

The Country Woman

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Fauna and Flora

GLOSSY BLACK-COCKATOO AND SHE-OAK





The Country Woman is the official publication of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales.

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Cover: Glossy black-cockatoo (female) eating she-oak seed pods by JJ Harrison. **Back cover:** Glossy black-cockatoo (male) in she-oak tree by JJ Harrison.

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Contents



- 4 State President
- 5 CEO's Report
- 6 [Glossy black-cockatoo](#)
- 7 Casuarina (she-oak) forests
- 8 News from February Executive
- 9 [Friendships Across the Years](#)
- 10 Committee Reports
- 16 [Conference Program 2026](#)
- 17 Additional Conference Info
- 18 Added/Amended Motions
- 19 State Office Bearer Nominations
- 22 Member Profile
- 23 Sudoku
- 24 Welcome New Members
- 25 Advocacy Update
- 26 From our Archives
- 27 CWA of NSW Branch Email Policy
- 28 Celebrations
- 29 From our Branches
- 32 From our Groups
- 33 Garden of Remembrance

From the Editor

It's that time of year again—State Conference! If this will be your first Conference as an attendee or as a delegate, welcome! You are about to embark on a new journey to understand the true power of our organisation. The motions debates, the inspirational speakers, the camaraderie of hundreds of women in one place, all with the same goal of making our communities better places, all of it makes for an electrified feeling and I cannot wait for you to experience it all. Or you may be a seasoned participant looking to play your part.

Conference is ground zero for change and sisterhood where new friendships are forged and longstanding bonds are strengthened. And don't get me started on all the gorgeous handicrafts, enticing cookery items and all the amazing Committee exhibitions. All the hours of love and skill so masterfully displayed are sights to behold.

But what I love most about State Conference is seeing all of you. Even though there are passionate differences of opinion about the motions, I have always admired the respect and genuine love all of you have shown me and each other. Your spirits make the Conference and our organisation the amazing Association it is, and for this I thank you. Thank you to the Mid North Coast Organising Committee for all the hard work you've put in this year and best of luck to everyone with entries in all the competitions. So bake well, travel safe (or log on) and see you at the big show.

[Brenda Michaud, Hon Editor](#)

State President

I attended the 100 years of CWA in Tenterfield celebration in February at the beautiful old Steinbrook hall. It was such a lovely day; if you're ever in the area do yourself a favour and go for a drive out to this hall it's just beautiful.

We have had our second "Ask the President Anything" webinar and again thank you for the questions put forward before and on the day. Going on the feedback, members are enjoying these and the open conversations had.

I have attended four meetings both online and at Parliament of Premier Minns's Rural Regional Remote Advisory Council (RRRAC) which we are a part of. A subcommittee from this working group was formed for work on drought/water policy. I have put my hand up to be on this as CWA of NSW have lots to contribute

in this area. We have met online and at parliament as well.

February State Executive was at Parkes and was a great success.

Facts Days completed so far are Oxley and Namoi, both days had huge attendance from group members and nearby groups; thank you to all for attending.

Danica and I attended a 2-day CommsDay Regional & Policy forum in Canberra. Speakers were from government, industry and technology with a focus on rural and remote connectivity.

Results have been released on the CWA of NSW Annual Women's Survey; no surprises what the major issues are. This is a valuable tool for us with our advocacy work and once again we will be taking these results to the relevant government ministers. We need to see a change. We need to see



recognition with action. Some of these issues are the same as last year and it's not good enough. Thanks to Seftons, I have done quite a few radio interviews where I can go through the responses covering access to essential health services, secure housing, cost of living, safety in our homes, education and unreliable public or community transport, just to mention a few.

Tanya Jolly
State President

Apple Slice recipe from *Everything I Know about Cooking I Learned from CWA*

Ingredients

Base

- 125 g butter, softened
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 ½ cups self-raising flour, sifted

Filling

- 4 medium apples
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- ½ cup caster sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Method

To make base, cream butter and sugar, then add egg. Fold in sifted flour. Press half the mixture into a small slice tin. Roll out second half ready to cover the filling.

To make filling, peel and core apples, slice and cook in ½ cup

water and lemon juice until tender. Drain and mash roughly, then add sugar, cloves and cinnamon. While mixture is still hot, spoon over base. Cover with the second layer of pastry and bake in a moderate oven (160°C) for 25 minutes or until cooked.

One of more of the apples can be replaced with chokos.



Kindness Quotes

"You can always give something, even if it is only kindness!"—Anne Frank

"Kind words don't cost much. Yet they accomplish much."—Blaise Pascal

"I do not forget any good deed done to me and I do not carry a grudge for a bad one."—Viktor E. Frankl

"Always try to be a little kinder than is necessary."—J.M. Barrie

"It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive."—Maya Angelou

"Be the reason someone feels welcome, seen, heard, valued, loved and supported."—Unknown

"Caring about the happiness of others, we find our own."—Plato

"Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness."—Lucius Annaeus Seneca

CEO's Report

As we look ahead to this year's State Conference and AGM in Forster, anticipation is already building for what promises to be a wonderful few days together. One of the exciting features of this year's Conference is that everything will be held under one roof at an excellent venue and being expertly overseen by the Organising Committee. I know many members will appreciate the convenience of having all Conference activities in one location, and it should make for a very enjoyable and connected event.

Members may also note that this year there is no requirement for a Special General Meeting, and we will not be holding votes for State Office Bearer positions or the Medical Research Project. However, there is a large number of policy motions to work through which is always encouraging to see and reflects the strong engagement of members with the issues affecting our communities.

In preparation for Conference, work has also continued on the development of the Association's next Strategic Plan. This new plan will guide the work of the CWA of

NSW from 2026 through to 2029, and we look forward to launching it at Conference in Forster.

Earlier this year the State Executive Committee met in Parkes which provided a valuable opportunity for Executive members to travel to the Central West and hear directly about the issues and policy matters affecting communities in that region. News from Executive is in this edition of the journal.

State President, Tanya Jolly, and I also attended the CommsDay Rural and Regional Policy Forum in Canberra which brought together industry, government and regional stakeholders to discuss connectivity challenges and opportunities across rural and regional Australia. Reliable telecommunications remain a key issue for many of our members and forums such as this provide an important opportunity to ensure the voices of country communities are heard.

You may also have seen that we recently released the latest results from our Annual Women's Survey. Thank you to everyone who took the time to contribute.



The feedback provided by members and other respondents is incredibly valuable and plays an important role in shaping the policy and advocacy work of the Association. If you have not yet had the opportunity to read through the results, I encourage you to visit our website where the full report is available: www.cwaofnsw.org.au/womenssurvey.

As always, this edition of the journal contains important information about the upcoming Conference, and we encourage delegates to review the material carefully in preparation for the discussions and decisions ahead.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Forster.

Danica Leys
Chief Executive Officer

Conference Supporters



THE LAND

Glossy black-cockatoo

Glossy black-cockatoos are one of the more threatened species of cockatoo in Australia and are listed as vulnerable in New South Wales.

Where do they live?

The glossy black-cockatoo lives in coastal woodlands and drier forest areas, open inland woodlands or timbered watercourses where its main food source, the casuarina (she-oak), is common.

Scientists think that glossy black-cockatoos prefer to live in rugged country, where extensive clearing has not taken place. Brigalow scrub or hilly rocky country containing casuarina species tends to be their preferred habitat in inland New South Wales.

In New South Wales, the current distribution of the glossy black-cockatoo covers areas from the coast to the tablelands and extends as far west as the Riverina and Pilliga Scrub.

What do they eat?

The glossy black-cockatoo generally prefers to feed from the seeds of mature casuarina trees. The birds' presence is often indicated by a layer of cracked cones and fragments that have accumulated under favoured casuarina trees.

A study in Eden on the south coast of New South Wales indicated that the glossy black-cockatoo is selective in its choice of food trees, choosing casuarinas that produce seeds with a high nutrient value. A pair of glossy black-cockatoos may make short visits to various feed trees in a small area, checking the quality of the seeds. Once satisfied, the pair will settle in the one feed tree and harvest all the cones within reach.

Glossy black-cockatoos occasionally eat seeds from

eucalypts, angophoras, acacias and hakeas, as well as eating insect larvae. In Central West New South Wales, they also eat the seeds of cypress pine.

Breeding

The glossy black-cockatoo prefers to nest in the hollows of large, old eucalypt trees, alive or dead. The typical nest site will be around 3 to 30 metres above the ground, and the nest hollow is generally lined with decayed debris. The birds tend to nest in the same areas as other nesting pairs, sometimes even sharing the same nest tree.

In New South Wales, breeding takes place from March to August. One egg, white in colour, is produced. In some instances, both the male and female parents will feed the chick, and the female will brood the chick overnight. At other times only the female will brood and feed the young.

Researchers think that glossy black-cockatoos breed throughout their range, including Goonoo and Bidden state forests, the Narrandera Range and Rankin Spring.

Threats

Habitat loss

Since European colonisation, a major threat to the survival of the glossy black-cockatoo is habitat loss—the clearing of casuarina trees in woodland areas and the loss of mature eucalypts for nest hollows.

The Riverina in New South Wales is one area in the birds' range that has suffered a major decline in population due to the removal of habitat. There has also been evidence to suggest that some glossy black-cockatoos from this region have been trapped for the illegal bird trade.

Scientists think that, to breed

successfully, glossy black-cockatoos need food trees to be near their nest trees. Fragmentation of habitat reduces the chances of successful breeding.

Changing patterns of bushfires

Changes to patterns of bushfires in eastern Australia since European settlement have also contributed to the loss of habitat for the glossy black-cockatoo. Casuarina trees are very fire-sensitive and are easily killed in an intense fire. Large dead trees where the birds nest may also be destroyed in a fire.

Threats from other animals

Glossy black-cockatoos are also threatened by feral cats and possums, which raid the birds' nests. They also suffer from competition for nests from galahs and introduced honeybees.

The full impact of threats such as habitat clearing and modification on the glossy black-cockatoo is still unknown. As the bird has a relatively long lifespan, the effect of these threats may not yet be fully evident on population numbers.

In recognition of these threats, the glossy black-cockatoo is listed as vulnerable in New South Wales under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. If action is not taken to stop these threats, the glossy black-cockatoo is likely to become endangered across its range in New South Wales.

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Casuarina (she-oak) forests

Casuarina is a genus of about 60 Australian species, with related species in New Guinea, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Pacific Islands. Commonly called she-oaks or oaks, because of the similarity of their timber to European oaks, casuarina species are a distinctive part of the Australian landscape. This forest type also includes the genus *Allocasuarina*.

Only some casuarina species form forest communities, because others are too short or sparse to be classified as forest. Casuarina forests make up about 1% of Australia's total forest area.

Because their roots can produce nitrogen through nodules that contain special bacteria, casuarinas can grow on nutrient-poor soils and other marginal environments, such as granite outcrops or sandy soils. As a result, most casuarina forests tend to be low in stature—sometimes with a dense, shrubby understorey. The tallest casuarina forests occur in riverine habitats, where they may be more than 20 metres tall.

The name "casuarina" is derived from the Malay word for cassowary, *kasuari*, which refers to the similarity of the drooping foliage to the birds' feathers. The unusual branchlets of casuarina trees look similar to pine needles, and are their most obvious characteristic. They also have woody fruits that increase their resemblance to pines. The needle-like foliage is not composed of true leaves, but rather of green, jointed branchlets that function like leaves. The true leaves are tiny, tooth-like structures protruding from the top of each joint.

Where are Australia's casuarina forests?

Casuarina forests occur in all states and territories of Australia, with a total area of more than 2 million hectares. The largest

area of casuarina forest in Australia is in western New South Wales, extending as a band into semiarid zones in South Australia and Queensland. There are also extensive areas in coastal New South Wales. Belah (*Casuarina cristata*) forests have the widest distribution, growing in habitats ranging from stony slopes and calcrete to heavy clay soils.

Typical species of inland areas include belah and river she-oak (*C. cunninghamiana*), which often occur in association with acacias and eucalypts. Pure stands of casuarina are restricted to specific sites, such as coast she-oak (*C. equisetifolia*) on coastal foredunes of eastern Australia, and rock she-oak (*Allocasuarina huegeliana*) on granite soils and outcrops in Western Australia. Coast she-oak also occurs in association with coastal banksias along the southeastern and eastern seaboard in less exposed sites. Drooping she-oak (*A. verticillata*) forms pure stands on the driest sites in Tasmania because it is more drought resistant than local eucalypts.

