

UNION OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN (VIC)

UPDATE: FEBRUARY 2020

A belated welcome to 2020 to all our members and friends. It has been a difficult start to the year on a number of fronts.

The catastrophic fires engulfing much of Eastern Australia have been foremost in everybody's minds, and our concern and best wishes go to members who have been affected in Mallacoota, the Southern Highlands and elsewhere. Courage, generosity, perseverance, stamina and heartbreak have all been evidenced, as has the lack of leadership from our politicians.

Why is there no February Newsletter? Why was there no pub lunch, a January fixture for social contact? Unfortunately, the Newsletter team has been in difficulty. Anne Sgro has had surgery for breast cancer and is half way through chemotherapy treatment. She is doing well but energy levels are erratic, to say the least. Cath Morrison has had surgery for the removal of a kidney and not feeling totally herself. Carmen has also been unwell. So we have had to re-assess our situation, which is most annoying although we hope relatively temporary. Clearing out the office in Ross House so that we don't waste funds on rent is slowly continuing. And we are assessing how best to be active this year.

For there is plenty for us all to be concerned and active about. In Australia, our leaders continue to prevaricate on climate change, an asylum seeker family is incarcerated on Christmas Island, Medevac has been reversed and refugees are now in limbo without treatment, people on Newstart continue to be locked into poverty and the sports rort saga has shown that corruption in government is blatant and rampant.

Overseas, conservative, populist government are receiving much publicity and the Middle East is a powderkeg. Where does Australia stand in regards to Iran, Iraq and the future of Palestine? What are our 300 troops doing in the area?

We do remain optimistic on the whole. Ordinary people and business are voicing opinion and taking action to address climate change. The courage and kindness shown in the face of fires has been amazing. And we can continue to phone, lobby, write, act together for humanity and the future of our planet.

2020 is the UAW's 70th anniversary. We are incredibly proud of all those years of activism for women, peace and social justice. We will keep in touch.