

# 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations for the WCTU in Queensland

The National President has visited Queensland for two 125<sup>th</sup> Celebrations.

The first visit was to Brisbane where a Thanksgiving Service ably written by Mrs Marjorie Enterman and alternating parts read by Marjorie, Miss Betty Burr and Mrs Ellen Chandler, was held in the Albert Street Uniting Church. This Church had been the venue for a number of meetings in the past but the original meeting called to band women together and form a Union of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was held in what was called The Music Academy nearby. Mrs Mary Clement Leavitt, a missionary for WCTU from the USA, called a meeting of women and a decision was made to form a Queensland Union with officers duly elected at the second meeting.



*Mrs Ellen Chandler, Mrs Marjorie Royce,  
Mrs Marjorie Enterman*

Soon afterwards a Union was started in Ipswich and then Bundaberg with eventually a total of over 40 Unions around the State.

So much has happened in the intervening years. Queensland members excelled in refreshment tents around the State at agricultural shows with permanent buildings at the "Ekka" in Brisbane. Then came scientific temperance exams. This enterprise developed so well that other temperance groups were invited to help. In recent years the temperance medal exams for speech and drama ably organised by Mrs Marjorie Royce for many years were highlights.



*Ellen displaying the black ensemble worn in  
the 1890's.*

Guests from a number of organisations were welcomed by the State President Mrs Marjorie Royce. The National President, was presented with an orchid corsage by Mrs Royce. Mrs Ellen Chandler recalled many of these historic facts and displayed an outfit - all in black as was worn by respectable ladies of the period. The skirt and beautifully embroidered bodice which was tucked and boned were complemented by a delicate lace shoulder cape. Mrs Chandler then related some statistics - "The Heart of the Matter" - of present day needs in our society particularly the need for a cultural change from binge drinking, street violence and FASD babies. Ellen went on to tell of the need for active women (and men) today to counter the culture of binge drinking in our communities. At the heart of the matter was the way individuals responded with each doing a little to establish a drug-free society.

She then challenged those present that there is an ever present need to develop changes, to operate in ways different from our predecessors and to use modern technology in all its facets.

We must never forget that it is the individual that is important and how our lives can be an example to others. Members can work alone and at home if necessary because person to person communication, writing, phone calling, or email are the root of our work. As Theodore Roosevelt said

***"When you get to the end of your rope,  
tie a knot and hang on!"***

Now is the time to "Hang on" and acknowledge that we celebrate the past, but we must own the present and plan and change for the future - for this is the Heart of the Matter.

The gathering adjourned to the adjoining cafe where a luncheon was organised in the function room. An anniversary cake was cut “with thanksgiving for the past, celebration for the present and hope for the future” and a lovely time of fellowship and conversation was enjoyed by all.

A later visit to Bundaberg in very warm sunshine saw over 100 guests sitting down to a Luncheon to celebrate **125 years of the WCTU in Bundaberg**. By coincidence it was also the 73 years since executive member Mrs Olive Unkles, had become a member of WCTU. A great personal celebration and one person who has made a great contribution to the local, State and National work of the WCTU.



*125th Anniversary Cake*

Mr Jack Dempsey, the local State Member of Parliament, was very complimentary to the work of our organization and the role of mothers in shaping the life of families and ultimately the community. The Uniting Church Choir sang a bracket of numbers, Lois Cottrell told of the role the Union played in Anzac Day Breakfasts and Mr Ross Keppel recited several humorous poems.

A card with the words “The Heart of the Matter” with a heart shaped chocolate attached was distributed to all. It also contained a reminder “If you think one can do nothing, you have never been in bed with a mosquito.”

The organizing committee were congratulated on such a successful event and the catering committee thanked for the ample and tasteful meal.

In November, Mrs Anne Bergen, National Secretary will travel to Ipswich to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in that city.