author, Australian Germaine Greer. It had a profound effect on women who read it and were moved to make changes in their own lives and to society. Greer postulated that women were limited by history and society, especially in their sexuality. She used humour and boldness to bridge the gap between academia and a contemporary society in which these issues were politely unspoken.

The book has been translated into eleven languages

and continues to be read and to be influential today.

Germaine Greer, Now 72, is a journalist, an author and an academic, who although she has lived in England for decades, is still sought for comments on Australia and feminism. Her often acerbic and controversial comments still make her newsworthy.

Later books include *Sex and Destiny*, *The Politics of Human Fertility*, *The Change: Women, Ageing and Menopause* and *Shakespeare’s Wife*.

She is currently professor Emeritus of Comparative Studies at the University of Warwick.



ALGWA NSW is the state's peak representative body for women who are in any way involved or interested in Local Government.

## ALGWA NSW

### Aims and Objectives

**To assist in furthering women's knowledge and understanding of the function of local government;**

**To protect and enhance the interests and rights of women in local government;**

**To take action in relation to any subject or activity of particular interest to women affecting local governing bodies and/or local government legislation;**

**To act in an advisory capacity to intending women candidates for local government elections;**

**To encourage women into professional careers in local government.**

**JOIN ALGWA—  
support our important work**

**Attend the ALGWA NSW  
Conference in Blacktown  
May 26-28 2011**

**Check our website-**

[www.algwa.org.au](http://www.algwa.org.au)

**Do you have skills to bring to the ALGWA NSW executive team and you are a financial member? Consider standing for election at the ALGWA Conference in Blacktown- May 26-28 2011**



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**Send stories and photos of your IWD activities and celebrations to your Newsletter.**  
[deewill@zip.com.au](mailto:deewill@zip.com.au) Register your event : [www.women.nsw.gov.au/events](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/events)