

The following is a snap shot of what has been happening around the country in the various States and Territories.

We look forward to catching up with as many of you as possible at our State of the Nation Gender Equity Forum and ALGWA Biennial National Conference at the Barossa Valley Novotel 25-28 March in the beautiful Barossa Valley, South Australia.

The National Board meets face-to-face twice a year and by teleconference every three months.

President's Report

It has given me great pleasure to represent ALGWA on behalf of our members at a number of events and meetings during the past few months.

ALGWA has observer status the Australian Local Government Association Board meetings. I spoke to the Board giving an overview of the 5050 Vision Program and received support from the ALGA Board. I attended the past 2 meetings in Canberra and in Tamworth. At the conclusion of the meeting Tamworth meeting, I presented out-going President Felicity-ann Lewis with a card and small gift (personally hand-made scarf with diamonds) and expressed ALGWA's heartfelt thanks for her contribution to women in local government.

Following on from the recent Local Government elections in Tasmania and South Australia, it was reported that there are 14 new women in LG in Tasmania and 18 in SA. Only 31% of the constituents voted in SA (feel there is no outrage over council issues such as rates), and there was a turnover of 40% of the 68 mayors. In SA, there were a record number of female candidates, but numbers have not improved.

I was also delighted to be invited to attend a 'think tank' session at LGAQ on Thursday, 27 November 2014 to discuss the future of women in local government and issues affecting women in local government. Local Government Association of Queensland is looking to focus on this area in the future.

In the middle of the year I spoke at the Queensland branch State conference. I presented a National President's Report including the latest information on the 5050Vision – Councils for Gender Equity program, and encouraged all Councils to be involved. I was also pleased to attend the Tasmanian ALGWA AGM

General Meeting in Completown.

I met and was suitably impressed with the WOW's (Wise Old Women) – retired Councillors who continue to be members and attend in be involved.

Congratulations to Tasmania ALGWA for their "Women Can" campaign, in which members mentor inspiring candidates in the upcoming local government elections. Their conversation was about ensuring all council areas had at least one women running for council!

I would like to commend both States on their excellent meetings. I have also attended a number of meetings in Canberra in connection with the 5050 Vision.

We have seen correspondence concerning the Leadership for Women in Local Government Conference hosted by the Liquid Learning Group. Advertising for these events show that ALGWA supports them, however, ALGWA has never officially entered into an agreement with them. We are concerned that they are asking our Executive and members to speak at their events at no cost and wanting to access our data and research at no charge. I would remind members that they are competing for an audience and potentially diverting our members to their events rather than members attending ALGWA events/conferences and I would caution involvement with them.

A number of Local Government elections were held around Australia, and I would personally like to congratulate 2 members of the ALGWA National Board on their re-elections. National Treasurer Alwyn Friedersdorff of Waratah-Wynyard Council in Tasmania was re-elected with the highest number of votes.

Congratulations also to South Australia ALGWA President Betty Gill on being re-elected to the City of Salisbury for the tenth time.

Betty was also recognised by the SA LGA for passing 25 years as an elected member in May 2014.

I would also like to congratulate Victorian President Cr Coral Ross, who in October was named as one of the 100 Women of Influence in the Westpac/Fairfax list. She was nominated for her work as two times Mayor of the City of Boroondara, President of ALGWA Vic, on the Board of ALGWA and her work with Family Violence.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a wonderful and fulfilling 2015.

Kathy Bensted, National President, January 2014

STATE OF THE NATION CONFERENCE - BAROSSA VALLEY, WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2015

ALGWA would like to invite members and those interested in Gender Equity in Local Government to a **Gender Equity State of the Nation Forum** on Wednesday 25 March 2015, organised by LGAQ in conjunction with ALGWA. This will take place in the afternoon of registration day of the ALWGA National Biennial Conference at the Barossa Novotel.

Not only is it important to share the information on the learnings since the beginning of the 5050 Program in 2010, but we would like to showcase some amazing outcomes of the benefits of workplace diversity within local governments. Those better practice councils from across the nation will be sharing their successes. Delegates are encouraged to arrive by lunch on Wednesday so they can attend the **Gender Equity State of the Nation Forum**.

Please contact Karen Murray for details on the Forum
karenmurray@logan.qld.gov.au

ALGWA NATIONAL BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Registrations now open. Early bird registration closes 15 January 2015.

Conference: 25-28 March 2015, Barossa Valley Novotel, South Australia

Keynote speaker is Annabel Crabb, TV presenter Paul Makin will be MC and there will also be female speakers from the Adelaide Airport and Adelaide Zoo. Registrations open on 15th September at the same time as our website will be launched. Enquiries on:

algwaconf2015@gmail.com

for further info about the Barossa check their website www.barossa.com and keep an eye out on Ourdeal for specials at the Novotel/Accor Hotels.

Early bird registration has an opportunity to win a 2 night accommodation package at the Weintel Motel in Tanunda, (10 minutes from the Novotel) drawn 17th January.

Further information available at:
www.algwaconf2015.com

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Queensland

Forty delegates from across Queensland attended the State conference in Warwick "Full, Frank and Fearless" and heard an array of speakers, including the Governor of Queensland, and President of LGAQ Cr Margaret De Wit, along with panel discussions and debates. Presentations were given by both Brisbane City Council and Ipswich City Council to bid for the hosting of 2016 conference, with Brisbane the winner.

