

Mothers Union Newsletter

June 2020

The journey's end ...

Since March all of us have been on a journey without a map and no real sense of when it would end. *Corona Virus 19* has been a real challenge to us all... a river we could not cross, a wild animal which might attack us, a barrier we could not overcome, a problem we could not solve. We have often been too frightened to walk near other people in case we might catch this invisible evil or to hug those who need care, in case we might catch Covid19. We have learned a new language such as "curve flattening" (not a means of getting slimmer!) and new rituals such as "social distancing" and wearing face masks. We have begun to treat some people as though **they** were the virus! How do you feel when some one crosses the street to avoid sharing a footpath with you? Let us hope and pray that the Corvid 19 journey is nearly ended and that we will once again become the community we are meant to be. Let us pray that this will be soon! Remember that the world outside your window is still there and you will be able to experience it again. Look how beautiful is this place.... Love and peace, irene



Two very interesting journeys

In this issue of our MU Newsletter we have articles from members who have been on interesting journeys. **Elaine Fasken** with a long-time interest in bush walking, tells us of her experiences in some incredibly beautiful and challenging places. Some of her photos are included in this newsletter. Two challenges for you ...Where is this beautiful place? And where do you think Elaine is standing in her photo?

Ros Smith, together with others from the multifaith group who journeyed to Jerusalem, was to be the special guest at our MU Birthday celebration in June. To travel to Jerusalem and to walk to the holy places is a very special experience as we know which many members of our parish have experienced too. Ros shares her experience with us through her article. Our birthday function as you know is our main fundraiser to enable us to support our chosen project. This year our project is the MU Parenting Program in Papua-New Guinea. Unfortunately, due to circumstances well beyond our control, we have not been able to raise any money so far. More about this later...

BUSHWALKING

Growing up in country towns where the car came out only for travel to another town, or to relatives in the city, meant that I was always accustomed to walking and bike riding, and with plenty of hills (Mount Beauty and Daylesford). My grandfather, Frederick Bishop, always took me out walking when I stayed with them as a child. Beckett Park and Maranoa Gardens, One Tree Hill, the Botanical Gardens (as part of a circuit from Flinders St via the Shrine) are places I remember him taking me to. He was a very early member of the Field Naturalists Society and hiked in the Dandenongs and the Grampians with a particular interest in the wildflowers of Victoria. Perhaps my interest in bushwalking was kindled with him. On our own family holidays, we often walked, culminating in a backpacking hike along the Overland Track in Tasmania with our 3 teenage children; Gillian stayed with my sister in Hobart.



While teaching at PLC, 1985-2002, I participated in the Outdoor Ed programme camping and hiking in the Howqua River/Bluff Hut area, Eildon Lake/Jerusalem Creek area and the Cathedral Ranges with a final backpack along the Great South Western Walk near Portland.

Outback holidays in the early 2000's in the Pilbara, Kakadu, the Kimberley and Queensland with Roger involved lots of long walks in stunning and interesting locations. As Roger's interest in photography increased, both speed and distance of walks decreased and in 2005, after a very camera focussed holiday in Tasmania, I joined the Waverley Bushwalking Club, and so did Roger. After that, bushwalking was a regular and important part of our lives, and it still is for me. I enjoy the physical challenge, the fresh air, the environment, the trees, the birds, the company, and I just enjoy the 'living in the moment' feel of it. Sometimes we might have deep and meaningful conversations, but other times I think of little,

I'm just there. I may come home tired, stiff and very sweaty, but refreshed and invigorated.

Day walks with 15-20+ club members often go on most Wednesdays to different parts of the Dandenongs, walking through beautiful Mountain Ash forests and tree ferns, past waterfalls, up and down some very steep hills or beside the Puffing Billy track. Other Wednesdays might see the club at Kinglake National Park, on Yarra River walks, at Lake Mountain, somewhere on the Mornington peninsula, on the Bass Coast Walk (cliff top and beach into Kilcunda) or closer to home along Dandenong Creek trails. There are regular suburban historical walks too. These day walks are usually 12km – 18 km and nearly always finish with coffee. The club also offers weekend walks and I have been on these occasionally to go to places like Werribee Gorge and Mt Macedon.

