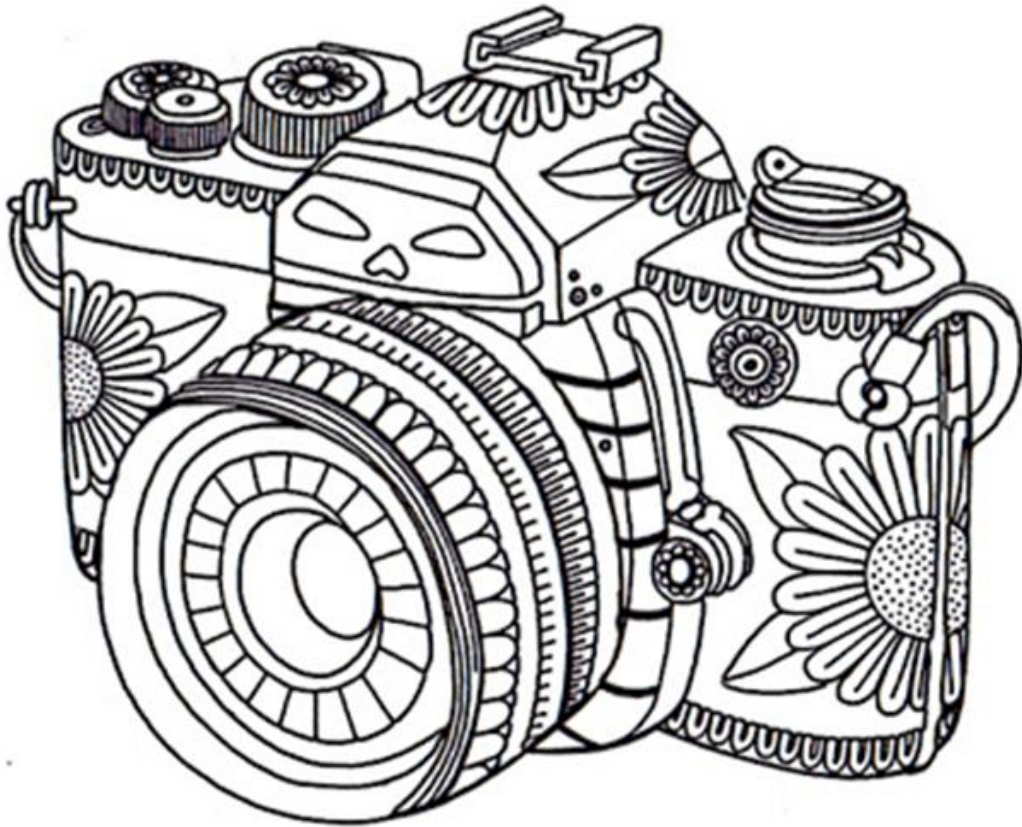




NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER (Inc.)
Australia



Wendy G.

LIFE is about USING

The whole box of

CRAYONS

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 19 September 2020 - 10:00 am

Via Zoom technology

E-Newsletter 2020

COMMITTEE - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 2020

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(General)

To be advised following Monique Rueger's resignation

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Victoria

Boroondara Group

No correspondence from Glenyse Pianta since 2019.

Western Australia

Kalamanda

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SUNSHINE COAST NWR MORNING GROUP 2019-2020

SEPTEMBER 2019

Our discussion was on the theme of “Simplify And Enrich Your Life”. We covered minimalism and generally agreed that offloading “stuff” was very freeing but at the same time we were aware that dumping stuff into landfill is not a good option and it’s sometimes difficult to find someone who actually needs your unwanted stuff. The better option is not to buy in the first place unless the item enriches your life. Some have taken the advice of Marie Kondo and have learnt to fold as she suggests. Simplifying does not always mean dealing with physical things but can also include awareness of what impacts your mental or emotional health. When life is simpler you get to enjoy the time you have in the present.



OCTOBER 2019

Member participation was very keen for the discussion of the book, “Margaret and Gough - The Love Story That Shaped A Nation”, by Susan Mitchell. We felt that Margaret’s influence on the life of their family and of course Gough’s career was very significant and for the better. Margaret was her own woman and did many things that she believed would make for a better Australia. All in all it was a very interesting story and it was great to look back on that time and remember.



NOVEMBER 2019

This month we discussed, “Political Correctness - Have We Gone Too Far?” It was easy to come up with some pretty silly examples of political correctness having gone too far! After the discussion we had our Christmas lunch together and enjoyed catching up with one another’s plans for the Christmas break.



JANUARY 2020

Our new arrangement is to begin the year in January with a planning meeting. Despite having a longer break our programme still has a couple of months where the topic is TBA! However at least the next 3 months are covered. Plus we enjoyed catching up on everyone's news.



FEBRUARY 2020

The topic was, "How do we find Inner Peace?"

It was an interesting discussion with the general belief being that believing in yourself and being at peace with your inner self meant liking yourself as you are. Other suggestions were love and forgiveness with love driving out fear. Another suggestion was welcoming everything, good and bad and trying to see the bad things in a different way. It was all very challenging.



COVID - 19

Who saw this coming? Our plans were abandoned when the number of cases began escalating and we were all unsure of what exactly we were in for. We were advised to stay home. As a group we decided to wait 6 months and re assess the situation as to whether to re start our meetings. Sadly the February meeting was the last one attended by our member Barbara Dickson. One of our first COVID-19 experiences was attending her funeral via a web link provided by her family.



