

WCTU New Zealand

Volume 64, No 3
Spring 2009

WHITE RIBBON DIGEST

*"Promoting a Lifestyle Free of Alcohol
and other Drugs"*



Southern Alps and Canterbury Plains, New Zealand

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
Vodka: Deadlier Than Sword
If It's Not Broken
Alcohol Help Lines Overload

Plus more
WHITE RIBBON DIGEST

New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union (Inc)
Organised 1885

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"For God Home and Humanity"

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Choice Words

"Think not forever of yourselves, O Chiefs, nor of your generation. Think of continuing generations of our families, think of our grandchildren and of those yet unborn, whose faces are coming from beneath the ground." ~ T. S. Elliot

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

I travelled over the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch recently and was in awe of the beauty of God's handiwork displayed in the pristine whiteness of the snow clad Mount Cook and the long range of Southern Alps stretching both directions as far as the eye could see , jagged peaks and deep ravines with the backdrop of a blue sky. Only God is awesome! Snow was down low on the foothills not that far away. Winter has started early on the ski fields and the month of June is said to be the coldest for 50 years and I believe it. The Southern lakes are unusually full and there should be no excuse for electricity cuts this winter unless they all freeze over!



It is time for lots of cups of soup and home-made bread, and when toasting beside a big log fire we almost forget how cold it is outside. Even though in the grip of frequent winter storms I have to think ahead and make a start on the Spring WRD issue to get it out on time, even if I don't feel Springified.

On the 1 July I travelled by bus to Christchurch as I was given a ten minute slot at the Oral Hearings of the Parliamentary Liquor Review. Although I was able to present and emphasis a few points and was well within my allotted time, (as I had allowed seven minutes for my presentation and three minutes for any questions), I felt that I was rushed through as the Chairman of the Select Committee said that the Members of Parliament present had a plane to catch and the he had my written submissions in front of him. I was the last on the programme. It was about another 20 minutes before the Committee members left the building. On reflection I believe that all should have an equal opportunity to put forward their opinions and I still feel slighted and cheated out of my time especially as I had travelled a good distance to take part. I am not impressed! A copy of the written submissions will be printed in this issue.

As I write this I can't but wonder about the price of fame and how so many people's lives are destroyed by it. I am saddened by the media coverage over the death of a pop star and the hysteria that has been whipped up and served as entertainment by the media. It goes to show also how far hero worship will go when an eccentric entertainer who has been kept alive with and eventually dies from drug use and abuse is given such prominent adoration. With so much recreational and other drugs in use one wonders how many young people are influenced by the words of pop music and life styles that glorify drugs. In this case the hysteria has been directed at the unusual life-style, music and films of a middle-aged man who lived and worked in an unrealistic entertainment field of music and dance. All forms of media such as TV radio and record companies are continuing to exploit the death of a person who lived the life of a Peter Pan character who didn't want to grow up, find that he is more valuable to them now than when he was alive! What an indictment on the society we live in.

For those of the readers who are not feeling well, may I leave you these thoughts and good wishes:- Hope it cheers you up to know you're thought about, and hoping it won't be too long until you're up and about. Get Well Soon.

FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Day (FASD) 9th September

Throughout the world many countries will be recognising the significant damage that is done to the unborn as a result of alcohol taken during pregnancy

At 9.09 am, the 9th minute of the 9th hour, of the 9th day of the 9th month each year many cities and towns will participate by bell ringing.

As daybreak moves westward around the world each participating country will commence their FASD day on the 9th minute.

The 9 symbolises the 9 months the unborn child is totally dependent upon the mother.

Over past years bells were used to warn the public of a danger and today they have been chosen to warn the public of women drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Many women have not heard this message or if they have, think it won't happen to them. We must continue to encourage all women to get this message out to their families, and friends, to advise them to abstain for alcohol during pregnancy, planning a pregnancy or when breast feeding.

Your local Member of Parliament needs people to write to them and ask that they vote to have mandatory health warning labels on all containers of alcohol as it is done in the USA and some other countries.

It has been reported that up to 70% of prisoners in the USA have FASD and that 62% of prisoners who can not read and write have the disorder as well.

We believe that if the NZ prisoners were researched by specialists of this disorder the results would be similar.

