

# **WATAC INC REPORT**

## **10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016 TO 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2017**

### **TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2017 IN THE MACQUARIE ROOM AT NSW PARLIAMENT HOUSE**

WATAC's last AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in the Jubilee Room in NSW Parliament House. Today it is 21 years that we have been celebrating the active life of WATAC in this beautiful venue. We sincerely thank Sophie Cotsis and her staff for their generous support over many years which has enabled our celebration to happen in Parliament House. Jodi Harrison who is Shadow Minister for Women also joined us for our 20<sup>th</sup> Luncheon in 2016 and has kept in contact with and supported us by subscribing to our Newsletter, however she was not able to be with us today because she is attending a Conference.

Our Luncheons have so often been enhanced by the input of our very inspiring speakers. Many of you will know that last year Trish and Vin Hindmarsh spoke to the theme '*Be the Change You Want to See*'. What a marvellous duo they were and their presence captured the energy WATAC is helping to generate in our Vatican II church. Last year we added to the beauty of The Strangers Dining Room with balloons, green, white and violet on each table (**Give Women the Vote**).

The annual Luncheon is made up of a wonderful community of WATAC members; partners and their friends. Add to that, each year WATAC invites some senior students and their teachers to join us at the Luncheon. We are all enriched by their presence and the contribution they make to the event.

WATAC is also involved in organising an Interfaith day in the Parliament House Theatre. The theme of this day is '*Religion and Peace – What are the Challenges and Implications for us all?*' The students and teachers who attend are usually studying the HSC Studies of Religion course and we have four speakers each talking from their religious background – Christian, Jewish and Muslim as well as an Indigenous person. These women and men are not only committed but also well informed. Our last Interfaith event was in November 2016 and we were planning another one in May 2017 which we reluctantly had to cancel as there were insufficient students able to attend. Because renovations are being carried out in Parliament House between now until the end of the year we are not able to organise another such event in 2017.

The WATAC Newsletter is produced four times a year by our Newsletter team, Helen Coles, Margaret Knowlden and Bernice Moore, and it is sent to subscribers as hard copy or emailed nationally and internationally. For some WATAC-ers it is their main point of contact with WATAC and many of these 'distance members'; contact us to assure us of their joy in receiving the Newsletter and all it contains.

As all of you will know a significant action was initiated by Carmel Maguire in mid-2015 when she wrote to WATAC members to alert them that WATAC needed financial support if it was to be able to keep functioning. The response to Carmel's letter from many WATAC-ers was generous and supportive but sadly as you will have seen from Maureen Watterson's Treasurer's Report we now need to face the reality of our situation yet again this year – 2017 to 2018. (*If you would like to see the Treasurer's Report with Income and Expenditures please contact Helen Coles in the WATAC Office.*)

Much of WATAC's energy and life is generated in the wonderful WATAC groups that meet regularly in each other's homes to reflect, discuss books and share articles. Many of you will have been doing this for some years.

Just some of the wonderful books the groups have been discussing include:

Bishop Pat Power's book *'Joy and Hope – Pilgrim, Priest and Bishop'*; Richard Leonard's *'What are we doing on earth for Christ's sake'*; Richard Rohr's *'The Divine Dance'*; *'Quest for the Living Soul'* by Elizabeth Johnson; and so many more. Some Groups also use articles from the WATAC Newsletter to animate their meetings.

An additional joy for some groups is their celebration of 'being community' in the spirit of the apostles: "they met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared food gladly and generously." (Acts of the Apostles 2:46)

In 2015 four WATAC-ers were involved with the WOW International Conference in Philadelphia USA: They were Trish and Vin Hindmarsh *plus* Paul Collins and Marilyn Hatton. The latter two were highly involved in the organisation of this Conference (*'Gender, Gospel and Global Justice'*).

WOW is 'Women's Ordination Worldwide' and thanks to Marilyn and Paul we have been networking with them for a long time now. Margaret Day has kept in touch and provided us with relevant information for some time until early in 2017. After the WOW Conference in the USA Trish Hindmarsh became WATAC's contact person with WOW. WATAC thanks both Trish and Marg for their commitment.

Through our long-time connection with Marilyn Hatton and Paul Collins WATAC has been able to network with many grassroots groups working for change in the Catholic Church.

As well as being involved in producing and distribution of both the regular Newsletter and e-Newsletter and being involved with the Working Group our Administration Officer, Helen Coles, looks after many of the administrative tasks for WATAC, handling telephone calls, regular mail and email, as well as liaising with Jason Rhodes of Cube Solutions to keep the WATAC website current. In the coming weeks Helen will arrange a major update for the website including having the Luncheon photos put up as well as some great photos of Rosemary Breen's Water for Myanmar project.

The committed and dedicated WATAC Inc Working Group with our Administration Officer Helen Coles makes possible WATAC's many activities. Without Helen's on-going commitment our work would not ever be achieved. Our sincere thanks Helen. Last year, after a decade on the WATAC Inc Working Group, two members, Janet Cain and Kaye Hodge, felt the need to retire from the group, but not from WATAC and they are still involved in helping with distribution of the WATAC Newsletter. We couldn't thank them enough. Much of the thinking, discussion and planning for WATAC happens at regular Working Group meetings in Alma Madden's home. We thank Alma for hosting us so graciously as well as for her input to the meetings. Thanks also must go to the other members of the WATAC Inc Working Group - Jan Barnett, Margaret Day, Margaret Keyes, and Bernice Moore – all give generously of their time, energy and ideas. Two other committed WATAC-ers also deserve our gratitude for many, many years of service using their outstanding skills for the benefit of WATAC: our Treasurer Maureen Watterson and our Newsletter typesetter Margaret Knowlden.

It is difficult to imagine what WATAC would look like without you and all these wonderful people who enable WATAC to do all it does. Let's thank them all now for their on-going commitment, support and dedication. Please give thought to joining the WATAC Inc Working Group this year.

Thank you.

*Bernice Moore - WATAC co-ordinator*