

## A Brief History - Zonta Club of Adelaide Flinders Inc.

District 23, Area 2. Club 0993



The Zonta Club of Adelaide Flinders was chartered on 2 December 1981, with the support of the late Dr Heide Taylor from the Zonta Club of Adelaide. At that time, we were part of District 16, which covered all of Australia and New Zealand. The District was split into two at the Auckland Conference in 1989 with New Zealand remaining as District 16. Australia then became District 23 - later separating into Districts 22, 23 and 24.

Within our District 23, which covers WA, SA, NT, Vic and Tas, we are one of 10 clubs in Area 2, which covers South Australia and Northern Territory.

Our Charter was presented by Mrs. Leneen Ford, who was at that time the District 16 Governor, at the newly opened Hilton Hotel in Adelaide on 26th November 1982. The club had 35 Charter members. Charter President: Esme Proudman, First Vice President: Paddi Lowry, Second Vice Chairman: Trudy Pohl, Treasurer: Liz Versteeg, and Secretary: Barbara Gepp.

**Meetings:** Held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Meetings began at The Public Schools Club, and then moved to Ayers House for over 20 years, then in 2010 we moved back to our original home, the Public Schools Club. Then in 2019 we moved to our current location at the West Adelaide Football Club.

**Club Board and Committees:** For most of its history the Club Board has comprised: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and four or five Directors. Whilst it is preferable for Directors to chair a committee, this is not always possible.

**Past Presidents:** Charter President Esme Proudman (1981-1984), Jill Welsh (1984-1986), Gwenda Cunningham (1986-1988), Elizabeth Smith (deceased) (1988-1990), Shirley Stagg (1990-1992), Dr Sarah Cunningham (1992-1994), Marjorie Smith OAM (1994-1996), Patricia Russell (deceased) (1996-1998), Fay Leditschke (1998-2000), Heather Sutton (2000-2002), Dr Pauline Glover (2002-2004), Isobel McFarlane (2004-2006), Cintra Amos (2006-2008), Carolyn Colquhoun (2008-2010), Jodi Knoop (2010-2012), Anne Miller (2012-2014), Sue Lear (2014-2016), Eronwy Edwards (2016-2018), Heather Smigiel (2018-2020), Dr Lesley Siegloff (2020-2022) and for the current biennium 2022-2024 we have had co-presidents Lorraine Omond and Lindy Berketa.

Our Club has had two Honorary Members – Jennifer Cashmore MP and Mrs Liz Scarce, wife of former SA Governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce. In 2024 member Jill Welsh received the Service Clubs Association of South Australia Heidi Taylor Medal for 40 years' service to Zonta and the community.

**Membership:** Membership peaked at 48 in 1991 and fell as low as 18 in 2001. Numbers have remained steady between 25 and 30 for some years, and we are now 27 members.

Length of service is valued and rewarded with Club service badges being given for every 5 years of service. We are fortunate to have a wealth of knowledge within our club with half of the membership having over 15 years' service and no less than 12 Past Presidents among our membership.

Fellowship is encouraged and is an integral part of our Club and members are congratulated or supported whenever the need arises. Cards, emails, Facebook messages etc are sent to the Zonta Community acknowledging achievements, well-being, condolences and thank you cards as and when required.

**Advocacy Projects:** Advocacy is an increasing priority for Zonta, and we are active within our Combined Area Advocacy Committee. We support SCASA and our club has had a representative on the Adelaide White Ribbon Breakfast Committee since inception in 2008 and is also represented on the new White Ribbon Australia SA Committee. Members support and attend various IWD (International Women's Day) events in March each year. Advocacy has become an integral part of Zonta.

**Service Projects:** Service projects have addressed the Zonta priorities of health, education and economic self- sufficiency of women and girls.

We strongly support the “**Zonta Says No!**” campaign against domestic violence. We currently support women's shelters with toiletry bags, and our Shoe Boxes of Love project and donate vouchers for basic shopping needs. In the past we have supported a girls' vocational orphanage and learning centre in Cambodia, indigenous and migrant projects, scholarships for young women undertaking study or internships, the production of a video to provide information and treatment options to women diagnosed with breast cancer, which was translated into several languages. We have partnered with the Girl Guides Association and The Zahra Foundation.

Our club was one of only two within our district to win a grant from Zonta International to support a project whereby we partnered with the Zahra Foundation, and the “Food for Thought” and “Cooking on a Budget” projects began. The Zonta Rug Project which began in 2005 was a very successful hands-on project involving not only Zontians but the wider community and approximately 250 handmade rugs are given away each year. While this project is no longer a club project, some club members still participate with other Zontians and offer their services. We are active with all grant applications when they are offered, and we have been successful on occasions.

After receiving a very generous donation from Mr. Wes Pickering, the club was able to establish the “Woman of Inspiration Award”. Confirmation from Mr. Pickering that this will be an ongoing annual donation has enabled the club to make this an annual Award.

**Fundraising Activities:** The Club's major fundraiser, an annual movie night, has been held for over 35 years. Another very successful fundraiser was “A Taste of Zonta” recipe book which included contributions from members and celebrities. Over the years, we have held numerous social fundraising dinners, lunches, fashion parades, art exhibitions, and high teas to name a few. In recent times regular sausage sizzles have been added to our fundraising activities and something new, garage sales. Members are continually thinking of ways in

which to boost funds, both for Club and Service use. The Zonta Challenge and loose change purses are just two.

**Area Activities:** The Club has been represented at all Area Workshops since Charter and hosted many of these, and several club members have served terms as Area 2 Director.

**District Activities:** The Club has always been well represented at District Conferences and has been represented on the District 23 Board with Margaret Rowland serving as Governor, Lt Governor and Area Director 1994-2000. Cintra Amos served as Area 2 Director and Lt. Governor 2008-2012. Carolyn Colquhoun served as D23 Treasurer 2010-2012. Cintra Amos was the chair of the 2015 District 23 Conference Committee. and was District Service Chair (2016-2018). Sue Lear was District Chair of Young Women in Public Affairs (2016-18), and Margaret Rowland was appointed Chair of the District 23 Centenary Anniversary Celebration Committee (2018-2020). Past President Eronwy Edwards served on the District Board as Area 2 Director (2018-2020). Currently Past President Dr Lesley Siegloff is serving as Area 2 Director (2022-2024) and Eronwy Edwards District 23 Foundation for Women Ambassador (2020 -2022) and D23 Area2 Foundation for Women Ambassador (2022-2024).

**Past members.** Dr Pauline Glover served as Area 2 Director and Lt Governor 2004-2008 and chaired the District Advocacy Committee 2010-2014, and Anne Miller served as Vice Area 2 Director (2014-2016).

**District Projects:** The Club has strongly supported all District 23 projects including Breast Cushions which are made and offered to all women in hospitals undergoing breast surgery, and Birthing Kits which are packed and sent to third world countries for women to give birth in a clean birthing environment.

Our club supports the District 23 conferences held every 2 years and 7 members travelled in September 2023 to Bunbury Western Australia.

**International Activities:** The Club has been represented at most International Conventions since Charter, with no less than 7 club members attending the Japan Convention in June 2018. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Eastern Europe members did not attend either the Chicago 2020 or Hamburg 2022 conventions. Brisbane, Australia is to host the Zonta International Convention in June 2024, only the third time a convention has been held here in Australia. We look forward to attending ourselves and welcoming Zontians down under.

**Zonta International Foundation for Women:** Each year the Club contributes 1/3 of funds raised to the Zonta International Foundation. Some members make individual donations, and the Club makes donations in the name of members on special occasions.

*Carolyn Colquhoun – Club Historian and Archivist*