Values and uses

Wood

The wood of some casuarina species is used in flooring, cabinet-making and other ornamental woodworking. For example, Western Australian she-oak (*Allocasuarina fraseriana*) is used for furniture in Western Australia and forest oak (*A. torulosa*) is used for shingles and shakes in eastern Australia. The quantities used are small because the resource is limited, but the products are expensive and keenly sought after. The wood of most casuarinas is hard and provides excellent fuel. Coast she-oak is used for timber, poles, pulpwood and mulch. It is reputedly the best fuel wood in the world because it is relatively



Photo by John Tarr

Black She-Oak, *Allocasuarina littoralis*

smokeless when it burns. It also produces high-quality charcoal. Belah is often used for fence posts and firewood.

Environmental

Casuarinas are important for biodiversity, and remnants of casuarina forests support a wide range of vertebrate and invertebrate fauna. Casuarinas provide food for native wildlife, such as the glossy black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*), which depends on the seeds of forest oak (*Allocasuarina torulosa*) and black oak (*A. littoralis*) as its primary food source. Casuarinas are often used for reforestation because of their value as windbreaks, and in soil reclamation and erosion control.

Indigenous uses

The hard wood of she-oak was often used for making boomerangs, shields and clubs. In Wylie Swamp, South Australia, archaeologists found a 10 000 year old boomerang made from she-oak wood. Young shoots were chewed to reduce thirst, and young cones were also eaten.

Other uses

The foliage of some species, such as river she-oak and belah, is used as fodder for stock during drought. Belah is often used for reforestation, because of its effectiveness as a windbreak. The bark of some casuarinas species was used for tannin production.

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News from February Executive

Strategic Plan 2026–2029

The 2026–2029 Strategic Plan draft was endorsed by the State Executive Committee and further details will be sent to all branches shortly.

Disaster Relief Fund

\$50,000 was donated to the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) to support farmers and regional communities affected by ongoing adverse conditions.

In considering options for distribution, CWA of NSW also gave consideration to CWA Victoria. At the time of the decision, CWA Victoria was not in a position to distribute disaster relief funds, thus the donation was directed through VFF to ensure timely and effective support reached affected communities. CWA of NSW will continue to keep CWA Victoria in mind for future support should circumstances and capacity allow.

Honorary Editor's position

A re-nomination for the position of Editor was received from Brenda Michaud and was approved by the State Executive Committee.

Potts Point Grants

The State Executive Committee ratified the decision to grant a Potts Point grant to Ungarie Branch

Procedures Manual

Updates will be available after the July Executive meeting on the CWA's website. A reminder that information in the Procedures Manual is not designed to be updated each year.

Reports from Representatives on Outside Organisations

Reports were received from CWA representatives on the SOS Fracture Alliance and Commbank Community Advisory Council.

Branches Open/Closed/In Recess

Closed: Blackville, Quandialla

In Recess: Boorowa, Casino Evening, Werris Creek.

AGM 2026

Urgency motions and necessary motion amendments were considered. Updates on motions are included in this edition of the journal.

2026 State Conference Raffle

The State Conference raffle is to help raise funds to hold the State Conference. Please promote tickets sales which can be purchased online through RaffleLink: <https://rafflelink.com.au/cwaraffle2026>

AGM 2027: Canberra

It was resolved that the Conference and AGM in 2027 be held in Canberra. Further dates and details to follow later.

Membership

Life memberships were considered and approved.

Reminders

Please ensure that you write your branch name when making any payments to State Office.

Groups are reminded that their State Executive Committee Member (SECM) is part of their Group Office Bearers and they play an important role in representing Groups at State level and supporting communication with State Office. Please ensure they are included in relevant correspondence and kept informed of group matters.

Upcoming Dates for Executive meetings

May (pre-conf): 3rd May

July: 13th–15th

November: 9th–11th

Reminder: deadlines for agenda material are strictly two weeks prior to any Executive meeting. Items not received by this due date will be held over until the next meeting.

Only Conference matters will be considered at the pre-conference Executive meeting in May.

Call for Nominations: State Committees

Nominations are called for the following State Committees:

Agricultural & Environmental, Cultural, Handicraft, Hospital Support, International, Show Catering, Social Issues and The Land Cookery. Nominations close with the Chief Executive Officer on 30th June.

Please use the link to submit your nomination in lieu of the Form G 14–1–724: <https://wkf.ms/4cFPEBq> or use the QR code.



Nomination forms must be accompanied by the completed relevant committee essential selection criteria form. These forms can be found on pages G 14–2 to G 14–16 in the Procedures Manual or downloaded from the website.

State Office Bearers will assess nominations for ratification by the State Executive at their July Executive meeting. Committees meet and elect Office Bearers during Committee AGMs and the tenure of the Committee is from October to September.

Friendships Across the Years

Persephone Jackson, Branch President, Wanaaring Branch, Far Western Group

Denise Turnbull, Branch Secretary and Group Handicraft Officer, Enngonia Branch, Far Western Group

How long have you been a member?

PJ: About three years.

DT: 53 years.

Why did you join?

PJ: I moved 1000 km from my hometown of Canberra to be with my now husband, a grazier in the middle of nowhere! My in-laws asked me to a meeting, and I thought it would be a nice way to meet other women in the community.

DT: I moved to the far west as a governess, leaving all of my friends and family in Sydney, and when I joined Yantabulla Branch (no longer in existence), the members took me under their wings and made me welcome. CWA has been my lifeline ever since.

What positions have you held since joining?

PJ: Branch Cookery Officer.

DT: I have held all branch positions as well as Group President, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Rep, Cultural Officer, Handicraft Officer, some of which for more than one term. I have also been a State Vice President, State Treasurer and on the State Handicraft Committee.

What have you enjoyed most about this involvement?

PJ: Our branch had some older members moving on, and a lack of new and younger members, and we are finding ways to bring life and interest to the branch. While we haven't had serious entries yet, I have sent out recipes for fun branch baking competitions.

We've enjoyed sharing delicious treats and getting involved. On our first recipe day, every member had a go!

DT: I have treasured all the friendships I have formed and have enjoyed learning about my fellow members and myself through my involvement with others.

How has your friendship come about?

PJ: I went to my first group meeting in Warren last year, and was a little nervous. But everyone was so welcoming, and Denise was warm and encouraging. She encouraged me to attend my first State Conference last May, where she met me on the first day to welcome me and make me feel comfortable. I was introduced to lots of lovely women, and the days ahead were interesting and so enjoyable with her company.

DT: Persephone and I met last year before the Conference. Unfortunately, we live so far apart that our friendship has had to develop slowly. I hope that I am able to help her learn more about the organisation and help to involve her in more activities.

Tell us some first impressions or things you've learned from one another?

PJ: As someone who married into the outback, I certainly enjoyed hearing her stories of being a young bride moving to the outback. Connecting with someone who has similar stories to you, perhaps a few years apart, is always special. And like many of the other wonderful women of CWA, Denise has really shown me the joy of being yourself, pursuing your passions and loving the life you have.

DT: When Persephone first attended a group meeting, I was very excited to have a member of Wanaaring Branch attend, as that hadn't happened in a very



Persephone and Denise at the 2025 State Conference

long time. Persephone wanted to attend the State Conference, so we were able to help her attend. I was keen to make her feel welcome, and our group members at the Conference all made sure she was mentored. My experience as a young member, mentored by older members, made me want to be a friend and mentor to this lovely young lady. I hope that she will always feel she can come to me, even with our distance—she lives west of Wanaaring, and I live between Bourke and Brewarrina—but we are only a phone call away.

What would you like to pass on to other members, no matter what chapter of life they're in?

PJ: You never know who may become your friend, and you never know what someone may be able to teach you, or the joy they may bring to your life! Being open to the possibilities of learning, connection and friendship with women of all ages and backgrounds is invaluable.

DT: I hope that others can learn, as I have, that we need to be flexible and acknowledge other members' talents and contributions. Remembering that we are all volunteers and that we all do our best, which will be different for each of us.

Agricultural & Environmental

Feral Pigs

The Agricultural & Environmental Committee held a briefing in February on the State Feral Pig Program with NSW Senior Feral Pig Program Coordinator, Bec Gray. Culling methods that have been working well are:

- Fully subsidised grain and bait offer from the LLS Feral Pig & Pest Program (FPPP) 2025-26, ensuring enough grain for the important free-feeding period before baiting to condition pigs to the food source. The advantage of Pigbaitta is that not much is needed to achieve a 90% cull.
- Cameras (LLS loan them) to monitor the uptake of grain, and to check that non-target animals are not feeding, and to track the feral pig mob sizes to estimate the right amount of bait.
- Using cameras after baiting to watch for pigs that are still active, and using follow-up combination control techniques: baiting, trapping, ground shooting, aerial shooting, fitting captured pigs with radio collars to locate other groups of pigs, and most importantly—broad-scale coordination with neighbouring properties. These combined methods have achieved the best results for long term management of feral pigs.

Competitions

Detailed information and support for the Recycled Article Competition, the Moore Award Book and the Primary School Competition (2026 theme: Frogs) in preparation for Conference was sent to all Group Agricultural & Environmental Officers in February. For those groups without an officer, it was sent to your Group Secretary. Please deliver the winning Recycled Article from group judging, and

branch Moore Award Books (not judged at group) to the Agricultural & Environmental display at the State Conference venue in Forster by 1 pm on Sunday 3rd May. At the February State Executive meeting your SECM was given a hard copy of the new primary school competition colouring stencil. If your branch doesn't have one, contact your SECM or Group Agricultural & Environmental Officer. The new theme for the primary school colouring and short story (judged at Canberra 2027) is the Glossy Black Cockatoo. A very big thank you to all the branches who made the effort to visit their local school(s) for the colouring and short stories; branches who thought outside the box to make a Recycled Article; and branches who had fun making a "doing" Moore Award Book to enter in the Agricultural & Environmental competitions. Another huge thank you to those branch and group officers who encourage, educate and inform their branches. Thank you to members who sought me out to ask questions about all things CWA Agricultural & Environmental. I have appreciated your support and making my job easier.

Dress In Blue Day

The Agricultural & Environmental Committee encourage everyone to wear lots of blue on the last day of State Conference—Thursday 7th May. It will be a "Do It For Dolly" day in memory of Dolly Everett. Dressing in blue is to raise awareness about mental health and the impacts of bullying, and reminds us to spread compassion and understanding of people with mental health issues in our communities. No money will be collected.

Appreciation of Tea Room Sponsors

At State Conference this year,

the Agricultural & Environmental Committee is showcasing the sponsors and products that make the CWA Tea Room at the Sydney Royal Easter Show so successful. These Australian grown, made and owned products are donated every year for CWA's biggest fundraiser, and we would very much like to acknowledge the sponsors and thank them for their generosity and lasting impact.

- Manildra Group flour used for the scones is sourced from more than 2,000 local farming families in NSW.
- Pepe Saya butter uses 100% Australian cream.
- Sunshine Sugar is grown in Northern NSW and contributes \$200 million per annum to the Northern Rivers economy.
- Pace Farms employs over five hundred people to help produce, process and transport their eggs.

Final Report

It has been a privilege to have been your State Agricultural & Environmental Officer for the last three years. Raising the profile of Agricultural & Environmental in CWA has been one of my main focuses. A heartfelt thank you to Bec and the committee, and all those who have supported me, and most of all, my husband Jamie. I wish the new Agricultural & Environmental Officer all the very best as she steps into the role in May.

Jenny Birtles
State Agricultural & Environmental Officer

Online Directory

Did you know all members can search the online directory? Log in to the website, then go to the "Membership" tab then "Member Portal" and choose "Office Bearers Directory" from the right hand side.

Hospital Support Report

We have been busy since our last report. Donations have been taken to the Canberra Circle of Women and to Macquarie Homestay in Dubbo. It is wonderful to be able to support charities such as these and we thank you for making it possible.

Our first Meeting of 2026 was on 25th and 26th February. Following the unpacking, we prepared items to go to Lou's Place, towels and then stationery for the children at Macquarie Homestay including colouring books, pens and coloured pencils. A supply of cuddle hearts had arrived and they will be going to Prince of Wales for their NICU unit. Twiddle muffs, cuffs and rugs are ready to go to various care homes with dementia patients. A small supply of premmie baby items will be going to the NICU unit at the John Hunter Hospital. On 16th and 17th April, we will be packing ahead of Conference. We hope to take several bags of knee rugs for distribution in Forster. An additional packing day for the Mother & Baby Packs will be arranged.

