



*towards a society for all ages*

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Australian Coalition '99 is an IYOP initiative supported by the Commonwealth Government of Australia

## His Parents' Greatest Concern

*Feature Article by Helen Elliott*

PP381683/00071

Wilf and Fay Alcock are an ordinary couple in their early seventies. They live close to the large country town of Bendigo where Wilf worked for 48 years with a menswear company. They have one son, Rodney, who will be 42 next August - and it is Rodney who has given the Alcock's life shape and meaning. Rodney has cerebral palsy and autism. He is completely dependent upon his parents for his life, the life that has always been his parent's greatest concern.

Wilf Alcock hit the headlines recently when he said he would take Rodney's life rather than have him face an uncertain future when he and his wife are unable to care for him. The Alcocks want assurance from the government that, when the time comes, there will be the right special accommodation and care available to Rodney. Anyone who heard the interview with Peter Thompson on ABC Radio National would have to have a heart as cold as crystal not to be moved by the Alcock's story. These two lives have been fashioned around Rodney, around giving him pleasure, finding the things he loves doing and pursuing them. Rodney loves cutting pictures from magazines, walking around the park and feeding the ducks, going to the pub with his father and having a beer, bowling and going to the gym - and lately he's discovered swimming. He loves attention and blossoms, as we all do, when he receives it. But it's more than just blossoming - how Rodney is in the world depends upon recognition of who he is.

With an eye to the future, Rodney has started staying overnight in respite care once a week. But it's an ordeal for the family. He accepts that he has to go, but he still doesn't like it. Says Fay

Alcock, her bright voice beginning to crack: "I don't think Rodney would last a month without us. It breaks his heart - and ours - just this one night at respite."

Wilf Alcock is courageous and is, according to Kevin Stone, the National President of the Council on Intellectual Disability, a man who has achieved "amazing things" with his son. Fay, too, is a remarkable woman. Yet perhaps Fay Alcock's life is not one that is unusual for a woman of her generation. Her life has often been that of carer; her own mother has recently died at the age of 94. She was the carer for an aunt and is now the solitary carer for an uncle. She does it with love because she is who she is. And she is indignant when she sees some of the care given to those she loves.

"The carers are there, they do their job. But what about the quality of the carers? You can't teach compassion. And how do the people who choose the carers know who has it and who doesn't?" Yet as they grow older Fay and Wilf Alcock know that they will have to depend upon the compassion and interest of people who are likely to be strangers.

Fay Alcock is seventy. It does not take much imagination to step into her shoes, to feel the chill she must feel when she thinks about the future for her beloved son. All she and Wilf want is to know that Rodney will be settled and happy before they die. Isn't that what we all feel when we think of our children? Where's the mother, or father, who, when their children are little hasn't been hurtled into a sudden panic by that thought: "What if I should die? Who will love this child as much as I love them?"

Rodney has been that child for all of his 41 years. And who will love him as his parents have loved him in the years that stretch ahead? Yet the Alcock's anxiety isn't selfish. They've turned it into public action. As Fay Alcock says: "We're not fighting for Rodney alone, we're fighting for all Australians in the same situation and we want to get the facts straight."

Rodney is actually in a better position than several families the Alcocks know in their district. The Alcocks are both still physically fit and strong, although they realize this isn't an indefinite state. Kevin Stone remarks that it is not unusual for both the ageing parent and the adult dependent child to end up in crisis care together. The facts are simple. Human Services will supply housing and move disabled people into small communities where they are supervised by carers. Small clusters of people should work better than huge institutions, but they need specialized and detailed attention if they are to work. In Fay Alcock's words, Rodney and all those like him need "the right house in the right situation with the right people". It sounds simple, but making it all come together is often too hard for bureaucracies to implement. Kevin Stone says the situation regarding accommodation support is explosive. Fay Alcock knows all about the way things work, and she isn't too impressed. There are about 8,000 people in a situation similar to the Alcocks - parents over 65 who are responsible for a profoundly disabled person. Kevin Stone believes this is probably "a gross underestimate". Fay and Wilf Alcock have to "wait and see" how their very public plea for attention from Human Services has gone. They have had rapid action from Human Services - an immediate assessment rather than another three years on the waiting list for accommodation. Others wait for twenty years. It might sound cynical but it seems you need to have mainstream media attention to make things happen. Fay says you have to "make a fuss, you can't just sit back and wait." She adds that most people are so worn out, so emotionally and physically exhausted that they don't have the psychological resources left to make any fuss. The letters of support that the Alcocks have had from people from all over Australia have been a godsend. It makes them feel less alone. And Fay Alcock often feels alone - and despairing. She

refuses to become bitter about what life has dished out to her, but she made a remark, almost in passing, that will cause all of us involved in this special year to take a deep breath and redouble our efforts:

"It's sad to be old," she said. "Nobody seems to take any notice of you."

And what must it be like to be not only old, but old and disabled? Or old and still having someone utterly dependent upon you?

IYOP

NEWS!

## The Global Embrace

The World Health Organisation in Geneva has already accepted several hundred pledges from organisations and committed individuals around the world who will organise events in their cities and towns.

The Global Embrace is the only event of a global dimension that will take place during IYOP.

The event comprises a walk in the morning of the official Global Embrace day, Saturday 2nd October. Participants are encouraged to set a course for the walk- for example, around a park or lake, over a large bridge or down a noteworthy road. In order to achieve a relay action between the different time zones, it is suggested that your walk commences at 11.00am on this day.

If you are unable to hold your event on Saturday 2nd October for some reason and have scheduled your event on another date around this time, you will of course continue to be part of the Global Movement for Active Ageing, and as such, you will be noted as participants.

***Please inform AC'99 National of your group's plans and you will be logged as participants in this international movement.***

Don't forget about the new page on our website dedicated to walks throughout 1999, and specifically to the Global Embrace.

***Please ensure that you send us details of your event as soon as possible.***

***Email: ac99nat@cota.org.au or fax: (03) 9820 4247.***

World Health Organisation celebrated World Health Day, 7 April 1999 with the slogan, "Active Ageing makes the difference" and focused on exploding the myths that surround ageing and highlighted policies that promote health at older ages.

Look at WHO's website at [www.who.int/whday](http://www.who.int/whday) or at the Ageing & Health website: [www.who.int/hpr.ahc](http://www.who.int/hpr.ahc)



## Gerontologic Post-Graduate Research Programs

The University of South Australia offers Gerontologic Post-Graduate Research Programs and invites you to make a significant contribution to your workplace and the community at the same time gaining a Masters or PhD. The innovative programs are designed to address issues related to both the professional field and the workplace.

**For further details contact: Margie H Sharpe PhD, Associate Professor, School of Physiotherapy, University of South Australia, City East Campus, North Terrace, Adelaide 5000 tel: 08 8302 2584 fax: 08 8302 2766 and email: [Margaret.Sharpe@unisa.edu.au](mailto:Margaret.Sharpe@unisa.edu.au)**

## The New Age Radio Program

"The New Age" is the name of a series of radio programs about older people produced by Community Radio 2SER-FM. The series was produced as part of the Healthy Seniors Initiative funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

One hundred older Australians are the stars of this inspiring new documentary series which presents passionate stories that challenge stereotypes about older people and examine

community attitudes towards older age. People aged from 53 to 93 years from rural, urban, indigenous and immigrant backgrounds talk about the myths and realities of being an older person. Their topics range from relationships, sex, health, grief and loss to housing and humour.

The series will be broadcast by more than 120 community radio stations around Australia. Contact your local community radio station for details. Alternatively you may wish to purchase the full "The New Age" set of nine half-hour programs, now available for \$45.00 which includes postage and handling.

2SER is jointly owned by Macquarie University and the University of Technology, Sydney.

**For more information contact 2SER-FM, PO Box 123, Broadway, NSW 2007. Tel: (02) 9514 9514 fax: (02) 9514 9599 email: [radio.2ser-fm@2ser.uts.edu.au](mailto:radio.2ser-fm@2ser.uts.edu.au)**

## Join A Great Adventure

This is an adventure story about the sea, a 70 year-old Sydney sailor and a single-handed, non-stop trip around the world. It is also about how you can join this wonderful experience and help a great Australian "Viking" achieve his lifelong ambition.

