

SWAN Newsletter



Southern Women's Action Network Inc.
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ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE 2008-2009

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Rosemarie

Draper

Committee

Jeanine Barnden

Alana Burley



Members are welcome to attend Committee meetings.

Bea Edwards—July Speaker Current and Future Concerns of the Aboriginal Community on the Mornington Peninsula

Bea Edwards is a descendant from the Pyemairrener clan of Tasmania. She was born in Prahran, Victoria but spent her early life in the Gippsland region. She currently lives in Frankston and is employed as a community drug and alcohol counselor at Frankston Hospital. She has been involved with a number of community social justice issues such as racism in Peninsula schools and violence against women.



Bea is also a recognized Aboriginal artist. She paints the patterns handed down from her grandmother who also taught her basketry and fibre arts. She is associated with the Koorie Business Network. She has been cited in *Tribal Expressions: the Business of Art and Culture—Indigenous Victoria*, edited by Jane Harrison and published by the same network in 2006. A biographer, Tess Allas, included Bea in the well-known Storylines Project, COFA in 2008.

Bea has worked with schools and local community groups in the Peninsula and will speak to us about her experiences relative to current and future concerns of the Aboriginal community on the Mornington Peninsula. This is SWAN's link with NAIDOC Week—National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.

SWAN Committee—2010

The SWAN Annual General Meeting is due to take place at our September meeting, so now is the time to start thinking about future Committee members. After a wonderful three years as SWAN Facilitator, Susan Blackburn is standing down. Our faithful Treasurer, Janice Gray, is also retiring from the committee after many years of support and involvement on the committee. I also need to flag that 2010 will be my final year as Editor of the newsletter. It would be wonderful to have someone step in as my 'apprentice' to learn the ropes over the year.. While we are very sad to be losing these hard-working members, the committee sees this as an opportunity for new and fresh members to take over the reins and inject new life into SWAN. Please think about what YOU have to offer.

May Kentish—May Speaker



May Kentish—Guest Speaker in May.

May Kentish, our May speaker, spoke passionately about her lifelong interest in the international political economy and the devastation wrought on the environment during times of war. She reminded us that under the Geneva Convention, especially Articles 54 and 55, governments are prohibited from removing, or rendering useless, any objects which may jeopardize the survival of civilian populations and/or local environments. Yet, many countries over the last century have been, and continue to be, devastated as a result of war. The film *Scarred lands and wounded lives* left many SWAN members saddened and outraged at the poverty, hunger, displacement, illness and death suffered by civilians during war. Thirty per cent of global environmental degradation is as a direct result of military activity. Big dollars continue to be spent on weapons of mass destruction, with over 75 billion dollars invested in the technology of the ‘Star Wars Program’ - the strategic defence initiative of the United States of America. In fact the United States of America spends a startling 45% of the world total military expenditure. Submunition based weapons designed to destroy runways, electric power transmission lines, deliver chemical or biological weapons, or to scatter land mines are still being produced in the form of cluster bombs—some of which have been purchased by the Australian Government! For further information on military spending May suggests checking the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SRIRI) <http://www.sipri.org/>

“One third of the amount spent each year by the United States of America on its military budget would eradicate the hunger and poverty of the whole world.

The global military expenditure is three hundred times the annual budget of the United Nations.

THIS and THAT

SWAN Bursary Winner

A former SWAN Bursary winner, Chloe John, will perform for us at the July Meeting. Chloe is studying at Melbourne University and has used her bursary to assist with music lessons. Chloe has found that singing and performing have assisted her self-confidence and assurance. She

will tell us a little of her motivation as she introduces her song.

Wanted—Kitchen Helpers

Thanks to those members who have been arriving early to help with setting up morning tea at SWAN meetings. The committee is always thankful for assistance both before and after the meeting. Please let Janice or Susan know if you

are able to help at future meetings this year.

Bushfire Recovery

The work of assisting bushfire victims in Victoria continues. A community group from Mt Isa has been working on making beautiful individual quilts as gifts for victims of the bushfires and the Queensland floods. A lovely practical idea!

SWAN Dates—2009

SUNDAY 19 July

Bea Edwards

**Mornington Peninsula
Aboriginal Community**

SUNDAY 15 NOVEMBER

tbc

WANTED

**Your suggestions
for Guest Speakers
for future meetings.
Contact Ann
Johnstone
59758042**

SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

**Annual General
Meeting**

RSVP

**for all meetings to:
Janice—5974 4104
Heather—97878532**

May SWAN Meeting



May Kentish addresses SWAN members at our meeting in May. As a mature age student May graduated from the University of Queensland in 1986. Upon her retirement to Mornington she joined the Australian Federation of University Women, serving as Secretary, Vice-President and Convenor for International Relations of the AFUW—Vic. May was thanked by Sue Parrott, who coincidentally worked in the same library as May in Queensland.



Support for Aung San Suu Kyi

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's continued detention in Myanmar puts the human rights spotlight on a country that has denied both economic rights and freedom of expression to its people in the past year.

The Burmese opposition leader's current trial, for violating the conditions of her house arrest, has been postponed yet again. Its outcome is not expected to end the detention she has endured for thirteen of the past 19 years.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is one of more than 2,100 political prisoners in Myanmar. Many others were denied economic rights in 2008-- a key message in Amnesty International's 2009 Report, published on Thursday 28 May. To add your support to Aung San Suu Kyu sign the petition on the Amnesty International website or write a letter of concern to the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar in Canberra.



MEG JAMS AND MERTON'S MARMALADES



Meg, as always, welcomes your donations of small jars, and particularly fruit suitable for jam-making.

SWAN RAFFLE

At each meeting we raffle a number of small items, usually locally made or produced, to add to the money we can donate to special causes. Please help by purchasing a ticket, or three, or by offering an item suitable for raffling. Every dollar counts!

SHARE TABLE

If you would like to speak to any item you have placed on our Share Table please speak with Susan Blackburn before the meeting.

WIRE FOR WELL-BEING

WIRE, the Women's Information and Referral Exchange, has been running a free, anonymous and confidential helpline for Victorian women

since 1984 When you call WIRE you will talk to a skilled counselor. They range in age from 21 to 60 and have a broad range of experiences. WIRE has helped with housing, health, legal financial issues – or just to have

SWAN



SUNDAY 19 JULY BEA EDWARDS

- Descendant of Pyemmairrener clan of Tasmania
- Community drug and alcohol counsellor at Frankston Hospital
- Recognised Aboriginal artist who paints patterns handed down from her grandmother who also taught her basketry and fibre arts
- Associated with Koorie Business Network
- Involved in community social justice issues on the Peninsula including racism and violence against women

NAIDOC Week—July 5-12

NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but by Australians from all walks of life. The week is a great opportunity to participate in a range of activities and to support your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Visit the Naidoc website for ideas of how you can join the celebrations for this week e.g. research the traditional indigenous owners of your area, visit local sites of significance, or learn the meanings of local and national Aboriginal placenames.

2008 NAIDOC Scholar of the Year Karen Martin



**Venue: Meeting Room
Shire Offices, Queen Street,
Mornington
9.30AM — cost \$7**

**BOOKINGS PLEASE
RSVP BY
FRIDAY 13 March
JANICE-5974 4104
grays@alphalink.com.au
or
HEATHER-97878532
heatherphillips4@bigpond.com**