The big news for this Report is that we were very fortunate to visit the Ronald McDonald House in New Lambton (Newcastle) and that our annual sponsorship for Room

7 has been paid.

I contacted Donna and Kerryn at Ronald McDonald with a request to visit and after settling on a date, three Hospital Support Committee members, two Friends of the Committee and two husbands, went on 23rd February. Whilst being in Newcastle, I visited the RFBI Hawkins Village facility to drop off some knee rugs. It was a delight to speak with some of the residents.

Donna and Kerryn invited us for afternoon tea and then gave us a tour. They shared many stories and some important facts that we were not aware of. There is no limit on the length of a stay. They are currently fundraising to build a further 11 desperately needed rooms. They have funds to break ground on stage 1 but need to raise many millions more to complete the project. 18-20% comes from the Ronald McDonald Foundation but the rest must be raised. There are no government contributions. Dr Audrey Evans had a vision back in Philadelphia in 1969. A recommended film to watch is Audrey's Children which is free to view on YouTube.

This house is very special. You can feel the love and vibrancy in every part of the complex. There is a tree of life with our name as one

of the sponsors there. We saw the family rooms and visited a room to be occupied later that day. Each family has a gift of a quilt or rug in their room and that is theirs to keep. We had taken some of the wonderful mosaic crocheted rugs and many stationery items for the children. The kitchen cupboards and fridges have designated areas for each room, along with a community pantry, coffee and pancake machines. A much-needed laundry is also onsite.

We met Dale who runs/oversees the educational programs, so that these children do not miss out and fall behind their classmates. School can be an important escape for these children. Play areas, inside and outside are vital.

Jennifer Blinkhorn,
Chairperson



CWA members and RMHC staff at Ronald McDonald House

Show Catering Report

I am currently in the process of organising the CWA Tea Room at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has volunteered their time and effort to support our Tea Room. Your contributions are invaluable and I truly appreciate your commitment.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the generous

support of our sponsors whose contributions play a crucial role in the success of the CWA Tea Room:

- Manildra Group for supplying 2.5 tonnes of scone mix
- Sunshine Sugar for providing sugar sticks
- Pace Farm for donating 60 dozen eggs
- Madura Tea for supplying our

tea selection

- Nescafé for providing coffee and hot chocolate sticks
- Beerenberg Jams for donating a raffle prize

Thank you all for your dedication and support in making the CWA Tea Room a wonderful event and CWA of NSW's biggest fundraiser.

Donna Robertson
Chairperson

The Land Cookery

February and March has been a particularly busy time for our cookery officers, competitors and CWA judges, as many groups held their competitions ready for the state finals. CWA judges were also in high demand at local Agricultural Shows around the state, representing and promoting the expertise of CWA. Congratulations to those of you who were successful this year on getting your entries through to the finals and a special thank you to those who continue to support the competition at branch and group level by organising competition days, stewarding, judging and selling our raffle tickets.

The Land Cookery Schedule for 2026/27 has been finalised with a rotation of the fruit cake and pudding, and several new items to challenge your baking and preserving skills. There are also new items for each of the junior sections which we hope they will enjoy. The schedules will be available for collection by Group Cookery Officers or a nominated group representative from Sunday at our sales table. Please let us know who will be collecting the groups allocation of schedules as they will need to be signed for. A reminder that "required recipes" will be published in the June edition of The Country Woman and online in June at www.cwaofnsw.org.au/cookery for members and non-members.

The 2026-2028 Cookery Companion—Celebrating 75 Years of The Land Cookery Competition can be purchased for \$6.00 per copy. This bumper issue contains a brief history of the competition, general hints and tips, required and suggested recipes with specific hints to the competitor as well as a number of the committee members' favourite recipes. As there will not be any pre-

orders, we recommend that branches and groups ensure that representatives attending the Conference are funded to purchase sufficient copies to distribute to their members on return.

Competition and Display dates and times have changed from previous years so please take note!

Sunday 11.00 am–5.00 pm: open for receiving of entries.

Monday: open after judging has concluded until 6.00 pm.

Tuesday 8.00 am–6.00 pm: Display open.

Wednesday 8.00 am–6.00 pm: Display open (raffle draw at afternoon tea break).

Thursday 8.00 am–9.00 am: Display closed and light fruit cakes and puddings can be collected.

Please let me know if you are arriving later than 5.00 pm or otherwise held up to drop off your entries on the Sunday: 0418 771 432. Light fruit cakes and puddings should have a label attached with the name and phone contact for the person collecting them. No other entries will be returned or sold, therefore food labels are not required. All entries must have a 2025/2026 "The Land" coupon attached. As per the schedule the coffee sponge is to be entered without jam.

Prize cards will be collated by group and handed to Group Presidents/State Executive Committee Members for presentation/distribution on return. Prize monies will be deposited into nominated bank accounts only. If you receive a prize, please ensure you provide the Treasurer promptly with the correct account details to landcookerycommittee@gmail.com.

Thank you to those individuals, branches and groups who have already contacted us offering to bring along items for our 75th Anniversary Memorabilia Display. There is still time to contact us if you have any interesting baking/preserving items or just bring them along to Club Forster. The Committee will be setting up for the competition and display all day Saturday and Sunday morning so you are welcome to drop off any items you have.

Finally, Ellice Schrader will be releasing a video shortly after the Conference to walk you through the new schedule sections and what the judges will be looking for. Good luck with your entry preparations and I look forward to meeting as many of you who are able to attend in the Conference in Forster.

Carole Windley, Chairperson

New Branches Needed

Do you travel a long way to attend your meetings or find it difficult to attend meetings during work hours?

Think about starting a new branch in a more convenient location, or a branch that meets in the evening or on weekends.

Just 12 people are needed to start a new branch and you might be surprised how much interest there is in your community.

The branch will also need people who would be keen to take on positions (such as President, Secretary, Treasurer).

If you think you could help start a new branch take the opportunity to discuss this with your Group President.

For more information see P 1-1718 in the Procedures Manual.

Handicraft Report

Handicraft is a traditional main sector of craft making and applies to a wide range of creative and design activities that are related to making things with one's hands and skill including work with textiles, mouldable and rigid materials, paper, plant and fibre, etc.

Handicrafts remain a vital part of our global heritage, celebrating the creativity and skills of artisans throughout history. By understanding the history of handicrafts, we gain insight into the diverse cultural landscapes that shape our world today.

With Conference in Forster fast approaching and state Handicraft judging about to be completed, excitement is mounting to see the entries we receive and what wonderful work has been entered. The Handicraft Shop at State Conference this year will have lots of bargains. We have been very fortunate to receive a large amount of craft supplies and some overlockers to sell so if you are looking for a bargain be sure to visit our shop in Forster in May.

The Chain of Friendship is going well, for more information please contact our Secretary, Ruth Shanks or Lyn Hurst.

We have workshops planned for this year and our first one for 2026 will be held in Umina

Beach in July. There will be two craft classes over the two days: crochet/beaded Christmas ball and Chicken Scratch. The coupon for registration is in this journal and I look forward to meeting all those who attend. We are looking to have a separate day for judges training in August, details to come.

The State Handicraft Committee will be having a stand at the Craft and Quilt Expo at ICC Darling Harbour, 15th-18th July 2026. We will be promoting CWA and encouraging women to join our branches for their craft and friendship days. We will have a display of craft items that have been made by members of various branches.

We are currently updating our Handy Hints for Handicrafters booklet and hope to have it ready for sale at the Conference.

Our 2026/2027 schedule is well under way and will be available in the June Journal. As this is my first year as Chairperson for the State Handicraft Committee, I am excited to present to everyone at Conference the 2026/2027 Chairman's Challenge and Branch Challenge.

Quote: *Never stop believing in you. You will get there.*

Happy crafting
Gai Mason, Chairperson

Annual Report 2024/2025

The 2024/2025 electronic Annual Report is now available to download from the website (downloads section) and in the March E-news.

The Annual Report text has also been added to the back of the Directory. There will not be a separate printed report; please purchase the directory if you would like a printed copy.

The financial report will be handed out to delegates at Conference. We ask delegates to pass this printed copy on to members who are interested. An electronic copy of the financial report will also be available prior to Conference.

Handicraft Workshops

at Umina Beach

11th-12th July 2026

I wish to attend the **Gingham Chicken Scratch Workshop**, 2 days, cost \$70 (includes morning/afternoon tea/ lunch).

I wish to attend the **Beaded Christmas Bauble Workshop**, 2 days, cost \$70 (includes morning/afternoon tea/ lunch).

Kits supplied at extra cost.

To be held at:

Umina Beach CWA Hall,
2 Sydney Avenue,
Umina Beach

Name _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Dietary Requirements: _____

RSVP Friday 30th June 2025.

A) Direct Deposit: BSB 032-769 A/C 830 720, using your name as a reference and email a copy of the coupon to Handicraft Secretary: cwaofnsw.handicraft@gmail.com

OR

B) Send your cheque and coupon to Ruth Shanks, 13/22 Peel Place, Dubbo NSW 2830.

For more information contact Ruth Shanks 0419 821 614.

Cultural Report

It is hard to believe that it is that time again: time for the State Conference! It hardly feels as though it has been a year since the last one. And now I realise that I have turned into my mother. She always said that she didn't know where the weeks had gone so quickly and I always found that to be a strange thing to say since three out of four years were the same length with the fourth only one day longer. I obviously am now officially old!

By now all entries and entry forms should have been received by the Committee for judging or for inclusion. The earlier entries have been judged, and we, the Committee, are so looking forward to meeting up with many of you at Foster. We have been assured that our nominated area has excellent lighting which should please our artists and our judges. Please don't forget to return the raffle tickets either in the mail or deliver them personally to the Conference. The money can be banked in the Cultural account nominated on the front cover of the raffle books

or given to Barbara Gow at the Conference. The prizes are well worth the chance of winning and the funds raised provide us with the prize money and trophies for any winners for whom we are responsible. The money also allows us to continue to support the Moorambilla Voices choir.

Plans are afoot for more workshops following the success of the one held in Young with Carol Xuereb and her experts. By all accounts it was an inspirational two days and was enjoyed by all participants. Thank you from us all Carol. Watch this space for more news as it comes to hand.

Our contemporary Australian woman author for this month is Tricia Stringer and the book I read titled "Queen of the Road". Tricia Stringer grew up on a farm in country South Australia. She spent most of her life in rural communities which is where she loves to be. She currently lives on the Copper Coast region where she works as a teacher-librarian by day and she is an author at night. Her knowledge and love

of the country is evident in her novels. She has also written three children's books.

This particular novel, published in 2012, tells the story of Angela, the single mother of a four year old. She juggles two jobs in an attempt to make ends meet. Her father offers her a truck driving job which requires her to move to a new town. Here she faces problems from the townspeople and other drivers who are hesitant to use her services. One local who doesn't judge her is Coop who is also facing problems with the townspeople. Together they make decisions to survive the feelings of being judged and isolated. The weather will soon be cooler—just right for curling up in a blanket with a cup of something warm and a good book. This is one that you might enjoy!

Once again, I hope to see many of you at Foster, and wish anyone who has entered any of the many competitions on offer a degree of success.

Lynne Dunn, Chairperson

Social Issues Report

The Social issues Committee Facebook group is now live. My thanks to Amanda Manson (former Committee Member) and also Yvette Smith (current Committee Member) for putting this together. There is already information available to members via that platform on the topics of aged care, precision medicine and cervical screening.

Planning on the webinar on the basics of the Aged Care Act continues. The Committee is investigating appropriate industry experts and organisations to address members on the basics of the

Aged Care Act reforms and provide information on a simple and clear approach for starting and navigating the aged care process.

The Committee and I are very much looking forward to meeting you all at State Conference in Forster in May 2026. We are presently preparing a series of flyers for members addressing the Committee's 2025/2026 Policy Priority Issues for members to take with them and disseminate throughout their branches and groups. We will be present for the week of State Conference and I

strongly encourage members to speak to Committee and I about social issues currently facing your communities.

There will be a brief meeting of the Social Issues Committee during the week of State Conference, after which the next meeting is scheduled for 27th August 2026 via Zoom.

Please get in touch with myself, or one of the Committee members, if you have any questions or wish to raise an important issue.

Elizabeth O'Dwyer, State Social Issues Officer

International Report

What a busy time the last two months have been. We had 130 attendees for the International Seminar in Dubbo.

Chris Ford was our first speaker. She spoke about her family's time living and working in Fiji between 1919-1945. She shared a slideshow of photographs with us as well. So special to hear personal recollections as told to Chris by her family.