In Loving Memory Of Barbara Dickson



VALE BARBARA DICKSON

The Sunshine Coast NWR Morning Group lost a much loved member this year. Barbara Dickson was invited to join the organization about 11 years ago and was thrilled to do so. Barb was a great researcher and we all enjoyed her stories and involvement with the group.

She always had something special to add to the topic of the month and participated fully in any of the activities. She loved a good laugh.

Barb contacted breast cancer and after several years of a brave fight succumbed to this hideous disease in March 2020. We all miss her.

AUGUST 2020

Our subject for this meeting was “Education - Yesterday Today Tomorrow”

This subject seemed very well received and we heard about early education here in Australia and Scotland and the U.K.

I think we all felt education has changed considerably over 50 years or so but with a few exceptions our children are being treated to a good education similar but different particularly in the tech field .



Illawarra Day Group Annual Report 2020

Like most groups, Covid-19 has placed unprecedented restrictions on our social life (amongst other things of course). However, one positive to come out of all this has been a technological learning curve in mastering Zoom!

We have been Zooming every Friday at 11-00 just to keep in touch and hear the highlight of everyone's week. March, April and May meetings were cancelled and in June restricted gatherings were allowed. Gerda arranged for us to meet at a café in Kiama, the 3 Brothers, with a side room large enough for us to socially distance and still have a meeting. Brilliant!! We meet at 10-00, buy coffee and cake, hold our meeting and then have lunch. The Topic for June was:

“My Worst, Best, Funniest, Most Embarrassing Moment.”

We had such a great meeting we repeated the topic in September when our excursion cruise on the Shoalhaven was cancelled. Not only were they affected by Covid-19 but also suffered a major flood which caused damage to the river banks. The company had to cancel all operations for 2020. We hope to support them next year.

Further topics for 2020:

“What Superstitions Were Passed Down in Your Family?”

“After the Death of Queen Elizabeth 11, Is Another British Monarch relevant to Australia?”

and of course we have to complete our program with our Christmas Lunch.

It was unfortunate that this year's conference had to be postponed. While it was great to see so many faces at our Zoomed AGM, we really missed the wonderful social interaction of our normal conference. We wish everyone a safe 2020 (what's left of it) and hope that 2021 will prove a much better event.

Trish Copeland

LO Illawarra Day Group

WEST BRISBANE MEETINGS

During the year we have had some very interesting discussions.

At our Christmas meeting, members described a Christmas Tradition. Common to most of the descriptions was the inclusiveness of the activity – everyone had to stir the pudding: the lights are for the enjoyment of the neighbourhood. Afterwards we played party games. This was a good introduction to the Christmas season.

In January, we were asked to review the latest book we had read. Only three of us were able to get together for this. Carole and Rose recommended their books while Anne felt hers was poorly written.

Yvonne posed us with a very meaty problem for February.” Should the elderly have an equal political say in politics”. She started the ball rolling by giving the “no” case – diminishing mental ability with age; becoming narrow minded and conservative. Of course, you could balance this with the lack of experience of the young. Bette told us that helpful politicians scored her vote. Carole has no voting rights in Australia and is looking forward to her opportunity to vote next year. She pointed out that medical dispensation from voting can be obtained for people with mental illnesses. Anne is very against excluding people from voting as she has been excluded twice – the referendum for Aboriginal Voting Rights since she lived in the Territory; and when the Ipswich Council was replaced by an administrator by the State Minister for Local Government. Rose felt that life experiences increased one’s value as a voter. This brought forth quite a lot of discussion afterwards.

By March, the pandemic was making itself felt worldwide. In this dubious climate, only three of us turned up at Anne’s for “Show and Tell”. We all chose items from our family history.

By April we were learning to “zoom”. Bette had posed us the problem of writing a best-selling book – what would it be about? Bette wants to write her autobiography. Anne told us she would definitely not be writing a book. Veronica wished to send a message to the young. Rose wished to cheer us all up. It was Janet’s first meeting. She has some experience with writing but has yet to complete a story. Carole likes to write about real life events but if fiction was required she’d write about Africa’s problems.

Veronica was curious about what city we’d like the keys to. This was a ‘zoom’ meeting. Anne said it would have to be Ipswich for her since this was where she was. Janet fancies Dunedin because of her Scottish heritage. For Rose, it was Paris. Carole loves Cape Town. Veronica chose St. Petersburg because her late husband always wanted to go there.

Culture caught up with us in June at Carole’s place. Poetry - the emotions evoked by poetry. Veronica, Bette, Yvonne and Janet all had personal experiences with a poet. The poems chosen by Carole, Anne and Rose were well know poems that painted strong word pictures.

By September, it was time to give some serious thought to the future. – “Will Technological progress lead to a resurgence of in cultural and intellectual pursuits?” Rose was very optimistic. Without hard work necessary, people will naturally indulge in cultural pursuits. Whereas Yvonne saw them sitting in front of the T.V., munching chips. Anne felt that ease

would create lack of inspiration which is very dangerous in an unpredictable world. Whereas Carole felt we couldn't control our creativity – that of course, we'd use it to create new and interesting things with our new technology.

And finally, in agreement with all going on around us, we looked at “the times they are a-changing”. This was a mixed face-to-face / “zoom” meeting with 2 visitors. Rose reminded us of the words to Bob Dylan's song and told us that change is continuous so just enjoy it. Anne felt we had reached crisis point and must find remedies and Carole supplied one such – phase out the use of fossil fuels. As she pointed out, many of the technologies involved have been used for centuries. Our visitors, Maree and Carmel, joined in a discussion that was so productive that I'm convinced that change could be managed to create a better world.