Some of the signs of FASD are:-

- * a child may behave differently from others at school .Shows some of the following signs:-
- * unable to concentrate and short attention span.
- * poor judgement
- * poor impulse control
- * poor memory
- * poor problem solving skills
- * immature behaviour

There is no cure for FASD but it is 100% preventable.

“Remember you don't have a problem child but the child does have a problem”
September 9: is a reminder that “Everyone is part of the solution.”

JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG !

Drink Driving Out of Control

When some mothers are driving their children to and from school while drunk it shows that this country has a serious alcohol problem Today half those who are found to be over the limit, are women .How is that for a twist on equality ?

In the past five years, the number of drinking drivers over the limit who have been caught by the Police have increased by 50%, a disturbing fact for other road users.

The NZ Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) makes no apologies continuing to advocate for a zero-alcohol limit on all drivers of motor vehicles Alcohol is a mind-changing drug which affects the concentration and coordination for all who even have a small amount. Zero-alcohol is the only safe amount.

What a tragedy to see so many lose their lives or suffer serious life-changing injuries because they do not think before they have that first drink and then get behind the wheel and drive. It is bad enough when a drunk driver is killed but more tragic when innocent people are involved. How can they not be aware of the effects of alcohol on the body? No one should get in a car when the driver has been drinking.

The budget to run media advertising campaigns to prevent this carnage goes into millions of dollars and does not seem to be getting to those who should be targeted. They should be showing DVD's of accidents, victims and safe driving practises in the secondary school class rooms instead of using up valuable school hours teaching the students how to put on condoms.

Police have reported that it is not that uncommon to catch the same person driving drunk twice in a 24 hour period. There needs to be more power given to the law enforcement officers so that they can take more drastic action such as removing the car and driver off the road for 28 days for the first offence whether the car belongs to the driver or not. From then on if a third offence occurs the drivers licence cancelled for life, with no exceptions. Until the drink driving offences are dealt with positively and firmly, there will be an increasing number of these drunk drivers on the roads.

A law with no teeth is worse than no law at all.



IF IT'S NOT BROKEN, WHY TRY TO FIX IT?

Former medical Chief of Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) at Hanmer Springs in his book 'Too Good to Last' subtitled 'The Death of a Caring Society, tells his life story and his many years of work at QMH.

This Doctor and his dedicated medical staff gave new life to the thousands of patients who passed through the doors of the residential treatment programme. In a tranquil setting they were removed from alcohol and other addicting drugs ,given healthy food to build up broken bodies and teaching them to live a successful life with out the need of any kind of drug and how to cope with stress when they return to the outside world. The success rate was very high and their progress was followed for two years.

It is now 18 years since the doors of QMH were forced to close by a health system run by bureaucratic bean counters. Today, rehabilitation clinics throughout the country are finding it difficult to cope with the workload. People are on long waiting lists with no hope of receiving early treatment.

It was a case of Parliamentarians of that time not listening to those who work on the front line of treatment and service ,whether in the addiction field, other fields of medicine, nursing, education system , law-enforcement .Unfortunately today, most are still not listening. Thirty years ago we led the world in these areas but sadly today we are on the wrong end of that scale. The sub-title of the book says it all.

ALCOHOL HELP-LINES OVERLOAD

During this financial recession, more people particularly men are turning to the Alcohol Help Line for help and advice for their problem drinking

As a result, agencies are reporting more marriage and relationship break-ups and Women's Refuges report seeing more cases of violence towards families.

Some men are spending more money on alcohol leaving the family to rely on food-banks, schools to supply breakfast and in some cases expecting schools to help supply warm clothes, shoes and waterproof clothing in low -decile areas.

As these drinkers see the result of their partner no longer willing to cope with their selfish behaviour, Alcohol Help Line has been fielding many calls for help and advice from family members and also the drinkers themselves.

With many residential and day alcohol and other drug rehabilitation centres closed over the past 18 years, the waiting list grows as the counsellors struggle to cope with the increased volume of demand.

VODKA: DEADLIER THAN THE SWORD

The Press Mon. 29 June 2009

The terrible cost of Russia's love affair with vodka was laid bare in a study published at the weekend. It blamed alcohol addiction for more than half the deaths amongst Russians in their prime years and said that the scale of the carnage was comparable to a war.