Then there were several short videos showing making Masi (tapa) cloth and woven fans, Fijian singers, Meke and how to make crepe paper hibiscus flowers. To take us to morning tea we then had members share what they did at their branch or group for International.

Narisha Karan then presented her talk on Fiji from a woman's

perspective. She shared her story with us, with her ancestors having come originally from India as indentured labourers, through to how there used to not be much interaction between Fijians, Indo-Fijians and Chinese-Fijians but in Narisha's generation this is changing. She has good friends in each of those categories. Attendees were very interested and asked lots of questions that took us through to lunch.

After lunch Narisha's husband Ravinesh Krishna gave his talk on Fiji from a man's perspective. Ravi was as entertaining as Narisha, whilst also imparting an overview of modern Fiji to us. Once again there was a spirited Q & A session.

Our final speaker for the day was Lynn Moore and she gave us a very light hearted look at being in Fiji during the first Coup and also at a later date when Cyclone Sarai hit.

Each speaker had slides which really brought their stories to life.

I would like to sincerely thank them for the time they put into preparing and presenting their talks. Thanks also to my Committee and Jenny for all their help in ensuring the Seminar ran as smoothly as we could make it. Thanks to Ruth and Warwick Shanks for finding Narisha and Ravi. Thanks to everyone who helped in any way at the Seminar whether it was with the display, IT or any other capacity. Lastly thanks to the members who attended and supported our fundraising so generously.

The highlight of dinner I think may have been the lucky doors which brought much laughter and bantering to the 117 attending.

On the Friday after Seminar, it was my privilege to speak at the QCWA International Conference in Ipswich. I gave them an

overview of projects we had done or contributed to in 2025. Samoa is their Country of Study for 2026 and Friday night we travelled to Deception Bay to share an Ava ceremony, dinner and entertainment with the Samoan Association. Valencia a young Samoan woman also spoke on the Friday afternoon. She told us about her journey from when she left her family to go to New Zealand and live with extended family to start high school, to how in 2025 they moved to Brisbane and she completed year 12. This year she is studying Criminology at Queensland Uni.

Thank you to all the groups who have submitted entries to the International competitions. By the time this Journal comes out the judging will have been completed but you have to wait until State Conference to find out the results.

Our Country of Study books will be available to purchase for \$25 at our display at Conference, unless sold out prior. Should you wish to purchase one, let Sabina Van Rooy (Monaro Group International Officer and International Committee Treasurer) know prior to Conference. She will put the book aside and you can collect and pay at Conference. It is cash only as we do not have Square or EFTPOS facilities.

As a result of many requests we are adding a People's Choice category in the doll section. Come and have a look and cast your vote. Also Sabina has sourced a jigsaw of Fiji for people to put together at Conference. Purely by chance it is the same scene as the cover of our book.

In the near future I hope to have a Zoom catch up with the other State International Officers around Australia.

Carolyn McMullen,
State International Officer



Conference Program 2026

Sunday 3rd May

4.30 pm **Ecumenical Service—Auditorium, Club Forster**

Monday 4th May

9.30 am **Official Opening—Club Forster**

Welcome to Country—Aunty Elvena Paulson

National Anthem, CWA Anthem & Motto

Welcome by State President, Apologies & Announcements

Welcome by Cr Claire Pontin, Mayor, MidCoast Council

Official Opening—TBC

Company of Voices Choir

Speaker—TBC

Keynote Speaker—Kerri Pottharst OAM

11.00 am **State President's Address**

11.30 am **Lunch**

1.00 pm **Business Session—Club Forster**

Confirmation of Minutes of 2025 Annual General Meeting

1.15 pm **General Business**

Medical Research Fund Cheque presentation

State Office Bearer Nominee Introductions

Agenda

Sponsor Address—Westfund

Agenda

Tuesday 5th May

9.00 am **Business Session—Club Forster**

State Honorary Secretary's Report

State Honorary Treasurer's Report

Speaker—Dr Nicholas Zdenkowski, Breast Cancer Trial

Agenda

Sponsor Address

12.30 pm **Lunch**

2.00 pm **Business Session—Club Forster**

Sponsor Address—Telstra

Agenda

4.30 pm **State International Meeting**

Wednesday 6th May

9.00 am **Business Session—Club Forster**

State Agricultural & Environmental Officer's Report

State International Officer's Report

State Social Issues Officer's Report

State Office Bearers for 2026–2027 announced

Agenda

Sponsor Address—RAMHP

Agenda

12.30 pm **Lunch**

2.00 pm **Business Session—Club Forster**

2.30 pm **Sponsor Address—NBNC**

Agenda

3.30 pm **Close of Business Sessions**

6.30 pm **Gala Dinner—Club Forster**

Thursday 7th May

9.00 am **State and Committee raffle results announced**

State Committee Reports and Award Ceremony

Agricultural & Environmental Committee Awards

Hospital Support Committee Report

Show Catering Committee Report and Donation

Cultural Committee Report and Awards

The Land Cookery Committee Report and Awards

Handicraft Committee Report and Awards

Honorary Editor's Report (including Garry Award)

Publicity Support Forum Award

Past State Presidents' Award

Pyrus Award

Votes of Thanks

Introduction of current Group Presidents, new State Executive Committee members and State Office Bearers

12.00 pm **Close of Conference**



Additional Conference Information

Delegates Information

The delegate's book is available to delegates at registration and State Committee members. Observers to Conference should bring the February and April journals which lists Conference motions to be discussed.

Shuttle from Taree Station, Sunday 3rd May

If you are arriving on the 12.40 pm train and require transport from Taree Station to the venue, please contact Rhonda Merchant on 0417 475 756 or via email at bazandrhonda@gmail.com. Please note that transport will not be available for later arrivals, as the Ecumenical Service will have already commenced.

Registration Hours for Delegates

Registration will be located at the Neptune Lounge

- Sunday: 12.00 pm–4.00 pm
- Monday: 8.30–9.30 am (late arrivals only)

State Office Shop

The Shop will be open for the collection of pre-purchased items only at the Neptune Lounge. There will also be a selection of merchandise to try on.

- Monday: 11.30 am–1.00 pm & 5.00 pm–5.30 pm
- Tuesday: 8.00 am–9.00 am & 12.30 pm–2.00 pm
- Wednesday: 8.00 am–9.00 am & 12.30 pm–2.00 pm

Please remember to bring your own reusable shopping bag as plastic bags will not be available. Shop orders are recorded under the person who ordered them, not branch or group.

Voting Hours

No voting will be required this year, as all nominees are unopposed and the Medical Research Project

is continuing for another year.

Lunches

Prepaid lunches are to be collected from outside of the Atrium—please follow the signage. A reminder that no food or drinks (except for water) are to be brought into Club Forster. Multiple dining options onsite are also available.

Gala Event

The Gala Dinner will be held on the evening of Wednesday 6th May 2026, Club Forster Auditorium. Gala Dinner tickets must be paid for in advance. There is no theme. Tickets are non-refundable and GST inclusive. Tickets can be purchased via TryBooking using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DHKWC>

Speaker Time Limits

Mover of a motion—may speak for three minutes. Seconder of a motion may speak for two minutes. Members speaking in favour or against a motion may speak for two minutes. You will hear a warning bell (1 ring) when you have 30 seconds remaining to speak. 2 rings is when you must stop speaking.

Parking

Club Forster has many parking spots available at no cost.

Foreign Coins and Stamps

Please bring these with you to Conference—there will be collection points at the International Committee display.

Mobility Impaired Venue Access

Access to Club Forster is mobility impaired friendly with ramp access and a lift. If you are bringing a walker, it will need to be safely stowed outside the main auditorium while the Conference

is in progress. Volunteers will be available to assist you as required. Please label your walker clearly with your name, group and mobile phone number.

Committee Exhibitions

All Committee Displays including Agricultural & Environmental, Cultural, Handicraft, Hospital Support, International, Show Catering, Social Issues, The Land Cookery as well as the Publicity Support Forum are located at Club Forster.

Agricultural & Environmental Committee

Recycled Article with Form A 5-2-724 and Moore Award Book with Form A 5-3-724 attached to be delivered to the Agricultural & Environmental display by 1 pm on Sunday 3rd May 2026. The name on the list for each group, must be the person collecting the Recycled Article and the Moore Award Book. All Recycled Articles and Moore Award Books to be collected by 1 pm on Thursday 7th May 2026.

Cultural Committee

Entries for all Art Sections must be submitted by 1 pm on Sunday May 2nd. Artworks will be judged on Sunday afternoon. Artworks must be collected by 1 pm on Thursday May 7th. Designated Group Representatives are requested to collect group envelopes and cultural books before 1 pm on Thursday 7th May.

The Land Cookery Committee

Entries will be received Sunday 4th May from 11.00 am to 5 pm unless otherwise arranged. The Land Cookery display will open when judging has concluded on Monday. The raffle will be drawn on Wednesday 6th May during the afternoon tea break. Only light fruit cakes and puddings can be collected on Thursday 7th May between 8 am–9 am. No other exhibits will be returned.

Added/Amended Agenda Motions

Health & Social Security

H14. Guyra Evening Branch, Northern Tablelands Group

“That the policy of the CWA of NSW be to advocate that the Commonwealth Government and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) reverse the recent reductions to travel reimbursement and allied-health provider rural loadings under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in rural and regional areas, to ensure people with disability continue to have equitable access to supports regardless of location.”

H19. Canberra Branch, Monaro Group

“That the policy of CWA of NSW be to advocate that the Federal Government and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) review NDIS pricing and

funding arrangements to ensure fair and transparent indexation rates that reflect the true cost of service delivery for allied health professionals (AHPs) and support providers, particularly in rural, regional and remote communities.”

Transport & Telecommunications

T2. Tamworth Evening Branch, Wanthella Group

“That the Policy of CWA of NSW be to advocate for further investigation into speed-limiting technology—it’s practical use, effectiveness, and impacts—to build a robust evidence base aimed at reducing high-speed crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries.”

T3. Picton District Branch, Illawarra Group

Withdrawn

Miscellaneous

M2. Maules Creek Namoi Group
Withdrawn

Urgency Motions

UM1. Walgett Branch, Barwon Group

“That the policy of CWA of NSW be to advocate for the opposition of compulsory land acquisition by the NSW Government for all linear infrastructure.”

UM2. Cooma and Bredbo Branches, Monaro Group

“That the policy of CWA of NSW be to request the Federal Ministers for Health and Aged Care to review the transport cost of older people in rural and remote areas in Australia and to provide transport to equitable and affordable subsidy to be able access services.”



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Will to ACRF.**

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State Office Bearer Nominations

For 2026, all positions are unopposed. There will be no voting on Office Bearers at the State Conference.

State President

UNOPPOSED

Tanya Jolly—Barellan Branch, Murrumbidgee-Lachlan Group



Member for 29 years.

Branch Positions: *Weethalle Branch (now closed):* President, Secretary, Vice President, Treasurer, Agricultural & Environmental, Cookery Officer, Councillor to Group, Delegate to State Conference. *Barellan Branch:* Vice President, Councillor to Group, Delegate to State Conference.

Group Positions: President, Vice President, Agricultural & Environmental, IBIS Editor, Chairperson for the 2014 Griffith State Conference.

State Positions: Executive Committee Member, Agricultural & Environmental Officer, Member of Agricultural & Environmental Committee, monitor on closed CWA Facebook group, State Restructure Committee, State President (current).

State Honorary Secretary

UNOPPOSED

Bronwyn Dunston—Singleton Branch, Hunter River Group



Member for 28 years.

Branch Positions: President, Secretary, Treasurer, International, Cultural, Publicity, Councillor and delegate.

Group Positions: President, Secretary, Treasurer, SECM, International, Vice President.

State Positions: The Land Secretary, Social Issues Officer, Vice President, State Secretary (current).

State Honorary Treasurer

UNOPPOSED

Ruth Cargill, Dubbo Evening Branch, Macquarie Group

Member for 25 years.

Branch Positions: Treasurer, President, Vice President, Secretary, Land Cookery Officer, International Officer, Councillor to Group, Delegate to State Conference.



Group Positions: Vice President, Treasurer, Cookery Officer, Telstra Connected Seniors Trainer, Treasurer ACWW South Pacific Area Conference Sub-Committee.

State Positions: Vice President, State Executive Committee member, Treasurer (current).

State International Officer

UNOPPOSED

Carolyn McMullen, Bundarra Branch, Gwydir Group



Member for 16 years.

