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Rainbows on the Horizon

MU (A) - Queensland State Conference

21-24 June 2011

The Southport School

Winchester Street, Southport, Queensland 4215

*I have placed my rainbow in the clouds as a sign of my promise
until the end of time, to you and to all the earth. Genesis 9:13*

At 2pm on Tuesday 21st June 2011 the Registration Desk for the Queensland State Conference opened.

Among the first to officially register was Frances Clark of Brisbane. Offering her instructions and welcome gifts were Qld State Committee members Beth Rigby (on left) Treasurer and Glenda Ebert, Secretary.



The Queensland State President, Marilyn Dunning, officially welcomed conference delegates and day visitors on Wednesday morning.



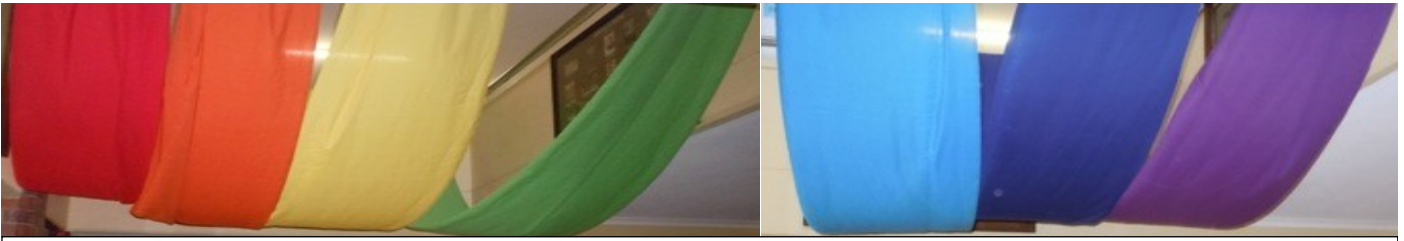
The School Chapel witnessed another MU Banner Parade at the beginning of the first Eucharist on Wednesday morning.

Officiating was Fr Ian Mundy, Chaplain Brisbane Diocese, assisted by the Rev'd Canon Libbie Crossman, Australian President.

Left: New Australian banner (on its light-weight "travel" poles) & the Queensland State banner.



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The rainbow theme of conference was enhanced by these yardages of coloured cloths lent by the Parish of Sherwood in Brisbane. Originating there to create atmosphere for a Cursillo event, these banners had been hanging across the ceiling of the parish's "old wooden hall".

Freshly laundered and with their bright colours exposed the banners hung above the hall outside the room used at conference as a central gathering place.

The MU "shop" (such an important inclusion whenever members assemble) was sited under the banners in the corridor outside the common room.

In the beginning, it was just a big open common room surrounded by dormitories where beds waited—topped with fresh linen.

There was a hollow sound on the tiles as the early birds found their way around.

But all would soon change this was the venue for a conference of MU members.

Guest Speakers

Wednesday was the Open Day when day visitors are welcomed. **Stephen Harrison** was the presenter of three sessions this day. He used the frog as the symbol of his talks, which sought to find ways for older citizens to communicate with the younger generations. In order to have a healthy environment in which we can all survive and thrive we must seek & employ pathways to link the needs and expectations of the young with those who have lived longer.

The Reverend **Linda McWilliam** captured our attention with her poster *Wheels of Life*. Linda spoke of her work with the Chaplains who are employed by Spiritus in their retirement and care centres. *The Wheels of Life* followed the wheels we use for mobility from the pram through bikes and cars to wheelchairs and walking aids.

The work of these Chaplains, both paid and voluntary, is not always easy as they strive to give ultimate respect to residents and their families in times of stress and sadness.



LONG SERVICE RECOGNISED

ABOVE During the Wednesday Eucharist, two Lone Members were recognised for their long service to MU. Brisbane Diocesan President, Shirley Beale, made the presentations to (on left) **Pamela Orr** (formerly of Robina MU) & **Donald Rogers** (formerly of Sherwood and Emerald branches).



The Australian President of Mothers' Union, the Rev'd Cannon **Libbie Crossman**, was the Cameo Speaker at conference.

Libbie chose as her topic *Join MU—Will Travel*. From the comfort of our stalls in the school theatre, we journeyed with Libbie as she visited MU branches through all States and Territories.

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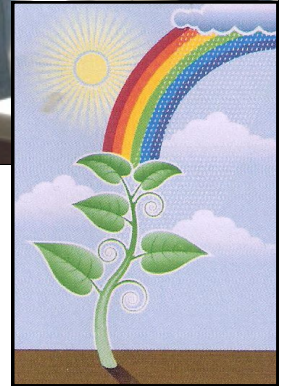
'Twas an oft repeated comment—*I wish I'd brought my knitting!* In a sunny corner of the common room these ladies waited in anticipation of the day's events: L-R Pricilla from Bribie Island, Eve Knott, Jan Garrard (Moreton Deanery President) and Judy whose creation in navy reached from the needles to her knee.



