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## NEW SCHOLARSHIP FOR RURAL WA NURSES

TWO not-for-profit organisations with a total of 213 years of service to the Western Australian community, have joined forces to provide a new educational scholarship for rural nurses in this State.

The Country Women's Association of WA (CWA) together with the Commercial Travellers' Association of WA (CTA) have established the CWA / CTA Henderson Field Scholarship which is designed to encourage further nursing skills training, particularly involving the care of children, for the benefit of rural, regional and remote communities.

Funds amounting to \$100,000 were gifted by the Commercial Travellers' Association of WA and provided to the Country Women's Association of WA who will manage the funds and selection process. Each year, a total of \$5,000 will be given in scholarships to deserving applicants.

"We are encouraging rural nurses to apply for a scholarship to access short or long courses, depending upon their need," said Mrs Heather Allen, State President of the CWA of WA.

"This scholarship is designed to encourage nurses to undertake further skills training in paediatrics or other specialties for the benefit of families in rural communities. School and community nurses may also wish to apply for a scholarship to upgrade their skills to offer more comprehensive services to their clients. We are happy to consider all applications," said Mrs Allen.

For further information, please contact the CWA of WA State Office on 9321 6041.



From left: Mrs Gaynor Mitchell, CWA of WA General Secretary; Mr Peter Edwards, CTA State President, Mr Frank Hedges, CTA State Treasurer, Mr Thomas Wallace, CTA Vice President and Mrs Pam Beatson, CWA of WA State Treasurer.

## Rural Medical Scholarship Winner

THE Country Women's Association of Western Australia announced the 2017 winner of the CWA of WA Rural Medical Scholarship as Katherine Middleton from the City of Greater Geraldton who was presented with a \$10,000 cheque by the CWA State President, Mrs Heather Allen.

The scholarship is awarded to one medical student studying at the University of WA after undergoing a formal interview and selection process with representatives of the CWA of WA. The student receives \$10,000 per year for the term of their full-time medical degree, providing satisfactory progress is made during the course of study.

"Currently, I plan to complete my GP training in a rural community. As part of that community, I hope to become a doctor who is more than just the person who writes a script for their medication. I want to be a GP who also plays sport with the community, who has a family who is part of the community. I want to improve rural health by treating people in rural communities holistically and by improving the health of the community through public health initiatives. This is the work which I have seen the CWA do in my local community," said Katherine.

Katherine Middleton was raised on a small farm in South Greenough and completed her schooling in Geraldton. It was while she was in her lower secondary school years, that she learned of a medical emergency involving one of their community families who lived on an isolated farming property. The emergency claimed the lives of the mother and child. This tragedy sparked young Katherine's passion to work in rural medicine in the hope that such heartbreaking events could be avoided in the future.

During her medical studies, Katherine hopes to do a one year placement with the Rural Clinical School in northern remote Western Australia. She wants to eventually achieve a Fellowship with the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine.

The Rural Medical Scholarship which began in 2008, was awarded to the inaugural winner, Dr James Preuss and most recently, to Dr Jessica Ibbeson from Bunbury who graduated in 2016.

"Our Association now looks forward to watching Katherine progress through her studies and we wish her every success in fulfilling her dreams to become a committed and hands-on rural GP," said the State President, Mrs Heather Allen.



From left: Sue Pognault, Student Support Coordinator, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences - UWA, Katherine Middleton, winner of the CWA Rural Medical Scholarship and Heather Allen, CWA State President.

## SOUTH PACIFIC WOMEN SPEAK OUT

EMPOWERMENT for women and reduction of violence were common themes in reports given by women from Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga at the recent South Pacific Area Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) in New Zealand.

Five delegates and six observers from the Country Women's Association of Western Australia attended the conference as an affiliate society of the ACWW, to hear these stories and support local issues.

