



**December 2008**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**Issue No: 93**

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**Club Meetings**

- o Second Thursday of the month (except January)
- o 6.15pm for 6.45pm
- o St Catherine's College, UWA

**Apologies**

**By 12 noon previous Monday to**  
[zontaperth@yahoo.com.au](mailto:zontaperth@yahoo.com.au)

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Penny Flett, West Australian of the Year 2009  
(photo from [www.australianoftheyear.org.au](http://www.australianoftheyear.org.au))

## 1. Penny Flett – West Australian of the Year 2009

*Carole Theobald, President*

It is not every day that a Zonta Club has the 'top WA citizen' amongst its rank and on 22 November, Club member Penny Flett was presented with the West Australian of the Year 2009 Award by the Governor, Dr Ken Michael at a special ceremony at Government House.

The Australian of the Year Awards began in 1960 and, according to the National Australia Day Council, they '*acknowledge what individuals can do to inspire national pride, enrich the lives of their fellow Australians and make this the greatest country in the world. Through these awards all Australians have the opportunity to nominate and recognise those Australians who have inspired or challenged us to participate more fully in the life of the nation to make a better and more vibrant Australia.*'

Who could embody the sentiments of the award better than Penny? I know she has inspired and challenged so many...

In her own quiet way she has been a trailblazer. In a recent article in the Post (29 November 2008), it was pointed out that she was the first woman doctor to serve in the RAAF during peace-time. "I asked if I could join a couple of times and eventually they said yes:" she said. (I wonder how many times is 'a couple' and how long was 'eventually'?).

Soon after I joined the Club, Penny became President and around the same time was also acknowledged as the Telstra Businesswoman of the Year. What inspired me was that such a 'successful' woman did not resort to traditional 'male' behaviour to succeed and was living proof that you can succeed by just being yourself. Penny is the consummate advocate – persuasive and persistent – inspirational.

Penny challenges the status quo. She is passionate about older Australians and has devoted her professional career to creating a 'life' for the aged and also those who are younger but need care. She often says that she will be old one day too (won't we all) and so it is heartening to know that there is someone out there who is making the changes that will affect all of us as we age.

Penny's passion extends beyond those living in caring environments. Through her membership of Zonta she applies it to improving the lives of many women locally, nationally and globally through our wide range of Zonta projects. Penny is an active member of our Club, being a Board member and participating in many Club events. Recently she was the Master of Ceremonies for our Australian Girls Choir event and at last month's meeting presented on the Amelia Earhart Fellowships.

On behalf of the Club, I congratulate you Penny. May you continue to inspire and challenge us, through Zonta service, to *participate more fully in the life of the nation to make a better and more vibrant Australia.*



Penny's achievements have featured in a range of newspapers  
(Post 28/11/08 shown)

## 2. Sciona Browne – Halls Creek Better Life Project



Sciona Browne – Manager, Halls Creek Better Life Project

Ever wondered what our 'commuting Zontian' Sciona Browne does in Halls Creek? The following snippet was gleaned from the November Newsletter of the Halls Creek Better Life Project...

*Sciona began working for the Wunan Foundation a year ago, as their Halls Creek Manager. Her main task was to set up hostel accommodation for young Aboriginal workers, at Halls Creek Lodge (Old Town).*

*Wunan calls this 'stepping stone' accommodation because it provides trainees and apprentices with good quality accommodation and 3 meals per day – this allows them to 'step up' to independent accommodation (their own homes) as they progress through their training and working life.*

*A new hostel, funded by the Commonwealth Government, is due to be completed next year. More recently, Sciona has taken on the role of Manager of the Halls Creek Better Life Project. The office is working flat out to help develop stronger relationships in the community and to assist organisations to deliver better outcomes. Before coming to Halls Creek, Sciona worked with a number of communities in the West Kimberley.*

## 3. Bec Christou – Inducted at November meeting



Bec Christou (left) was inducted at the November meeting by Area 3 Director, Judy Tennant.