The report which appeared in 'The Lancet', said three-quarters of deaths among men and half of deaths among women aged 15 -54 were attributed to alcohol abuse. David Zaridze, who lead the international research team, calculated that alcohol had killed three million Russians since former Soviet leader Mikail Gorbachev tried and failed to restrict sales in 1987.He said," this loss is similar to that of a war."

The study analysed the deaths of almost 49,000 people between 1990 and 2001 in Tomsk, Barnaul and Biysk, three industrial cities in Siberia with typical mortality rates. It concluded that alcohol was the cause of 52 per cent of deaths; 13 times greater than the worldwide average.

The Russian, British and French researchers said,' excess mortality from liver cancer, throat cancer, liver disease and pancreatic disease is largely or wholly because alcohol caused the disease that caused death.

Soaring poverty and stress associated with the Soviet collapse, and the loss of jobs and security, have been blamed. The study highlights a doubling of alcohol consumption in seven years between 1987 and 1994 to about 10.5 litres of pure alcohol a year for each person. Consumption has continued to rise sharply. A 2007 Public Health report reveals that Russians were now drinking 15 litres of pure alcohol each year Almost 30,000 people died each year from alcohol poisoning and at least 2.3 million people were alcoholics. (abridged)

Thought for Today

I choose today to forgive those who have hurt me and not be locked into that prison of hate but am determined not to continue to be a victim. The choice is mine.

(anon)

NEWS IN BRIEF

ANOTHER HERBAL PARTY DRUG

Salvia is the latest herbal drug craze to hit the USA. This hallucinogenic herb Salvia Divinorum use is another means for a quick "high" It is cheap and easy to get and popular with young people. The dried leaves are crushed and smoked, or mixed in a drink snorted or chewed to get a 5 – 20 minute high. Little is known about the long-term effects. But health experts are classifying it with LSD and hallucinogenic mushrooms and are very concerned with the use of it.

It is legal still in most States.

NO SAFE LIMIT

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne says in its study of 1520 young people's drinking habits from the mid teens, that there is no 'safe or sensible limit for this group. The research also shows that adolescents who drink even small amounts of alcohol have an increased risk of developing alcohol problems and risky sexual behaviour as young adults.

CHINA PLANS SOME SMOKING BANS

China is planning to ban smoking in hospitals and medical clinics in the year 2011

31 MAY WORLD SMOKE-FREE DAY

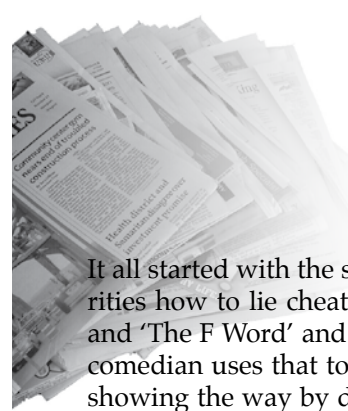
Throughout the country on this day, most newspapers ran a full page advertisement with stories of how people quit smoking and contacts of how to go about it.

Quitline freephone number 0800 778 778

POLICE ASSOCIATION SURVEY

In a recent survey conducted in November 2008 by the Police Association, nearly three-quarters of the police officers want the drinking age raised to 20 years.

The age was cut from 21 to 20 in 1967 and lowered again to 18 years in 1999. In 2006, Parliament voted 72 – 49 against a private member's bill to raise the age back to 20.



White Ribbon Digest LETTERS TO EDITOR

The Marlborough Express

T.V'S NEW LOW

It all started with the so-called reality shows where we have been shown by celebrities how to lie cheat and betray each other. Then along comes Gordon Ramsey and 'The F Word' and behold it is now acceptable usage on TV. Every second rate comedian uses that to squeeze a nervous laugh out of the audience. Now we are showing the way by delving into criminal lives. Featuring first the New Zealand criminals then the Australian branch.

The latest quality programme on the list is an in-depth look at the Australian gangs followed by one on the Mafia.

What is wrong with the folks in charge of the programme choice that they fill our screens with this garbage? Programmes that shouldn't be given the time of day.

Society is being desensitised by the constant flow of lowlife featured on our screens.

Our children in particular should not be exposed to this type of programming and don't tell me that kids are in bed before these viewing times. Some stay up later than me.

If you feel like me that something should be done, boycott the products of the sponsors supporting these dubious programmes. What will be featured next?

