



# International Inner Wheel Newsletter

Issue 32

June 2009

Communicate your Visions and Make a Difference



Friendship Personal Service International Understanding

# 14th International Inner Wheel Convention

The 14<sup>th</sup> International Inner Wheel Convention in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia began on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May with Registration. Although a little chaotic at first all the members from the 36 countries represented eventually signed in. The more energetic of them then took advantage of the shuttle bus service to investigate the shopping and eating opportunities in Kota Kinabalu City.

Wednesday's Banner Exchange took place at civilized 11am, allowing everyone time to enjoy a leisurely breakfast and sample the magnificent Breakfast Buffet. Members were as enthusiastic as ever in their pursuit of previously unknown clubs whose banners they could add to their collection. It was a very colourful affair with members in costumes varying from the Welsh contingent's red t-shirts to the magnificent saris of the Indian members. Many were the friendships renewed and made, and many were the addresses exchanged on this truly "international" morning.



The evening Welcome Reception was a truly splendid affair set amid tropical forest displays and featuring beautiful ice sculptures. Wine and delicious canapés flowed freely served by the ever attentive hotel staff whose natural charm was such a feature of this Convention. The Guest of Honour Datuk ( a chivalric title dating from the nineteenth century) Ilyas Ibrahi, the Mayor of Kota Kinabalu, gave a warm and entertaining welcome to the Convention and to the members of Inner Wheel. This was followed by welcoming speeches from local



Convention Chairman Datuk Nancy Ho and by IIW President Suzanne. Further entertainment was provided by the three Singapore Inner Wheel Clubs who modeled fashions by designer Anna T, who organizes a charity "Mother and Child" which provides sewing work for disadvantaged women to empower them to become economically self sufficient. The clothes are sold through the charity and the proceeds are used to support the initiative. Convention members were invited to support the charity by buying the designs modeled.



The Opening Ceremony on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May, in the Magellan Grand Ballroom which was hung with all the flags of the countries in which there are Inner Wheel clubs, began with a short period of reflection on various philosophical quotations chosen by President Suzanne and portrayed against a background of peaceful scenes of her home country.

Then followed a slide introduction to all the countries represented at the Convention with musical accompaniment provided by the Royal Sabah Police Contingent Band. The flags of the host countries – Malaysia and Singapore and those of the President’s country, Denmark, and International Inner Wheel were unfurled. After speeches by Convention Coordinator Nancy Ho and President Suzanne, we were addressed by the Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Seri Musa Aman, who had taken a very early flight from Kuala Lumpur especially to



be present. He emphasized the importance of Inner Wheel and similar organisations in fostering true international understanding. He also praised International Inner Wheel’s support of the Unicef Project “Global Education for Girls” President Suzanne then lit the Candle of Friendship and sounded the gong to open the Convention. We were then treated to a display of local culture featuring stunning costumes and the most graceful dancing by

Malaysian ladies and more warlike and athletic dancing by men in amazing headgear. The Peacock Dance was particularly impressive. There were numerous changes of costume and the styles of dancing ranged from temple-style dancing to rustic set dances in suitably rustic costume. In view of this we were not surprised to learn that Sabah is home to 30 different ethnic groups. President Suzanne was presented with a gift by Nancy Ho which turned out to be a beautiful black and gold formal Malaysian costume with short jacket and long straight split skirt. At this point President Suzanne announced that Global Education for Girls will continue to be the IIW Social Project for the next three years.

The Business Sessions, on Thursday afternoon, Friday and Saturday, were well attended by non-voting as well as voting delegates. President Suzanne, with her amazing command of English, conducted affairs with great efficiency and good humour. The voting slips were collected and counted efficiently. As in Christchurch there were numerous proposals to extend membership to women without a Rotary connection but none managed to achieve the two-thirds majority required to change the constitution. The speeches were articulate and often impassioned and left those listening in no doubt that the speakers were deeply committed to Inner Wheel and wished above all else that it should survive and prosper. Many of those new to IIW Conventions expressed interest in hearing the discussions on each proposal, saying how much better they now understood IIW.



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*Katharine Dobson (D.18, GB&I), who lived in Sabah for some years, describes the Hospitality Evening.*

“The Hospitality Evening was held al fresco at the Sabah Foundation Tower on the shore of Likas Bay. From this site spectacular sunsets can often be seen, sometimes ending with a green flash as the sun dips below the horizon. The Committee had checked the time of sunset, had arranged a police escort for the coaches as we sped through Kota Kinabalu at rush hour, but sadly they could not arrange the cooperation of the clouds!

Maidens clad in local costumes met us, to garland us with bead necklaces, and Murut ‘warriors’ dressed in bark cloth waistcoats, red loincloths and striking head dresses of bark cloth and tall Argus Pheasant feathers greeted us with a gong ensemble. A bamboo ensemble played as we found places to sit. After the Guest of Honour, the Sabah Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment, had arrived, we were treated to ‘A Taste of Asia’ from a sumptuous buffet set up as hawker stalls. Wine and soft drinks flowed, but there was a temporary shortage of beer - maybe Inner Wheel members drink more beer than Sabah ladies!