Jack Christoffersen will set sail from Sydney in mid December. His course will be west to east from Sydney via the south of New Zealand, Easter Island, Cape Horn, St. Helena, Cape of Good Hope, The Maldives, Cape Leeuwin, south of Tasmania and returning to Sydney. Jack will be the first person in this age bracket to fulfil this quest, which will be recognised by the Guinness Book of Records.

**Jack is looking for sponsors to support the cost of equipping the yacht. If you or your organisation would like further information on this formidable man and his quest, please contact: Louise Eckersley, Director, Gentil Eckersley, Level 1, 525 Harris St, Ultimo NSW 2007.**

**Tel: (02) 9552 5555 Fax: (02) 9552 5522 Email: [gentileckersley@bigpond.com.au](mailto:gentileckersley@bigpond.com.au)**

## National Strategy for an Ageing Australia

The Commonwealth Government is committed to a strong and meaningful response to the celebration of the International Year of Older Persons. The key policy response is the development of a national strategy to address the issues arising from the ageing of the Australian population.

In 1976 Australia had 1.3 million people over 65 years - 9% of the population. By 1998, this had increased to 12% or 2.2 million people. Projections show that this will grow to 16% or 3.6 million in 2016. These trends are the context for consideration of appropriate policy responses by the Government. A broad strategic approach and agreement on the elements required for ongoing action is essential. The National Strategy will enhance Australia's capacity to provide a quality lifestyle which is sustainable for Australians of all ages.

The National Strategy will develop a broad ranging framework to identify challenges and possible responses by Government, business, the community and individuals to meet the needs of Australians as they age. A whole of government approach is building on work already undertaken to look at possible impacts of ageing in particular areas, for example, in superannuation accumulation and use, and appropriate housing.

The Hon. Bronwyn Bishop, MP Minister for Aged Care has issued a background paper which outlines the scope of the work currently being undertaken on the impacts of, and potential policy responses to, ageing under four major themes ie. Independence and Self Provision; World Class Care; Healthy Ageing; and Attitude, Lifestyle and Community Support. Discussion papers on each of the themes

will be released progressively during 1999.

Key stakeholders have already been consulted regarding the framework for the National Strategy, with more than 100 responses received from peak consumer groups, industry organisations, various government departments at the Commonwealth, State and Territory level as well as Ministers. These stakeholders and the wider community will be encouraged to respond to the discussion papers and provide feedback to the Government. The outcomes of this consultation process will be taken into account in the development of the National Strategy.

It is important to remember that greater numbers of people reaching 'old age' is a major achievement, the result of improved living conditions and medical advances over various forms of disease. Future generations of older people will be better educated, have better health and have more financial resources than their parents. These developments open up new possibilities for individuals and the community including the potential for a longer working life in the paid workforce and an expanded personnel base for the volunteer sector. There will also be an increasing range of leisure and travel opportunities, which will provide stimulus to further economic growth.

The coming months will provide a unique opportunity for a concerted and wide ranging consideration of population ageing in Australia. The agenda is being set for a positive process of discussion which will assist the Government in the development of the National Strategy for an Ageing Australia.

***For more information, please visit the following website:  
[www.health.gov.au/acc/nsaa](http://www.health.gov.au/acc/nsaa)***



*The Hon. Bronwyn Bishop, Minister for Aged Care recently visited SBS Radio in Melbourne to address representatives of the 70 language groups on issues pertaining to our ageing population and the Commonwealth Government's National Strategy for an Ageing Australia.*

*From left to right: Mike Zafirooulos, Station Manager, SBS Radio; Stan Piperoglou, Senior Adviser to Federal Minister for Aged Care; Delys Sargeant, Australian Coalition '99; the Hon. Bronwyn Bishop.*

**NATIONAL** Partner

**NEWS!**

## **COTA Congress: A Working Future For Older Australians?**

The Council on the Ageing (COTA) will be holding its first national congress in Adelaide from 7th to 9th November 1999 to celebrate IYOP. The Congress program will explore the complex social and political issues surrounding unemployment, employment and retirement options for older Australians. There will also be opportunities for participants in the Congress to take up other issues that are important to them.