Inside terrorist camp or the short life of a suicide bomber. Unacceptable today, who knows tomorrow? The saddest thing for me is that no one complains!

*Paul Watson
Renwick
12-06-09*

T.V'S GOING DOWNHILL!

This says it all about certain programmes and Paul Watson's letter of June 12, explained perfectly what a lot of us are thinking.

Maybe the wrong interests are paying censors to do the job or maybe the wrong people are doing the job.

Whatever it is, society is the loser.

*Shirley Marfell
Seddon
17-06-09*

OBJECT TO WHAT YOU DON'T LIKE

I totally support Paul Watson's comments in his letter TV's New Low, June 12, he sums up the feelings of many.

In particular, trailers of AO programmes, (usually depicting anger violence, scheming, guns, unacceptable language, sex, alcohol) and some advertisements should never be permitted during the times young people could be watching.

Many of us object to unsolicited objectionable material in our living areas.

I have in the past sent formal complaints to TVNZ and the Broadcasting Standards Authority but they were not upheld. In 2005 I wrote to the then Minister of Broadcasting

.Part of his reply stated," for every New Zealander who believes standards are slipping there is probably another who will argue for freedom of expression." He was no help either. There is a ray of hope.

Formerly Viewers for Television Excellence, Media Matters in New Zealand Incorporating Children's Media Watch, has its vision," A Media Environment in NZ that is safe for all: free of gratuitous sex, violence, and offensive language. So parents can trust what their children see."

If we don't speak out against what is wrong, we are condoning it!

See www.viewers.org.nz for more information.

*Elaine Hadfield
Blenheim
17-6-09*

Comedian Bill Cosby tells of a philosophical conversation he had with his father. "Is the glass half empty or half full?," pondered the younger Cosby. His fathered replied, "It depends on whether you're pouring or drinking."

Just as he was approaching the teller's window at his bank, a man trips and falls forward. Fortunately, he managed to catch himself before he falls. "Apparently, sir", the teller says, "you've come here to get your balance."

WCTU UNION NEWS

Devotional Page

(Thanks to Mrs Joy McDonald of Brisbane for this devotional message)

F.A.S.DAY REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS

I thought a lot about Bells and Candles used as the symbols for the F.A.S. Day so I went to the Oxford Dictionary to get the meaning:-

BELLS: A sounding instrument usually of metal, cup shaped with a flaring mouth, rung by strokes of a clapper, tongue or hammer suspended within it.

The Bible Dictionary tells us that small Bells of gold are attached to the robe of the high priest. It was part of his official dress and they were designed to herald his approach. (Exodus 28: v 33 and 34.)

Bells are rung for weddings to signify the beginning of a new life. Maybe that is why Bells are used for FAS Day, to signify the beginning of a new life.

CANDLES: The Oxford Dictionary describes the Candle as a hardened fat, such as tallow or wax; beeswax or bayberry, with a braided cotton or linen wick embedded into the wax or fat. As far as we know, ancient people did not use candles as we know them. Instead they used lamps which burned a liquid such as olive oil.

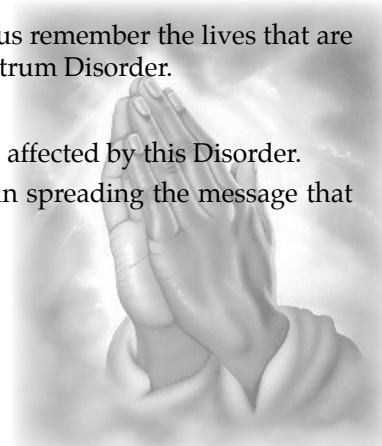
The Bible Dictionary says that for ordinary use lamps were made of clay with an inside hollow for oil; the wick protruding from one end and at the other end a projection held by the thumb. More elaborate lamps such as the seven lamps of the candlesticks for the tabernacle and temple were made of gold. (Exodus 37: 23; 1 Kings 7: 49. Fuel was generally olive oil. (Exodus 27:20)

Christ was known as the light of the world. Maybe candles are used for F.A.S. Day to signify the light of life.

