

Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom:
Aotearoa Section



Newsletter April 2022

WILPF

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Section AGM

We are calling for nominations for:

National president
Section co-ordinators (secretaries)
National treasurer

Looking forward to seeing you there

WILPF International Congress 2022

Online: Two weekends in July

The business of the congress will be done over two weekends:

July 16/17 and July 23/24.

There will be an international series of workshops and panel discussions in the intervening week – **July 18-22.**

All sections are invited to present a workshop /panel discussion. Our Aotearoa Section will offer one. Any ideas welcome. Send to:
wilpfaotearoa@gmail.com

Aotearoa WILPF Section AGM 2022

Saturday 30 April

Join us on Zoom
1-4 p.m.

**Passing of Great Leaders in Maoridom
A Sad Time**

*By Pauline E. Tangiora, kuia of Mahia,
Rongomaiwahine, Vice-president of
Women's International League for Peace
and Freedom Aotearoa, and Patron of the
Peace Foundation Aotearoa.
(Published, The Gisborne Herald
April 01, 2022)*

Kua hinga te totona i te Waonui o Tane

It is with sadness that we have lost a man that had such concern for his people.

I first came across Sir Wira Gardiner when he was the CEO of Maori Affairs and during the 1993 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Sir Wira had a very deep respect for bringing Maori to the world stage. On my journeys to the UN overseas, my reports were sent to the Maori Affairs department in Wellington. His encouragement of the value of our work was very important for our country.

We owe a depth of gratitude to Ta Wira for his wonderful chairing of the committee and looking into our passports. Many of us appeared before his committee as we had the old way of having French on our passports. Many thanks to him and his committee because we now have our very own passport of Aotearoa in Te Reo Maori and English. This is only a few of the many things that this great man has done for us

Haere atu ra, Sir Wira Gardiner.

Ko te Whaea June Jackson, a fighter for the “so-called underclass.”

Haere atu ra, haere atu ra

We have all heard of this great lady and her work through the Manukau urban authority, and the work she did on her Marae.

My perspective of June stems from one day in particular, many years ago, while working at Auckland Prison. She was striding down the corridor; we stopped for a chat. She didn't look very happy as she had with her the Black Panther paper from America. It seemed that some of the officers didn't like that she had brought this paper in to the prison. Together we made a bit of a noise, proving that such a newsworthy paper would benefit our Māori inmates. It would open their eyes as to what they could achieve.

This kuia eventually went on to sit on the parole board for many years. While sitting alongside an inmate, I would hear her give them a tongue-lashing about why they were in such a place — in prison. Her expectations of them and their futures were made clear — she let them know what they could do positively for themselves and their whanau.



Photo caption: Dame Temuranga Batley-Jackson receives her damehood from Governor-General Anand Satyanand at the Ngā Whare Waatea Marae, Mangere, Tamaki Makaurau, in 2010. Photo: Phil Doyle Stuff

My gratitude to this kuia for giving hope to these people, who have turned out for the better due to having met her.

I am grateful for the friendship I had with this woman, and for what she has done. Her own personal efforts and the work she did for her Marae, for giving work programmes to so many people.

He Mihi aroha ki te whanau pani.

Haere ata ra ki tenei poutuku manawa o Kahungunu

Over 35 years ago, Moana Jackson put forward to the government a proposal that circulated the country, receiving feedback from his journey around Aotearoa. He was seeking how we could stop our young people from going to prison. Sadly, that has been ignored, to this day.

He had a humble and quiet way about him, and he helped so many people. He worked tirelessly on the rights for indigenous people — not only in New Zealand, Aotearoa, but in the United Nations. This amazing man should have been far more recognised in this country for his amazing work.

It is hoped that the work that he had been doing on reviving our constitution will continue. His legal mind and expertise in this field will be missed — he gave so freely of his time and his knowledge.

Over the years, it's been humbling to watch him. Even though he was very forthright in his thinking, his humility was to be admired. That was how he walked through life. We have seen such great work from him, with him giving freely the wairua of the old people who have passed on, and this could be seen through his great leadership.

