

PWA STUDY CAMP REPORT 2018

2018 marks the last PWA Study Camp in NSW. The Camps have been held annually since 1966 at various locations throughout the state. Each Camp was organised by a Camp Committee whose membership changed smoothly over the decades.

The Camp Committee wrote a very fine *Message* in the Camp booklet, describing the reasons for stopping the Camps and paying tribute to members past and present. Mention was made of the Study Leaders, some of whom led several Camp Studies and about the inspiring teaching these ladies imparted.

The recent Camp held from Monday 5th to Thursday 8th March at Yarramundi was attended by 32 full-time campers plus four day visitors on Tuesday. The Theme of this final Camp was *Rejoice in the Lord Always*, based on Philippians. The Study Leader was Sylvia Siu, a young mother who brought along her baby Suraya leaving husband Rev. Sylvester at home at Woy Woy with their other two little girls.

Sylvia told us of her early life in Egypt and growing up in a Coptic Christian home and church, so different from the rest of us. Her presentation of the topic before each Study was absorbing and interesting, leading us to a greater understanding of what it is to "*Rejoice in the Lord always*". The Study itself was challenging, calling for great skill from the four Study Group Leaders to keep the momentum going, keeping us 'on task'.

The accommodation was very good, with everyone able to have a lower bed. The meals were varied, well cooked and well presented. The local bell-birds serenaded us each morning and throughout the day and apart from an opportunistic dog (no food went his way), no sign of wildlife was evident – not a snake to be seen.

On Monday evening, after dinner Camp Convener Betty Minter welcomed everyone and State President Barbara Clark gave the Opening Devotions, following Camp tradition of Hymn, talk and prayer. After Sylvia gave an introduction of the Study through an overview, there was an Ice Breaker Game, then the Camp Committee presented the Evening Devotions as a group. Each morning and evening, a different Camper led the Devotions.

Group photographs were taken on Tuesday so the Day Visitors could be included. Tuesday concluded with a Mini Concert by the Camp Committee members and a Camp Trivia Game, which was a lot of fun.

On Wednesday evening we saw a collection of 175 slides prepared by Sylvia Johnson (who has taken photos at all the Camps she has attended and who has been Camp Registrar for 31 years - (that was one of the answers in the Tuesday quiz). There was a lot of reminiscing as each photo was screened, lots of happy memories of Camp events and of women who are no longer with us, but with the Lord.

An innovation at this Camp was a 'second hand' bookstall, with Campers donating books they no longer wanted, the money raised being added to the *Shriek!* Fine Box. The total was increased thanks to the skill and generosity of Roslyn Sharp, who had embroidered drink coasters as a gift to every Camper and then sold the extra ones for \$3.00 each.

The Campers decided the \$300.00 raised would be divided among PWMU's appeal for funds to aid Global Recording Network's Bible material for the Sudan, Home Mission's Book Tokens for Student Ministers and for the Women's Ministry Facilitator.

Betty Minter thanked everyone for all their help and contributions. This was followed by a Communion Service with Sylvia Siu speaking and Rev Bob Thurlow from Windsor conducting the Communion. Then it was time to join hands and sing "*Bind Us Together Lord*" for the last time. Lunch followed and then the Campers dispersed, very aware that this was the end of a long tradition for women of the PWA in NSW. Only God knows what the future will bring.

Anon.