Branch Positions: President (current), Secretary, Treasurer, Cookery Officer, Councillor to Group, Delegate to State Conference.

Group Positions: Vice President, Cookery Officer, Cultural Officer, Handicraft Officer, President (current).

State Positions: Member of the Kindness Working Group, State International Officer (current).

State Agricultural & Environmental Officer

UNOPPOSED

Penelope Fenley, Merriwa Branch, Hunter River Group



Member for 12 years.

Branch Positions: President, Secretary, International Officer, Publicity Officer.

Group Positions: Vice President, Agricultural & Environmental Officer, Publicity Officer.

State Positions: State Agricultural & Environmental Committee Member (current); State Executive Committee Member, CWA of NSW Representative to TOCAL Advisory Council (current).

Citation: I joined CWA of NSW in 2014 once I was living in Merriwa full-time. I have lived in the Riverina, Southern Tablelands, Blue Mountains and the Hunter Valley, so have experience with agriculture and environmental issues in various climates and topographies. Understanding the integral intertwining of agriculture and environment is a

core part of running a successful farming business. I work well in a team. I have worked in all levels of government, and I am aware of how the different layers can impact on policy and decision making processes. Being involved with agriculture for most of my life, I am aware of the challenges confronting agriculture environmentally and personally, how government actions can have unexpected negative consequences and how long it can take to address these. I am a member of NSW Farmers and the CWA of NSW Agricultural & Environment Committee. I am the current CWA of NSW representative on the TOCAL Advisory Council, which requires reporting to TOCAL prior to meetings and to State Executive Committee after each meeting. After working in libraries I understand the need to stay updated with relevant information and research and be aware of possible impacts on practices including CWA of NSW policies and procedures.

State Social Issues Officer

UNOPPOSED

Elizabeth O'Dwyer, Mascot Evening, Phillip Group



Member for 14 years.

Branch Positions: President, Secretary, Cookery Officer, Councillor to Group, Delegate to State Conference and AGM.

Group Positions: Vice President, Agricultural & Environmental Officer, Cookery Officer.

State Positions: Social Issues Committee Member, Secretary of the Social Issues Committee, Member of Centenary Committee, State Social Issues Officer (current).

State Vice Presidents

THREE POSITIONS—UNOPPOSED

Beverly Britton, Lisarow-Ourimbah Branch, Northumberland Group



Member for 15 years.

Branch Positions: President (current), Vice President, Minute Secretary, International Officer, Cookery Officer, Cultural Officer, Group Councillor, Delegate to State Conference.

Group Positions: President, Vice President.

State Positions: State Executive Committee Member (current), Executive Representative on the State Cookery Committee.

Citation: I was born in Gunning in the Southern Tablelands, grew up in Bomaderry and moved

to the Central Coast in 1965 where I finished my schooling and completed a Secretarial Course at Gosford Technical College. After marrying in 1972, we purchased a property in the Yarramalong Valley, west of Wyong, where we raised beef cattle and kept bees. We have two daughters, one a Speech Pathologist in Albury, the other an Assistant Principal in Newcastle. We have three grandchildren. I was a partner in my husband's tiling business as well as working at a large wholesale nursery for 30 years, where I became a supervisor and managed a work force of 35 people. I joined the CWA in 2011. I have held a Branch position every year since then and a Group position for the last 10 years which includes three years as SECM. I helped organise the cooking competitions and Tea Rooms at the Central Coast Regional Shows, and also coordinated Tea Rooms and craft stalls at the Central Coast Harvest Festival which showcases the hinterland and farming communities of our area. If elected, I will apply common sense and dedication to the position and assure you I will do my very best.

Leonie Fish, South Grafton Evening Branch, North Coast Group



Member for 47 years.

Branch Positions: President, Secretary, Treasurer (current), International, Cultural, Publicity. Councillor to Group and Delegate to Conference.

Group Positions: President, Secretary, Vice President, International, North Coast State Conference Organising

Committee 2024.

State Positions: State Social Issues Officer, State Social Issues Committee, SECM, State Choir, State Vice President (current).

Citation: I joined CWA in 1978, making many new friends and enjoyed supporting CWA activities. I am married with three children and three grandchildren. Family gatherings are precious as we all live in different parts of NSW. I completed schooling in Tamworth and trained as an infants teacher in Armidale. I had a wonderful working life and was privileged to be part of so many lives. "Learning is a life-long journey"—and I learned so much from interacting with children and their families over 45 years. I had the opportunity to be involved in programs for children with educational and well-being issues. I have been State Vice President for the last year and with the experience of being State Social Issues Officer, I have come to a greater understanding of the importance of teamwork. Supporting our State President, each other, and what CWA stands for, makes CWA the strong voice it is today. It is a privilege to be a member of CWA and to be a part of this incredible network of women.

Christine Ford, Walgett Branch, Barwon Group



Member for 12 years.

Branch Positions: Treasurer, Catering Officer, Delegate to Group, Secretary (current).

Group Positions: Secretary, Treasurer, Social Issues Officer, Group Councillor, President (current).

State Positions: Show Catering Supervisor, Executive

Representative to the Show Catering Committee, State Executive Committee Member (current).

Citation: Born in New Zealand, I moved to Australia in 1990 and have lived out west since. My husband is

a 3rd generation funeral director and working in this industry has been interesting and fulfilling work. Up until recent years we also owned and operated the Tyrepower store in Walgett. I'm involved in our show society, co-leader for our singing group, Community representative on the local health committee and I'm the secretary/treasurer for two sporting clubs. My background in administration, bookkeeping and computers has been beneficial in our businesses, my volunteer work and in my CWA positions. Serving as a State Executive Committee member has been enormously rewarding and I will use this experience to continue to help the Association. I am an active member of CWA at branch, group and state level and I'm enthusiastic to continue by transitioning to Vice President to support CWA, the members and our President where required.

CWA of NSW Competition dates

For The Land Cookery and Handicraft dates check with your local branch and group.

Competition	Closing date	Delivered to
A&E Recycled Article: Group winner	Sunday before Conference	A&E display area
A&E Moore Award: Branch entries	Sunday before Conference	A&E display area
Branch A&E Officer's Report Award	31st January	State A&E Officer
A&E School Children K-3 colouring: Group winner	Sunday before Conference	A&E display area
A&E School Children 4-6 story: Group winner	31st January	cwa.nsw.ae@gmail.com
International Senior Book Competition: Group winner	28th February	State International Officer
International Student Post Card: Group winner	28th February	State International Officer
International Doll: Group winner	28th February	State International Officer
Primary School PowerPoint: Group winner	28th February	State International Officer
International Handicraft: Group winner	28th February	State International Officer
Short Story Senior: members	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Short Story Junior: individuals	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Poem (senior only): members	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Bush Ballad (senior only): members	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Junior Posters hard copy or digital: individuals	15th February	Cultural Committee Secretary
Cultural Record Book hard copy: Group winner	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Cultural Record Book Digital: Group winner	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Photography, Senior and Junior: Individuals	15th November	Cultural Committee Secretary
Scott & Broad Art: individuals	Coupons: 31st March, Artwork: Sunday before Conference	Cultural Committee Secretary/display
Past State Presidents' Award	28th February	State Office
Publicity Award	1st March	cwapublicityforum@gmail.com
Agnes Garry Award	15th February	Hon Editor via mail or email

Member Profile



Carolyn McMullen, State International Officer.

What branch and group do you belong to?

I belong to Bundarra Branch, Gwydir Group.

How long have you been a member of the CWA of NSW?

In June, it will be 16 years.

Why did you want to join?

As a little girl, I saw a CWA badge amongst my grandmother's things. I thought one day that it would be a good thing to belong to. I have never been able to find out if the badge was hers or how she came to have it if it wasn't.

What committees or positions have you held?

I have been Branch Cookery Officer, Treasurer, Secretary, President, and currently Correspondence Secretary. At group I have been Cultural, Cookery, Handicraft, Vice President, President and currently

Carolyn McMullen

Vice President, again. At state, I was Gwydir Group SECM and am currently the State International Officer.

How did you find your way to the International Committee?

As the State International Officer, you automatically become the Chair of the International Committee.

In a few sentences, can you explain what the International Committee aims to do?

The International Committee organises and runs a seminar on the Country of Study each year, coordinates the collection and judging of the International competitions and organises the display of those entries at the State Conference. Most important, though, is to help through the International Fund and fundraising to improve the lives of women, children and families in countries less fortunate than ours. Also, to foster understanding and empathy among our NSW members toward countries and people around the world.

What does a day in the life of a State International Officer look like?

It does vary depending on the time of year. A normal day is to check and respond to emails received from the group, branch or individual members and perhaps write a report for the Journal. Sometimes there may be a phone call or two to answer; some days it seems the phone rings all day. In the evening, there may be a International Committee meeting via Zoom. Other days might be spent attending branch or group International Days.

What do you love most about the International Committee?

How being involved in International lets me see first-hand how much all the Material Aid, Mother & Baby Packs and special projects (for example, water tanks) mean a great deal to our sisters in the South Pacific and across the world, as anyone attending the International meeting at the State Conference will see. None of the aid would be possible without the enormous support that members across the state give to our Committee, and the work of Hospital Support and the Phillip Group members in putting the parcels together.

Ideas for encouraging new members

- Listen to what new members have to say even if it's different from the usual way of doing things.
- Explain rules and procedures when needed in a gentle way.
- Pair each new member with a more experienced mentor so that procedures can be explained and questions answered.
- Remember that we were all new once and took some time to understand things.
- Invite new members to participate in activities—stalls, shows, craft days and any other activities.
- Invite new members to participate in competitions. Make the forms, due dates, etc, clear to them.
- Encourage members to ask questions and take time to explain things.
- Have a brainstorming session asking newer members for their input and ideas without judgement.

Sudoku

How to Play Sudoku

Every row must have the numbers 1–9 appear once. Every column must have the numbers 1–9 appear once. Every 3x3 box must have the numbers 1–9 appear once. Solution in the next edition.

Tip: you can start by looking for the numbers that are missing in a row and see if you can eliminate any of those numbers by looking at the other numbers in the columns or squares around it.

7	9		6	5				
		6	3	8				5
3					1	7	2	
5		7			3		6	
	1		2		4		8	
	6		9			4		3
	8	4	5					1
6				2	8	9		
				4	6		5	2

Puzzle Rating: Easy. Source: www.sudoku-puzzles.net

	4	7				9	6	
			6		3			
1	3			2			8	5
		5	9		7	8		
9								1
		4	1		2	3		
8	5			4			7	9
			5		8			
	6	9				5	2	

Puzzle Rating: Medium. Source: www.sudoku-puzzles.net

	9			3				5
		4	1		7			3
			4	6	9			
	2					1		
6	7						9	4
		3					8	
			5	1	8			
5			6		3	8		
7				2			5	

Puzzle Rating: Hard. Source: www.sudoku-puzzles.net

5				2				7
9	7						2	4
			9		1			
	2			5			9	8
		9				3		
1	3			9			6	
			5		2			
2	4						5	3
6				8				9

Puzzle Rating: Very Hard. Source: www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to these 179 new members of our branches:

Ariah Park Liz MacLean,
Rosemary Wood **Ballina**
Louise Atkinson, Karen Ballintyne
Bangalow Catherine Bailey,
Robyn Buckley, Michelle Kelly,
Ulrike Schultz, Elaine Volpato,
Elaine Waugh **Barellan** Patricia
Castle, Michelle Fletcher, Denise
McDermott **Batemans Bay**
Jennifer Chapman, Lynette
Spanomanolis **Bathurst**
Evening Hannah Miller
Belconnen Lisa Collins, Shirley
Fettell **Bellingen** Marg Brien,
Toni Byrne **Belmont** Sue
Fuchs **Bermagui & District**
Katherine Gentle **Berry** Lyn
Booth **Borenore** Narelle
Oldroyd **Bowral** Linda Frost, Julie
Tope, Kim Tynan **Broken Hill**
Courtney Colling **Bulahdelah**
Evelyn Denelzen **Bundarra**
Johnette Walker **Bungendore**
Pamela Klemke **Camden**
Kim Isherwood, Paris Maguire,
Melodie McGrath, Megan Williams
Canberra Adine Boehme,
Maxine Deakins, Edwina Royce
Canowindra Sarah Refalo
Cessnock Evening Lorraine
Brown **Cooma** Megan McDonald
Collie Evening Jessica
McKay **Coonamble Evening**
Madeline Mackay **County of**
Burnett Shelley Moor **Cowra**
Evening Colleen Woodley
Dapto Kathryn Hammond
Deniliquin Shirlee Burge, Jenny
Fellows, Louise Graham, Helen
Hayes, Lucy Horne, Elizabeth
Whykes **Dubbo Evening**
Natalie Bramble, Shirley Hazelton
East Maitland Jacqueline
Opuku **Enngonia** Manon de la
Roche du Ronzet **Eugowra** Anne
O'Connor, Antonella Willersdorf