So let us ring the bells and light the candles to help us remember the lives that are and those that will be affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

PRAYER:

Father, we bring before you these little ones who are affected by this Disorder. Help us to be mindful of their needs and assist us in spreading the message that alcohol kills and maims
Lord, grant us your peace and understanding.
Amen



SUBMISSIONS TO THE SALE AND SUPPLY OF LIQUOR AND LIQUOR ENFORCEMENT BILL 2009

Chairperson
Parliament's Justice and Electoral Select Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

The following submissions are submitted by Mrs Molly Aitchison, President and on behalf of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union.(NZWCTU)

Introduction

For many years we as an organisation have been dismayed at the way the liquor laws are formulated. Even before the ink is dried the loopholes are evident to everyone except the politicians! No NZ Government in history has really taken seriously the reasons for the alcohol-related problems that we as a country face today. Patched up laws are poor laws and need more than a band-aid. Binge drinking is seen in all age groups of our society but nowhere more tragic than amongst the young.

Since the purchase age was lowered from 20 years down to 18 years in 1999 we have seen a downward spiral as more and more younger drinkers take up the habit.

Before any legislation is put into place we ask that the Government look seriously at the drug alcohol which we believe should be placed at the centre of this Bill

What is Alcohol ?

For many years doctors and researchers have been telling us that," alcohol is a mind changing drug. It must be grouped with the amphetamines, heroin, L.S.D, and marijuana and it far exceeds all these combined as New Zealand's biggest drug problem ." Dr Frazer McDonald.

"Alcohol is an anaesthetic, a drug capable of leading to death. A biological tissue poison and a drug of addiction. There is no human tissue which cannot be adversely affected by alcohol." Sir Charles Burns

"Alcohol creates New Zealand's third biggest killer. Alcohol-related brain damage is widespread in NZ. Experimental studies have shown that even moderate doses of alcohol can produce memory loss and lower learning capacity." Dr Max Abbott

It has been said that if alcohol had just been discovered it would never win marketing acceptance under today's stringent codes. Alcohol is so toxic that it would be probably barred as a prescription drug

These men of the past who have built a legacy of knowledge and facts through years of research, study and dealing directly with those whose bodies and minds have been severely affected through the use of alcohol, whose evidence can not be ignored.

As you see from the above statements by NZ experts who have spent a lifetime in their field prove that we are not dealing with a harmless cordial and this should be kept uppermost in the minds of those when the Bill is being drafted and by those M.P's who will vote on it.

The Drinking and Purchase Age

New Zealand has a purchase age of 18 years but we do not have a drinking age.

The NZWCTU believe that we should have a drinking age introduced and a purchase age both 20 years, preferably 21 years. Our fore fathers who once set the age at 21 years although they did not have the scientific facts that we have now knew that alcohol had a detrimental effect on young peoples lives.

Today medical researchers and educators all agree that the human brain cells are not fully developed until into the early 20's. Adolescence is the time span between 10 and 20 years.

Alcohol use during this time when the brain cells are still developing affects the part of the brain known as the hippocampus causing it to decrease in size leading to permanent brain damage.

Scientific evidence suggests that even modest amounts of alcohol consumption in late childhood or adolescence can result in permanent brain damage.(Dr John Nelson, American Medical Assoc. 2002).

Continued alcohol use shows up in poor memory attention span, loss of memory, poor learning skills, slow impulse actions, progressing to the point that a young person is unable to get work because they are unable to pass simple reading and concentration tests. Some employers have stated that about 25% of those interviewed for work were unemployable.

Heavy drinking during adolescence often leads on to continued heavy drinking in adulthood. Clinics report that men in their early 40's are mentally unable to work (brain damaged) because of alcohol use and in increasing numbers need a carer.

For this reason we believe that there should be a drinking age introduced and the purchase age should both be at least 20 years of age. At present when parents and

guardians are permitted to give alcohol to children under this age, we believe that this message should be made known to them of the dangers to their children's futures. If parents then knowingly allow their children to be permanently brain damaged through supplying them with alcohol would not this be classed as child abuse?

Many States in the USA have raised their legal drinking and purchase age back to 21 years.

We believe that this would be the first step along with other measures such as the

- * Legal driving age up to at least 18 years.
- * Young people to be in a place of educational training or trades until age 18 years.
- * Young people need to be kept busy and encouraged into community involvement to help build up their self-esteem and learn to take their place in society.