Entertainment was traditional Borneo dancing. Rokiah Staun, from the Kota Kinabalu IW Club commented, introducing us to the dances and costumes. She was dressed as a Kadazan, one of the many



costumed in black, supposedly a godly colour, to give protection from bad spirits. An early dance was *Daling Daling*, in which the ladies wore elongated finger nails to enhance their movements. As with so many dances it was a court-ing dance - hence its name, taken from the English, Dar-ling Darling. Later we were treated to a *Sumazau*, perhaps the dance of Sabah, a rice har-vest dance of the

Kadazandusun people which imitates the mating dance of the hornbill. We were encouraged to join in and many did. The high-light was provided by the Muruts, a people who were formerly head hunters - skulls can still be seen in many of their longhouses. They whooped their way to the stage through the crowd, and gave a blowpipe demonstration, shooting balloons tied to the top of a bamboo pole. Doris Johnsen, IHW Treasurer, gamely volunteered and successfully 'killed' her balloon. Then followed a dance in which bamboo poles are banged together on the ground and dancers weave between them, trying not to get their ankles hit. Volunteers from the floor were called, and the Nigerian ladies were particularly enthusiastic participants.



As the music died away, we were treated to a dramatic firework display over Likas Bay, provided by Kota Kinabalu City Hall, and probably enjoyed by many more than just the Inner Wheel delegates. As we wended our way to our coaches, trying to find the one for our particular hotel, the happy chatter of the many delegates showed

that the evening had been a success.

The Gala Evening on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May was a glamorous affair with 800 members resplendent in evening dress and national costumes. The Guest of Honour was the First Minister of Sabah, accompanied by his wife. Music was provided by local group "The Dreamers" whose rendering of music from the 1960s and 1970s (our vintage!) was so good that members took to the dance floor after the first course and were very un-willing to return to their tables for the excellent food. The theme of the evening was "Festival of Colours", which was most appropriate.



The Fashion Show by A'Sutra displayed the range and richness of batik design and demonstrated how creatively these hand decorated fabrics can be made into stunning garments and accessories. A group of ladies from Nigeria, in their magnificent headdresses, providing an impromptu performance of their Inner Wheel songs. The talented ladies of the Inner Wheel Club of Kuala Lumpur gave us a medley of exuberant dances featuring a colourful collection of exotic costumes, many made by the members themselves.

All good things come to an end – unfortunately, and on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May we had the splendid finale to our 14<sup>th</sup> Convention. President Suzanne entered, wearing the beautiful Sabah costume given to her by the Convention Coordinating Committee, flanked by adorable children from a kindergarten supported by the Inner Wheel Club of Kota Kinabalu. The venue for the next Convention in 2012 was announced – Istanbul in Turkey, another first for our organisation.



The guest speaker was Dr Catherine Lim, an acclaimed local author and political commentator, who entertained us with jokes and anecdotes about the gender gap.

Mr Steen Andersen, Executive Director of UNICEF Denmark, spoke about the importance of the projects to which IIW was contributing.

He was then presented with a cheque for £155,000, our contribution to the UNICEF action on “Global Education for Girls”. We were told that this would mainly be devoted to work in Madagascar. The money raised for the project during the next three years will be spent in Bolivia.



Entertainment was provided by local children: a fantastic formation Chinese drumming group, all pupils of Chung Hwa Lower School, Kota Kinabalu, amazed us with their precision. The kindergarten children who had accompanied President Suzanne’s entrance then performed a charming dance, enhanced by one delightful little girl catching sight of herself on one of the large screens and doing her own thing with an air of fascination. This was the first time that the children had travelled from their village and seen the city but they performed beautifully.



After the Candle of Friendship had been extinguished and the Convention closed the Organising Committee in their beautiful blue and yellow costumes, led by multi-talented Chairman Nancy Ho performed a song and dance “Thank you for the Friendship” to Abba’s “Thank you for the Music”. The session ended with the singing of Auld Lang Syne accompanied by some slightly damp eyes.

# *Inner Wheel in South America*

Readers will know from the last Newsletter that there are active Inner Wheel Clubs in Guyana and Suriname and there are also members in French Guiana but, as far as I know, this is the first time we have published news from Colombia. In April 2008 the Inner Wheel Club of Bogotá celebrated the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of its charter by supporting a reading contest "Lets Enjoy Reading". The day was also the Day of the Spanish Language which was supported by UNESCO as part of the 2007-2008 programme "Colombia, A Cultural Country of Latin America". 250 people participated in the competition for which there were prizes in nine categories. The photograph shows Amanda Suárez de Reinoso, President of the Inner Wheel Club of Bogotá congratulating one of the winners. Also in the picture is Leticia García de Castellanos, founder member of the club and organiser of the competition.



*Founder members and friends of the Inner Wheel Club of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The lady in the centre is a representative of the Inner Wheel Club of Firenze Iris.*

At last there is an Inner Wheel Club in Brazil. Due to a large extent to the untiring commitment of Laura and Grazia Massetani and the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Firenze Iris (District 209, Italy) the first Inner Wheel Club in Brazil, in Belo Horizonte, has been formed and we all join in the hope that this club will be one of many in South America. Firenze Iris is a small club which has achieved a great deal and set an example for all of us to follow.

# Making a Difference to Education

Ashnadelle Hilmy-Mortagy, Chairman of District 95 (Egypt & Jordan) reports on the progress made in her country towards improving education for girls.

“When I started my duties as Chairman of District 95, I decided to encourage our clubs to participate in the IIW Social Project, Girls’ Education, which we adopted in cooperation with UNICEF for a period of three years ending in June 2009. With the help of our District Committee I visited numerous clubs and talked about this project, and we are fortunate to have an established NCCM / UNICEF initiative in Egypt that is quite successful.