***These three great leaders have passed on.
To the members of their whanau:
arohanui.***



Pauline Tangiora: Photo Del Abcede

Te Tiriti -Based Futures and Anti-racism

This year's series of online workshops has finished but you can see the programme here:

<https://www.tiritibasedfutures.info/programme>

Last year's workshops have been uploaded to YouTube and you can see them here:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TeTiritiBasedFutures>

This year's workshops will also be uploaded in due course.

From the newsletter editor: Celine Kearney

This my last newsletter as editor. I have enjoyed trying to keep up with people and events in the Section. However, after ten years, it is time to pass the role to someone else. Looking back over newsletters, they hold a record of who we are as a section, our actions, and our aims. They also hold a record, including photos, of those of our members who have passed on, women who I'm sure we hold in memory and whose legacy is our strength as Aotearoa WILPF Section. I will continue to record our work through creating content for our website.

Mothers of the Revolution is a feature-length documentary directed by New Zealander Briar March, shown in movie theatres around Aotearoa earlier this year. ***Celine Kearney*** saw it twice... and remembers her own experiences.

The documentary tells a multi-levelled narrative about the Greenham Common women's peace camp at RAF Greenham Common, about three hours west of London, 1981-2000. Much of the story is told through interviews with women who lived at the camp, committed to non-

violent action to prevent US nuclear warheads being stationed on British soil. It took a wide international perspective on the women's actions, particular the connection between Russian activists and Greenham women. Despite the women's actions and a New York court case led by long-time Greenham woman Rebecca Johnson to stop the missiles, with Margaret Thatcher and Michael Heseltine in charge the US nuclear missiles were flown into RAF Greenham Common in 1983.



Pictured: Celine Kearney, Green Gate, in the forest, Greenham Common women's peace camp. September 1984.

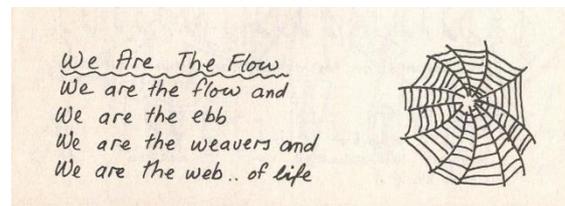
I first went to Greenham in February 1984, for two or three days in a cold English winter, returning in September 1984, for two weeks. Then again twice in 1985, once to appear at court in Newbury, the nearby village.

I remember telling the woman judge, at Newbury Courthouse, that I had crossed the fence to bear witness to the violence done to indigenous peoples of the Pacific, and the terrible consequences for them of the nuclear cycle: mining uranium, testing bombs on land and the ocean. She sentenced me to a fortnight in a Victorian prison in London, or to pay a fine. I chose the fine.

My experiences at Greenham taught me never to underestimate what older women can do.

I remember women committed to the kaupapa of non-violence, in the face of violence that was deliberately directed, and random, the strong haunches and heavy hooves of fine horses ridden by mounted policemen, trying to move groups of women along - myself included. Living in the forest in plastic blenders, (tents of waterproof material slung over a tree branch). Learning to keep the fire going ... using a hole in dug in the forest as a latrine, ritual keening at the fence for those who would die if the missiles were launched.

Singing, the image of the spider web, a metaphor for the interconnection of all of life, threatened by the nuclear missiles – surely also an image for the current world climate crisis.



Source: Women's Protest Songbook Wellington Women for Peace 1985

Already an active member of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement, I was happy to find the movement alive and well in an English forest, led by Australian activist, Zohl de Ishtar, at Green Gate, one of camps at the 6/7 gates around the seven-mile perimeter fence, each named for a colour of the rainbow.

Maori kuia, Titewhai Harawira who was interviewed in the documentary, visited the camp in 1985. Pictured below at Green Gate, Titewhai's message of resistance resonated at the women's camp.



I recycled my diaries some years ago, so can't check who to acknowledge for these photos.

National Council of Women conference Megan Hutching reports

Southland NCW branch hosted this online conference, on February 19. The main item of business was a report on the proposed changes to the NCW constitution which would do away with formal branches and subject committees and replace those with informal branches and Action Hubs.