The Conference acknowledged the aid provided by the Australian and New Zealand societies which continues to support projects like vegetable growing, sewing classes, handicraft production, education of women and children, promotion of healthy lifestyles, better health care and provision of water tanks.

Brenda Samson of Port Moresby told of her organisation's strategies to reduce violence against women and girls.

"We are training young men in the football team to be good role models," she said. "They play with a white ribbon attached to their wrists to show support. We also have a rapid response team to provide shelter, counselling and support through the legal system."

Nola Sasingian from East Sepik said, "One woman walked for three days through the mountains with her daughter and her chooks to escape violence in her village. We gave her refuge." Nola also told of annual initiation ceremonies for young men and women and of community education programmes in action.

Gertrude Andrias from Jiwaka in the PNG Highlands talked of educating women, giving them life skills to make them strong and able to reach out to other women. In keeping with the conference theme 'Honouring the Past', Gertrude had brought her mother-in-law Kunjim with her, in recognition of Kunjim's contribution to women's welfare. "If your mother in law doesn't like you," explained Gertrude, "she will tell her son to find a new wife. Some men have two or even three wives. This isn't good because it leads to a lot of fighting."

Talitha from Tonga showed a picture of a house standing in water. "We carted stones and soil to raise the ground level," she said. "Now the women can grow their own vegetables beside their house."

Rising water levels are of great concern to the Kiribatis and Tongans. That is why the CWA of WA put forward a successful motion to ensure the wise use and protection of the shared marine environment, to protect the sustainability of coral reefs and fish stocks for future generations. Successful motions by other groups concerned the availability of transport in rural and remote areas; the introduction of stricter safety standards for button batteries and for the screening, vaccination and treatment of cervical cancer throughout the Pacific nations.

The CWA of WA is proud to be associated with the ACWW which represents nine million women worldwide, and aims to improve the lives of women and families in many ways from on the ground projects to representation at the United Nations.



Kunjim Andrias from Papua New Guinea (mother-in-law of Gertrude).



From left: Gertrude Andrias from Papua New Guinea with Delegation Leader, Sara Kenny.



From left: Talitha from Tonga with Delegation Leader, Sara Kenny



From left: Brenda Samson from Papua New Guinea with Delegation Leader, Sara Kenny.

## TWO GREAT CWA WOMEN SADLY MISSED Irene Faith Hooper AM and Annette Helen Easton

TWO long-term members of the Country Women's Association of WA will be remembered with great fondness and admiration after passing away recently.

Irene Faith Hooper was one of ten children and grew up on the family farm near Lake Grace. She trained as a primary school teacher and along with her husband Noel, raised a family of one son and four daughters. Mrs Hooper joined the newly formed Kondut Branch and became President, then President of Wongan Division in 1973 and State President in August 1979.

As the "Flying President" in her aircraft Romeo Whisky Hotel, she traversed this vast State to fulfil her official duties as State President. Irene worked with passion and devotion and as a result, was accorded much love and honour throughout the Association. She was presented with the Association's highest Award of Honorary Life Membership in 1984 and was later honoured with a Member of the Order of Australia in 1985 in recognition of her services to the community as a whole.

Annette Helen Easton, known to mem-

bers of CWA as Helen, was born on the family farm in Narrogin. When Helen was six, the family moved to Newdegate. Her mother and sister were foundation members of the Newdegate Branch of the Association when it opened in 1936 and due to her young age, Helen became an Associate member.

Helen left school early as there was no high school nearby but this was no deterrent to her. She worked on the family farm and together with the family, was very active in the community, where she is acknowledged on a number of Honour Boards for her work and achievements.

Helen was regarded as a woman ahead of her time. She held many positions in the Association, and together with the late Wendy Folvig, drew up an action plan for the Association's role in the State Emergency Service. At State level she was Chairman of the CWA Residential, State Extension Officer, Chairman of the Social Issues Fact Finding Team, State Treasurer and was awarded Honorary Life Membership in 1989.