The Congress will appeal to a wide range of professionals, policy-makers, academics and of course many older people themselves. It will challenge participants; discuss policies, theories, strategies and programs; advocate new directions; facilitate communication, education and training and increase public awareness of the social, economic and political impact of limiting employment options for older adults.

We invite you to register your interest in the two day program which includes a series of keynote addresses and workshops. Conference program and registrations are available from late August; early bird registrations close 11th October 1999. If you would like to make a contribution to the Congress you will need to contact the organisers by July.

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*Please contact: COTA National Congress  
1999, COTA GPO Box 1583,  
Adelaide SA 5001;  
phone: 08 8232 0422; fax: 08 8232 0433;  
email: [krichardson@cotasa.org.au](mailto:krichardson@cotasa.org.au)*

## **Second National Rural Conference on Ageing**

The Charles Sturt University will be holding its second national rural conference on ageing with the theme, "Ageing- The Art of Living". The conference will be held between 8-10th July, 1999 at Charles Sturt University in Albury. The Federal Minister for Aged Care, the Hon. Bronwyn Bishop MP, will officially launch the conference. The Rural Ageing and Lifestyle Group of Charles Sturt University chose to focus on themes of inclusion of all older people in a celebration of creativity in later life. The event promises to bring together younger people, artists, academics, health and leisure professionals and older people in a gathering to mark the ageing journey together.

*Find out more about the conference and leave your comments at the following website: [www.csu.edu.au/faculty/health/ralg/](http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/health/ralg/)  
The Conference Convenor is Celia Bevan, Director, Rural Ageing & Lifestyle Group.  
Enquiries:  
tel (02)6051 6820 fax: (02) 6051 6772  
email: [apender@csu.edu.au](mailto:apender@csu.edu.au)*

## **Grandparenting Day and a National Grandparenting Foundation**

The inaugural Grandparenting Day will be celebrated on Sunday 27 June, 1999. This will be a family occasion with entertainment, special events and activities for all ages. You can meet celebrity grandparents with their grandchildren, and the Federal Minister for Aged care, the Hon. Bronwyn Bishop MP, who will officially launch the new Grandparenting Association of the Council on the Ageing (NSW).

The objectives of the Association are to:

- promote the positive value of grandparenting;
- encourage grandparents to pass on their knowledge and experience;
- support grandparents who are primary carers;
- provide information to grandparents whose

*AC'99 National May 1999 • Tel: (03)9820 4463 • Email: [ac99nat@cota.org.au](mailto:ac99nat@cota.org.au)*

relationship with their grandchildren is adversely affected by marital breakdown or distance;

- facilitate opportunities for intergenerational relationships and to emphasise the commonality of interest shared by all generations of a family.

The Association will offer a range of services to members including grandparenting effectiveness and enrichment sessions and information services and peer support groups.

***For more details about Grandparenting Day, which is a free event, or membership in the Grandparenting Association, contact Council on the Ageing (NSW) on tel (02) 9299 4100, fax (02) 9299 4414 or email: cotansw@ozemail.com.au***

Grandparenting Day is being held in association with the 2nd Sydney Retirement & Home Living Expo, which will take place at the Sydney Showground from 25 to 27 June 1999. This is a major exhibition for retirement, retirement living and care of the mature aged.

***For more details about the Expo, telephone (02) 9876 4600.***



### **National Council of Women to Publish Anthology**

The National Council of Women will shortly publish an anthology of personal stories and essays written by older women. The working title of the book is "The Best is Yet to Come" and will be launched in Melbourne later this year.

The Council received 99 manuscripts from across Australia and a number of these have been selected for the anthology. The Council advises that the work is of a very high quality and is poignant, courageous, humorous and dramatic.

In order that the Council can self-publish the manuscript, sponsorship is sought to support the publication. The Council is seeking contributions of \$100 each, and sponsors will be listed in the book in the order in which donations are received. Families or groups may wish to contribute \$10 each to bring the total sponsorship up to \$100.

***Individuals or groups who wish to be associated with this exciting project are invited to send contributions to: National Council of Women of Australia Ltd, Suite 1.06 Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Vic, 3000 Tel: (03) 9662 9177 fax (03) 9662 9477 email: NCWA@bigpond.com.au***

### **Vision Australia Foundation**

The Association for the Blind has recently changed its name to Vision Australia Foundation. The focus will remain on people who are vision impaired, print handicapped or with late-onset sensory loss.

