

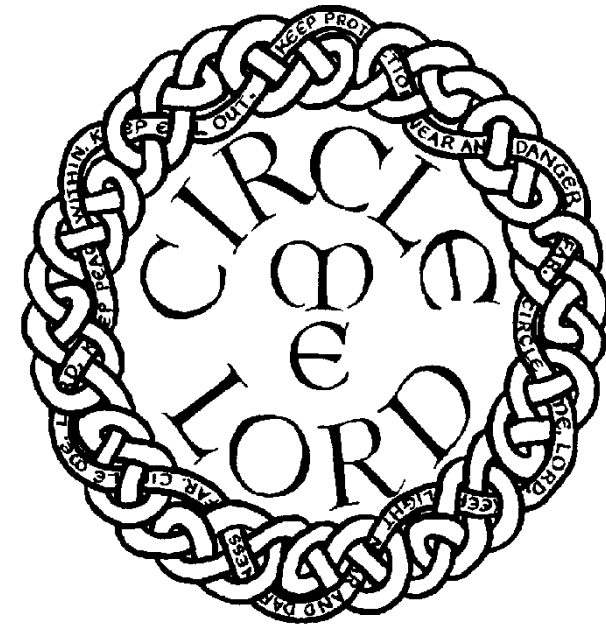
Diocesan MU Executive 2011

PRESIDENT	Ronda Gault
PAST PRESIDENT	Jenny Rainsford
VICE PRESIDENT	Judy Binion
JR. VICE PRESIDENT	Val Coghill
SECRETARY	John Gault
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CHAPLAIN	Rev. Linda Osmond
PUBLICATION	June Prior
SOCIAL RESPOSIBLTY	Dianne Wells
OVERSEAS & NTH. OUTREACH	Leone Tress
MAGAZINE	Ross Everitt
I.P.C. PRAYER & SPIRITUALITY	Gwen Proctor
LINKED TOGETHER	Toni Larkin
HISTORIAN	Phyl Reid
DATA BASE	Toni Larkin
PROMOTION/DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATION	is vacant



LINKED TOGETHER

August 2011



Our theme for 2011

Challenge Change Relationships

Diocese of Bendigo

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of MU Bendigo. While every effort is taken to ensure the accuracy of dates and comments, MU Bendigo cannot accept responsibility.

Contributions from branches and others are warmly welcome and can be sent to:

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☎ 5443 2007

📱 mob, 0428452122

✉ Email tonilarks@netspace.net.au.

From our MU President

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to the most High. It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening.
[Psalm 92 1-2]

Dear Friends in MU and Caritas,

What an enjoyable day we had at Eaglehawk on the 17th of June as we gathered to meet Beverley Ovens, and absorb the information she had to share about MU around the world and how the many projects are supported. To hear Bev tell us that “ the part of your subs which goes to MSH are supporting this project in Burundi ...and this project in the Solomon Islands” etc caused me to again realise how we are all involved in the work being done around the World by MU members. The breadth and challenges of the work happening around the world at grass roots level, is breathtaking. From reading that great little magazine Families Worldwide, we are able to access so much information about the challenges and achievements of MU in the world, and also determine prayer points and prayers every day. In this current July –December edition MU/Caritas in Australia ...particularly Caritas, is highlighted with a one page story. In this little volume there are many discussion stimulators for your groups, branches or with friends and family. I guess this is so with Mia Mia and also Families First. I often feel frustrated when I realise after skimming through them that there are so many articles I want to read in depth....and I need to find the time. When I do get to read them, my enthusiasm for the work of MU is renewed and I am inspired to open my mind to the possibilities of activities and actions that might translate to Australia and our Bendigo Diocese. Do you find this too? In spite of the difficulties we may have we can all be full members of

A note from your Editor

We are presently experimenting with some colour in Linked Together to see if the cost justifies the inclusion of these photos.

You will realise, I'm sure, that we are unable to include all photos that you very kindly send us, but we will endeavour to insert one or two from each function. It should be noted that we are limited to one A4 page of colour.

I would be interested in comments from branches on how you like the new format. I thank you kindly for all of the photos you generously send. Remember, without you we don't exist !!!