Nineteen of our clubs signed protocols on December 24<sup>th</sup> in a great ceremony which made us all proud to be members of International Inner Wheel and to be able to help our country in a much needed initiative Girls’ Education. We are happy to see that our efforts have resulted in our adoption of eleven schools in three provinces.

The First Lady of Egypt, Mrs Suzanne Mubarak, the Chairperson of the Technical Advisory Committee of NCCM, launched the initiative in January 2003. The initiative has opened and operated 1076 girl-friendly schools during the period 2003-2008 in the following provinces: Sohag, Assuit, Menia, Beni Suef, Fayoum, Giza and Behira. These schools provide education for 29,000 girls aged between six and thirteen years.

The Girls’ Education Initiative aims to reduce the gender gap in primary education as well as providing quality education for girls living in rural, deprived and impoverished areas. It relies on several principles, among which are:

- Support participation of civil society
- Partnership with all stakeholders
- Combating poverty
- Development of database, monitoring and evaluation.”



Fatima Boys’ Home in Welihena, Negombo, which is run by nuns of the Good Shepherd Order, provides a home for 45 orphan boys aged between 3 and 12. The boys attend a local school where English is taught only in the higher classes. The members of the Inner Wheel Club of Negombo (District 322, Sri Lanka), feeling that the younger children should have the opportunity to learn English, have been giving up their spare time to teach these children. These classes lack the most basic amenities but their most pressing need was for blackboards and a club member donated four of these.

# Realising your Vision for Children

186 children orphaned as a result of an earthquake enjoyed a wonderful day out at a water park, thanks to the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Gandhidham (District 305, India). The children were thrilled with their day of fun rides and lots of delicious food.



Mrudrula Dand, Editor District 314 (India) reports: "The members of the Inner Wheel Club of Bombay North were introduced to two orphanages where underprivileged children were living in squalor and deprivation. Bereft of comforts that we take for granted, lacking even the basic cocoon of parental affection, they were a sad looking lot. The children live in a bare, dismal dwelling that lacks basic amenities. We quickly approached the authorities concerned for details. The staggering list of their rudimentary requirements was discussed by our members, who hastened to provide them. We arranged for them to receive fridges, a cupboard, aluminium storage bins, wooden crates, metal trunks, pressure cookers, cutlery, clothes racks, blankets, pillows, curtains etc. We hoped that our small gesture would help make their house into a little more of a home. It is only by taking an initiative for an acceptable today that we can even begin to hope to enrich their tomorrow".

The Inner Wheel Club of Anand Round Town (District 306, India) has been very concerned with the development of children, supporting a three day event called Abhivyakti, which loosely translates as "development". At this event in Anand Town Hall more than 700 children from 26 schools demonstrated their talents in a wide range of areas including the making of friendship bands, cartooning, collage making and folk dance. The club provided refreshments and prizes, and on the final day told the audience of 400 something of the history and values of Inner Wheel. It is estimated that the event was seen on cable TV by more than 25,000 people each day.





In 2007-2008, on the initiative of its President Nicole Cordery, the Inner Wheel Club of Tours (District 72, France) concentrated its fundraising activities for the year on supporting the charity "Á Chacun son Cap". This charity, which was founded in 1995 with the backing of the French Ministry of Youth and Sport, has as its patron the famous yachtswoman Dame Ellen MacArthur.

The object of the charity is to develop an interest in sailing in hospitals specialising in the treatment of children suffering from Leukaemia, by providing a week at sea on five 12m yachts for children who are undergoing treatment or are cured. Facing the sea so as better to face their illness helps them on the road to recovery. A doctor and several nurses take part in the excursions, as well as helpers who themselves were previous patients. Apart from the professional skippers everyone on board is a volunteer. The children are accompanied from their respective hospitals either by air or coach right up to the harbour of Trinité sur Mer in Brittany. Each yacht can take four children and four adults.

The Inner Wheel Club of Tours was given the responsibility of accompanying the children by coach from the hospitals in Tours, Angers and Nantes. The three Inner Wheel members, who accompanied several fairly anxious children, were to share the moving experience of being on board the coach with boys and girls who were a little timid but ready to capture the spirit of adventure, an experience they will not readily forget. The faces of these children, ill but radiant, will remain engraved in their memory.

The Inner Wheel Club of Gold Reef (District 932, South Africa) has adopted a small hostel at the Kathorus Child and Family Organisation situated in Thokoza. There are currently 11 children accommodated in Cottage No 2, the club's particular area of concern, and they range from age 4 to 14, mainly girls but there are some boys as well. These children are all from abusive backgrounds, and some are also HIV/AIDS orphans. Kathorus Child and Family Organisation (KCFO) was originally established in 1999 as a crisis centre, and then had to register as a children's home in 2001 because of the increase in AIDS orphans. The club has already provided books for the children, sourced from the Rotary Centre in Bedfordview, as well as a gas heater and two gas cylinders as back-up. Their current project is to arrange refurbishing of the cupboards, doors and ceilings in Cottage No 2, as they are rather shabby and in some cases badly damaged. The anger these children harbour is sometimes expressed in destructive behaviour, and the furnishings bear the brunt of these attacks. Recently members of the club were invited to KCFO's AGM and Club President, Anne Annis, was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation, framed for display, on that occasion. Gold Reef members plan to provide the children with something special for Christmas, and eventually they hope to re-tile and paint the bathrooms, in an attempt to make their surroundings more attractive and cheerful.