Base camps are another way I enjoy bushwalking, usually 4-7 days staying at the one place with daily walks in the nearby area. These have been at the Otways, the Grampians, Lake Tyers, Portland and Nelson, Nicholson River (Gippsland), Anglesea, Licola, Falls Creek and the High Plains. I love being up in the high country; I was so fortunate to be there between Christmas and New Year, just before the area was closed because of the bushfires.

We went on two international trips with the club. One to Canada and Alaska and the other to Italy. The first was mainly travel based sightseeing with some good walking included. The second was based in Tocco, a village in Abruzzo, from where we walked locally and went on daily trips.

My elder daughter Helen has started weekend walking with friends and she and I have enjoyed quite a number of long walks together, at Phillip Island and in 2018 when we travelled together on the riverboat from Amsterdam to Budapest. Anyone else going to come bushwalking with me? Elaine Fasken.

What is happening with Mothers' Union at Mt. Waverley?

Earlier in June the MU committee met to discuss our program and plans for Mothers' Union for the rest of the year. As you have noticed, we have included articles in our newsletter, mostly related to the planned topic, to replace our usual program. At that meeting we had a grand plan to begin meeting together first in fellowship groups of about 10 people, because what we are missing is seeing each other and being able to talk together face to face. Then came the change of plans with the government re-imposing a limit of 5 people guests per house. We have not abandoned small group meeting idea, only they will be SMALLER ... only 5 people plus the hostess. We are arranging groups based on geography, so you will meet with people fairly close to your home. We will use this time to participate in the *Wave of Prayer* but the main reason for the meeting will be to catch up with each other. It will be lovely if you could bring a **very small** plate of afternoon tea to share as the person who is hosting the meeting will supply tea and coffee. Very soon you will receive a separate email with the proposed groups and addresses of the hostess

Mark this date in your diary **MONDAY JULY 27th. MU Fellowship group 2pm.**

We hope that our planned meeting for August 24th. will take place at the Parish Centre

MU project for 2020: Positive Parenting in Papua-New Guinea

The Anglican Church in PNG intends to roll out a culturally appropriate version of the Mothers' Union designed Positive Parenting Program. The program has been used successfully for training parents in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands to develop positive relationships with their children and each other. Drawing pictures of the family is a way to start the conversation about relationships. The costs for this program are estimated to be:

PPP Manual for each participant \$75;

Cost of training new PP facilitators in a 10day residential workshop is \$1000 per participant;

Transport for each participating Mother from each deanery in Oro Province \$20 per person.



Participants involved in this program, in the Solomon Islands made the following comments...

Danny: *It changed me. As a person, as a father. It changed me mentally and saved my relationship with my family. I want this for other families. There are so many young families that need this before it's too late...*

Alan: *We move too quickly here! Dating isn't really a thing so there is pressure to move fast into marriage with one person. Then, later things are hard, and they think 'I must have married the wrong person' so they start to point the finger at each other. That's when the violence starts.*

If we are going to fulfil our promise to support this excellent program which has great benefits across families and the community, we need to raise some money quickly. It has been suggested that had we had our fundraising lunch in June, we would have each donated about \$20. So, the committee is suggesting that if you are able to attend the MU Fellowship Groups in July, please place your donation in the coloured envelope provided by the hostess. If you cannot come but would like to donate, please send a cheque to Margaret Tingate our Treasurer. Please send it to her home address (on contacts list) and write **MU Parenting Project** on the back. All Cheques need to be made out to *Mothers' Union, Anglican Parish of Mt. Waverley*. Supporting family life is one of the important principles underlying our membership of Mothers' Union and the Positive Parenting Program is a wonderful way to do this.