Closing date for next issue
SEPTEMBER 26TH. 2011

We are looking forward to hearing from;

Bendigo Nth. MU
Cohuna MU
Lockington Caritas

Cathedral MU
Eaglehawk MU
Kyabram Caritas

If any branches do not intend to send a report, it would be very much appreciated if you could please let me know by the closing date. Thank you to all those who are so willing to contribute as this is what helps us all to keep in touch.

....WHAT'S BETTER THAN A GOOD WEDDING?

Most of us would agree that the answer to that question is a **good marriage**. This is not only because a wedding is over in one day but also because a loving relationship in marriage brings lasting satisfaction.

So to help couples planning their wedding to give thought to their marriage as well, our Bendigo MU Executive agreed to insert an advertisement in the glossy magazine 'Bendigo Bride' published by the Bendigo Advertiser in May this year.

Although we may think our spouse is perfect on our wedding day we soon discover that he or she has faults and failures similar to ourselves. To help us overcome these imperfections and to grow in love together we need God's guidance and enabling. An important feature for most couples is not only the romantic feeling but also the privilege and responsibility of raising children.

Because of our aims and objects members of Mothers' Union and Caritas are in a good position to support others in this process. The power of prayer, the example of good role models and the availability of resources are all beneficial.

Here is the advertisement as it appears in the magazine. Please promote it in any way that will help those getting married to benefit from it. Also pray for Ronda and Barry to have the right attitudes and words to answer responses.

JOIN THE LOVE TRIANGLE!
LET God bless your marriage!

To help you in this great process contact one of us:
Ronda on 5461 4576 or jonron@westnet.com.au
Barry on 5448 3912 or bvrains@gmail.com

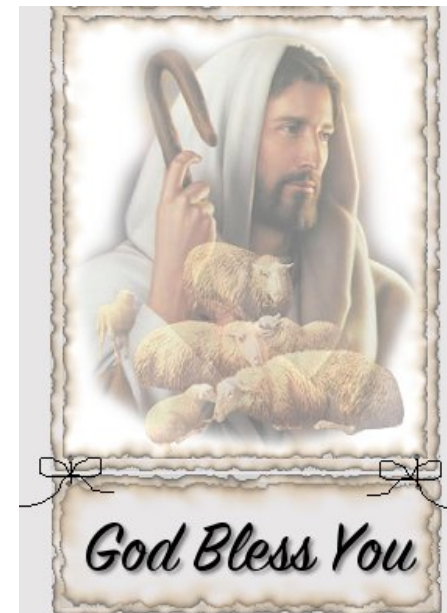
MU Australia
Part of the World Wide Mothers' Union

MU Australia is part of an international organisation of four million members in 81 countries sharing Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening and supporting marriage and family life.

MU....fulfilling the promises we made when admitted ...upholding the aims, objects and vision of MU...sharing Christ's love by prayer and actions.

Personal challenges abound but with the knowledge that we are never alone in our troubles, whatever they may be, and that we are enriched and comforted, strengthened and supported by the God of our life, our Shepherd, sustains us. This enables us to look outwards, step forward and reach out in the confidence that God is in charge!! And we have so many friends who are also there for us praying for us and with us. May you all know this and feel this in your lives with all its ups and downs.

God bless you all
Ronda G



From our MU Chaplain

Dear friends.....where on earth has the year gone? Here we are halfway through 2011 already. I must be getting older, because the months fly by.

What a great day we had at Eaglehawk for our Winter Gathering....some great music, an interesting guest speaker and wonderful fellowship. (not to mention the warming soup and yummy morning tea). A lot of planning and preparation for such a gathering and some members had travelled quite some distance to be there, such is the commitment of many to our wonderful organisation.

I am heading for Kyabram on the Wednesday 13th of July to share some worship and to speak at that branch's gathering.....I'm so looking forward to that. I expect it'll be a time of sharing and good fellowship, and maybe a bit of fun too.

Also coming up, in August (11th), St.Paul's branch is having another 'Quiet Day". An opportunity for **reflection, refreshment and rebooting!** In this age of computers and technology, this term *rebooting* can maybe fit quite well. We all need rebooting at times... when our faith is perhaps flagging or we become a little complacent and 'ho-hum'.