On a wet and windy Thursday in September the members of Saldanha Inner Wheel Club (District 935, South Africa) made a start on their project to help needy schoolchildren from Noordhoek and Diazville Primary Schools, which are in Velddrif and Saldanha respectively. The most urgent need was a pair of shoes for a little boy in Grade Four who had been walking to school through a flooded area in a very leaky pair of sneakers all winter. He was taken to the local PEP stores where they also found a raincoat for him. Little Louston was very proud of his new shoes and socks as well the raincoat. Since then members have bought shirts, long pants and a skirt as well as shoes and socks for three pupils from Diazville. They still have to buy uniform items for three more Diazville pupils and one more from Noordhoek. There were seventy six children on the original list from Diazville, which had to be whittled down to six so the need is very great. A lovely

lady called Corrin Tiger organized the children at Diazville and will arrange a meeting with the parents for Inner Wheel members. She has impressed upon them that they must look after the clothing bought for their children and the members will be invited back to the school at the beginning of the new school year to see how good the uniforms still look. Members consider that their efforts are being really appreciated, which makes them feel that this has been a very worthwhile project.

The increasing number of orphans resulting from the AIDS pandemic has resulted in the formation of the Setshabelo community based AIDS Orphan Care Programme. Setshabelo is the Sotho word for refuge or sanctuary. Setshabelo was formed by a group of concerned people from the Johannesburg East Methodist Circuit and based at the Bedfordview Methodist Church. Their vision is that each child orphaned by AIDS will live in a loving and supportive functional family unit within their community in Thokoza and not be taken away from the place they have always known. They have selected child care workers whose role it is to identify and assess the orphan households to establish their needs and each professional



works with 10 households. They address their educational, social, emotional, physical and spiritual needs. In order to care for 450 orphans from 251 orphan households, it is essential that they involve the help of the grannies and other members of the community. Some years ago Bedfordview Rotary Club became involved in the project and on hearing about it Inner Wheel could not help but want to play a role, as it tugged at the heart strings. It is hard not to be moved by the plight of these youngsters. The project involves the grandparents in their care whenever possible and they highlighted the need for basic essentials for use in their meeting place. Bedfordview Inner Wheel Club (District 932, South Africa) readily agreed to buy 50 sturdy plastic chairs, two huge cooking pots, two electric hot plates and two microwaves to make the job of catering for the children so much easier for them. They will continue to help wherever they can.

# Making a Difference to Women

The non-districted Inner Wheel Club of Mombasa (Kenya) recently held a charity sale, in which, with hard work and good fellowship, they raised a considerable sum for their club projects: breast cancer, education and micro finance. Under their micro finance initiative they have sponsored two groups in the village of Kadzinuni. The Inua Nyumba Group consists of 21 women who were given loans for two terms to start small businesses. The first 15 women successfully built up their small enterprises and repaid the loans within the two year term. At present five women are on their third loan. They are making a profit and repaying the capital. The Utu Dawa Group comprises 16 women in their first year. All the women buy food and raw materials to distribute and sell at a profit. One of them now owns a kiosk.

The members of the Inner Wheel Club of Madras East (District 323, India) have donated ten bicycles and hygiene kits to the girls at a local juvenile home and also conducted a personality awareness workshop for the girls. Fifteen women were given training in bicycle maintenance and repair.

At Trento (District 206, Italy), as part of International Women's Day, members heard about the role of women in Armenia. The gathering was attended by Vartui Karakhanian, Assistant to the Ambassador of the Armenian Republic in Rome. She showed slides and videos of life in Armenia today and conveyed the club's contributions to the Midwifery Department of the Redemptoris Mater Hospital in Ashotsk.

The Inner Wheel Club of Patan, Kathmandu, Nepal (District 305) is supporting the work of Rimjhim Women Community Organisation in Badikhel Village, who are raising funds for the construction of a common Community Building to be used for community development programmes developing skills, providing training and alleviating poverty. The club has paid for the plastering of the community hall. The photograph, taken at the building site, shows Mrs Brinda Rana and Mrs Sulochana Pradhan of Patan Club handing over their cheque to the President of the Rimjhim Women Community Organisation.



Clubs in District 911 (Nigeria) were able to show IIW President Suzanne Neilsen the work they had been doing to support the training of young women when she visited them in November 2008. On their behalf she presented sewing, hairdressing and catering equipment to 50 women who had been undergoing training for the previous three months.

Her visit coincided with the graduation of 50 young girls who had been provided by District 911 with free computer training.

Since 2007 the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Jodhpur (District 305, India) have been helping needy and skilled women to start their own small-scale industry. One particular woman to whom they gave assistance became very successful and was able to lend money to other women to start their own businesses.



Members of Inner Wheel District A62 (Victoria, Australia) have embraced "Opportunity International" as their international project this year. Their aim is to raise enough money to form a Trust Bank in the Philippines or Indonesia. The Opportunity International organisation is committed to relieving poverty by providing small business loans to poor people in 28 developing countries. This enables borrowers to develop a steady income and thus provide food, shelter and education for their families, as well as creating jobs within their community. 80% of the loans are made to women, who set up small business enterprises to support their families. These loans are made on trust with no collateral needed. Because 98% of the loans are repaid, Opportunity International is able to lend the money over and over again, so thousands more people can work their way out of poverty over the next decade. To help raise the money each member of District A62 was issued with a canister into which to put \$1 each time they spoiled themselves with an extravagance.