Evans Head Anne Jones **Exeter**
Jan Brown, Toni Phillips **Forbes**
Evening Jan Hawthorn **Forster**
Barbara Eskelinen **Galston** Janet
Lawson **Glenbrook** Brenda
Greig **Gloucester** Lisa Peterson
Googong Penny Azzato,
Rachael Beveridge **Greystanes**
Naomi Jackson **Gundagai** Erin
Batt, Sharon Batt **Hornsby &**
District Kylea Tink **Hunters Hill**
Pia Jenkins, Millie Lulic, Maria Urgel,
Evangeline Walker, Leah Wicks, Sue
Yates **Inverell Sunrise** Mary
Judd **Jindabyne** Rhonda Allen,
Wendy Marman **Jindera** Karen
Reid **Keiraville** Alexandra Brown,
Jill Crossley, Anne Gallagher,
Bianca Jarvis, Kayla Jarvis, Tessa
Kerans-Clay **Kiama** Dale Severs
Kiama Evening Wendy
Saunders **Kyogle Evening**
Wendy Grissell **Leura** Leonie Dale
Lismore Gillian Ashlin **Lismore**
Evening Heidi Barnier **Maclean**
Charlie Skinner **Maitland**
Katie Baylis **Manilla Evening**
Roslyn Cook **Mannering Park**
Colleen Bellamy, Susana Maulen
Mascot Evening Peg Redding
Milton District Rhonda O'Brien
Morpeth Alison Ravn **Moruya**
Stephanie Chiu, Shani Keane
Murwillumbah Evening
Karen Boyce **Narooma**
Maryanna Word **Nashdale**
Madison Thomas **Nelson Bay**
Verella Hobbs **Newcastle**
Evening Anne Mitchell **North**
Star Jenny Baumann, Philippa
McGuigan, Heather Scanlan
Nymagee Sammy Harley,
Amanda Hart **Orange** Lynelle
Maguire, Samantha McGufficke
Paterson Alison Crocker
Peats Ridge & District Deb
Ashford, Julie Carbone, Gayle

Downey, Levana Hobday, Jenny
Kent, Michelle Massey, Wendy
Masters, Deb McGillicuddy,
Kim Wells **Penrith** Kathy
Godkin, Carol Gough, Vicky
Williams **Picton District** Anne
Cordingley, Zarina Marsland,
Hazel Pilt **Port Macquarie**
Jan Fuller, Margaret Osborne
Queanbeyan Evening Gillian
Southwell **Richmond** Lisa Agius,
Debbie Cooper, Kathy Livingston
Rylstone Nerele Nelson
Sawtell Janine Hutchings
South West Rocks Chris
Manns **Southern Highlands**
Evening Lesley Wood **Stanwell**
Park Jennifer Short **Sydney**
City Kathryn Brice, Laura Brice,
Lucy Carter, Melissa Miceli
Tamworth Evening Jessica
Tellemann **Taralga** Elaine Rhodes
Tenterfield Ashleigh Ruffo
Tenterfield Weekenders
Luella Copeland-Smith, Georgina
Llewellyn, Ashleigh Rasmussen,
Lindi Sheehan, Aimee Thomas,
Robby Wilson **Toongabbie**
Melinda Lowe **Tumut and**
Surrounds Jennifer Watts
Umina Beach Margaret
Booth, Tina Cabrera, Caroline
Gardiner, Vicki Knight, Elizabeth
McFadgen, Christine Morgan,
Natalie Stansfield **Uralla** Lindsey
Wright **Urunga** Tracey Henwood
Virtual Judy Morse-Cook
Wagga Wagga Evening
Christine Nicholson **Walgett**
Geneve Austin, Bridgette
Fitzgerald, Shirley Smith, Leola
Thurston **Weemelah** Timaleti
Davy **Wingham** Sue Hope
Woy Woy Michele Sweeney
Yamba Chris McDonald **Yass**
Tanya Boulter, Lynda Weller.

A letter enclosing your membership card has been sent to you.

Advocacy Update

The Country Women's Association of NSW continues to advocate for women, families and communities across regional, rural and remote New South Wales. The first months of 2026 have involved a wide range of engagement with government, sector organisations and advocacy coalitions on issues including healthcare access, agricultural safety, telecommunications, energy policy and environmental protection.

Meetings

Throughout February and March, CWA of NSW representatives participated in a series of meetings hosted by the Rural, Regional and Remote Communications Coalition (RRRCC). These discussions included briefings on the Next Generation Connectivity for Australian Agriculture project which is exploring how low-earth-orbit (LEO) satellite technology could support improved digital capability on farms. The coalition also received updates from NBN Co regarding the future role of LEO satellite infrastructure in regional telecommunications networks and discussed shared advocacy priorities to address ongoing connectivity gaps across rural Australia.

The CWA of NSW also attended a strategy meeting with independent Member for Wagga Wagga, Dr Joe McGirr, and other alliance partners involved in the Rural Health Action Plan. The plan builds on the findings of the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into regional, rural and remote health and seeks to progress practical reforms aimed at strengthening healthcare access outside metropolitan centres.

During this period, the Association was invited to participate as an observer in the Seniors Oral Health Alliance (SOHA). The Alliance is working to address the significant inequalities older Australians

experience in accessing dental care, particularly those living on low incomes, in aged care, or in regional and remote communities. The issues raised are closely aligned with concerns frequently reported by CWA of NSW members.

Engagement with SafeWork NSW also continued, with discussions focusing on safety initiatives in the agricultural sector. Current priorities include increasing awareness about seatbelt use in side-by-side vehicles, promoting vaccination against Q fever and supporting farm emergency planning. The CWA of NSW representatives also continue to attend SafeWork NSW roundtables, providing an opportunity to raise emerging safety issues directly with regulators and government representatives.

The CWA of NSW has also been involved in planning and coordination meetings for the Unite for Land and Water advocacy event which brings together community groups, Gomeroi representatives and allied organisations concerned about the impacts of the Narrabri Gas Project and associated pipeline infrastructure on land, water and food security.

In March, the CWA of NSW representatives attended stakeholder briefings as part of the NSW Energy Consumer Reference Group and related working groups. These sessions provided updates from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on energy affordability programs, the Net Zero Plan, regulatory changes affecting electricity and gas markets, and broader energy transition policies affecting regional communities.

The CWA of NSW also participated in discussions convened by the NSW Department of Communities

and Justice, as a member of the Community Sector Specialists Reference Group examining the first year of coercive control legislation in NSW. The session included insights from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research on early implementation outcomes and emerging issues to be considered in the forthcoming statutory review.

Additional engagement included meetings with the NSW Rural Women's Network regarding planning for the 2026 Rural Women's Gathering, as well as participation in the National Drought Network, which provides information sharing and updates on drought policy, conditions and support programs.

Submissions

During this period, CWA of NSW contributed to public consultation on the draft revision of AS 7531:2025—Rolling Stock Lighting and Visibility. While acknowledging improvements to the draft standard, the Association maintained that the proposed framework remains inadequate unless key visibility measures are mandatory rather than optional.

The submission emphasised that rail transport should meet safety standards at least equivalent to those required of heavy road transport and argued that the standard should reflect best-practice safety expectations rather than minimum requirements subject to operator discretion. CWA of NSW recommended that any departure from established safety controls should only occur following a documented risk assessment approved by the relevant regulator.

The CWA of NSW made a submission and appeared before the NSW parliamentary Inquiry into Health Services Amendment

From our Archives

(Splitting of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, MLHD) Bill 2025. Tanya Jolly, State President, emphasised the position that the focus should remain on improving healthcare outcomes, not drawing new boundaries or establishing new bureaucracies.

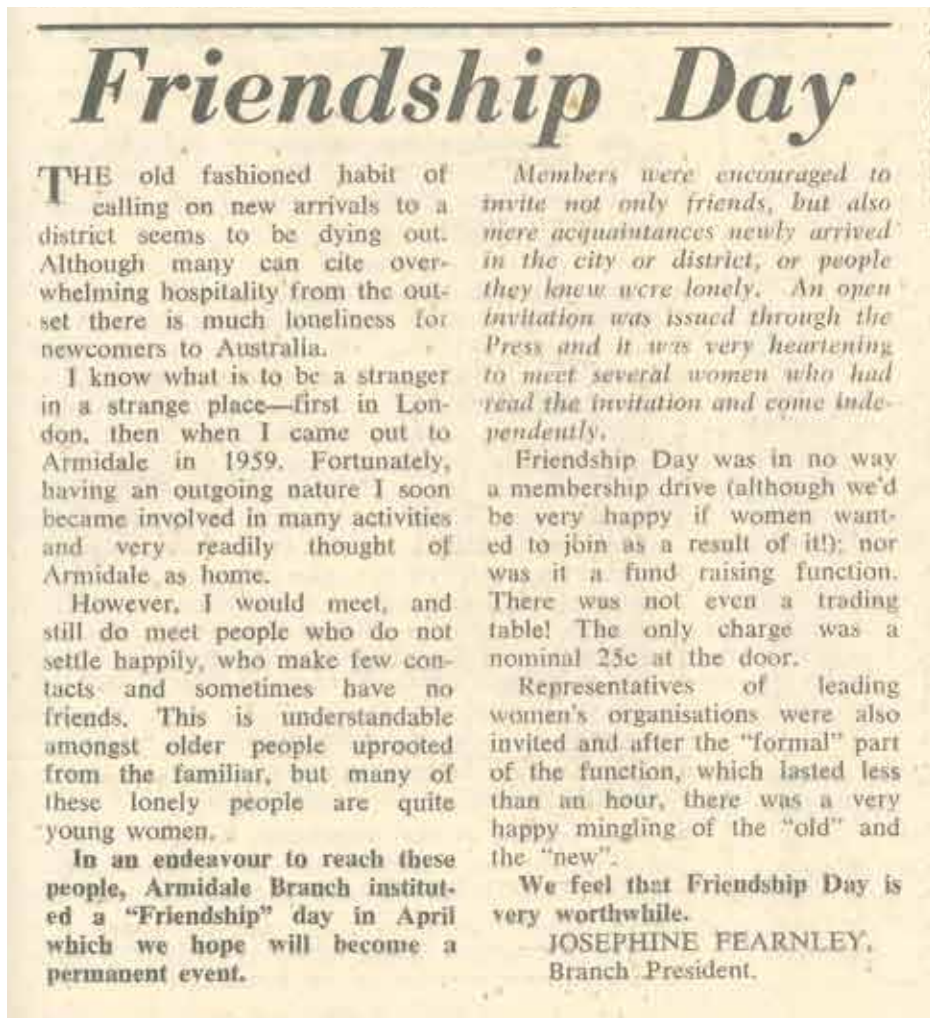
Media and Public Advocacy

The release of the CWA of NSW Annual Women's Survey Report was a major focus of public advocacy during this period. The survey, which received more than 750 responses from women across the state, provides an important evidence base for policy engagement and highlights persistent disparities between metropolitan and regional communities.