Perhaps we may take our faith for granted and don't see it as the blessing it is. Rebooting is about beginning again, getting back to basics....a new start....a bit of a kick in the pants! I'm sure St.Paul's members would be pleased to have visitors on the day....so if you fancy a bit of a 'kick in the pants' please join us from 11am - 3pm. BYO lunch.

Mothers' Union became an organisation in the diocese of Winchester. It quickly spread throughout England, and as women migrated overseas, they took MU with them.

Only seven years later it reached Australia, the first branch being formed at Cullensford, Tasmania, when a new Rector and his wife arrived from England. The first Bendigo branch began in 1903 with meetings being held alternately once a fortnight in the parishes of All Saints and St Pauls.

In 1896 Mary Sumner became the first Central President, a position she held from 1896 to 1910. she died in 1921 at the age of 93. that position is now known as World Wide President.

In 1917 in England, the Young Wives Committee was formed to be especially responsible for work among young mothers. In 1920 the fellowship of Marriage was formed. After the Second World War, the two groups found much of their work overlapping and in 1945 they amalgamated as The Young Members Department of Mothers Union – YMD.

YMD began in the Bendigo Diocese in 1940. over the years there was a growing dissatisfaction with the name and in 1983 the name was changed to Caritas –Part of the Mothers Union. Friendship in Action.

Mothers Union now has four million members in 81 countries world wide.



Talk by Gwenyth Veal at Leitchville on the Origins of MU

Whoever heard of mothers having a union! How did it come about?

Mary Heywood was born in 1828, the youngest of three children. She lived on the border of Wales and England. She had a sheltered life and was schooled at home, but the family travelled abroad for holidays. Mary married at twenty (in 1848) to the Rev. George Sumner (they were married 61 years).

In 1851 George became Rector of the Parish of Old Alresford and they were there 34 years. The idea of a union of mothers came to Mary Sumner when her first child was born, but she was not able to do anything until 1876 when she was 48 and a grandmother. She invited a group of thirty to forty mothers from the village to the rectory, to discuss the idea of having regular meetings to help one another in their responsibilities as wives and mothers.

The story goes that when the time came for the meeting, Mary was so nervous she asked her husband to address the ladies. She had no trouble when she called the next meeting a week later. The meetings were held weekly and numbers steadily grew.

In 1885 the Summers moved to Winchester. That same year a great Congress was held in Portsmouth, England, led by the Bishop of Newcastle. He realised that many of the woman packed into the great hall were suffering for various reasons and in need of help and encouragement. He eventually persuaded Mary Sumner to speak to them. She spoke to them of her dream of a union of mothers who could unite in prayer and come together regularly for encouragement and support, helping one another in whatever way needed; and with God's help, raise the home life of a nation.

The next day a group of influential women met and the

I am reminded of a little reflection I found in one of the little publications from St Columbans Mission Society, the 'Thank You' prayers by Patrick Sayles SSC....

When I look back on my life
I can see your hand at work.
Perhaps at the time
I was too busy to see it,
too occupied with worldly affairs.
I realise now
how you have always loved me
how you have always held me
in the palm of your hand,
always cared for me.
How I've neglected you Lord!
How easily I've hurried through
busy days and weeks and years
without ever giving you
so much as a 'Thank You'.
So I do it now. I thank you Lord,
with all my being,
with all my soul, all my heart,
for all your loving care. Amen

Please be assured of my continued prayers for you all.

Love and blessings,
Linda
(Rev. Linda Osmond)



From our Caritas Leader

Winter is with us and at Leitchville we are experiencing freezing cold and frosty early mornings, but with a few hours of sunshine to follow.

This has made it possible to spend some pleasant outdoors in the garden.

Also it was very pleasant that, amid the cold weather, Leitchville Church was able to host the Caritas Gathering which was certainly a warm and friendly occasion. With around 60 people in attendance, we all enjoyed the worship, the high tea, the entertainment and the wonderful fellowship throughout the evening.

Many thanks to all who came, for I know there were long distances to be travelled by some. Thank you also to our Chaplain Reverend Linda for the evening service she prepared and for the colourful service sheets she provided. The prayers given by Ronda and John were very much appreciated as was Gwen Veal's informative talk on the background and history of MU/Caritas. Thanks to the Leitchville Caritas group for their help with the cooking and decorating of the Church hall.