Queensland also held two training sessions – Mentor and Financial Management Training.

New South Wales

NSW are starting to build a strong campaign for the 2016 elections to make sure that women are given every possible chance to get elected. The NSW State Conference will be held a month later at Wollongong 30 April—2 May 2015 due to the State election being held March.

President Cr Colleen Fuller and NSW ALGWA Executive member Denise Wilton met with the NSW Minister for Local Government Hon Paul Toole and spoke about including Getting Women Elected at the Electoral Commission Forums before the 2016 elections and continuing the Local Government Ministers Awards for staff and councillors.

The Branch has also arranged an award for Vicki Grover in recognition of her 40 years service on Gunnedah Shire Council.

Victoria

Victoria hosted a women's delegation from China jointly with the National Council of Women (Victoria) The Chinese delegation were particularly interested in domestic violence and getting women elected to local government.

In September Victoria held its annual Bursary Award at Parliament House, Melbourne There were 13 applicants for the \$1,000 scholarship for an officer to help with

their studies. More than 60 attended the event.

November 2 was the 100th anniversary of women being given the right to stand for local government in Victoria. ALGWA, together with the VLGA and the MAV and the City of Hobson's Bay held a celebration on November 6.

More than 100 people attended the function, including retiring MP Jeanette Powell. Jeanette is an ALGWA life member and the former Minister of Local Government.

ALGWA Vic Secretary, Cr Helen Harris has written a book on the history of women's suffrage in local government and the first women councillors. Helen is a professional historian, and she uncovered a large amount of previously unknown details of women voting in local government elections in the 1850s.

ALGWA Vic has produced this as a book: *The Right to Vote; The Right to Stand*. The book also details all the women councillors elected in Victoria since Mary Rogers in November 1920. The book as proved to be so popular that a second print run has been ordered. As part of the book launch, pictorial displays were produced. The display is set up at the National Biennial Conference in March 2015.

At the recent Victorian Mayoral elections 30 women have been elected Mayor – an equal record number. Three members of the Victorian executive have been elected Mayor for the next year – Cr Helen Coleman (Metro Vice President); Cr Felicity Frederico (Bayside) and Cr Coral Ross (President)

Tasmania

The ALGWA executive remains the same as there were no elections at the AGM. Highlight of the meeting was the visit by National President, Kathy Bensted who remains an admirable ambassador for all things ALGWA but most especially for the work of the 5050 Vision program. The AGM included a visit to Ross and the Female Factory – one of many set up around early Tasmania to deal with the wayward convict girls, many of whom who were deemed to be culpable for daring to be with child out of wedlock.

Tasmania was also focused on the council elections. Their WomenCan program is very active and was borrowed by South Australia. They set up a Facebook page, which was well supported and used. The elections saw an increase in the number of women elected - 31% previously 23%. President Kathy Bensted has also been impressed with the mentoring program and election campaign developed by Tasmania.

South Australia

The main focus in South Australia has been the November council elections. They held a series of 'Women Can' sessions on Getting Elected at Prospect, Marion, Charles Sturt, Murray Bridge and Pt Adelaide Enfield. More than 100 women attended and heard speakers including former ALGA President Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis and Mayor Ann Ferguson. The branch were surprised at how little that the 'general public' knew about Local Government and all attendees received a booklet called 'Women Can' thanks to ALGWA Tasmania.

The elections saw an increase in the number of women elected in local government rising to over 29%. The branch also raised concerns that they were receiving very little support from the LG Association in SA.

The other big focus for South Australia has been planning the biennial ALGWA conference 'Step up & Top up' in the Barossa.

The branch was also pleased that their International Women's Day celebration speaker Maria Hulls was named as Her Excellency The Youth Governor of South Australia for 2015 - a great honour for a young person 'going somewhere'

Northern Territory

Membership has almost doubled recently due to an acting CEO sending the membership form to all her female staff members and they all joined!

Sadly on 1 August we lost Alderman Robyn Lesley who had first been elected to Darwin City Council as an Alderman in 1978, from 1978 to 2014 she served just over 20 years as an Alderman. She also worked for the Government on Local Government issues for a lot of the time that she wasn't an elected member.

Western Australia

There has been no change to the WA ALGWA Executive. Much of the focus in WA has been the local government structural reform in the metropolitan area, where 30 metropolitan councils are likely to be reduced to 15.

Next ALGWA Board meetings:

Teleconference Tuesday, 27 January 2015 commencing at 9.00 am (Queensland time)

AGM and Board meeting at Biennial Conference 27 March 2015, Barossa Valley Novotel, South Australia

National Executive



National President

*Kathy Bensted,
Queensland*



**National Vice-
President**

*Cr Coral Ross,
Victoria*



**Acting National
Secretary**

*Karen Murray,
Queensland*



National Treasurer,

*Cr Alwyn
Friedersdorff,
Tasmania*



**Northern
Territory Rep**

*Cr Katrina Fong
Lim*



**South Australian
Rep**

Cr Betty Gill



**Western Australia
Rep**

*Cr Janet Davidson
OAM*



**New South Wales
Rep**

Cr Colleen Fuller