NCW NZ members will now be members of the national organisation (rather than their local branch), as will organisational members like WILPF. For paying subs, organisational members will be divided into small, medium and large and the organisations can decide which group they belong to. An example was a group with a small number of members but a healthy bank balance which might like to pay a medium or large subscription. (N.B. A Special General Meeting was held on 26 March and the new constitution and organisational membership fees were passed. The new fees will take effect on 1 April.)

There were a couple of workshops – one was on Te Tiriti, diversity and inclusion and the other a panel of Southland women. Both were interesting and useful,

especially the first which covered a range of topics including the perennial 'how do we engage younger members?' which resonated strongly with me as it's a discussion we have been having, off and on, for years in WILPF. I thought that the change of membership structure from a web of branches, each with a small number of members, but with bank accounts, office holders, etc., to a nationally organised one was something that we might want to consider for WILPF Aotearoa. Our national membership is 65 people, yet we have three branches, each with their own bank accounts, as well as the Section which also has bank accounts. To me, it seems overly complex. I hope we can discuss this at the Section AGM in April.

During the NCW conference, we were also reminded that there is a new Incorporated Societies Act. WILPF will need to look at that and the Section constitution to see what, if any, changes should be initiated. I have also joined the NCW's International Action Hub.

ANZAC Day Peace Forum: there will be an online 'Welfare Not Warfare' forum, April 25, from 1.30pm - 2.30pm via zoom. Peace vigils: Wellington 'Honour the war dead by ending war' peace vigil 5.30pm to 6pm; the Dunedin vigil in the afternoon. Contact for more information: Peace Movement Aotearoa, icanz@xtra.co.nz

Asia Pacific Report

WILPF Asia-Pacific region representatives and Section liaisons met in February and March: Kozue Akibayashi, Noriko Tada, Yuuko Kageyama, Taeko Okada, from Japan, Roti Make, from Polynesia, Janette McLeod, Ludmilla Kwitko, from Australia Celine Kearney and Megan Hutching, from Aotearoa. These are valuable,

focused discussions which enable us to get to know each other and the issues that are important to each section.

For our closest WILPF sisters in **Polynesia**, the struggle continues for acknowledgement of and compensation by metropolitan France for the decades of nuclear testing, as Roti Make explains. She describes with frustration the French strategy of yet again sending officials to Polynesia to put the burden of proof upon local people to provide evidence that the consequences of nuclear testing are significant enough to be compensated. A new WILPF Polynesia president has been appointed and a section meeting to be held soon.

Japan: A documentary on Fukushima nuclear disaster has been uploaded to YouTube – this could be shown during Congress. The 100th anniversary of the establishment of Japan Section was in 2021 and a celebratory get-together is being planned

Australia: a report on increased militarisation in Australia has been developed into a demilitarisation campaign in the lead up to the 2022 federal election. A new peace, gender and the environment group has been established.

Ideas for what the Asia Pacific Region could offer at Congress:

- The Japanese documentary about the Fukushima nuclear powerplant disaster
- A workshop on decolonisation
- A workshop on the militarisation of the Pacific and the legacy of nuclearization
- Engagement with environmental issues

West Papua

A leading West Papuan activist is comparing the plight of his region to that of the crisis in Ukraine.

Benny Wenda, who is the Interim President of the United Liberation Movement of West Papua (ULMWP) says even as the world looks on in horror at Russia's invasion, West Papuans feel a special affinity to the Ukrainian people.

"We feel their terror, we feel their pain and our solidarity is with these men, women and children. We see their suffering and we weep at the loss of innocent lives, the killing of children, the bombing of their homes, and for the trauma of refugees who are forced to flee their communities."

World leaders have spoken up to condemn the actions of Vladimir Putin and applauded the bravery and spirit of Ukrainians in their resistance; as they defend their families, their homes, their communities, and their national identity.

But Wenda questions why they have been silent about over half a century of conflict in West Papua. Between 60-100,000 people are currently displaced, without any support or aid. This is a humanitarian crisis," Benny Wenda said.