Local singers and musicians who call themselves "Young at Heart" entertained us with rousing music and singing. They are very talented and added immensely to the merriment of the evening. Altogether we had a great night sharing Christ's love through friendship in action.

I do hope that all groups have received the new Caritas Pro-

Rochester Caritas

Our year commenced in February with a B.B.Q. Tea with approximately 16 members present. An enjoyable evening of fellowship was had by all.

Support was given to those members whose homes were affected by the January floods, our town is still in recovering mode.

March saw us enjoy a St. Patrick's Day evening with Irish songs around the piano followed by a 'Green Supper', a very enjoyable evening.

Our April meeting will fall on Maundy Thursday so members, if they can, will attend the service.

May and June we hope to have a guest speaker, these still to be arranged.

July is to be our yearly Crumpet and movie night, held at one of our members homes.

August we will have a demonstration of box making with the daughter of one of our members.

September we hope to procure a guest speaker and October will be our International night where members will provide food from different countries and maybe dress accordingly.

November will be our A.G.M. and Christmas break up.

Members assist regularly with hospital visiting and meals on Wheels. The parish will be staging a Deb Ball at the end of May so members will be assisting with catering etc. for that.

We look forward to another year of fun and fellowship and of helping each other.

Sue Jackel

Leitchville Caritas Report

Our new office bearers for the next two years are Roma Dye Leader and Evelyn Fenn Secretary/ Treasurer.

Our first meeting for 2011 was a bring a slice and the recipe for same. We also discussed the program for the coming year.

In March, together with friends and the Cohuna MU, we travelled to Echuca to see the film " The King's Speech". Before the journey home, we enjoyed coffee, cake and fellowship.

Angela Kervin a local school teacher was our next guest and gave a very interesting insight of her teaching Grade 3 students at an English speaking International School in the Libyan capital of Tripoli and plight to escape from the civil unrest and return home to Leitchville.

In May our group hosted a well attended and very enjoyable High Tea organized by our member Dawn Keath who is the Caritas Diocesan Secretary.

Finally in June we gathered at the home of Dawn Keath to view slides and hear from Caritas member Yvonne Church, about her travels, with a group of 35 local people, through the British Isles and some European countries.



Blessings to all
Roma Dye Caritas
Leader Leitchville

motional material, which consists of colourful posters for advertising, and invitation cards to be handed out. This material is to be used far and wide not just on Church notice boards, to let people who are seeking friendship and support know that Caritas is a group they can turn too.

I have recently attended State Council in Melbourne where the Australian Caritas leader, Jan Misiurka, was the afternoon speaker. As a result, Caritas was discussed at length and we were able to ask some important questions.

Also at the meeting State leader Beth Scaysbrook presented her 1st. Report to State Council. She had found from information gathered from Diocesan leaders that groups were actively involved in State, Diocesan, Parish and community levels and there was a strong theme working through them of Christian love for others. She could also see that groups had many and varied outreach activities, including the fun of trips and outings and guest speakers. Beth concluded by saying that these things may not seem so different to other groups within the Church, but Caritas has no criteria to join and is not a fundraising group, but in all they do the aim is to share the love of Christ through friendship in action.

Love and Blessings,
Dawn Keath



Overseas and Northern Outreach

Please continue praying for all places of unrest in the world and especially at this time for the Sudanese people. With all the terrible violence which is taking place in Sudan, we cannot begin to imagine what it must be like living there. Listening to the story of Jacob Makuei, I thank God for my peaceful life in Australia.

Jacob is one of the "Lost Boys". He was among more than 20,000 boys, mainly Dinka and Nuer Sudanese, who fled from Sudan into Ethiopia during Sudan's civil war from 1983 to 1995. A flare up of war in Ethiopia in 1991 led many of the Lost Boys, including Jacob, to flee back into Sudan. Unfortunately, this was by no means the end of Jacob's journey; another explosion of violence within South Sudan in 1991 led Jacob and many of the Lost Boys to finally find some sort of peace in a refugee camp in Kenya.

After a long stint in the refugee camp, Jacob was accepted as a refugee by Australia. He moved to Perth in mid 2004 and found his way to Swan Hill via Melbourne in May 2005. Since then, Jacob has become a settled and respected member of the Swan Hill community, where he lives with his Sudanese-born wife and young family.