NWR AUSTRALIA

Illawarra Evening Group – August Report

Apart from the fact that 2020 has been a most dysfunctional year for everyone, across the world, here in the Illawarra Evening group we have not had a good year for other reasons too.

We have had a couple of meetings early in the year at my home, for lunch, due to the fact that my knees would not let me walk too far, way too quickly, so easier to meet here. Then, COVID put paid to that as we had to stay home and make a new way of existence. Therefore, we communicated via phone or email and attempted to do online “travelling” via our imagination and wrote a spiel on how we were manipulating the loneliness of being at home and how we were managing it. Some interesting stories came to light but I will keep those for the e-newsletter.

Along with that, another member is still coping with the after effects of her stroke late last year but happy to report that Betty is now able to make the odd excursion outside with assistance from family and we are very grateful that she is enjoying some outings.

Sadly, we are trying to keep in touch with Anne’s family via SMS as Anne continues to succumb to the terrible effects of brain cancer and not likely to recover. Our thoughts and prayers are always with her, her husband, her daughter and family in Perth and her son and his family in Canberra. Our small group is getting smaller in numbers but strong in our friendships, love and respect for our individual needs. Isn’t that a very big part of what NWR is all about?

I apologise for my lateness in sending this report as I am only just home yesterday from having both my knees replaced just 2 weeks ago. I have no regrets but have to say it is one of the toughest physical gigs I’ve undertaken. Still many weeks to go of rehabilitation (and pain) but I am very thankful that I am already able to walk on my own, very carefully (and with a walking stick, mostly)! Many thanks to my family and friends who have supported me physically and in thought for many months and particularly the last 2 weeks.

We all continue to work our lives out, around the restrictions and some fear of what this year has brought our way and our ladies wish every other member of NWR in this fantastic country, safe days, good health and wellbeing for you all and your families. Hang in there !!

Bev Shaw

LO, Illawarra Evening Group

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

Have you ever wondered
Why the world is round?
Or why last night it thundered
And rain fell on dry, parched, ground?

Where on earth did life begin?
Explain what drives people apart?
Or why she has a dimple on her chin?
But too many have godless heart.

Is this the reason we are to pay,
Each one of us, born of God?
He challenged us to mend our way
With pandemic, fire, drought and flood.

Will he guide us to a better life?
Or send a new Saviour for us all?
So man will no longer beat his wife,
But hearken, to his call.

The mystery of life is fraught
With both love and hate combined.
Please, God, hear my frantic thought
And bring peace, to my troubled mind

Bette Howard - Brisbane West June 2020

BEV'S 2020 TOUR ... in DAYDREAM LAND

... CLOSE TO HER HEARTLAND or HOME SWEET HOME?

My "tour" began with a hearty breakfast at the Lutana Hotel...

. One needs to start the day well with a full stomach, refreshed and ready for a busy day. I didn't have too much time to get to the gardens as a meeting place, so it was a quick clean of my teeth, brush my hair and put on a sunhat. It could turn out to be quite a sunny day with long minutes out in the harsh sun... or... who knows what it will be in such an isolated place!



I hurried out into the garden, not too much 'alive' at the moment, just a few other birds rustling around in the bushes. What a pleasant place. I hadn't seen a garden up this close in a while, so I wondered what the gardener did all day as there were a few too many weeds for



my liking. A few plants looked familiar and the grass was superb to sit on ... *as I waited for the crowds to arrive...* such a pleasant breeze... **sun on my face... zzzzzz ...zzz...** Oh my goodness, what was that? A sprinkler! What, where was everyone? Oh no, they must have come and gone and I slept through it all. Better get going then!

Fortunately, I wandered into a downstairs gym and powder room. It looked like someone's private suite but, nevertheless, I made myself at home, tidied myself up and moved off to the stairs leading up to... a kitchen café I suspected due to the smell of freshly brewed coffee and maybe scones with jam and cream... maybe! Well, yes, I found the kitchen but the place was still empty. Don't care, I need a cup of coffee, found the cups, sugar, coffee and milk and went for it. Unfortunately, no homemade goodies to be seen. Just outside the café I found a big, sunny balcony so I sat there for a time enjoying the view and finishing my coffee (no goodies). **I had some feelings of deja vu and couldn't help but wonder, had I been here before?** Anyway, on with the tour, see if I can find anyone at all!



The next stage of the day's tour took me into a strange look at some artwork in a tiny room that appeared to be more like an office but it did have some very interesting paintings, prints and some photos... **photos of people whom I'm sure I've met before** but many years ago. Black and white photos, paintings and prints of familiar places!! It got a little spooky being in there, so I longed to get back outside as quickly as possible.

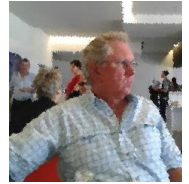
OK. So now I'm back into a garden, smaller than the other but with more attention to detail and no vegetables. That gorgeous big frangipani tree! Beautiful roses and lots of unusual succulents... hmm... and there is a sandstone and brick structure that could date back a long way, who knows? It looks like a letterbox but on this tour, it could be a significant building of this area, dating back... years! Who knows!



The wind had started to blow up and was quite strong, almost blowing my cap off. I had noticed, as I left the café, there was a comfortable waiting room, of a kind.

So, I headed back inside, found the softest, plush chair to occupy and wait it out for the others to come back to the Lutana Hotel. What a tiring day!