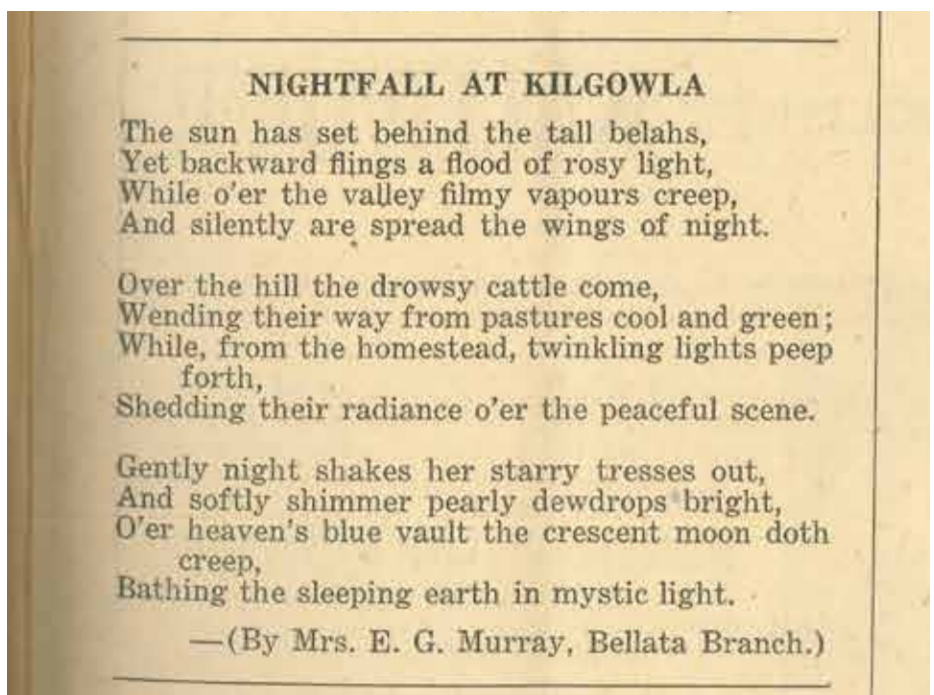
The findings reinforced concerns raised consistently by members: difficulty accessing primary healthcare services, long wait times for specialists, rising out-of-pocket medical costs and the need to travel significant distances for routine care. Housing insecurity and cost pressures also featured strongly, alongside concerns about safety, infrastructure and economic participation in regional communities.

Opinion articles published in *The Land* continue to provide an important platform for raising these issues publicly. Recent columns have addressed the growing impact of drought in regional communities, the challenges associated with overseas agricultural labour and workforce supply, and the importance of ensuring country children have equitable access to swimming and water safety education.

Through these activities, the CWA of NSW continues to ensure that the lived experiences of women in regional, rural and remote communities remain visible in policy discussions and public debate.



Friendship Day, The Country Woman, June 1968



Nightfall at Kilgowla poem, The Country Woman, May 1953

CWA of NSW Branch Email Policy

Purpose

To ensure the efficient and secure management of email communications within the Country Women's Association (CWA) of New South Wales, this policy outlines the allocation of dedicated branch email addresses and the use of personal email addresses for office-bearing and committee positions.

Policy Statement

The CWA of NSW database does not have the capacity to record role-based email addresses for Branch Presidents, Branch Treasurers, Group Office Bearers and Committee Office Bearers. It does, however, have the capacity to record a branch email address which will replace the Branch Secretary's email when State Office is emailing Branch Secretaries. If your branch chooses to use a branch email address, please indicate this on your Branch Annual Form (Branch Office Bearers form).

Due to these operational constraints and structure of our current database system, the following policy has been established:

1. Branch Email Address

- Each branch can, if agreed by the branch, open and operate a specific branch email address.
- The dedicated branch email address will be used when emailing the Branch Secretary on branch matters.
- The Branch Secretary is responsible for managing and maintaining the branch email account, ensuring that it is used for official branch communications.
- Branch Secretaries must ensure the dedicated branch email account

is secure and access is restricted to authorised personnel only.

- Branch Secretary's personal email will be used for personal matters such as her membership and shop orders.

2. Personal Email Addresses for Other Roles

- All other office-bearing and committee positions within the branch cannot be associated with dedicated branch email addresses.
- These positions must use their personal email addresses for CWA-related communications.
- The personal email address used must be the one associated with the member's profile in the CWA of NSW database.
- If you have created other role-based emails for public use, you can continue to promote those within your branch, however the State Office will not send correspondence to those email addresses.

3. Database Management

- The CWA database will be the primary source for managing and updating members' contact information.
- Members are responsible for ensuring their personal email addresses are accurate and up-to-date in the database.
- Any changes to personal email addresses should be promptly reported to the Membership Manager, who will update the database accordingly.

4. Email Usage

- All email communications should reflect the professional and respectful



values of the CWA of NSW.

- Email addresses used for CWA of NSW communications should be checked regularly to ensure timely responses to CWA-related matters.

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Celebrations

Canowindra Branch



Canowindra Branch members celebrated Margaret Swift with her long service bar presented by Branch President Cathy Smith. Margaret joined the Canowindra Branch in 2025 but has been an active member with the Eugowra Branch where she served as President and Secretary. She continues serving as the current Central Western Group International Officer. Congratulations Margaret!

North Coast Group



Deidre Vanderveer, Bonville Branch, received her 50 year badge at a recent Group Council Meeting. Deidre has held numerous roles, including Branch Patron, Branch President, Branch Treasurer, Branch Handicraft Officer, Branch Cultural Officer, Branch Cookery Officer, Branch Social Secretary and Branch delegate to State Conference. Congratulations, Deidre, on your amazing contribution to the CWA over the past 50 years. *Photo: Deidre receiving her certificate from North Coast President, Leonie Saunders.*

Stanwell Park Branch



Stanwell Park Branch has awarded a life membership to Carol Pugh for her involvement with the CWA for 49 years during which she served as Branch President, Group Councillor, Group Vice President and delegate to State Conference. She also won a Group Fund Raiser of the Year award. Her involvement in grant applications and building planning resulted in major improvements to our hall. Carol is a wonderful example of kindness to all members. *Photo: Branch President, Gloria Holloway, with Carol.*

Tenterfield Evening Branch



Tenterfield Evening Branch celebrated 100 years of CWA in Tenterfield at Steinbrook Hall. Attendees enjoyed a delicious lunch, lots of laughter and reminiscing. There was memorabilia on display and State President, Tanya Jolly, gave a wonderful address about her involvement with the CWA. Members Marilyn and Anne gave an informative talk about the branch's activities over the past 100 years. Some of the accomplishments included creating a rest room at the local showgrounds, purchasing a rest home for mothers and children and many fundraising activities to assist the local community.

Central Western Group



Helen Southwell, Byng-Emu Swamp Branch, was presented with life membership by Group Treasurer, Beverly Worrall. Helen's past positions have included President, Treasurer, and Secretary of Lyndhurst Branch as well as Group Secretary, Group Cultural, Group Handicraft Officer, Group Trophy Coordinator and member of the Group Public Speaking Committee. Congratulations Helen!

Camden Branch



Through concerted volunteer efforts, Camden Branch was delighted to be named winner in the Community Group Award category during Camden Council's Australia Day Awards and Citizenship Ceremony, accepted by Branch President, Darlene Burkhardt (centre left), and Branch Secretary, Sonia Roberts (centre right). The award recognises the work of current members and is a tribute to every generation before.



Celebrations

Mendooran Branch



In December 2025, the Mendooran Branch celebrated its 100th anniversary. The celebration included the unveiling of a CWA centenary bench by Immediate Past State President, Joy Beames, and attended by visiting members from branches within Castlereagh Council Group, representatives of the Mendooran Men's Shed, local members and friends. Visitors were invited to enjoy a delicious afternoon tea and view a memorabilia display. A summarised branch history was read and a beautiful birthday cake was cut.

From our Branches

Belmont Branch



just one of the properties taking part in the Autumn Central Tablelands Garden Trail. Members were kept busy selling baked goods and sandwiches to visitors keen to experience Hartvale's idyllic setting, tucked at the base of Mt York, with views across the valley. Pictured from left to right are Kathryn Hibbert, Branch President Kerrie Yealland, and Sharon Walls.

Belmont Branch was recently named a finalist in the Lake Mac Awards for the Community Group of the Year Category. These awards celebrate our local achievers, performers, sportspeople, volunteers and community groups. We were one of seven groups who made it through to the finals and several of our members attended the gala event for presentations. Although we didn't win, we were very pleased to be named a finalist and to have represented our branch at such a prestigious event. Pictured on the red carpet are Joan Brackley, Dorothy Sumner, Mel Atkin (Secretary) and Dianne Davis (President).

Blackheath Branch

In March, Blackheath Branch was invited to have a stall at Hartvale,



Mudgee Evening Branch

At our February 2026 meeting, the Mudgee Evening Branch was delighted to welcome guest speakers who originally hailed from Fiji—our Country of Study for the year—and who now call our beautiful town home. We felt incredibly fortunate to have Susie Nakauta and her family join us for the evening. Susie shared



warm and engaging insights into life in Fiji, including cherished cultural traditions and personal experiences. To top off the night, she and her family treated us to some wonderful singing, creating a truly memorable atmosphere.

Nimbin Branch



Nimbin Branch has the only op shop in our village and is highly valued in the community,

receiving donations and selling lots of low-priced, quality clothing and bric-a-brac to happy customers. We collaborate with other local community organisations to provide free material aid, such as blankets, clothing and kitchenware, to those in need daily. We also provide essentials to rough sleepers as needed, provide clothing to local pre-schools when requested and purchase new winter clothing and bedding to distribute for free to those in need during the winter months. We regularly donate quality clothing to remote op shops like Fitzroy Crossing. We also keep emergency clothing supplies on hand for community members in need and collaborate with Nimbin Youth to supply bedding and clothing upon request. All monies raised after expenses are directed back into the community.

Port Macquarie Branch



Port Macquarie Hastings Mayor Adam Roberts put in a special request for a lamington cake shaped like Australia for the community celebrations on Australia Day. 10 members set to work the day before to create the huge cake. Lots of measuring, cutting, icing and rolling in coconut. The result: one cake, 80 x 50 cm, for the community gathering; a smaller cake donated to a local charity that provides meals for those in need and lots more lamingtons sold in the tearooms on the day. 12 members ran the tearooms—the biggest and busiest in memory—

with lamingtons and scones for sale. They sold out of scones by 10 am!

Queanbeyan Evening Branch



Queanbeyan Evening Branch were proud to again support the Queanbeyan Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony, where our refreshments were warmly received, with vegetarian options, sweets and fruit cups being especially popular. Community engagement continued into February with Devonshire Teas at the local Showground for RSL LifeCare Community Services Day, followed by Jerrabomberra Community Day, featuring an information stall and homemade goods for sale. Looking ahead, we are preparing for the annual Respite Care High Tea, Seniors Festival in Queanbeyan and surrounds, our Land Cookery competitions in March, and Mother's Day fundraising activities. It has been a busy and rewarding start to the year, with both service to the community and the showcasing of our members' talents.

Quirindi Branch

Quirindi Branch hosted a morning tea for 10 residents in aged care recently at the local Sugar Plum Cafe. The residents were delighted to have an outing, to meet old friends, and to enjoy coffee and cake together. It was a valuable morning of



conversation and something to talk about when they returned home. Quirindi members are delighted to support these residents in aged care, with so many not having family close by.

Sydney City Branch



In the wake of the December Bondi tragedy, Sydney City members supported the Red Cross Lifeblood community by baking Anzac biscuits for blood donors and staff. After the donation, it was suggested that the branch leave a mitzvah, as this formal act of kindness and reflection was deeply meaningful to the community. Branch President Yvette Henderson spoke on ABC Radio about the display of community spirit, which touched community members. Regarding the spirit of the initiative, Bungendore Branch President Donna Bush remarked, "I was particularly heartened when she spoke about how the CWA shows up in moments of need, in times of change and when quiet persistence is required." President, Yvette (centre) and Vice Presidents, Lyn and Silvana, are pictured meeting Edgar, the manager of Sydney Town Hall's

Lifblood Centre, with our first delivery of Anzac biscuits.

Toongabbie Branch



Recently Toongabbie Branch were very fortunate to have the Parramatta City Councillor Georgina Valjak present a talk at our meeting. She spoke about the services and financial assistance available to community groups in our council area. Georgina also mentioned the implementation of a new community recycling centre in our council area.

We can certainly recommend having council representatives visit CWA meetings. This helps to improve the awareness of members regarding local issues and improves the relationships between branches and councils which can also assist with the work of the CWA of NSW in advocacy.

Woy Woy Branch

In 2022, the Woy Woy Branch started monthly lunch outings to support cafes and restaurants that struggled during COVID lockdowns and restrictions. They called it Support Small Business Lunch. This initiative continues with up to 25 members attending the lunches. This is a great way for new members to get to know their fellow branch members and for longer-serving members to stay



connected and form friendships. There is always much laughter and good times. The community businesses also appreciate the custom. February was a great lunch at Waterfall Cafe which sits within our local parklands—a free space with hectares of different planted areas.

Do you have a story to share?

Submit your stories about your International Women's Day event, Anzac Day event (including branch participation in your local Anzac Day event), community support activities, donations to a local cause, a workshop your branch has run, an International Day, a new craft group or anything a little bit different to the Honorary Editor as soon as you can after the event.