***To contact Vision Australia Foundation: Tel: (03) 9599 5000 Fax: (03) 9598 4158. Website: www.visionaustralia.org.au***

## **IYOP IN THE**

*states & territories*

### **A National IYOP Photographic Competition & Exhibition from a NSW partner organisation**

The Mid North Coast Area Health Service Northern Sector Aged and Extended Care is a public sector health facility situated in Coffs Harbour which specialises in aged care assessment and services. It is committed to primary health education by promoting healthy and positive imagery of our older community. To commemorate IYOP it is holding a National Photographic Competition and Exhibition which

aims to highlight the vital role of older Australians in the community. The National Competition and Exhibition aims to contribute to the reduction of ageism in our society, highlighting the vital role of older Australians.

The National Exhibition will be held at Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour Campus from the 6 - 10 October 1999.

The National Photographic Competition and Exhibition will be open to amateur photographers and photographic art that reinforces "A Society for all Ages" incorporating photographic art that highlights older people in a healthy, positive and productive manner. The closing date for entries is 22 September 1999. All winning prints will be acquired by the Mid North Coast Health Service Northern Sector for display within the health service. There is over \$6,000 worth of prizes including the major prize - a Canon EOS 50 SLR Camera with a 28-80 mm lens. Camera House, Canon and Eastern Australia Airlines are major sponsors of this event.

To further support the National Photographic Competition and Exhibition Camera House offer a 10-20% discount off photographic products and accessories to all senior citizens who present a seniors card at any of their Camera House stores.

***For enquiries contact: National Exhibition Organiser, Mid North Coast Area Health Service Northern Sector, Aged and Extended Care, Locked Bag 812, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450  
Tel (02) 66599 700 Fax (02) 66599 703***

## **Ambassadors in South Australia**



*IYOP Steering Committee member, Colin Lawton congratulates Ambassadors, Dorothy Pash OAM and Keith Conlon.*

A number of Ambassadors for the Year were appointed by the Governor of South Australia, Sir Eric Neal, AC, CVO, at a celebratory function at Government House on 10 May. Their role will be to promote the Year itself, but more importantly, to assist with fostering and encouraging attitudes towards positive ageing with a view to genuinely developing "a society for all ages".

Ambassadors were selected on their extensive community contributions, demonstrated empathy towards older people, and knowledge of issues for an ageing society. It is anticipated that they will "spread the word", both in everyday activities and at formal IYOP events.

The IYOP SA Calendar is published in the "Looking Forward" feature in The Advertiser that comes out every second Friday of the month. As part of their contribution to the Year, the Seniors Information Service is providing a complete Calendar on their website [www.seniors.asn.au](http://www.seniors.asn.au) This is updated in line with the The Advertiser deadlines and is worth a visit. Event highlights include the following:

Healthy Lifestyles Program of Helping Hand Aged Care have been very active in organising a series of programs throughout the Year. These include:

- Wild Women's Weekends -Lifestyle retreats for women over 50 who need some time away to recharge their batteries. Activities include walking, personal growth, massage, aromatherapy, mind mapping, deep listening circles, relaxation and discovering "the goddess within". Venues and costs vary.
- Anglicare SA, as part of their contribution to the Year, has initiated an intergenerational, cooperative project titled, 'A Lesson in Life', involving students and successful older South Australians working together to produce a valuable social history, suitable for publication.

***For more details, contact Peter Bleby 08 8305 9265. For further information on SA initiatives, refer to the website.***

## **IYOP ambassadors travel from the Kimberley to the South West**

COTA WA President and Vice President, Bettine Heathcote and Deborah Kirwan, have been busy IYOP ambassadors!

In Broome, HACC project officers were interested in IYOP in relation to indigenous communities. In Busselton, the Busnet Computer Club and the Vasse Probus Club were particularly enthusiastic about the role of older people in rural communities. Soroptomists International of Joondalup welcomed the IYOP ambassador as a fitting speaker for their own 21st birthday party and celebrations for 77 years of the worldwide Soroptomist movement .