Jacob finally returned to his village in Sudan in December 2010. There, he saw his mother for the first time in 23 years. Jacob documented his trip to Sudan and the refugee camp in Kenya that he called his home for so many years. The trip was a life-changing, perhaps even life-giving experience for

The Anglican Art and Craft Exhibition will be on June 3rd 4th & 5th.

All can help supply goods for Maggie & Liz's Cooking and Craft stall .

On Tuesday 28th June at 2.00pm, Blumes visit with their winter fashions. Admission \$5.00 (No raffle, 'Lucky Door': Blumes vouchers.)

This is our next meeting day, so we can have our 11.30am service and lunch as usual before preparing tables, and will have brought some slices (and plain biscuits for any with dietary issues) to have with tea /coffee during the presentation. Joan to collect Ada & cheval mirror that day. It's not a luncheon , so needs to be kept simple & nothing messy, such as Devonshire scones, as jam & cream can mark the garments. Ron/Les will be asked to set up 8 tables, expect maybe 50-60 guests. After lunch & a chat the meeting closed with the Grace at 1.30pm.

Joan Mellahn

When I say that 'I am a Christian', I am not shouting that 'I am
clean living.

I'm whispering 'I was lost, but now I'm found and forgiven.'



Swan Hill MU

Members present : Maggie Williams, Shirley Wilkie, Thora Brown, Marj Rowe, Dulce Henery and Joan Mellahn met at 11.30am in the foyer, where we had a 'back -to - front' sort of meeting.

It was Joan M's 80th birthday that day, so we began with "play lunch!" of cream sponge & cuppa , with cards & flowers & lots of love, much appreciated by Joan, thank you also to all the dear absent friends, including Nancy Todd on behalf of link MU branch in Mentone.

Absent today: Ethel, Eileen, Ada, Betty, and Joan B.

At midday Maggie invited Joan to lead our M.U. service, during which we each offered our own special prayers. We also prayed for Ethel, recovering from surgery, and Joan B. with several hospital stays and tests.

Rhonda Gault and Nancye Todd (Mentone) have been in touch with Joan. Rhonda wanted to know how our little group is getting on, and took note of the date for our visit from Blumes. Some may visit to boost our mission effort that day. Invitations have been sent out to local churches .

Three ladies from here attended the Kerang M.U. morning tea recently.

Chriss Tomamichel has taken on one of the church tapestry kneelers and has set herself the task of 'one row a day.' So far there have been no further offers. Joan M has one well on the way, and emailed Wendy and Christopher Pullin to ask exactly the lettering which should go on theirs, but until now has received no reply. We need one for Gary Fordham too.

Jacob. He has returned to his home in Swan Hill, determined to help his former community to improve their lives.

Jacob's story has some harrowing elements to it. However, it is ultimately both uplifting and inspiring.

Beverley Ovens, O&NO Aust. Co-ord., shared some of her experiences with us at Eaglehawk. It was great to get some first-hand information about Myanmar, Burundi and other places. I will have a list of Links as soon as Beverley is home again and will then pass them on to the MU Branches wanting a Link.

God Bless

Leone



When I say 'I am a
this with pride.
I'm confessing that I
to be my guide.



Christian' I don't speak of
stumble and need Christ

Social Responsibility

The issues facing MU and Caritas members for many months continue unabated - the issues of same gender marriage and possible amendments to the Marriage Act, pressure to legalise euthanasia, and continued pressure on Chaplaincy and Christian religious education in schools.

There are a number of other issues facing us and the communities in which we live and which also deserve our discussion, attention, and possible action. These are:-

- Teen (single?) mothers being encouraged/coerced into returning to school.
- Boat people - how should we deal with them?
- Hoons - that is youngsters who indulge in violent crimes and harass other people, usually in public places.
- Gender selection of babies. Like you. I was extremely distressed to learn last month of a couple who had conceived twin boys only to abort them on the basis that they were the 'wrong sex' for the couple. Apparently, ways are being developed where people can select the gender of their child/children before conception and birth.
- Toddler pageants and "pushy parents". A form of sexualizing children? Robbing children of their childhood.

These are all issues which are, or should be, of concern to MU and Caritas members, and I encourage members to spread the word through their church and wider community about these issues. Don't be afraid to "speak out"!