At the November meeting the Club was pleased to welcome Rebecca Christou as a new member. Bec was inducted by Area 3 Director, Judy Tennant and presented with a Zonta rose and an information pack.

Bec is a proud member of the Australian Defence Force having served her country in the Army as a Medic both on international operations and in various locations within Australia.

Bec has been in the Army for the past 7 years and during her time has managed to represent her nation in Defence Sporting activities in the realm of track and field. The pinnacle of Bec's sporting success is highlighted by competing in the Vanuatu Round Island Relay where the Defence female team she was in, broke the record and were able to donate the winning prize money back to the children's hospital in Vanuatu.

Bec is currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Science Health and Environment course, at Murdoch University. Bec's chosen degree is indicative of her passion to help others and the environment. Bec possesses the unique qualities of being compassionate, yet firmly determined, and has the proven requisites to succeed in some of the toughest situations conceivable.

*It's great to have you aboard Bec and we hope you enjoy being a member of Zonta International – Ed.*

## 4. Kath Mazzella – Knitted Vulvas in Carnarvon



Kath Mazzella (seated front right) with a crocheted vulva

Kath Mazzella, the Zonta Area 3 Woman of Achievement 2005, was recently guest speaker at the World Rural Women's day in Carnarvon. Kath is a gynaecological cancer survivor and advocate for raising gynaecological awareness. She also has a wicked sense of humour, demonstrated in the title of her talk - "Down Under"! Kath showed some knitted vulvas that she had received from a cancer survivor in the USA and found them a great way of breaking down the barriers to getting women to start discussing this part of the anatomy. Since Kath's talk the Indigenous women want to know how to make crocheted vulvas and explore ways of including vulvas in their art work! Keep up the good work, Kath!



Sabrina Hahn (picture from [www.bqpa.wa.gov.au](http://www.bqpa.wa.gov.au))



If you bring a gift to the Christmas party for the refuge – please DON'T wrap it!

## 5. Refuge helps out with Sabrina's Open Garden

A recent newsletter from Zonta House Refuge Association describes how it helped Sabrina Hahn, one of the ABC radio 'soil sisters', by organizing Devonshire teas when she opened her own garden to the public. The Refuge arranged for Brumby's bakery to make 1,000 scones plus muffins. Over 2,500 people came to look around Sabrina's garden and more than 600 Devonshire teas were served. As a result of everyone's efforts the refuge raised about \$2000 over the two days.

At our Club's Christmas Party on 11<sup>th</sup> December, a cheque for \$1,000 will be presented to the Refuge as part of our ongoing support for this tremendous organisation. Members are encouraged to bring unwrapped presents to the party for the ladies at the refuge. The Perth Male Voice Choir will be entertaining us, so it promises to be a great evening. If any members would like to see the refuge or help with the transportation of the gifts, please contact Mary Gurgone who serves on the Management Committee of the Zonta House Refuge Association.



The Burswood on Swan Function Centre was a great venue for the breakfast.

## 6. White Ribbon Day Breakfast

Project Five-0 organised a White Ribbon Day Breakfast at the Burswood on Swan Function Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The Breakfast was attended by members of the five organizations that make up Project Five-0 (Zonta International, Soroptomists, Business and Professional Women, National Council of Women and the International Federation of University Women) as well as Guides WA and other community members. The Hon Robyn McSweeney and Hon Helen Morton were in attendance as was the International President of Soroptomist International, Margaret Lobo, who gave a short welcome address.



Di Bryant (Perth Northern Suburbs), Hon Robyn McSweeney and Dixie Marshall

The celebrity guest speaker was Channel 9 newsreader and sports commentator, Dixie Marshall, who provided an entertaining overview of some of the challenges she had to face with being in the public eye and also being a woman commentating on Aussie Rules football – a very male dominated area. Dixie shared her ups and downs and described how domestic violence had affected her own life. She reiterated to the young women present that violence in its many forms is not acceptable and the importance of removing yourself from a violent situation. All attendees received Project Five-O show bags containing information about all the women's organizations in Project Five-O.