The Australian Association of Gerontology (WA), the Italo / Australia Welfare and Cultural Volunteers, Melville City Council and the Australian Women's Army Services Association are just a few groups in the Perth area with whom discussions have been held.

Thanks to the Lotteries Commission of WA, COTA WA has been able to help fund over 100 community organizations in WA for IYOP events, projects and celebrations. The grants of up to \$1,000 each have been allocated to projects from Esperance to Broome.

## **Reconciliation and Intergenerational program in Queensland**

A special experience was recently shared by several generations in Queensland. To mark the International Year of Older Persons, two classes of 5th level school children from Taigum State School and their teachers met with a group of Elders from the Nalingu Day Respite Centre. The meeting across generations and cultures was facilitated by the Nundah Reconciliation group coordinated by Bev Hickey.

Elders and children began to interact after shy introductions. The children had been studying Aboriginal culture at school, and took drawings and stories with them to share with the Elders. Teachers facilitated the interaction by selecting children to present first. Aunty Ruth, (Ruth Hegarty), reminded the children to speak up, and introduced the Elders. She explained the reason people were introduced using Aunty or Granny, and began the dialogue about cultural differences and the need for sensitivity and respect. The children listened respectfully and seemed pleased to share their drawings, in Aboriginal styles, with the Elders.

After sharing drawings and personal stories the children were encouraged to ask questions. One child asked about personal totems. Granny Ruby 89, with a smile, told about her totem, the possum. She told the children that she was prohibited from hurting or eating possum and couldn't marry a man from the same totem. Aunty Evelyn ,90, told about her totem the wanga pigeon. Aunty Janet ,87, shared with the children that she didn't know her totem because her mother had not lived among her own people. The goal of this project is to facilitate the process of reconciliation through education using the International Year Of Older Persons as a starting point. These students study Aboriginal cultures during this term, an ideal opportunity to meet with the Elders at Nalingu, who are representatives of multiple Aboriginal tribes for first hand information, and to answer the questions their studies stimulated. The next step in this on-going project is a Bush Tucker garden at the school, planted by the children under the guidance of the Nalingu Day Respite Centre Elders.

## **IYOP has High Profile at Victorian Seniors Expo**



*Seniors Expo (Vic) 17 - 19 March 1999*

AC'99 Victoria had a high profile at this year's Seniors Expo, a three-day event held at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne during Senior Citizens Week in March.

AC'99 had a large stand in the centre of the Expo and gave away "showbags" of IYOP promotional material, including fridge magnets, stickers and brochures, as well as 5,000 copies

of the Victorian calendar which shows some of the Victorian Partners' activities for the March to June 1999 period. Prominently displayed were some of the photographs from the "Ageing Through the Lens" exhibition and competition, organised by Ballarat Health Services and the City of Ballarat

Next to the AC'99 Victoria booth were photographers taking pictures of people posing under a sign saying "Getting Better with Age". Even the Victorian Premier, Mr Jeff Kennett, stood beside the photograph which was subsequently published in The Age newspaper. The Expo was an excellent opportunity to reach many thousands of older people, promote IYOP and demonstrate what the community and business sectors in Victoria are doing for the Year.

## Older Person of the Year Award in Tasmania

Southern Cross Homes, the Tasmanian Division of a major national aged care provider, will be celebrating IYOP with a Gala Dinner on Friday 17 September. The Older Person of the Year will be announced at this event. The Royal Australian Navy Band Tasmania will entertain guests with Big Band music at the dinner.

Southern Cross TV and Woolworths Ltd (Purity and Roelf Vos) have accepted invitations to co-sponsor Tasmania's Older Person of the Year. A formal launch of the Older Person of the Year Award will be held towards the end of May.

## News from the Far North

IYOP events and initiatives in the Northern Territory include:

- Seniors Easter Party, which was hosted by the Kalyminian Brotherhood, which was attended by Minister Bishop and Senator Tambling.
- Launch of the Seniors Card in the NT, by the Chief Minister and the Minister for Senior Territorians.
- Weekly Internet Training for seniors at the NT Library, situated in Parliament House.
- Senior's Book Fest - COTA (NT) is about to launch the Senior's Book Fest which is a small collection of children's literature, about older

people (neighbours and grandparents). The books will be sent to various groups and organisations throughout the NT for a period of two weeks. The Playgroup Association of the NT has already made a booking for the Senior's Book Fest for Children's Week. They plan to have older story tellers reading to groups of children.