Zero-Alcohol Limit For All Drivers

"If you drink don't drive" so goes the Road Safety slogan. Unless this is made an offence it means nothing!

The NZWCTU believes that there should be a zero alcohol limit for all drivers.

Alcohol is a mind-changing, depressant, narcotic drug which acts like an anaesthetic on the brain.

Even small amounts of alcohol can cause the driver to experience a wide range of emotions from being over-cautious, reckless, over-confident, agitated and drowsy.

For other road users poor weather and road conditions, other traffic plus other situations where clear minds are needed to use all their powers of concentration to survive can do without those who are selfish enough to put others at risk.

There are other countries which have a zero-alcohol limit and where people believe that it a privilege to be able to drive.

If made law it would soon have those who plan to drink outside their homes make responsible decisions before starting out for the evening and having their first drink. To have:-

- * have a designated non drinking driver
- * have taxi fare
- * attend a place that has a courtesy van.

The machine that tests the alcohol in the breath could be set at a low level so that small amounts of alcohol taken in food or a perfume will not give a false reading.

The penalties for this offence should be severe enough to prevent offending or re-offending.

Hundreds of innocent people lose their lives and thousands are seriously injured as a result of drinking and driving each year.

The Hospitality Trade has for years been very vocal so that this law continues to remain at the high BAC level of .80.

Liquor Advertising , Sports Sponsorship and Marketing

In France – the nation noted for the French paradox, the much publicised apparent health benefits of alcohol – authorities have become concerned at the alcohol's massive health cost they have banned the alcohol – industry sponsorship of sporting events, prohibited television advertising for any type of alcoholic beverage and require magazine and newspaper advertisements to carry government health warnings.

The French have around 45,000 deaths caused by alcohol each year. However, since the ban on alcohol has been introduced, overall alcohol consumption has declined, as have the diseases related to alcohol. Deaths due to road accidents have also decreased, despite a regular increase in the kilometres travelled. ("Uncorked" page 131. by John F.Ashton and Ronald S Laura.)

NZWCTU asks that the following issues to be made mandatory:-

- * That sports sponsorship of alcohol be banned in the same way that tobacco has been
- * Banning all advertising of alcohol in any form on TV.
- * Magazines and newspapers to have a health warning message with each liquor advertisement.
- * Health warning labels on all containers of alcohol beverages to help combat the increase in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder caused only by pregnant women drinking alcohol.

Alcohol Marketing

There must be a cap placed on the number of licensed premises that can operate in areas where people's lives are affected by their presence.

In NZ we have one liquor outlet per 225 of population over the age of 15 years.

The law is written in such a way that residents are over- ridden in their objections to licensed premises with their 'pokie machines' in areas with low socio-economic population. As well, objections are usually ignored and licensed premises are allowed in areas near hospitals, schools, rest homes and children's parks.

With our high incidence of alcohol use and alcohol related social and health problems we believe that alcohol should be removed from all dairies and supermarkets. Having alcohol in amongst the food 'normalises' when we are dealing with a drug that should be classified as 'class 3' along with heroin, LSD and cannabis.

Health Warning Labels

The NZWCTU asks that the Government make mandatory all containers of beverage alcohol to have health warning labels warning women of the child-bearing age that it is dangerous to the unborn baby to drink alcohol during pregnancy because of the risk of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.(FASD)

In 1988 the U.S.A brought this into law . Many people are very conscious of health and read labels today and this law could help prevent children being brought into this world brain-damaged.

It is reported that 65% of prisoners in the USA who can not read have been diagnosed with FASD. If tests were taken in NZ prisons a similar result may be had.

Summary

The NZWCTU believes that unless drastic steps are taken our future health authorities will not be able to cope with the number of middle-aged people wanting organ transplants, and other serious physical and mental diseases caused by the moderate and heavy use of alcohol.

In the past few years since 1999 when the legal purchase age was lowered to 18 years we have seen a sharp rise in NZ of a drinking culture that brings with it the side issues of murders, assaults, domestic violence, child abuse, to name a few. Those who were 18 years at that time are now 28 and many have continued their heavy drinking and in some cases anti-social behaviour. The marketing of the Ready to Drink (RTD) spirit based alcohol drinks especially packaged to appeal to young women have introduced them quickly to a market that has trapped them into thinking that it is only a cordial until they are really hooked.