The next thing I knew, I was awakened by a nice man, a good sort, handing me a lovely glass of wine and asking me to share a platter of cheese and biscuits and then he asked me what I would like for dinner. Wow! I thought to myself... "he's a keeper"... and wondered if he was married. Had I seen him in one of those photos, a wedding photo, with a woman who reminded me of myself... except much younger? Hmmm. *Déjà vu!*



Bev Shaw

Suzanne Perram's look at life in 2020...

This is Greg the Cat responding on behalf of my human (Mum – Suzanne) who is busy upstairs organising my bedroom for exercise zoom classes. I am an officio-member of Illawarra Evening Group which meets in my home from time to time.

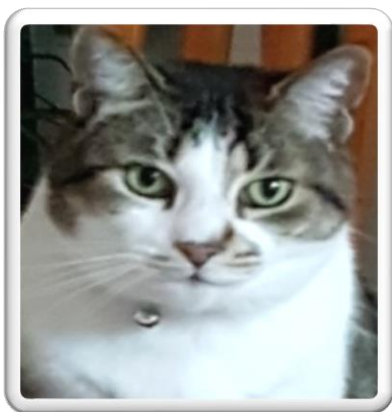
I am an indoor cat and as such self-isolation is not a real big problem! However, having mum home 24/7 is trying for both of us!!!! But we are learning to adjust Mum more so than me!

Mum is driving me crazy with rearranging my upstairs bedroom for exercise zoom classes, I have taken to participate in these classes by sitting on the laptop, jumping on the window ledge opening up the blinds and letting too much light in (helping out). There is a dog who also attends the zoom classes but he doesn't worry me as he is on the screen.

I have become involved in telephone conversations by 'WhatsApp' where mum insists on holding me up to whoever she is talking to. Really, a cat sometimes is not interested in being held up for everyone to see, I like to choose my time when to make my appearances!

Mum has taken to sitting out either in the courtyard or on the front porch and as an indoor cat those areas are out of bounds for me. And if we are self-isolating then Mum should stay indoors with me, believe me, I make my feelings known.

Sometimes I need time out and have had to resort to hiding in the storage cupboard under the stairs (when the door is left open, I sneak in) or when the bedroom is not being used for exercise classes, sleeping on my bed.



It is nice having Mum home, but there is readjustment for both of us!

Well that's all from me, Mum is coming down the stairs so I must finish off this report.

Take care

Greg The Cat

And... Christine Marks' ...

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... Coronavirus Lockdown

Jamberoo NSW

A day on the farm during this unsettling time, means sometimes helping out with some of the jobs.

Yesterday was no exception, so it was roll up my sleeves to help bring in the silage. This means I drove the truck laden with one bale at a time and Gary drove the tractor with one bale on the front of the tractor. As there were 13 bales to bring in, it took a little time, as we could only do two at a time. However, the weather was lovely so it was quite nice chugging along pretending to be a farmer.

Now the pale green silage bales are sitting in my front yard ready to be sold. However, today was a great day, as we drove to Shellharbour and had fish and chips by the sea. What a treat a drive can be during these days of living through a pandemic.

Cheers to everyone

Christine Marks



From the ladies of the Illawarra Evening group... Suzanne, Christine, Betty, Anne and Bev... we hope your 2020 has given you some really interesting times to ease the boredom of the days spent at home and away from family and friends. Hope it's all a dream... especially for those who have lost a lot.

Trish Copeland Illawarra Day Group

What I've been working on:

A quilt top I've called "The Cycle of Life in a Triacontakaihexagon". It took me longer to work out the name of the shape than it did to sew it. 😊

Apologies for the fridge corner in the photo!!!



IN THE YEAR 2020

Pulse rate rising (a worrying thing)

At having to sanitise.

Not even able to safely shop.

Desperate to socialise.

Everyone wondering what to do,

Making us choose between

Isolating or wearing a mask – thanks

Covid-19.

A BOOK REVIEW

“WHERE THE CROWDADS SING” by Delia Owens

This is a 2018 novel which has topped The New York Times Fiction Best Sellers for 2019 and 2020. The story follows two timelines that slowly intertwine. The first timeline describes the life and adventures of a young girl named Kya as she grows up isolated in the marsh of North Carolina from 1952-1969. The second timeline follows a murder investigation of Chase Andrews, a local celebrity of Barkley Cove, a fictional coastal town of North Carolina. The book has sold over 4.5 million copies. (Extract from Wikipedia)

I loved this book. I was a bit uncertain about it at first, but I was soon hooked, and the further I got into the story the more I loved it. It really sang. I am not a big fan of getting out into nature – I am a big city girl – lifelong, but I quite like to visit the bush for a day or so from time to time. I am definitely not into marshes and swamps.

But it was Kya, the character, that I fell in love with, and I didn't really know why until I was telling a friend about it. She made a comment to the effect that I really related to the story, and I realised then that it was Kya I related to. Not that I have ever experienced anything like her loneliness, but she never gave up, no matter what life threw at her. And it threw some humdingers at her! Well, life has thrown some humdingers at me too, and I have never given up! I describe myself as resilient, and Kya certainly had resilience in spades.

So I loved Kya's story. I loved her feistiness. It was well-written, even though there was a bit of to-ing and fro-ing at times. The characterisations were great. We knew where each character stood, and what they stood for. The pathos of the story was not overdone – if anything it was underdone, in that Kya simply got on with life the best way she could, as each hurdle was pitched at her.