JOINT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, April 2019

Ros Smith

One of the most amazing and enriching experiences of my life so far was my unexpected participation in the Joint Journey to Jerusalem (JJJ), conducted under the auspices of the JCMA (Jewish Christian Muslim Association) in April last year. From 1st to 9th April, twelve women - four Jews, four Christians and four Muslims - explored and experienced Jerusalem in each other's company, and through the eyes of each of our three Abrahamic faiths. In the process, we developed real friendships and deeper appreciation and understanding of our own and each other's faiths. We also met with women working together in Jerusalem in various ways to increase understanding and tolerance and improved lives for the people of Jerusalem and its surrounds.



I know several of you have visited Jerusalem, and I will not try to describe the places we saw. Rather, I will try to indicate some of the highlights for me and the impact of JJJ on me. Our accommodation was very close to the Old City. We each shared a room with a person of another faith. My room-mate was a wonderful 40-something Muslim woman, from whom I learnt a lot.

One of the first places we experienced was St Anne's Church and the Pool of Bethesda. This is the church of Mary the mother of Jesus, named for her mother, St Anne. It is magnificent, steeped in history, and with wonderful acoustics. While we were there, a Korean choir was singing one of my favourite hymns (How Great Thou Art). We were all deeply moved, and music became an important part of the rest of our journey. We visited many beautiful and historic churches, including the Church of the Nativity, The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and St George's Cathedral.

We went of course to the Western Wall (the Wailing Wall). Irene had given me a peace dove and a prayer for peace to insert in the wall. I happily did this and was amazed to discover how moving the experience was. I thought I would be witnessing others worshipping, but it was very real for me. We walked the Via Dolorosa (Jesus' Way of the Cross, see photo) -this for me was not a great experience, as it was so crowded, busy and noisy. Unfortunately, I was not well enough to join others when they went again very early one morning, before the crowds arrived, and felt its true significance. The Tent of Nations, located 9km southwest of Bethlehem, is a wonderful witness to faith and courage and dedication. It has been in the Nassar family of Palestinian Christians for over a hundred years. Despite continuing to suffer severe persecution, they meet it with the motto "We refuse to be enemies" and refuse to hate.

We experienced wonderful hospitality, particularly Friday night Shabbat Prayers followed by Sabbath family dinners in mixed groups of three, and Saturday Synagogue service and family lunches in private homes. Another highlight was Friday afternoon Parallel Prayers for Peace – while the Muslims were at prayer at Al Asqa Mosque, the rest of us prayed for peace on the rooftop of Notre Dame, in a direct line of sight to the Mosque. Though physically separated, we all felt connected in prayer. (I have had a similar experience of connectedness during the COVID19 lockdowns). Since returning, the twelve of us have remained in contact. We have held presentations in Jewish, Muslim and Christian places (and some secular ones too). Each time, there is a speaker from each of our three faiths, demonstrating our friendship, respect and shared understanding of the importance and richness of inter-faith experiences. I am deeply grateful for my wonder-full ongoing JJJ experience.

Some prayers for these troubled times...

**Lord God, whose Son Jesus Christ,
understood people's fear and pain
before they spoke of them,
we pray for those in hospital or sick at home
especially for those suffering from the Corona Virus;
surround the frightened with your tenderness;
give strength to those in pain;
hold the weak in your arms of love,
and give hope and patience
to those who are recovering;
we ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN**

**An Irish Blessing for those who are travelling ...anywhere
May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm on your face, and the rain soft on your fields.
Until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of his hand.**

And from the Media...

The Irish Blessing ..300 churches in Ireland share their common Celtic tradition of music and song
Click on this link to YouTube to access this <https://youtu.be/TascswZPj8U>

The Blessing Australia... enjoy images of this country, places you may have never seen while
people young and old sing a Biblical Blessing ...Follow this link <https://youtu.be/OOt7baaVSbE>

Be Not Afraid ... a beautiful rendition of this contemporary hymn written by Bob Dufford SJ for
all those who travel outside their comfort zone. Great reassurance. Lyrics included so sing along.
<https://youtu.be/wQr4udSiEew>

We have all been struggling, with the boredom and tiredness of the lockdown, when time
crawls and we always need a snack. Many of us are missing the stimulation of being with
friends and family or even getting out of our homes to somewhere interesting. Thank you to
Marg Taylor for this visual commentary.