## *Envisaging a Healthier Future*

On 21<sup>st</sup> September the Inner Wheel Club of Indore Central (District 304, India) organised a Medical Camp at a Jain Temple. More than 800 patients from nearby villages were checked by 20 doctors of all specialities who gave their services free of charge. The club provided free medicines and biscuits for the patients. Two weeks later members of the club assisted the management of Varma Union Hospital when two orthopaedic consultants from King's College Hospital, London provided free examinations for nearly 200 patients. The photograph shows Orthopaedic Consultant Mr Graeme Groom examining a patient at Varma Hospital.



The Inner Wheel Club of Mülheim a.d. Ruhr Schloss Broich (District 87, Germany), celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> Charter Anniversary, decided to invite three English-speaking Gynaecologists from developing countries to Germany for advanced training and cultural exchange. In this project they cooperated with their feeder Rotary Clubs from Mülheim and Oberhausen, with help from four local hospitals and the Rotarian Action Group for Population and Development.

Dr Veronica Nkwenti from Cameroon, Dr Ebere Dorothy Anikwe from Nigeria and Dr Pattaya Hengrasmee from Thailand were invited to stay from April through June 2007 at the local hospitals as guest doctors. The goals of the project were the advanced medical training of the gynaecologists, cultural exchange, an increase in personal knowledge of the problems and needs of the respective countries, increased awareness of the population explosion, and international understanding and hospitality in the spirit of Rotary and Inner Wheel. In an effort to make the guest doctors feel at home and alleviate homesickness the Inner Wheel Club and Rotary Clubs collaborated to provide an entertaining social programme at the weekends. Thus international friendships were forged and opportunities discovered to pursue further projects with the three Gynaecologists in their home countries.



In Great Britain & Ireland this year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Alzheimer's Disease Society. Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia are a growing problem for countries with an ageing population. The brain disease, which can reduce hitherto highly intelligent and effective people to the state of helpless babyhood, places an enormous strain on carers and sufferers alike. It was suggested that various organisations hold tea parties to raise funds for the Society. The members of the Inner Wheel Club of Tunbridge Wells (District 12, GB&I) had arranged their tea party for Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, but on that

day Britain was blanketed with snow, making travel almost impossible. Nevertheless, with Rotarian assistance, they managed to get sandwiches and cakes to the Club Secretary's home where they entertained 50 people and raised a great deal of money to support research and the provision of specialised medical care for people with Alzheimer's Disease.

Readers may recall from a report in Issue 30 of the Newsletter that District 913 (Nigeria) has been devoting much of its fundraising effort to the building and equipping of a Mammography Centre at Ilesha. Their dreams were finally realised when on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008, International Inner Wheel President Suzanne Neilsen, on an official visit to Nigeria, cut the tape to mark the opening of the completed facility.



The members of the Inner Wheel Club of Dausa (District 305, India) organised a free medical check-up for 89 women as well as distributing medicines and vaccinations. The Inner Wheel Club of Gwalior (District 305, India) provided Rubella vaccinations for 300 girls. Residents of a home for Leprosy victims were given 55 jugs by the members of Jaipur East Club when they visited the home in July. 198 pregnant women and 130 children in a remote area benefited from a medical check-up arranged by the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Mehsana Milk City (District 305, India).



Clubs in Italy devote much of their fundraising efforts to supporting the work of maxillo-facial surgeons who correct jaw and facial malformations in disadvantaged people throughout the world. At the end of 2007 the club of Torre Canadese raised money for the cause from a limited edition aquatint by a well-known artist. The picture to which the members look forward is that of the smile on the face of someone who has, until their intervention, been unable to smile. Then they will know that they have truly made a difference.

The newly formed Inner Wheel Club of Gazimир (District 242, Turkey) is devoting itself to a project aimed at eradicating Spina Bifida, a very severe birth defect of which there are 5000 new cases per year in Turkey. The defect leaves the sufferers with devastating handicaps and can be life threatening. In conjunction with Gazimир Rotary Club and the Spina Bifida Association Inner Wheel members are working to increase training for target groups in the city of Izmir, increasing awareness of the risks in pregnancy and bringing pressure to bear on the Government to make the taking of Folic Acid (the only known preventative) mandatory in pregnancy.

The first training day, which was held in Izmir on 22nd November, was attended by 60 Inner Wheel members and representatives of other women's organisations. The event was well reported in the Press and on television.



The week of 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> August 2007 was "World Breastfeeding Week" and this received enthusiastic support from many Inner Wheel Clubs in India. They invited young women and their babies from their local communities to seminars conducted in some cases by members of Inner Wheel. Dr Republica, a member of the Inner Wheel Club of Madras East (District 323) explained to her audience the importance of breast milk to a baby, particularly in the first 48 hours of its life. The milk produced at that stage is called Colostrum, which contains fat, sugar, water, protein and antibodies for the child. Breast-feeding should continue ideally for the first six months. Working mothers could express their milk and store it in sterile bottles so that their babies could go on benefiting. She urged the mothers not to get carried away by the blandishments of the advertisers of supplementary food products.