The plot was a demonstration of how human nature is still closely linked to that of animals, and we will do what we have to, to survive. Kya was well-versed in nature, and read many books on both nature and biology. She made her plans to survive, based on the behaviour of the animals she had studied and read about. The natural world that Kya inhabited was as much a character

as any person in the book, and we learnt a lot about the marshes and the wildlife they nurtured.

Most of the characters in the story were horrible, and they treated Kya like they treated their black people, as good-for-nothing, of no account, except to mock her. Chase was simply a creep, playing on Kya's emotions with false promises of marriage, so he could bed her.

Now – where do the crawdads sing? “Way out yonder” is where the crawdads sing, and if you go there late in the day and keep very quiet, and feel nature moving under your feet, you will hear them, and they will sing. (Crawdads are freshwater crayfish.)

It is a very appropriate book to be reading in this time of isolation! Maybe we could learn a thing or two from Kya, on how to handle being alone. Kya simply got on with the job of surviving. That was a full-time job for her, and she learnt many valuable lessons about protecting herself, and looking after her own welfare. She learnt how to feed herself by bartering, and making do with the resources that nature provided. She devoured books, once she could read, and even went to a library in a neighbouring town to borrow some.

But the big question is – did she kill Chase???

The author, Delia Owens, grew up in Georgia, and was very familiar with the mountains, and the wetlands of North Carolina. She spent a lot of time outdoors as a child, encouraged by her mother. Then she lived in Africa for 25 years, studying wildlife and nature, so she had some valuable insight into the natural behaviours of animals, which are similar to humans. She asserts that females are naturally inclined to live in a group, which makes it all the more pathetic that Kya was so alone.

Rose Ellwood

Brisbane West NWR

My Orangutan by Lyn Hazell

My special encounter with animals happened last year, 2019. I prefer to see animals in their natural habitat in the wild.

This amazing experience began in South Borneo.

We viewed a video of Julia Roberts, the famous actress with her special meeting with an orangutan. These beautiful animals have the strength of at least ten men. This orangutan entwined his long hairy arms around her neck, much to the distress of Julia and her minders. But she was ok.

However the next day we began gliding up the Sekonyer River in a klotok, a traditional bamboo boat to the Tarijung National Park, looking for various types of monkeys in the dense jungle. They were so entertaining as they clambered and swung from branch to branch chattering amongst themselves as they searched for food.

We pulled into a jetty in the Pondok Tarigue and Camp Leaky site where we hiked into the jungle to view an orangutan feeding platform. We had two armed rangers with us. At this special site in the jungle were a few logs arranged as seats in front of the large platform scattered with bananas. In between were a few 'tomato' stakes linked by a blue plastic rope which formed a fence.

After an hour or so we were warned sometimes the orangutans came, sometimes NOT!

Finally, a large fluffy orange orangutan slowly climbed down a palm tree gently dropping onto the platform. He stuffed about five bananas in his mouth, his eyes darting all around. We moved forward to the blue rope fence and took some great photos of this teenage orangutan. The rangers told us his name and that he was SCARED! Suddenly he scampered up the tree with the bananas protruding from his mouth like buck teeth.



Then a huge male very slowly climbed down, eyes alert to every movement as he took in the whole scene. He slowly sauntered across the platform and began to eat the bananas with his back to us as he arrogantly glanced over his shoulder now and then.



The rangers told us he is the leader of the troop and has been for twelve years, which apparently is a very long time, hence all the other orangutans keep their distance as they usually live solitary lives. I again moved closer to the fence to get a better photo while he inspected, selected and enjoyed a deliciously ripe banana. Then very slowly he climbed down, off the platform and swaggered over to me. I was mesmerised. We just stood spellbound looking into each other's eyes! Gently he lifted the blue rope and stood beside me!!! I sort of came to my senses and thought – I need a photo!!

After I took the photo, still keeping eye contact he very slowly sauntered away into the jungle!

In a flurry of excited movement, the rangers and our Australian guide were anxiously asking why hadn't I heard or noticed the whole group had retreated.

My Australian guide was desperately thinking of what to say in the accident report and just how to fill in the mountain of insurance papers she would receive.

To this day, I have thought many times about this special encounter. I wasn't scared ;in the least. I just don't know why. But that spellbinding meeting of a wild orangutan will stay with me forever.

Lyn Hazell
Illawarra Day Group

My Great Gorilla Walk

January 2020

As you know my favourite past time is walking. I walk every day 4-5km, usually along the beach. I also do walking-tours all over the world. Each one is special in its own way with exciting highlights.

My latest one is the hike in Uganda to see the Gorillas in the Mist, which has been on my bucket list for years ever since seeing the movie.

The day began with a drive, through the mist to the start of the walk. We had an information talk on our behaviour towards the gorillas – no imitating their sounds, keep a respectful distance etc., and safety from any other animals we may encounter. We were given our own personal guide and a hiking staff to begin. We set off in a small group with armed local rangers at each end of our group. The atmosphere of excitement seeped through the mist. The impenetrable jungle as it is officially described was exactly that impenetrable!

As we began, we followed elephant tracks through the jungle, I thought this would be easy! Large elephant footprints deep in the soft mud sucked my boots as I tried to extricate them to take another step only for my feet to be entangled in strong thick vines. Slowly, step by step, we ascended up the mountain struggling with the altitude, clambering over massive logs festooned with large leafed lianas and newly emerging jungle plants became a breathless struggle upwards ever up, stopping now and then to catch my breath.