The breakfast was very well organized and congratulations go to Di Bryant from the Zonta Club of Perth Northern Suburbs for being the Zonta representative on the committee that organized the event.



L-R: Alison Martin, D23 Governor, Judy Tennant, Area 3 Director and Hon. Robyn McSweeney, MLC, Minister for Child Protection; Community Services; Seniors and Volunteering



L-R: Kath Snashell (Perth Northern Suburbs) and the Hon. Helen Morton MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Water; Mental Health



Margaret Lobo International President of Soroptomists



Jackie Davidson, passionate physicist and Amelia Earhart Fellow.

## 7. Amelia Earhart Fellow

At the November meeting, Penny Flett formally introduced guest speaker, Jackie Davidson, Adjunct Associate Professor Physics, UWA and a former Amelia Earhart Fellowship recipient. Jackie spoke with great passion and enthusiasm about her love of physics that was triggered by the space program and the incredible journey that her career in physics has taken her.

After studying at UWA, Jackie went to the University of Chicago where, with the help of an Amelia Earhart Fellowship, she was able to complete her PhD. After graduating she became involved in experimental astrophysics at the NASA Research Centre in California. She became Project Scientist for SOFIA

(Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy). More recently Jackie has returned to Perth and to the UWA.

Jackie spoke about her perspective of the three pillars of academia: philosophy, nature and God. On behalf of members, President Carole thanked Jackie for sharing with us some of her amazing achievements and experiences during her career, but most of all sharing her passion of physics.



Dancing to the Mucky Duck Bush Band



L-R: Carole Theobald (Perth), Mary Leonard, Anastasia Maslij and Elaine Newman (Perth NS)

## 8. Mucky Duck Bush Band

When was the last time you 'Stripped the Willow'? For the uninitiated "Strip the Willow" is a very energetic traditional country dance. At the Zonta Club of Perth Northern Suburbs Christmas Party, the Mucky Duck Bush Band entertained Zontians (from Perth Northern Suburbs, Perth and Swan Hills Clubs) and friends to an evening of fun and frolics in the garden of a Zontian's home. Perth Northern Suburbs President Anastasia Maslij, presented a host of 'awards' to members before leading off the dancing. Thankfully, the band 'called' the dances, so you did not need to know the steps!

There were spot prizes for best 'bush' costume with many guests wearing Acubra-style hats, check shirts and boots. Some even wore Christmas bush hats on which corks had been replaced with small, hard Santas – not the easiest thing to dance in!

Besides enjoying the sumptuous spit roast and traditional plum pudding desserts, guests could also complete their Christmas shopping by purchasing cases of wine or hand crafted jewelry and accessories. The Perth Northern Suburbs did a great job and it was a very enjoyable night!

## 9. A smile for Christmas



A man in Perth calls his son in Brisbane the day before Christmas Eve and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough". "Dad, what are you talking about?", the son screams. "We can't stand the sight of each other any longer", the father says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Melbourne and tell her".

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like hell they're getting divorced", she shouts, "I'll take care of this". She calls Perth immediately, and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Okay", he says, "they're coming for Christmas - and they're paying their own way".

## 10. Diary

- **11<sup>th</sup> December 2008 – Club Christmas Dinner**  
This will be held at St Catherine's College and features the Perth Male Voice choir. Don't forget to bring an unwrapped gift for the Refuge!
- **January 2009 – No Club Meeting**
- **12<sup>th</sup> February – Club Meeting, St Catherine's College 6.15pm for 6.45pm**  
BBQ to catch up after the Christmas break.
- **23<sup>th</sup> May 2009 Area 3 Workshop**
- **25-27<sup>th</sup> September 2009 – District 23 Conference, Ballarat.** There are some good deals at the moment so book your air tickets now!

Want to know what is happening in our club? Visit [www.zontaperth.org.au](http://www.zontaperth.org.au)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!