Submissions for the journal close the 10th of the month before (eg 10th May for June journal). Unfortunately, The Land Cookery days and Handicraft Days cannot be included in the journal as they are too similar for each branch and group.

Please also submit significant branch birthdays (10, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 75, 80, 90, 100) and awards to members (long service bars, 50 year badges, life memberships, OAMs) for the Celebrations section.

Member contributions and featured articles can also be submitted. Please contact the Honorary Editor to discuss.

Please send your item with a separate high quality photo to the Honorary Editor, Brenda Michaud via email: nswcountrywoman@gmail.com.

Photo tips

- Don't be afraid to take some extra shots from different angles. You can pick the best one later
- When you are taking a group shot try to get the people in two or three rows, eg. the first row of people sitting down and the back row standing behind
- Capturing a good "in the moment" shot can be difficult. Photos often turn out better if people know their photo is being taken and are smiling (whether or not they are looking at the camera)
- If you have a device with different resolution and quality settings, always use the highest resolution and the best quality
- Smart phones and tablets can be a convenient way of taking photos but they often don't have optical zoom or a good flash so get close and take the photo in good light. You might like to take a photo outside your building if inside photographs are too dark.

Ensure you have permission from the people in the photo to have their image printed in The Country Woman which is also publicly available online.

From our Groups

Monaro Group

Did you know the CWA of NSW is a founding member of the SOS Fracture Alliance (SOSFA)?

Last November, Kerri-Ann Arnott, State Social Issues Committee Secretary and SOSFA representative, and two Monaro Group representatives attended the SOSFA launch of the new Australian Clinical Standards for fragility fractures due to osteoporosis at Parliament House, Canberra.

The Standards represent the culmination of two years of tireless work by SOSFA to address the rising number of osteoporotic

fractures affecting countless people and costing Australia nearly \$3 billion every year.

Last December, the Monaro Group hosted a presentation by one of the doctors on the Alliance, Dr Fiona Mackie (pictured in the red jacket), who debunked several myths about osteoporosis.

SOSFA unites 43 medical, allied health, patient advocacy, carer and other organisations under



its umbrella with the goal of preventing secondary fractures occurring in Australians from undiagnosed or poorly treated osteoporosis.

Vale Patrisha Hurley OAM

Past State President 1998 to 2001

The Association is deeply saddened by the loss of Patrisha Hurley OAM who gave many years of dedicated service to the Country Women's Association of NSW, contributing at branch, group and state level with distinction.

After holding a range of office bearing roles at Myamley Branch and Oxley Group during her 55 years of membership, Patrisha then joined the State Executive, serving as State Vice President from 1994 to 1997 and later as State President from 1998 to 2001. During her leadership she worked to strengthen the Association's advocacy and public profile.

One of her proudest achievements was her involvement in the NSW Rural Health Action Group, which in December 1999 advocated for improved access to health services in rural communities and highlighted the severe shortage of doctors across regional New South Wales.

During her time in office, the Association also took important steps to modernise its communications, including the establishment of a State Promotions Committee in 1999, the early development of the Association's first website and the engagement of its first professional marketing consultant.

At the local level, Patrisha remained deeply involved with the Myamley Branch, serving in a variety of roles including Branch Secretary and Branch President. Patrisha also held roles with Oxley Group, where she contributed in several roles including Group President, Publicity Officer and Agricultural & Environmental Officer over many years.

In 2004, Patrisha was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her service to the community and to the Country Women's Association.

Patrisha Hurley is remembered with gratitude for her leadership, her commitment to rural communities, and her lifelong dedication to the ideals of the CWA of NSW.

CWA members formed a Guard of Honour at her funeral.



Garden of Remembrance

Borenore

Ros Brander—joined the Borenore Branch in 2012 and was an active member holding the office of Publicity Officer and Vice President. Ros and her husband Dudley helped with catering and fundraising activities. Ros was first a member of the Forbes Branch, then after moving to Borenore she joined Nashdale Branch with her mother and later transferred to the Borenore Branch. Borenore Branch will put a plaque near the rosemary beds which Ros instigated.

Bowral

Nancy Wood OAM—joined the Bowral Branch in 2012, having previously been a member of the South Australian CWA. Nancy enriched the branch with her musical talent, playing the piano on many occasions, and at times entertaining us with musical items with her husband and daughter. Nancy served as both International Officer and Cultural Officer.

Edgeroi

Anne Cash-Sorensen—joined CWA as a member of the Younger Set at Come-By-Chance. She later joined Pilliga Branch and then Narrabri Branch when she retired and Edgeroi Branch when Narrabri closed. She held numerous positions in CWA and in the community. Anne was a true country woman who lived and worked on the land for most of her life. She is missed by all her CWA friends. Aged 88.

Eurongilly

Rita Craig—joined Eurongilly Branch when she married and moved to the district. She was a loyal member and was a fabulous cook, especially with her slices. Rita always took an interest in all CWA matters and members, telephoning whenever

someone was ill or recovering from surgery. Current affairs and suggestions about “how to” were her trademarks which she always dispensed in a gentle manner. Rita was awarded a 50 year badge in 2015. Aged 101.

Kendall

Dorothy Crossingham—joined the Johns River Branch in 1961. During her years at the Johns River Branch she was awarded a Long Service Bar and then in 1991 was awarded life membership. Branch closure forced her to transfer to Laurieton and then on the closure of that branch a transfer to Kendall Branch. Dorothy left a legacy of many stories, kindness and respect. She found much joy in her CWA journey. She still read *The Country Woman* until the time of death. Member for 64 years. Aged 98 years.

Maitland

Joy Palmer—much loved and respected member Joy served as Branch Agricultural & Environmental Officer. Joy will be remembered for her enthusiasm to make things happen and making people feel welcome. She was always there to help, from baking for events, to entertaining us with her small “squeeze box” accordion. Joy was very involved in the community, particularly with Maitland Agricultural & Horticultural Show, her service and dedication was recognised with a medal presented by Agricultural Shows NSW, just days before her passing. We will miss her friendship and smiling face at our meetings. Aged 83.

Nyngan

Dorothy Larsen—served for many years in the Girilambone Branch, before transferring to Nyngan after retiring to the area. Dorothy is remembered for serving humbly and efficiently in many leadership positions and is also remembered

for her needlepoint and cooking. She once bravely represented the Far Western Group at the state level in the sponge cake bake off! In 2023, Dorothy became Branch Patron and was recognised for her over 60 years of service. She received her 50 years service badge in October 2013 and was honored with life membership in 2021. Aged 97.

Sawtell

Carmel Mordaunt—joined Sawtell Branch in 1995. She was a kind-hearted person who always helped out whenever she could. She became a very passionate fundraiser for the expansion of Shearwater Lodge (a place cancer patients could stay whilst receiving treatment). Her warm nature and generosity will long be remembered.

Trundle

May Collier OAM—a dedicated member for 62 years who provided leadership and mentoring to generations of members. May served as Trundle Branch President, Handicraft Officer, Publicity Officer, Cultural Officer, International Officer, Councillor and Patron. At Oxley Group level she acted as Vice President, Representative to State Executive, Handicraft Officer and Patron. For many years she held the position of State Handicraft Judge and was awarded a life membership in 2012. In 1996, May was the driving force behind the establishment of the Oxley Public Speaking Competition. A wise and gracious lady, she was an inspiration to us all and will be sorely missed. Aged 98.

Tamworth

Elva Shumack—joined CWA in 1957 (serving for 69 years), Elva was a member of Goolhi Branch, later transferring to Gunnedah, then Tamworth. A very involved member, Elva held the positions

of Cookery Assistant, Vice President, Greetings Officer, Correspondence Secretary and Cultural Officer. She was made a life member in 2023. She worked hard to promote the Association and won a CWA scholarship. Her smile, kindness and friendship will be missed. Aged 87.

Tuggerah Lakes

Lorna Anthes—joining the CWA in 2007, Lorna was a member of Tuggerah Lakes, Terrigal, Mannering Park and Toukley Branches before returning to us. A quiet and gentle lady, Lorna enjoyed all branch activities, participating as her health allowed. Best known for her beautiful hand sewn quilts that won many regional show prizes were often donated to causes such as Ronald MacDonald House.

The Glen-Mannus

Doreen (Dora) O'Hara—a long serving and devoted former

member for 30 years. Dora was vitally interested in all aspects of CWA and always contributed to discussions with a common sense and thoughtful approach. She had an extra keen interest in Agricultural & Environmental. Dora is remembered for her gentle, friendly and kind nature and devotion to her local community and CWA. Aged 101.

Ursula O'Brien—a committed and passionate member for 48 years. Ursula held many positions in the branch including President, Secretary and Publicity Officer, all for numerous years. Ursula had many skills of leadership and being a team member, always a great listener, and very fair and honest in her opinions and decisions. Ursula was also actively involved in many areas of the local community and was awarded Tumburumba Citizen of the Year. Ursula attended group meetings as well as State Conference many times. Ursula is remembered for her friendship,

caring nature, support and as an inspiration to all. Aged 93.

Wagga Wagga

Cheryl Honey—joined the branch in 2021 and was President from early 2022, until her passing in March 2026. Cheryl was fully committed to CWA and took up challenges with gusto. She oversaw the 100 year celebration in 2023, organised and drove fundraising, project managed maintenance on the CWA rooms, and ensured CWA was seen in the local community. Cheryl was inclusive, cared about each member and encouraged everyone to give their all. She was a hard worker who was fun, caring, full of life and kindness. Her dedication, commitment and enthusiasm will be sadly missed.

Branch Secretaries please note: notifications should be mailed direct to State Office, or emailed to membership@cwaofnsw.org.au.



Accommodation and Mini Ads

Members Outsourced Accommodation

The Metro Hotels Group has been chosen as the accommodation provider for the CWA of NSW.

A 15% discount off the BAR (Best Available Rate) at the time of booking, when using the code, is available at Metro Aspire Hotel Sydney, Metro Hotel Marlow Sydney, Metro Apartments on King and Metro Apartments Darling Harbour, Metro Hotel Miranda, Metro Mirage Hotel Newport, Metro Hotel Perth (South Perth), Metro Hotel Perth City and Metro Advance Apartments & Hotel Darwin.

Booking can be made online via www.metrohotels.com.au. The accommodation code is only applicable to online bookings.

The code must be entered (in the promotional code section when searching for rooms).

The code can be obtained from the website (after logging in) or by calling CWA State Office.

State Office Shop

Purchase CWA merchandise online at www.cwaofnsw.org.au/onlineshop or download an order form at www.cwaofnsw.org.au/orderform. Ensure you log in before purchasing.
Phone: 02 8337 0200

Advertising in The Country Woman

Mini Ads are available on this page for branches, groups or members' small businesses. Larger ads are available throughout the journal. Please contact Leah at communications@cwaofnsw.org.au or call 02 8337 0200 for rates or further information.

Bermagui Seaside Cottage

The CWA Bermagui Seaside Cottage comprises a family room off the kitchen and 2 bedrooms containing: queen bed and single bed, and twin beds. Cutlery supplied. Bring own linen.

Enquires and applications to:

The Secretary,
PO Box 123, Bermagui 2546
cwaseasidecottage@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook

The CWA of NSW Facebook page shares branch activities, CWA news as well as items of interest.

We welcome anyone to follow the page at www.facebook.com/cwaofnsw.

The CWA of NSW Members closed group on Facebook is a way members can share and discuss areas of interest with each other. It is for CWA of NSW members only. It can be found at www.facebook.com/groups/cwaofnsw (please answer the questions after clicking "join group").

The Country Woman is produced on the instructions of **Brenda Michaud**, the **Honorary Editor** of the **Country Women's Association of New South Wales**, Level 2, 244 Coward St, Mascot, 2020. Typeset by **Leah**, Country Women's Association of New South Wales State Office and printed by **IVE Group**.

Print your own membership poster

You can download and print your own poster to help promote your branch. Display the poster on a community notice board, at your local library or a shop window. Download using the QR code or go to the website. Choose the first poster to fill out your branch's details (ensure it is open in Adobe Reader to show the "fillable" field) or the second poster for a ready-to-print version.



Fundraise to help support various causes

Learn something new



Meet with others in your community

Find your place at CWA

Your local branch:

Search for a branch at www.cwaofnsw.org.au/branches

Poster with space to type branch's details

www.tinyurl.com/cwposter1



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Meet with others in your community

Find your place at a local CWA branch



Search for a branch at www.cwaofnsw.org.au/branches

Ready-to-print poster (no space for details)

www.tinyurl.com/cwposter2