My personal guide was kept busy helping me with every obstacle, slashing, balancing and supporting every step as we followed the lead ranger, a lovely confident competent young lady in jungle greens.

After hours of trekking, finally, we reached our gorilla family. Keeping very quiet we crept and then perched on a very steep slope as we stood in absolute awe of the gorilla band. They completely ignored us. Their thick black coats looked so warm and soft as they foraged in the tangled undergrowth. Two females, each with a baby boy, one was 18months old. He scampered around swinging on vines, dangling on low branches but keeping quite close to his mum. The other baby,



6months old snuggled in his smother's arms, then clambered over her back before escaping to explore. His mother carefully watching then pulling him back when he went too far.



Then the huge silver back swaggered over, nuzzled both females before settling down to strip huge chunks of bark off a tree with his long sharp claws and then sharing it with his ladies. Mesmerised we watched and photographed every move as they continued to totally ignore us.

It had taken over two years for the rangers to train the gorillas to get used to humans and to ignore us and feel safe and not intimidated by our presence.

After an hour or so, it was time for us to return to our hotel. After standing so still and quiet for ages we stumbled as we began our descent, slipping and sliding in the moist mud and entangled undergrowth. We returned via a different route which was steeper and more impenetrable with deep muddy holes that almost sucked my boots off as I balanced and bounced downwards. Nearing the bottom, a bog, just like quick-sand sucked and slurped, trapping both my feet, it was very difficult for my guide to slowly extricate me as I cautiously navigated the edge to safer ground. We arrived at a small stream where I hoped to wash some of the thick mud off my boots, but to no avail, it stuck like glue.

Totally exhausted we staggered to the clearing where the rest of our group, including the rangers and guides celebrated our achievements with more photos and awards were presented.

Slowly we staggered back to our hotel. I was so exhausted I couldn't even remove my boots! Fortunately, there was a young man to remove my boots and take them away for cleaning. I was totally euphoric of my achievements, surviving the hike and ticking off one of my life's ambitions.

After a long hot shower, we celebrated with a glass of champagne as we perched our very tired feet on the balcony railing of our room, looking at the impenetrable jungle that we had conquered.

Lyn Hazell -- Illawarra Day Group

Art Class Tools by Jane Miller

I did 15 lessons on Zoom with my Bilgola watercolour art teacher. Her aim was to give us tools for later use.

Here I learnt how to do eyes



Here how to capture shadows.



Creative Writing Exercise by Monique Rüeger

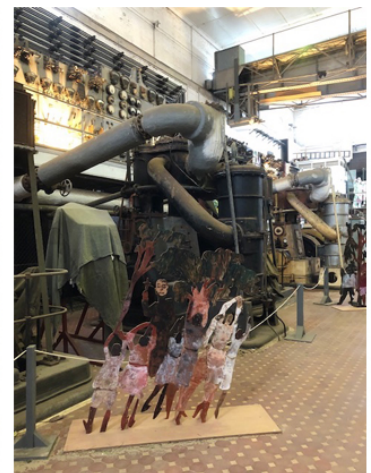
I recently joined an online Creative Writing for Pleasure group at my local library. Our homework was to write about 'something pleasant or unpleasant that happened in the time between the classes'.

With poetic license allowed and encouraged, I decided to write about our NWR Eastern Suburbs group excursion to the Sydney Biennale currently taking place on Cockatoo Island.



In the laundry basket flew the tracksuits. Out came the floral dresses, the sunglasses and the colourful scarves. An excited group of old friends was going on an outing to Cockatoo Island! We felt like schoolgirls bursting out of a cloud of Covid induced self-isolation into a forgotten world of blue skies, sea salty smells and gently lapping waves. The excitement was palpable. Chatter and laughter filled the air. Pleasures taken for granted before the pandemic were now deeply felt delights. Contented, the old friends went home, their heads filled with sights of the harbour, the art displays, the seagulls nesting on the ground, protecting their young vehemently from the feet of passers-by, feeling rejuvenated by the time spent together.

Monique Rüeger
Eastern Suburbs Group



A Short Story

It was the 1980's. I was a young physiotherapist working at St. George Hospital in Sydney in an old ward with no air conditioning. My patient was a tall, well-built police officer in his early 30s who tragically had broken his hip and needed a replacement. He also needed to be placed in a full body plaster cast, extending to the ankle on one leg and the knee on the other. This required spaces left for waste expulsion.

It was January, hot and humid, so the plaster was proving slow to dry. I placed my patient on one side with cushions strategically placed for his comfort and to expose the back expulsion space. I pushed his bed across the ward, manoeuvred it sideways in front of a west facing sunny window on the second floor of the building.