"Women forced to give birth in the bush, without medical assistance. Children are malnourished and starving. Our people have been suffering this, without the eyes of the world watching, for nearly 60 years." Benny Wenda said Indonesia must allow the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, humanitarian aid organisations and international journalists access to West Papua. "Like the Ukrainian people, you will not crush our spirit, you will not steal our hope and we will not give up our struggle for freedom," he said.

(Source: Radio NZ, March 5, 2022)

West Papuan Students

At Tamaki Makaurau's March branch meeting, Del Abcede explained that the Indonesian government has withdrawn funding from West Papua students

studying in Aotearoa New Zealand. This has left the students in dire straits - little money for food and accommodation.

If you would like to make a monetary donation, here is the number to do so:

Bank: ANZ Bank NZ Ltd

***Name: Papuan Students Association
Oceania***

Account Number: 06-0901-0773895-00

WILPF International

Arms will not save us

While the European decision to send arms to Ukraine has been applauded, it is important for us to remember that arms will not save us, ***writes Carmen Magallón Honorary President of WILPF Spain.*** Rather, they will plunge us back into the historical turbulence of killing and dying...



Photo: International WILPF Carmen Magallón

The violence that imprints the use of weapons only leads to a spiral of death, in which there is always a winner in the contest, the one who has the most weapons. He achieves his miserable end: to dominate, to extend his territory, to raise his ego. . . but everyone loses because lives are lost, which is the most valuable thing we have.

That said, what to do when an invasion, such as the one in Ukraine, takes place before our eyes? The first thing to say is that we do not have a response with the same level of immediacy as those who refer to arms. And yet we propose to resist without arms. It is not a question of judging those who resort to armed resistance, we are not here to judge something so human and complex. Even Gandhi himself spoke of resisting in this way, if necessary. It is a question of thinking about what to do in the medium and long term without the inertia of falling back into the use of human lives as cannon fodder....

This is a reflection that is limited to underlining the importance of educating in the knowledge of and respect for international law, as part of peace education. It is about thinking from a paradigm that departs from the classic assertion that 'To achieve peace, people must be on a war footing'. No, that way we only repeat the history of wars. To achieve peace, we have to be on a peaceful footing. And from there, we must educate, not only in schools, but also socially, to defend international legislation that has been built with great effort, legislation and institutions that, as the Preamble of the United Nations Charter states, were born to "save our children from the scourge of war."

This requires educating the population on the importance of a democratic global governance and having a forum for debating conflicts between countries. We need an education that is attentive to decisions that can erode the balance of agreements and laws that make up the international legislative architecture.

We live these days with anguish over Putin's threat to use nuclear weapons in the contest. There were earlier decisions that paved the way for this possibility and to which the international community

should have raised its voice. In 1987, Gorbachev and Reagan signed the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Missile Treaty), withdrawing these missiles and both sides renouncing their use. Well, in 2018, Trump -USA- withdrew from the treaty, abandoning an important agreement that prevented threatening the use of nuclear weapons, thus leaving Putin's hands free to do so now.

We see that, if international agreements are not upheld, instead of moving forward, we move backwards at the hands of foolish leaders. The International Institute for Global Security reports that in 1994, Ukraine, Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, later joined by France and China. Through this memorandum, Ukraine, which had a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons on its territory, renounced it and joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon state. All in exchange for respect for the integrity of its borders and sovereignty. Now Putin has violated that legally formalized promise to the detriment of the security of the whole world.

Can we educate to value and defend international law? We can and we must. Starting with education in respect for and recognition of the role of the United Nations as a forum for dialogue and diplomacy in which all international actors are represented, and which, despite all its shortcomings, would have to be invented if it did not exist.

WILPF International Congress

The Congress theme incorporates climate, militarisation and feminist peace.

The Congress will be held online, on a platform which provide transcripts for a number of languages, though separate arrangements will need to be made for translation for Japanese.

There will be webinars to introduce the platform and to show how to use it before Congress, also webinars on what happens at Congress.

More information here:
<https://future.wilpf.org/>

Contact us

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And see us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/wilpfaotearoa.nz

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Young WILPF – Y-WILPF
<https://www.wilpf.org/our-members/#young>