Yours in Christ. *Diane Wells*,
MU Social Responsibility contact, Bendigo Diocese."

Notes from South East Bendigo MU

Early in the year the decision was made that our branch, which has met for 60 continuous years, should go in to recess for 2011, as the health and age of the majority of members was such that we could no longer continue as in past years.

All were to be encouraged to pay MU fees and be made aware of current ideas and issues.

It was planned that we still meet monthly but become more open to others to attend what would be a Prayer and Fellowship group. With the input and leadership of Rev Greg Harris this has provided some inspiring times to date and hopefully this will continue.

Ruth Paynter

South East Bendigo MU

Pyramid Hill MU

After a suggestion of the three of us getting together to have a coffee, we arranged a time only to have Mary's husband end up in Hospital and she was unable to come. They are still involved in blood tests every week and I don't want to pressure Mary at present - if they make it to church that is a plus.

So I am sorry to say we do not have any special news to contribute. Everyone on the farms is flat out with recovery after the floods and sowing crops. The ground has compacted and getting very hard on top. A good rain would be a blessing, at least an inch.

I do feel for the farmers at Benjeroop east of Kerang who have not been able to get onto their farms until very recently. I am still making patchwork rugs for MU.

Blessings
Helen Stevens

KYABRAM MU

We have had a very busy start to the year with many Challenges, Changes and Relationships.

St Andrews was the venue for World Day of Prayer on March 4th. Our members helped decorate the church with bromeliads, ponchos and colourful rugs to create a Chilean atmosphere, our Rector, Mike Vircoe, was the thought provoking speaker on the theme "How many loaves". It was a very brave effort by Mike as it was only a week after his accident.

We held an "Adopt a Family" lunch on March 6th, it was bring your own lunch to share, with M U members providing cakes etc to have with coffee, it is always an enjoyable time to bond with young families, and there was a new baby to cuddle, always a delight.

On April 6th M U and Caritas members visited Teen Challenge an establishment just out of Kyabram, where they offer a Christian alternative to drug and alcohol dependency, and other life controlling problems.

Members baked biscuits to take and leave with them, about 15 tins, we also supplied the morning tea, they were most appreciative of both, especially anything with cream.

Our time with them was most rewarding as we sat and talked with the men, and they freely shared their background stories and their present journey with Jesus as their focus. We left feeling we had attributed something worthwhile, not only the food, but by listening to them and enjoying their company.

The men's ages range from 17 to some in their 50's, please pray for them to be successful in transforming their lives.

Val McKenzie
President

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

This was the inspiration of Shirley Wakefield who provided the book in 1988.

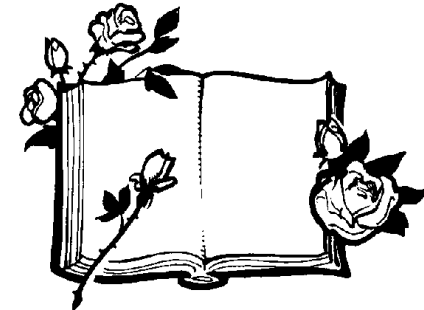
The purpose:

1. To provide an opportunity for MU and Caritas members and Executive to have the name of a member entered to recognise their contribution to the life of MU and Caritas.
2. To provide an opportunity for members to honour a family event.

Those wishing to have a name and brief description entered in the book are invited to send the information and a donation, small or large, to the MU Diocesan Treasurer. The donation is used to further the work of MU and Caritas.

A blackwood case to display the MU Book of Remembrance was also given by Shirley 'in recognition of the long service to the Mothers' Union by her mother, Audrey Robbins'. It is currently in the entrance of St. Paul's Cathedral Hall.

Jenny Rainsford



Lady Day at Holy Trinity
Bendigo

President Ronda presenting Joy
Freier with a gift from
Bendigo Diocese



Rev. Linda Osmond presenting
scrolls to members

Karen Elay Kunoo with her 50
Year. MU certificate &
daughter.



The book stall was kept very
busy



Caritas Winter Gathering at
Leitchville

The singers in the church during the
lovely service led by
Rev. Linda Osmond



The wonderful ladies from
Leitchville cutting their
birthday cake



Just a sample of the beautiful supper
presented by the ladies



The great singing group
"Young at Heart"