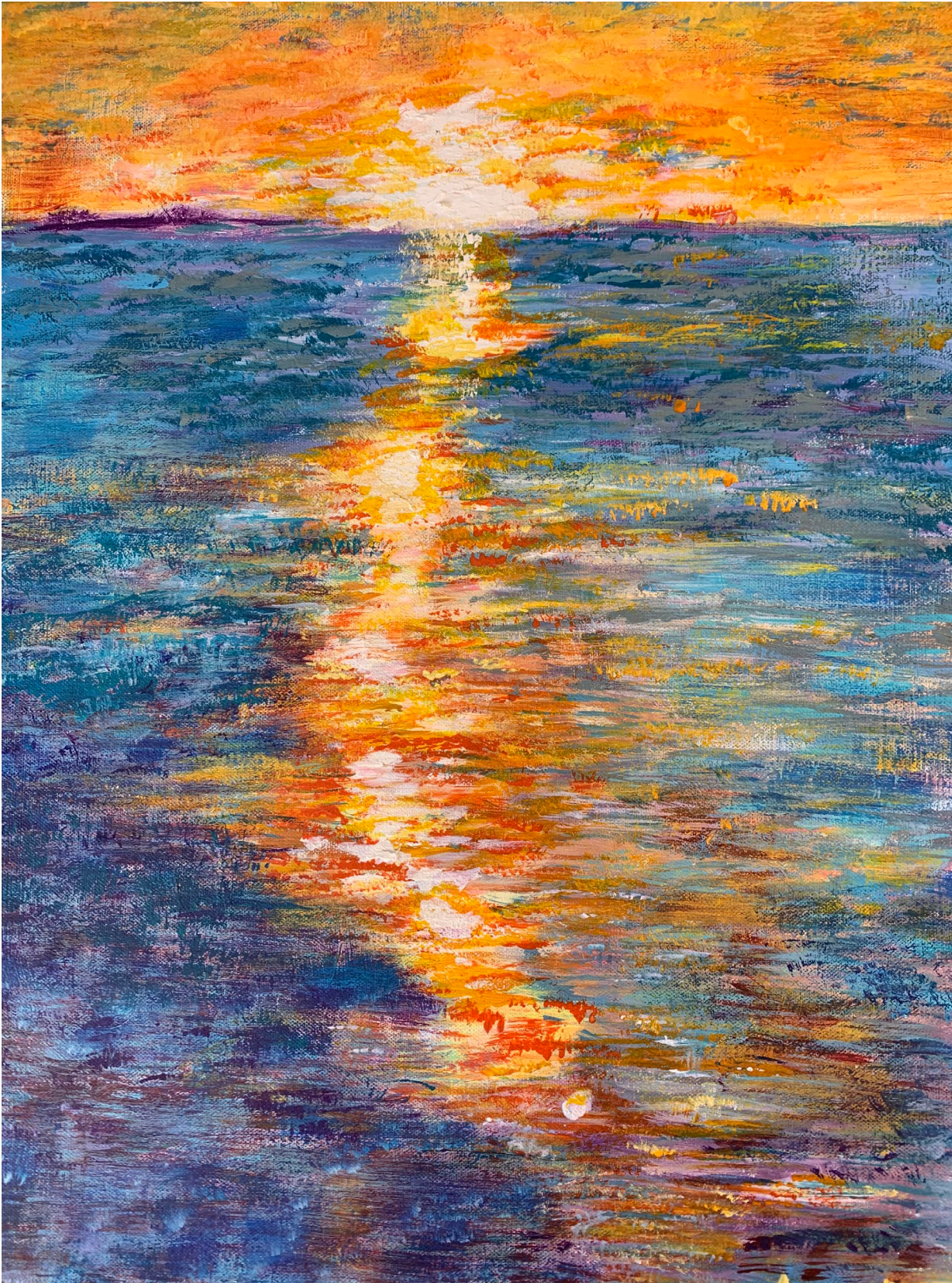
By this stage, at a mere 153cm tall, I was hot and sweaty and lucky to still have a functioning back when, from nowhere, up popped a ladder, quickly followed by the head of a window washer. His face and the police officer's expulsion space were extremely proximate. The officer's face registered my surprised horror but on explaining, he burst out laughing, as did I, and quickly followed by the window washer.

Just another day at the "coal face" of medicine.

Lynne Savage
Illawarra Day Group

Recent Paintings by Jenny Chivell

Sunrise _ Acrylic painting



Sunlight through the Trees _ Acrylic painting



Boats_ Pastel painting



Jenny Chivell
Eastern Suburbs Group

NOW and for ALWAYS

In these unexpected, unavoidable, crazy times, we are experiencing surprising benefits, but also little annoyances, frustrations and at times anger. We have new worries, difficulties and disappointments and relatively trivial things can start to build up until we feel like screaming.

We have been encouraged to think about those around us, so here are a few simple suggestions to consider to make life less stressful for others and ultimately for yourself—useful now and always.

- A smile, nod or wave can really brighten someone's day.
- Use your car indicators for changing lanes, turning, and leaving roundabouts.
- When a car is entering or leaving a parking spot give the driver enough room to manoeuvre.
- When walking keep to the left on footpaths.
- Late at night close doors (house, car) as quietly as possible and keep voices low.
- Leave the next sheet of toilet paper reachable, whether it's on a roll or in a dispenser, likewise for paper towels.
- Where bags are provided when buying fruit and vegies, leave the next bag on the roll easily accessible.
- Place shopping baskets neatly in the stack with the handles down.
- Push the supermarket trolley as far into its bay as possible and not leave it at the bay entrance.

Most importantly, where possible, check on your neighbours to make sure they are coping or need some help and conversely, don't be reluctant to ask them for help if you could do with a hand or just want to chat.

Of course there are many more ways our frustrations can be minimised, but these few suggestions don't take much effort, only a little thought.

