

**Australia Day Honours:** BPWA is delighted to announce and wholeheartedly congratulate a very special member who received deserved recognition in the recent Australia Day Honours list. Congratulations to Joan Heard, OAM from Victoria but who is well known throughout BPW nationally. Joan has held many positions in BPW and is best known as the inaugural recipient of the Jean Arnot Award at the Fremantle National Conference, 1994.

**BPWA Project Office:** Project Officer **Kate Wignell** leaves BPW in mid February to begin a business with her partner. A call for applications was distributed to BPW networks with the new Project Officer Alex Haynes being appointed. On behalf of members, BPWA Council have expressed their gratitude to Kate for all her work and assistance and wish her well in her new endeavours.

**Alex Haynes** has a wealth of skills to bring to the role of Project Officer. An architect by training, she has owned her own business consulting to a range of businesses. Alex has also been involved with a women in construction NGO, so is familiar with the processes. She has extensive experience in project management.

Administration Officer **Bonita Dowell** will be absent for a month due to surgery and our thoughts and wishes are with her. Clubs and members should continue to contact the office but your patience is sought during the upcoming month as the President and Secretary 'fill-in as temps' in between their normal work commitments during the absence of staff. A final year accounting student, **Rebecca Van Eeden** will be working part time during Bonita's absence.

Please note that the office will be manned on weekdays except Tuesdays.

**S4W Project research 'Lifelong Economic Well-being for Women' Update :** BPWA Council and S4W board of management met with OSW [Office for the Status of Women, Dept Prime Minister & Cabinet] in Canberra recently to discuss the outcomes of the first research round final report '**What Women Want**' where over 3,000 Australian women responded to identifying the priority issues. The meeting assisted in finalizing the document, which we are now investigating publishing opportunities.

The new round of research can now begin soon and the tender has been posted on appropriate sights. The focus of the next round of research will look at two of the top issues: *Affordable and Accessible Education for marginalized women and girls* and *Equal Pay for Equal Work*. Both of these issues are at the core of BPW business and we look forward to the lead role we will take in the project and the outcomes that will result in Policy Papers.

Many members have expressed the desire to be Group Leaders in the next round and they will each be contacted by the President over the coming few weeks to discuss their involvement. Any other member wishing to participate is asked to contact the office for details.

**Roundtable on Superannuation - a gender perspective** has been called by the BPWA President. CPA Australia will host the event in April which will involve key people from CPA. Independent Retirees' Joan Heard, Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward and many others. Members interested in the topic and wishing to be involved, please contact BPW Administration: [bpwaust@bpw.com.au](mailto:bpwaust@bpw.com.au)

**Delegation of business women from China:** 2004 will see a number of visits of groups of business women from China looking for a better understanding of Australia's professional women's employment status. BPWA will host a number of events and encourages those members interested in participating make contact with the office to express their interests.

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**Project Respect:** The national President Judith van Unen met with the Executive Officer to discuss way in which the two organizations can work together to support their work. *Project Respect* conducts outreach to reach the needs of the thousands of women in legal and illegal brothels, tabletop dance venues and other sex industry sites. Their services have developed in response to women's requests and suggestions, aware of the many barriers faced by women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

**BPWA Mentoring of Women's NGO's:** BPWA has been approached by two women's organisations to assist with mentoring capacity building exercises.

- **VIRWC** [Victorian Immigrant & Refugee Women's Coalition] has numerous groups of women working in home-based businesses or small groups. The BPW Victoria Co-op presents an opportunity to take these groups under their umbrella to assist with forming a co-op.
- **POSITIVE WOMEN** is a peer support and advocacy group run by women with HIV/AIDS for women with HIV/AIDS. They are a state-wide, independent service offering confidential support and information to any woman who has been diagnosed with HIV. They can also provide advice to parents, friends and family members of women with HIV/AIDS. In recognition of their special needs they provide a safe and comfortable environment that is completely confidential and address the need for accurate information that is relevant to women's experience of living with HIV.

**COSBOA:** [Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia]. BPWA is a member organisation. National President Judith vanUnen, in her capacity as a COSBOA Director, met with the Inspector General of Taxation recently to discuss priority issues for small businesses.

**Attorney General Department's Human Rights Forum:** BPWA President regularly attends these forums, this one being an opportunity to meet with the new Attorney General, The Hon Philip Ruddock MP. Agenda and discussion items covered numerous topics including *court leniency in cases of violence affecting indigenous women / international human rights / people smuggling / racial and religious vilification* and concerns regarding the governments decline to support the Optional Protocol to the *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [CEDAW]*.

**BPW SINGAPORE** joins with Global Women Inventors & Innovators Network (**GWIIN**) and Women Business Connection (**WBC**) to invite you to participate at this highly regarded initiative. The theme for the event will be: *Marketing a wealth of Women's Ideas'* Shangri-La, Singapore 5-7 May2004. There is a Call for Papers, Information on the Conference, Information on the Awards and the Draft Program available for the 2 day event. For more information please contact BPWA office.

**Superannuation –a gender perspective:** President Judith vanUnen and Project Officer Kate Wignell met with one of our Security 4 Women partners CPA women to discuss superannuation. BPWA is formulating a policy position with work being carried out by VPIP Jean Murray and Finance Committee member & IPYBPWA Dianne Charman. Early in 2004 BPWA will be facilitating a summit of interested organisations and individuals to discuss the gender perspective of superannuation.

**WASH Update:** As earlier reported, the research being undertaken is funded by WomenSpeak and the City of Melbourne, and conducted by a coalition of women's groups known as WASH [Working Against Sexual Harassment]. WASH is both a member organisation of S4W and which BPWA is a member organisation. The research report documents experiences of verbal and physical harassment and victimisation. The report highlights the significant physical, psychological, social and financial impacts of sexual harassment. The impacts include mental distress, nervous breakdown and, in most cases, the victim leaving their job. WASH is launching the report on sexual harassment that covers topics such as: the key decision-making influences, strategies used, and barriers faced by those experiencing workplace sexual harassment on International Women's Day, 1<sup>st</sup> March in Melbourne.

**VP Communication, BPWA:** The position of BPW Australia Vice President Communication remains vacant. Any member wishing to consider the role or any aspect of the post, is asked to contact the President, [president@bpw.com.au](mailto:president@bpw.com.au) or [bpwaust@bpw.com.au](mailto:bpwaust@bpw.com.au) for more information regarding the role

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