The Inner Wheel Club of Madras Central Aaditya (District 323) gave the mothers they talked to packets of Sattu Mavu, a porridge mix specially made by a Self Help organisation called Tejo Maya. This had been found to give mothers nourishment which in turn helped their babies. The club is supplying mothers with one packet of mix each fortnightly for the first 6 months. The contribution of the many clubs who supported this project cannot be emphasised too highly as a major means of preventing neonatal mortality.

Anne McGill of District A80 (Australia) has sent us a very moving report bringing up to date our knowledge of the major health initiative of the Inner Wheel Clubs of Australia, the Cord Blood Research Project.

"At our Conference in Port Macquarie, I was very privileged to introduce an extraordinary family - Jan, Darrell, Yardley (aged 10) and Cooper (aged 8). Cooper, who is a recipient of a cord blood transplant, accompanied his mother Jan on to the stage to tell us their story.

At the age of 3½ Cooper developed a cold and was very listless. Blood tests were taken and Leukaemia was diagnosed. However, after a few days he seemed better and the blood tests came back clear. Six days later he crashed and was rushed back to hospital - Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia was confirmed. A bone marrow donor was found in Canada and arrangements were made for the lady donor to travel to Australia. Unfortunately she became ill and was unable to come. By this time Cooper was dangerously ill and a search was made

on the Cord Blood Register. A match was found and Cooper was given a cord blood transplant. Another problem occurred: graft versus host disease. This happens when the body rejects a transplant and again Cooper was dangerously ill, with wet dressings all over his body. He was kept in isolation and eventually he became stronger. All in all, little Cooper was very ill for more than 12 months.

During this time the family moved to Sydney and stayed at the Ronald McDonald House, where they had the loving support of the staff and many friends they met who were in similar circumstances. During this time Darrell, Cooper's father, became ill and unfortunately is now coping with a very serious illness.

When his Mum was finished with her talk, Cooper then told all the ladies about his little friend Willie who is about to have a cord blood transplant. He requested we have a minute's silence for his friend. You could not hear a pin drop, but many tears flowed. He then told us about attending a film as a guest of Nicole Kidman. She told him she was very nervous walking down the red carpet. "I'll take your hand" said Cooper, "and you'll be okay." Yes! Because of a cord blood transplant Cooper is 'okay' as well.

Our support of this project will continue to help the 'Coopers and Willies' of this world and help the researchers ensure a better life for many sick children."



*The photograph shows Immediate Past IIW President Kamala with members of the Inner Wheel Club of Valle de Cuernavaca in front of the Inner Wheel Monument, which represents a Tetelcinga woman.*

The Inner Wheel Club of Valle de Cuernavaca (District 418, Mexico) is very much involved with supporting local causes. They have helped to finance the treatment of a child with cancer by selling their book "Recipes Valle de Cuernavaca". With their Rotary Club they support the local Youth Orchestra, helping to provide them with instruments. At the Christmas Concert last year the youngest member of the orchestra, a little girl of nine, delighted everyone with a solo performance of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star".

They also collaborate with Rotary in an organic egg farm project which is intended to enable mentally handicapped adults to achieve economic independence by working on an organic farm, at the same time benefiting their region. The Club was delighted to welcome International Inner Wheel President Kamala Ramakrishnan when she visited Mexico in April 2008. The club continues to grow and recently welcomed three new members.

# Making a Difference to Disabled People

The island of La Réunion (District 920, Indian Ocean) has a famous sports event every year, known as the "Grand Raid". In October 2007 District 920 decided to help six youngsters aged from six to 17 years old and suffering from Muscular Dystrophy to participate in the "Semi-Raid", a 64km race across the island with the help of 30 volunteer racers who took turns carrying the children around. Mélissa, 6, led her team by leaving the starting line in Cilaos at 4am. Francis, El Khabir, Alexandre, Dalène and Kévin then each had their turn in the race. Carried in a "joëlette", a wheelbarrow-type seat, their faces radiated joy at the sight of the breathtaking beauty of the landscape which they could never have discovered on their own. They were able to follow highly difficult tracks, reaching parts of the island that can only be reached on foot, arriving at the finish line at 3.30pm the next day to the applause of more than 100 spectators. This feat was a "first" and was made possible by the Inner Wheel Club paying the 30 volunteer racers' registration fees. District 920 also ensured that the team was supplied with refreshments at various points in the race.



The Inner Wheel Club of Dhanmondi, Dhaka, (District 328, Bangladesh) recently launched a project to help the first Old People's Home established in a rural village 85 km away from the capital, Dhaka. The club donated wheelchairs for all the disabled residents. This facility also provides clinical services to the poor senior citizens of the village free of charge every day. Some of these wheelchairs are also used for patients in the out patient department of the home where hospital facilities are available. The club is also raising funds to help with its daily running expenditure. The photograph shows Ms Nayar Islam, Club President, along with two other members of the club handing over the wheel chairs and the fund.

As has been reported in previous Newsletters, Inner Wheel in the United States has as its major project the provision of myoelectric limbs. In October, in Orlando, Florida, the IWUSA Foundation celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a press conference at the Hanger Clinic. Two local TV stations and a local newspaper interviewed one of the most recent recipients of a myoelectric limb which was partly funded by the IWUSA Foundation. Kasey Edwards was 18 in June 2008 when he lost his arm to an alligator and he was told he would receive a myoelectric arm from Hanger Clinic, funded by IWUSA Foundation. Between June and October Kasey had surgery, was fitted with a newly developed i-limb, and has made remarkable progress in learning to use his new arm and hand. Kasey has appeared on the "Today Show" twice, "The Doctors" and been interviewed by other TV stations and newspapers. During the October meeting the interviews were aired on local and national TV networks. An article also appeared in a local Orlando newspaper. IWUSA Foundation was acknowledged in all the interviews as the funder for Kasey's myoelectric arm. As a result of the media coverage there have been numerous requests for information about the myoelectric limbs.