- "Recollections" - Sunday May 23, 1.00 pm - 5.00 pm. "Recollections", an intergenerational project includes yarn spinning, performances, memory cushions and reminiscing.
- The Minister for Senior Territorians recently announced that small grants were available to seniors organisations, groups and clubs OR individual seniors for IYOP projects. Preference will be given to projects which do not normally attract funding from other Government funding sources. If possible, the projects are to be completed in 1999.

**NEW**

Partners

### Amnesty International

Contact: Mr Graeme Stephen  
Tel: 03 9427 7055 Fax: 03 9427 1643  
Email: [vicaia@ozemail.com.au](mailto:vicaia@ozemail.com.au)  
Website: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

### Australian Youth Foundation

Contact: Ms Ulrike Schuermann,  
Executive Director  
Tel: 02 9357 2344 Fax: 02 9358 5635  
Email: [youth@ayf.org.au](mailto:youth@ayf.org.au)

### HESTA (Health Employees Superannuation Trust Australia)

Contact: Mr James Coyle  
Tel: 03 8660 1600 Fax: 03 8660 1650  
Email: [jcoyle@hesta.com.au](mailto:jcoyle@hesta.com.au)  
Website: [www.hesta.com.au](http://www.hesta.com.au)

### International Education Forum Australia Ltd.

Contact: Mrs Carleen Wheeler  
Tel: 03 9598 5111 Fax: 03 9597 0535  
Email: [ief@iefaust.org.au](mailto:ief@iefaust.org.au)  
Website: [www.iefaust.org.au](http://www.iefaust.org.au)

### **Neocom Development Group**

Contact: Ms Allison Proctor  
Tel: 03 9686 9666 Fax: 03 9686 9699  
Email: me@neocom.com.au

### **Speech Pathology Australia**

Contact: Ms. Michelle Windsor,  
Public Affairs Manager  
Tel: 03 9642 4899 Fax: 03 9642 4922  
Email: sppathau@vicnet.net.au  
Website: www.vicnet.net.au/~sppathau

### **The Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex Servicemen and Women Limited**

Contact: Mr William Weir, OAM,  
National Secretary / Treasurer  
Tel: 07 5578 2259 Fax: 07 5596 5694



Older people were represented in the 1999 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Three older persons groups walk behind an IYOP banner on the night.

### **Letters to the Editor**

The Editor would like to thank the following contributors for their comments. Each will receive an IYOP Commemorative Coin Set for their comments, with the compliments of the Royal Australian Mint.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I was prompted to write this letter by your invitation in "National Update- Edition 7" to write to you and have the opportunity to win a "1999 Uncirculated Six Coin Set". But it was not the main reason!

It is noted that Council on the Ageing is the auspicing organisation of the Australian Coalition '99 and that this is an "International Year of Older Persons 1999" initiative.

And yet it appears to me to me that there is a serious deficiency in one aspect. Little seems to be covered

in the fields of the problems experienced by a majority of older persons who desire to work either from necessity or preference, in securing or retaining employment. The older person today is not just unemployed or under-employed but is definitely otherwise a disadvantaged person of mature age, discriminated against when seeking employment.

The achievement of recognition of mature aged re-employment is a goal deserving assistance from all sectors of the community, and the promotion of the value of mature aged workers, including their maturity, sound work ethic, experience, knowledge and wisdom in the context of paid work and their valuable (and often unpaid) contribution to society. "National Update" should be more than just a mere report of the entrenched and often wrongly accepted views of the position of the older person in the community. Times have changed; this is a world where the "older person population" is increasing faster in numbers than other age groups. We should not miss the opportunity that the "International Year of Older Persons 1999" gives to the more mature. The opportunity should now be taken to use the publication as a platform for representation, to foster employment opportunities and as an information resource, with awareness raising, supportive and lobbying roles.

