



**The work of the Society for Promoting the Training of Women**

## **Spring Newsletter 2014**

Dear Friends,

You not only support our aims, you make a major contribution to our income. The Society would be nothing without you. If we each enlisted at least one new member we would double our membership, increase our income and be enabled to help more women. Please will you help us in our membership drive this year? More details are given later in this Newsletter and on the website: [www.futuresforwomen.org.uk](http://www.futuresforwomen.org.uk)

Two of our Trustees have begun planning lectures and social events in 2015. These follow on from last year's literary lunch in Somerset, at which our Patron, Victoria Glendinning spoke. They are looking for inspirational women speakers and prestigious venues which will create stimulating occasions and raise the profile of Futures for Women. We hope that many of you will be able to come and bring your friends.

Mrs. Gillis Burgess is retiring from the Board of Trustees having given long and dedicated service since becoming a Trustee in 1973. She was chairman for ten years (1993-2003). At the Annual Meeting we have an opportunity to thank her for all that she has done for the charity throughout those forty years. I hope to see many of you at the AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> June.

Thanks to all of you for your continuing generous support which makes such a difference to the women we help.

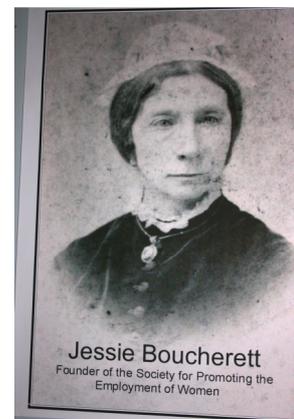
With all good wishes,

*Elsbeth Richards*

## Update from our Secretary

The period since Christmas has continued to be busy. We received 35 applications for loans in the first three months of the year and interviewed 5 candidates at our meeting in March. The subjects being studied by applicants included International Development, Sound Design and Russian and East European Studies – yet again a diverse range of interests from highly intelligent and dedicated women.

In February we were contacted by a production company named Betty which is making a series for BBC2 featuring our charity's founder, Jessie Boucherett. Researchers from Betty have visited our archives in Girton College, Cambridge and spoken to Dr Anne Bridger, our archivist who based her Dissertation on Jessie's work and, with Ellen Jordan wrote our book "Timely Assistance". Anne has written an article on page 3 giving more information about the series.



Meanwhile I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our AGM on Wednesday 11 June. I can hardly believe that this month will mark my first year in post as Secretary – the time has flown by.

*Jane Hampson*

## Official name change

Following on from the members' resolution that we posted to you at the end of 2013 we can confirm that there was a majority vote to officially change the name of our charity to **Futures for Women**. We are now registered with Charity Commission and Companies House under this new name.

We have also protected our new logo as a trade mark.



## Annual General Meeting for 2014

will take place at

**ING Banking, 60 London Wall,  
London EC2M 5TQ**

**On**

**Wednesday 11 June at 1.00pm**

*Sandwich lunch available from 12.30pm*

This year our post-AGM presentations will include stories from grantees and a farewell to Mrs Gillis Burgess who has been a Trustee of Futures for Women for many years and is also a past Chairman. Dr Pam Hirsch will also update us on being interviewed by production company Betty for a forthcoming BBC programme (more below). I hope you can spare the time to join us – it should be a fascinating event.



portfolio



## SPEW and Shopgirls

*Dr. Anne Bridger writes.....*

BBC2 Television will be screening a three-part mini-series soon, which will focus on "Shopgirls". Their researchers contacted us early in February to see whether our archive contained any references to the earliest opportunities for such work.

The word 'shop' seems to have been more broadly used for what today we would refer to as a variety of workshops, offices or typing bureaux: there are many entries in our archives referring to support for such ventures and I shared with researcher Lauren Bennie some of the more amusing episodes, for example when one young girl was refused a

hairdressing apprenticeship as she was “too short” to attend to a customer’s coiffure.

As Ellen Jordan and I had transcribed the majority of the Committee Minutes when preparing my thesis and our subsequent book *Timely Assistance*, I was able to send Lauren print-outs of the transcript of SPEW’s 1860s records as well as give her a better understanding of its members’ pioneering efforts; and to draw attention to the extent of Jessie’s financial backing for the rest of her life. Lauren arranged to spend a day at the Girton archives, and I suggested the possible focus for her time there. She had also consulted many of the Annual Reports. During my exchanges with Lauren, I was naturally anxious that ‘my heroine’ Jessie Boucherett should be given as much coverage as possible, so I sent her details of Jessie’s letter in which she established beyond doubt that it was indeed she (with Adelaide Procter’s help) who launched SPEW.

Naturally, the programme’s references to SPEW will be very brief, as the main focus of the series will be tracing the ways in which girls and young women were absorbed into the retail world over the century which followed 1850. Hopefully, they will be able to let us know what they do plan to say, in advance of the screening.

The researchers seem very impressed with all that they were finding out about this Society and we are hopeful that the airing of some of our earliest as well as present activities will produce more supporters when the programme goes out.