The 21<sup>st</sup> birthday of the Inner Wheel Club of Secunderabad (District 315, India) was celebrated by the donation of 21 blankets to the visually handicapped, 21 shawls to the residents of an Old People's Home, 21 artificial limbs and 21 callipers to disabled people. They also gave equipment to the Obstetrics and Paediatric departments at the Ghandi Hospital.



## *Realising Your Vision of Support in Times of Natural Disaster*



The tsunami which devastated so much of the area around the Indian Ocean in December 2004 attracted enormous support from Inner Wheel Clubs around the world. The following account is simply an example of the assistance which our members have so generously given.

The Old Kent Road is a well known thoroughfare in East London and features in a number of popular songs. Now there is a new Old Kent Road thousands of miles away from the original, thanks to the Inner Wheel Club of Maidstone (District 12, GB&I). The village of Kosgoda on the shores of southern Sri Lanka near Galle was

destroyed by the tsunami, leaving over 60 dead and many children orphaned. A Kentish couple, who know the area well, launched an appeal to provide the people of Kosgoda with a new village and a future. The charity they founded has now built a village including houses, four shops, a school and a medical centre. The village also needed six roads and by April 2007 one remained to be built. The Inner Wheel Club of Maidstone decided that this would be their special project and gave the substantial sum of money required for the work. They have been well rewarded and will be remembered in the new village of Kosgoda as they named the road "The Old Kent Road". The road sign also says "Donated by the Inner Wheel Club of Maidstone, Kent". Maidstone Club Correspondent Audrey Hext tells us that her club is proud to have helped the tsunami victims in such a positive way and expresses the hope that one day perhaps a group of Maidstone members may walk down the Old Kent Road in the village of Kosgoda.

The Inner Wheel Club of Bombay Mid Town (District 314, India) recently became a rapid reaction force, as described here by Club President Asha Singh.

"On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008 we received an SOS from Mr Lawrence of the Pavement Children's Club (an Outreach Programme for Street Children in the Church of St Andrew and St Columba, Fort, Mumbai). He said that the first down-pour of the monsoon had brought misery to 25 slum dwellers whose slums were demolished by builders on D'mello Road and asked if we could get 25 strong plastic sheets 12x14 to them as soon as possible. They must however be light enough to fold up and run if the police came! Two lucky breaks enabled us to take action immediately. We had ready money as we were on our way to the bank with a substantial donation from one of our members; and I knew the tarpaulin wholesale depot as last year my son had donated to construction sites. We turned the car round to the depot, bought 28 plastic sheets and 60 hot samosas for the children and distributed the lifesaving homes. As we entered the church hall, a quirky moral question occurred to me: are we saving 25 families from disaster or are we aiding and abetting law breaking? I think St Andrew and St Columba would say the former!"



People everywhere watched with horror on television the dreadful fires which raged in mainland Greece early in 2008. Members from District 96 (Cyprus) felt a deep personal concern for the victims and visited the village of Kerynia in Achaia in the Peloponnese to express their sympathy and make a donation to those people who had suffered so tragically in the fire. The photograph shows the members with the local Mayor who thanked them for their concern and generosity.

Floods recently devastated the area of Wainibuka in Fiji and the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Tokalau Suva in Fiji (District NZ291, New Zealand) were glad to be able to provide practical support. They gave 60 food parcels to 42 families in Nasautoka Village as well as giving rations to 18 other families in the central division.



# Fostering International Understanding



Torino Europea (District 204, Italy) hosted representatives from clubs in Brindisi (District 212, Italy), Brugg-Wettingen (District 199, Switzerland) and Toulon (District 73, France, Andorra, Morocco & Tunisia) at a Gala Dinner to celebrate their common aims, cement their friendship and work together to realise their visions. Inner Wheel friendship makes it possible for women from many different countries to get together in service.

Members of District 211 (Italy) met fellow Inner Wheel members from Egypt at the Automobile Club in Cairo. Inner Wheel friendship was such that it felt like a family reunion.



Members of the Inner Wheel Club of Skoyen (District 31, Norway) recently celebrated their club's 20<sup>th</sup> Charter anniversary by travelling to Florida where they had dinner with the members of Fort Myers Club (District 696, USA). The two clubs made contact when Taran Resk, who originally belonged to Skoyen Club, joined Fort Myers when she moved to the USA.

*The photograph above shows the members of the two clubs at the celebration.*

*This photograph shows Skoyen Inner Wheel Club President Tove Berg, on the left, receiving the Fort Myers Club banner from Fort Myers President Sheila Ware.*





In November 2008 International Inner Wheel President Suzanne Neilsen paid an official visit to District 913 (Nigeria). These lovely, cheerful photographs really raised my spirits on a cold, grey day in England - I hope they do the same for you.



In September 2008 the annual Nordic Meeting was held in Rostock, Germany, to discuss different aspects of Inner Wheel including national activities, international projects and the International Convention. Happily, International President Suzanne Neilsen was able to join the gathering.

The photograph shows the National Representatives from Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, with IIW President Suzanne Neilsen (Denmark) third from the left.