*S. Reynolds, ACT*

*We agree with you that bigger issues pertaining to older people warrant attention - and action during this Year. Your letter was written prior to the release of Update 8 which included an opinion by Vic Nicholson entitled, "Shouldn't your next generation of employees be older and wiser." AC'99 National will be targeting a large number of organisations with the corporate sector during this Year; and one main objective will be to raise awareness of and start attitudinal change towards older people in the context of employment within the discipline of human resource management. There are many partner organisations of AC'99 that have or will be undertaking programs to advance employment opportunities for older people. I also encourage you to refer to the AC'99 calendar of events which includes a number of initiatives specifically focused on older people and employment, one of these being the Council on the Ageing National Congress in Adelaide in November.*  
- Editor:

Dear Sir/Madam,

The City of Unley has had very positive response to activities for the International Year of Older Persons. Our Grandparenting Again courses, and Active

Recreation for Older People Forum attracted large numbers. A concert by the Band of the South Australia Police on Wednesday June 2nd at 10.30 am is expected to be booked out.

*D. Mellows, SA*

*Congratulations to the City of Unley for your contribution to the Year. We have been alerted to other city councils that have demonstrated a deep level of commitment to creating age -friendly communities across Australia. You may be interested to learn that AC'99 National has established a partnership with the Local Government Association of Australia to encourage information and idea interchange between city councils, and a special section on local government involvement will be introduced to the AC'99 website shortly. - Editor:*

Dear Editor,

Sorry I did not respond earlier ... we retired people get very very busy you know...! I have visited the website a few times and have found it to be very easy to use! I wonder if overseas people might find a map of Australia useful....with major centres marked on it, and even some graphical info to show our great country...maybe include the location of several mayor IYOP events. The calendar of events is very useful too and we are using it to avoid double booking events for our own organisation.

IYOP in general seems to be gaining momentum. The calendars are filling fast and the media is getting into the swing. There is a lot of public awareness here in Tasmania and there have been some very good activities, such as our Grey Mardi Gras. The Australian Coalition "Update" is also a very useful tool. It contains a variety of useful information. The only problem is getting all the info to all our members! We are a young organisation here in Tasmania having only been going for about 3 years. We get a few copies, but really can't afford to send them out by mail. We get about 60 member to a regular monthly meeting, but we only have about 4 copies to distribute. Is there an answer?? I hope these comments are of some use to you.

*Bill Millar, Hobart*

*It is very pleasing to see that the information issued by AC'99 is being read and used widely across Australia, and we will certainly consider your suggestions. We would be happy to supply more copies of "Update" each month to your organisation. Alternatively, some of your members may be able to access the Internet where "Update" is posted just prior to the release of the printed version. - Editor:*

## INTERCOM

*from the secretariat*

### **Certificates from Universal Care Management**

Last month, AC'99 National Partner organisations received official certificates of partnerships to acknowledge their role and ongoing contribution to the International Year of Older Persons. AC'99 National is grateful to Universal Care Management for sponsoring this initiative.

### **Copies of "Full Voice" and Postcards**

You will have received copies of The Body Shop "Full Voice" magazine and postcards for the National Body Image and Ageing campaign. Please advise us at the National Secretariat or your respective AC'99 state/territory secretariat if you require more.

### **Share your photographs with us**

We would love to receive photographs of different IYOP commemorative initiatives around the country. Please send us your photographs for consideration for inclusion in "Update". We would also appreciate a brief synopsis of no longer than 50 words describing the event. Please clearly mark your photograph including names of people featured. Also include include a return postal address so that we can return the photograph to you.

Send your IYOP snaps to Australian Coalition '99 National, Level 2, 3 Bowen Crescent, Melbourne, Victoria, 3004.

### **"Update" material on Website**

Each month, we post information on IYOP developments including specific initiatives. You'll find these additional items listed under the most recent edition of "Update". We suggest you mark our site as a "Favourite" and refer to it regularly.

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## IYOP Coin Set Order Form

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\* If total cost of coins exceeds \$100, please  
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*A photograph of the IYOP Coin was included  
 in "Update" no. 6 and can also be seen at  
[http://www.ramint.gov.au/mint\\_issue/issues/default.htm](http://www.ramint.gov.au/mint_issue/issues/default.htm)*

Council on the Ageing (Australia) is the auspicing  
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