

Moravian Womens Association Home & Overseas Paper - June 2021

This will be my last Home & Overseas Paper - how quickly time passes!- Here is a quick review of my 10+ years as Home & Overseas Secretary:

2009 to 2020

When I started writing these papers, in 2009 or 2010, I had just spent some time on sabbatical, lecturing at the Moravian Church's Teofilo Kisanji University at Mbeya in Tanzania, which was an amazing adventure. So returning to ordinary work and taking on the job of Home & Overseas Secretary didn't seem too difficult.

I very much enjoyed researching and writing papers on subjects which interested me over the years, such as Royal wedding dresses, Halloween, Lent traditions, Daylight saving, money matters, and various health topics. I tried not to be too "London centric", but felt the new Skygarden in the City, and one or two exhibitions were worth sharing. There were slightly more difficult papers such as Brexit (remember that!) but I was always happier putting together a Christmas Quiz!

Where possible, we had first hand accounts of interest from overseas, including the difficult question of refugees.

We have had many, many, papers on the charities we support, too many to mention by name. Some of the most rewarding to research and write about are the very small, specialist, local charities, which are obviously so dear to some of our members, and may not have the most professional or well known websites, but they really appreciated our donations.

2020 to 2021 Straws in the wind...

My daughter Cassie came back early in 2020 on a visit from Hong Kong where she lives. Hong Kong and mainland China were in COVID lockdown, and we laughed about the pictures of people in Hong Kong queueing for toilet rolls! The toilet roll factories in mainland China either could not export to Hong Kong, or were closed - the news spread like wildfire, until suddenly, for no good reason, people in the UK started stockpiling!

Cassie decided not to attend a family birthday celebration, staying in her hotel, just in case she had the virus, but I still did not take COVID seriously. Then, a recently retired GP friend of mine decided to cancel a holiday we had planned, as she was preparing to volunteer. Suddenly, we were all in the midst of lockdown, and our MWA Day was cancelled, along with the Irish District Retreat.

Writing a few extra Home & Overseas papers over the past year has been a very small task, compared to the illness, loneliness, and bereavement others have survived.

MWA Facebook page

We started the MWA Facebook page several years ago, but it really took off, when I started putting up a photo each day from approximately Easter 2020 to Easter 2021, to illustrate the Daily Watchword. It was a way of keeping in touch when we were all locked down, some of us for longer than others, and I loved doing it.

The fellowship never ends!

I have so much enjoyed the fellowship with other Sisters, travelling to MWA Days, and becoming a regular at the English and Irish Retreats (which I hope to continue doing). I'll finish by wishing all our Sisters the best for the future, and especially to the Executive Committee and Sr Janet who will be Home & Overseas Secretary from September.

Naomi Hancock May 2021

TRUE FRIENDS
ARE NEVER APART,

MAYBE IN DISTANCE
BUT NEVER IN HEART.