The non-districted Inner Wheel Club of Skopje ( The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) celebrated the third anniversary of its Charter in May and invited the members of all the Turkish Inner Wheel Clubs to join them. Hülya Dagli, General Secretary of District 242 (Turkey) attended with her husband and once again found the warmth and generous hospitality which is typical of Inner Wheel friendship around the world



Sixteen members of the Inner Wheel Club of Edirne, the first to be chartered in Turkey, met up with members of 9 different clubs from Bulgaria to celebrate World Inner Wheel Day. They first visited the city of Kazanlak and then went on to Stara Zagora. Together these Inner Wheel friends enjoyed a meal and exchanged banners, making for a very happy day.

A new relationship between the young District 248 (Bulgaria) and longstanding District 45 (Denmark) was cemented when Bulgarian members were invited to attend District 45's Changeover Ceremony. They learnt a lot from their Danish "sisters" about Inner Wheel friendship and projects and signed a memorandum making them Sister Districts. So inspired was Nelly Bratoeva, Immediate Past Chairman of District 248, by the occasion that she resolved to attend the International Convention in 2009 to enjoy even more Inner Wheel friendship.



## *Making a Difference by Feeding the Hungry*



Among their many projects in the fields of health, education and mother and child care, the members of the Inner Wheel Club of Delhi Civil Lines (District 301, India) have been supporting the work of the Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Theresa. The photograph shows members of the club handing over supplies of rice, custard powder, pulses, dalia (cracked wheat) and sooji (semolina) to one of the Sisters.

## *Realising your Vision of a Greener Environment*

Mitali Banerjee, President of the Inner Wheel Club of South-West Calcutta (District 329, India) has told us of the contribution her club has made to the "greening" of the environment.

"With the aim of emphasising the need to maintain environmental balance through nature conservation the club held a tree planting programme on the pavements of some roads in the vicinity of Vivekananda Park in Calcutta. Twelve other clubs joined us. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008 twenty saplings were planted. The Inner Wheel logo and the name of each club were displayed on the iron fence round each plant".



# The Future of Inner Wheel

Saturday, 29 March 2008 saw the official Charter of the Inner Wheel Club of Aotea Auckland, New Zealand's first New Generation club and the youngest – both chronologically and in age! The Charter evening was the culmination of many months' work and the fruition of a vision by Hazel Hunter (Auckland East) and Annabelle Valentine (Vice-President IW NZ) to begin New Zealand's first New Generation club. The evening was very well attended with many VIPs taking time out of their busy schedules to attend including National President Marion Patchett, members of the Inner Wheel New Zealand Council, Chairmen of three Districts, Rotary representatives, Club Presidents from around Auckland, and many members of the sponsor club, Auckland East. Marion Patchett truly brought home to all attending the importance of Inner Wheel and our worldwide contributions, especially to the education of women, by reading a letter from International President, Kamala Ramakrishnan. Charter President, Julie Garlick, received both the framed Charter document and her Chain of Office from Gaye Pratt, District NZ291 Chairman. In her speech, Julie expressed our gratitude and explained how truly humbled all Charter members are by the support and generosity of Inner Wheel.



*Annabelle Valentine, Deputy National Representative Vice President Inner Wheel New Zealand with her daughter and daughter in law on Charter Night*



*What a pleasure to see so many happy young women keen to communicate our vision.*

District 312 (India) now has three "New Generation Clubs" which will ensure that our world vision is preserved for future generations. Members are drawn from the daughters and daughters-in-law of Inner Wheel Club members.



*The "New Generation" Club of Allahabad Navya*



*The "New Generation" Club of Lucknow Prerana*

# Istanbul 2012

Inner Wheel Turkey, Districts 242 and 244 invite you to the 15th I.I.W. Convention to be held in 2012, in Istanbul, the city where East meets West, the city where faiths meet all together and side by side.

Istanbul is the only city in the world located on two continents. With its unique position as a metropolis established along the Bosphorus in Europe and Asia, with its 2500 years of history, it has proudly served as capital to the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Today's Istanbul is a vibrant cultural, industrial, and historical centre with 15 million inhabitants, a city that throbs with life 24 hours a day. Two international airports, sea, rail and motor routes connect the city to all world destinations; fabulous Turkish cuisine, modern shopping centres and centuries old bazaars make it an ideal venue for conferences and conventions throughout the year.

The motto of the Turkish republic is, in the words of its founder Ataturk, "Peace at home, peace in the world" !

So let us meet in Istanbul, Turkey in 2012 to help achieve peace on earth, and build bridges of understanding between our countries and our peoples.

We promise to make the 15th Convention something to remember.



I cannot believe that my second year as your Editor is nearly over - and what a way to end it, with that fantastic Convention in Kota Kinabalu. I felt so privileged to be there. I hope you have enjoyed reading about the Convention, a report which was only made possible with the help of Katharine Dobson, D18 (GB&I), Mary Emmet-Lewis, D15 (GB& I) and Thelma Pacsoo, D4( GB& I), Wendy Knight (New Zealand) and, particularly, Dr Christine Mosley, D330 (Singapore and Malaysia). This issue also contains a selection of some of the articles which have appeared in News on the Web since November 2007. Do keep your contributions and photographs (in jpeg format) coming and you will see them on the web site. I look forward to hearing from you.

*Wendy Tindall-Shepherd*  
*IIW Editor*

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