We believe until the purchase age of 20 years and a drinking age of 20 is introduced then it is futile to try to patch up the rest of the liquor problems. This would be a start and then other measures could be introduced.

KEEP YOUNG PEOPLE CHALLENGED

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) is very concerned about the big increase in binge drinking amongst school children especially in Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Poland.

French Health Minister Bernard Kouchner spoke at a global conference on youth and alcohol recently. He said with so much gloom and doom children needed to be encouraged in good exciting activities which bring true happiness through their own achievements.

Here in NZ we have so many things for young people to do outside their studies. There are some sports that don't have a culture of alcohol, there are so many opportunities to learn musical instruments, either privately or through schools, and limitless hobbies. Tramping groups ,swimming,surf life-saving etc., It is up to the parents to help encourage their children into activities that will give them a sense of achieving in their lives and never have time to be bored. Healthy activities and projects relieve stress without turning to the bottle as many adults do.



OBITUARIES

Ralph Alveston Wood

27-8-24 - 1-6-2009

Auckland Union

A large crowd gathered at the Glenfield Presbyterian Church to farewell a popular, devoted Christian and family man.

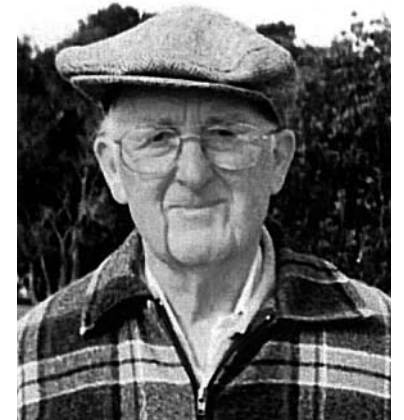
For many years he had been a stalwart member of Henderson WCTU Union and later Auckland Union with his wife Hazel who passed away last year.

He held the position of Treasurer for the NZWCTU from 1995 until he suffered a stroke at the end of 1997.

He and Hazel will always be remembered for their kindness, hospitality and willingness to speak and witness of the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our sympathy to Sylvia, Glennis and families.

1 Corinthians 15 v 58



THE LAST CAB RIDE

Twenty years ago, I drove a cab for a living. Answering a call I arrived at a building at 2.30am. The building was in darkness except for a single light in the ground floor window.

Unless the situation smelt of danger I always went to the door.

I knocked at the door, "Just a minute," answered a frail elderly voice. After a long pause, the door opened and a small woman in her 80's stood before me with a small suitcase at her feet. The furniture was covered with sheets and there were several cartons packed as if ready for delivery.

She took my arm as I helped her to the cab. She thanked me for my kindness but I said I treated all my older passengers as if they were my mother. She gave me an address but asked if I could go the long way around through the city streets. She said that she was in no hurry as she was going to the hospice. She said that she had no family and that the doctor said that she did not have long. With that I reached down and turned off the meter.

For the next two hours we drove through the deserted streets as she pointed out all places familiar to her. Where she had lived with her husband when they were first married, places that she had worked as a young woman, and other places where she asked to stop while she sat there in the darkness as the street lights showed her eyes glistening with unshed tears.

As the sun was rising she said, "I'm tired now, let's go."

We arrived at this low building like a small convalescent home and drove through an archway along the drive to the front door.

Two care-givers came out with a wheelchair to meet her as she was expected.

"How much do I owe you?" she said reaching for her purse. "Nothing" I said. Almost without thinking I bent down and gave her a hug. She held on to me tightly. "You gave an old woman a little moment of joy. Thank you."

I squeezed her hand and then walked out into the dim morning light.

Behind me, a door shut. It was like the sound of a closing of a life.....

That day I couldn't get those two hours out of my mind.

On review I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

People may not remember exactly what you did or said but they will always remember how you made them feel.



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"To reduce health and social problems by promoting a lifestyle free of alcohol and other drugs."

YOU ARE NEEDED

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By signing the following pledge you may become a member of this organisation. "I affirm my life-long pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor as a beverage, and my willingness to pursue all proper means to discourage and prevent its use in society. I pledge myself to work and pray to this end by endeavouring to promote a personal purity of life, free from the menace of narcotic poisons and drugs, claiming always the promised guidance and help of God.

Signed

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Men are eligible for full membership

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