Michele Middendorp
The Hills

Ten Tall Poppies

(dedicated to my family)

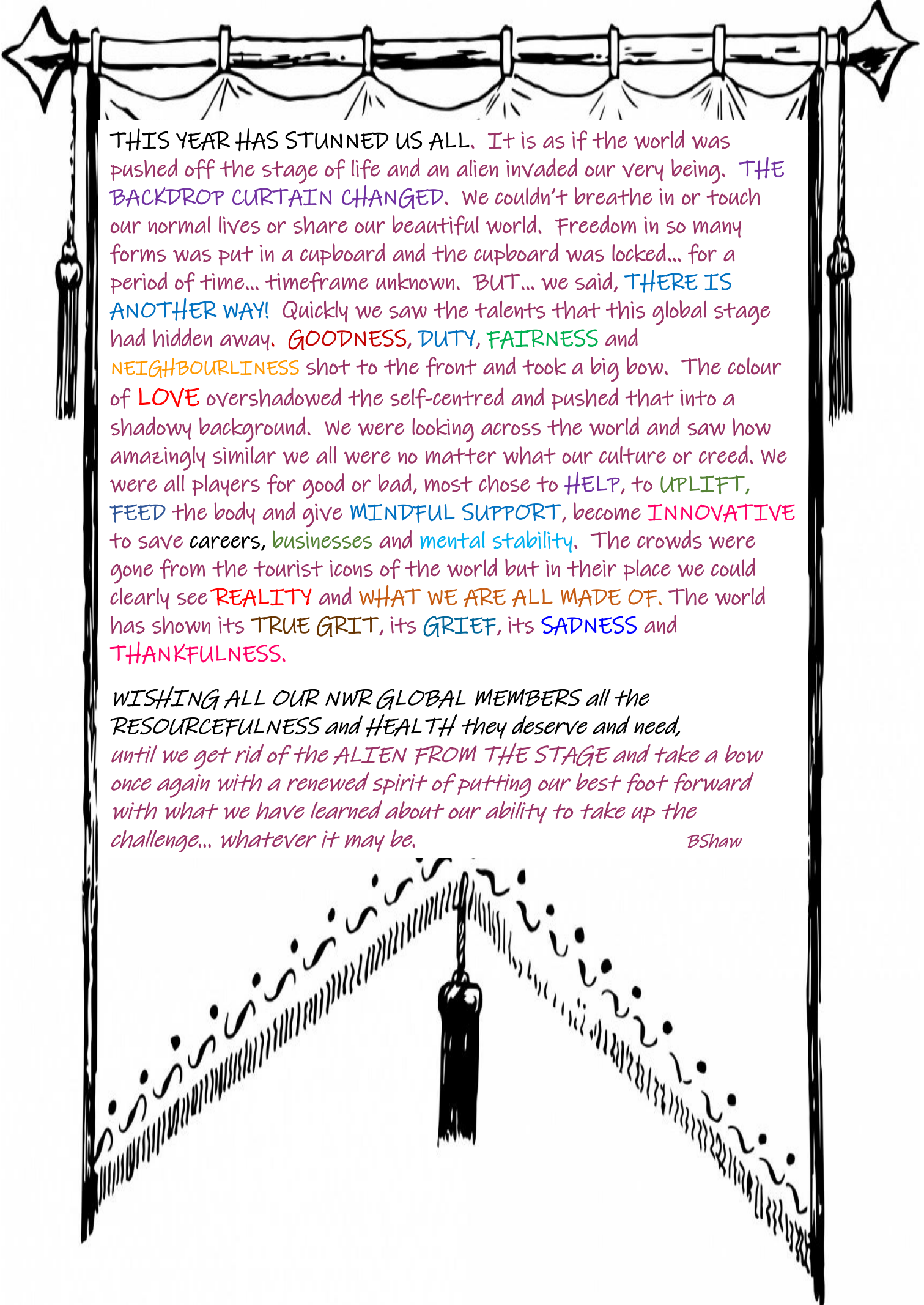
Tall and straight they stand, watchful guardian angels.
Tall poppies that life sometimes wants to cut down.

Dancing with the wind, a ballet of beaming red beacons,
Glowing with hope, bounding back, irrepressible.

Ten strong and free-spirited individuals, one family
United by love.

Monique Rüeger
Eastern Suburbs Group





THIS YEAR HAS STUNNED US ALL. It is as if the world was pushed off the stage of life and an alien invaded our very being. THE BACKDROP CURTAIN CHANGED. We couldn't breathe in or touch our normal lives or share our beautiful world. Freedom in so many forms was put in a cupboard and the cupboard was locked... for a period of time... timeframe unknown. BUT... we said, THERE IS ANOTHER WAY! Quickly we saw the talents that this global stage had hidden away. GOODNESS, DUTY, FAIRNESS and NEIGHBOURLINESS shot to the front and took a big bow. The colour of LOVE overshadowed the self-centred and pushed that into a shadowy background. We were looking across the world and saw how amazingly similar we all were no matter what our culture or creed. We were all players for good or bad, most chose to HELP, to UPLIFT, FEED the body and give MINDFUL SUPPORT, become INNOVATIVE to save careers, businesses and mental stability. The crowds were gone from the tourist icons of the world but in their place we could clearly see REALITY and WHAT WE ARE ALL MADE OF. The world has shown its TRUE GRIT, its GRIEF, its SADNESS and THANKFULNESS.

WISHING ALL OUR NWR GLOBAL MEMBERS all the RESOURCEFULNESS and HEALTH they deserve and need, until we get rid of the ALIEN FROM THE STAGE and take a bow once again with a renewed spirit of putting our best foot forward with what we have learned about our ability to take up the challenge... whatever it may be.

BShaw

SOMETIMES
ALL YOU NEED
IS A LITTLE
SPLASH OF
COLOUR

Colour Your World...
Your way!

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