Those who came

Representatives from the Northern Territory, North Queensland, the Rockhampton Diocese and the Brisbane Diocese enjoyed a time of fellowship, study and new learning as guest speakers presented their sessions - each honouring the conference theme

Rainbows on the Horizon.



who enjoyed



THE BAG

Containing: Mug
Notebook & pens
Bookmarks,
Fase washer &
soap & mirror
Maps & data eg
*Little Black Book
of Scams*
Jelly Beans in
rainbow colours
Pot pourri bag
Pens & a surprise
"Pen" (aka a
screw driver set)

The Australian Junior Vice President, Ann Kennedy, presented the opening session on Tuesday afternoon.

She brought hand craft from MU members in India and Burma to support her talk—the work of MU members worldwide.

Above—Here Ann is receiving a “thank you” gift from Brisbane Diocesan President, Shirley Beale, at the conclusion of her second session on Friday morning. **Ann is wearing the scarf especially created for MU by Tartan designers in Scotland.** (It is available through the MU shop in Melbourne via your “local” shop.)

A question asked by an MU branch member who was unable to attend conference was, *Did you sing Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow"?*

Yes we did, with Ann on Friday morning.

AND SO MUCH MORE!

Somewhere amidst the talk fests from guest speakers, we managed several sessions of **Bible Study in small groups** - *Heaven, Atonement, Justice, Happiness, Strength, Redemption, and Human Good.*

[Thanks to the Rev'd Sue Woodcock for compiling the studies.]

The concert So much talent in our midst. Like wine, the vintage skits had only improved with age.

Our mystery adventure tour on an amphibian “duck”.

Wonderful gift bag of goodies including “our own mug”, of a colour to match our bag. From the cooks of our branches came the fare for morning & afternoon teas—slices & biscuits galore!

Renewing friendships, meeting new people

The Dining Hall—if but the wooden tables or the walls could talk what stories of boys at school they might replay.

3 meals a day—served with a smile & tasty too.

Good food, warm beds, laughter, chatter & friends + new learning & thoughts to ponder — hallmarks of a successful conference..

Mystery jaunt!



Super Duck

It was a mystery until we had to be told—our outing on Day 3. Some of us walked, others took advantage of a ride in “Jenny’s Jeep”.

Waiting for us near the school’s entrance a “Duck” - used by the Army for speedy access from land to water.

Once aboard, with some in beanies for ear production from chill winds (for ducks you know don’t have windows), we drove to the Spit and into the water, under the Broadwater Bridge. Our route on water was along the Seaworld spit.



Jenny’s Jeep

An integral part of every conference is THE CONCERT. Performing in costume is “super Susan” (orange cape & sunnies)





Over the Rainbow



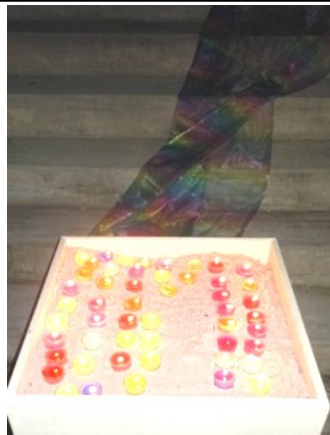
*Happy Hour fare was presented on the "pool" table—
ready for when the session ended.*



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So much thought and effort is contributed to a conference such as we were privileged to attend in June. Whether a participant or reader of this review, you'll agree thanks goes to those who used their talents. Individuals and MU branch groups became involved. To mention a few..... the "pots of gold" (Maltese chocolates on sticks) which adorned the dining tables as party food for the concert goers; from members of Aspley/Albany Creek the "ribbon" waterlilies; the sand tray into which, at Lillie's behest, we placed lit candles to remember those who had mentored us in our MU journey, to the Caritas members who ensured we had some lollies. Not least to earn our thanks, **the committee** who (even with faith) doubtless "worried" about everything.

THANK YOU

REFLECTION

By Fr Ian Mundy
Brisbane Diocesan
Chaplain

May this State Conference be characterised by exchanges of:
Kindness—warm assurances that others are on your side and care for you.
Encouragement—strong reassurances of your own strengths and uniqueness.
Challenge—loving but firm exhortations to be more when you depart than you were when you arrived.

Kindness Someone once wisely said that *people do not care how much you know until they know how much you care*. To build relationships at the Conference on anything but kindness is to build on sand. May we know that those we share these days with really want our happiness and growth; that they are really here for us, or we won't be open at all to their influence.

Encouragement All of us need to believe in ourselves. We need confidence in our ability to take on the difficulties and opportunities that we will encounter in our time together. To encourage means to put courage in. Encouragement instils into the recipient a new and fuller awareness of her or his own powers. Encouragement says: You can do it! Let us say that to one another by word and action in the days ahead.

Challenge In encouragement makes the recipient aware of her or his strengths, challenge is the loving push to use that strength. Try. Stretch yourself. Volunteer. Do it. If you succeed we will be in the front row clapping our hands off. If you fail, we will be by your side hugging you until any hurting stops.



The window above the Chapel altar. Thanks to Sandy Evans (Gympie Branch) for playing the organ so beautifully. Then there were those other ladies who made music sing from the keyboard of the Baby Grand in the theatre. Thank you too.

May these be the memories we take away from this Conference.

- **That we showed kindness.**
- **That we gave encouragement.**
- **That we were challenged and rose to those challenges/**
May God be with us
in the days together and beyond.