One of the academics approached by the BBC team for the programme is Dr Pam Hirsch\*, and an interview with her will appear in the first episode. Pam is the author of the definitive biography of Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon and is an expert on the Langham Place Group. As I was privileged to have Pam as one of my academic supervisors during my doctoral research, I look forward to seeing her ‘on the telly’ in the near future!

**\* Dr Pam Hirsch is a Tutor and Fellow in the Faculty of Education, Newnham College, University of Cambridge. See ‘Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon: Feminist, Artist and Rebel’ Chatto and Windus 1998; Pimlico ed. 1999.**

**Dr Anne Bridger**

**FFW member and co- author of “Timely Assistance - the work of SPTW from 1859 – 2009”. Copies of the book are available from the Secretary.**

## Membership payments for 2014

June is the time of year when we ask our members to pay their membership subscription of £30. If your membership payment is outstanding we would be grateful if you could either forward a cheque for £30 to the Secretary or make a BACS payment to our bank account:

**Barclays Bank**  
**Branch Sort Code: 20 – 81 – 20**  
**General Fund**  
**Account No: 70982032**

Alternatively, have you considered setting up a Standing Order so that you don't have to remember to make your payment each year? By completing a Standing Order form your bank will automatically make the payment on your behalf on an annual basis until you ask them to stop. A standing order form is enclosed with this newsletter – if you want to use this method of payment just complete the form and return it to the Secretary. She will also be able to advise you whether or not you have paid your membership for 2014.

Your membership payment remains very important to FfW and goes towards helping even more women study for a qualification that will enable them to secure their desired career.

## Leaving a legacy for women

Leaving Futures for Women a gift in your Will is just one way that you can support our work. The importance of making a Will cannot be underestimated. If you die without leaving a Will your assets, such as your home, valuables, savings and investments, may not pass on to your family and friends and a large proportion may disappear in inheritance tax. Making a Will gives you peace of mind that your wishes have been followed. For further advice on making a Will please contact a solicitor, accountant or Will-writing service

## Why Futures for Women needs your support

### AF – MA in Victorian Literature, Art and Culture at the Royal Holloway London University

I just wanted to let everyone at Futures for Women know that I passed my MA with distinction, and to thank the society once again for their generous loan. I enjoyed the degree so much that I decided not to return to Ireland but to remain in the UK and apply for a PhD at Royal Holloway, as well as to other universities in the London area. I completed my dissertation while working full-time at Windsor Castle from June-September, so I was fairly exhausted by the end of the season! Almost as soon as I finished my MA I took on a fully-funded EU Da Vinci internship at the Duke Street Gallery in Dublin where I worked in art journalism and art restoration. I returned home shortly before Christmas and am still cantoring at Westminster Cathedral.



Performing at the Duke Street Gallery  
(James O'Neill)

Duke Street Gallery

### VL - Creative Practice for Narrative Environments, at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design

I am proud to be part of an organisation that champions great design for the public good. In my role as a Design Advisor in the Cabi (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) team at the Design Council, I help to ensure that sustainable communities are created through good design practice. On a day-to-day basis I collaborate with key stakeholders across the UK involved in redevelopment, from central and local government to developers and community members. My role is particularly crucial in light of recent agendas for growth, such as London's 2020 vision. I also contribute to wider events organised by the

Design Council, such as the Beyond 2012 event to commemorate designers who contributed to the London 2012 Olympic Games.

### **TP – MSc Integrative Science – University of Oxford**

I am now working as an International Species Recovery Officer for the RSPB. Biodiversity conservation and exploring remote places are both things I am deeply passionate about, and so when the opportunity arose to join an RSPB research expedition to one of the most remote places on Earth I signed up immediately! In July and August 2013, I was lucky enough to be part of a five person team on a scientific expedition to Henderson Island. The island is situated over 3,000 miles from the nearest continent and it is one of the Pitcairn Group. It takes six days to travel from the UK to Henderson (via Pitcairn) and on arriving, you are struck by the remoteness and strange beauty.

Over the following nine weeks, the team worked hard to complete successfully the full work program of scientific research. It also gave me the unique opportunity to get to understand what a natural gem Henderson Island is. From the birds to the insects and plants, many of which live now-where else on the planet, Henderson has a largely intact and near pristine terrestrial ecosystem that, fully justifies its World Heritage status.

However, Henderson should be even better for wildlife, it has lost large seabird colonies and little natural vegetation regeneration occurs because invasive rats eat eggs, chicks and seeds, these were brought to the island by Polynesians for food hundreds of years ago. Removing rats from Henderson Island is the single most effective action we can take to allow recovery of the special wildlife that depends upon this island to live and the data collected on this trip will help inform the next steps towards this.



## **FUTURES FOR WOMEN TODAY**

**Registered Charity No 313700**

[www.futuresforwomen.org.uk](http://www.futuresforwomen.org.uk)

**Patrons** Professor Mary Fuller  
Victoria Glendinning CBE FRSL Hon D Litt  
Lady Hawley

**President** Lady Appleyard  
**Vice-President** Her Honour Suzanne Stewart

**Chairman** Mrs E Richards  
**Vice Chairman** Ms J Murray

**Trustees** Dr C Boulter, Mrs G Burgess, Professor J Dine  
Ms K Goldie-Morrison, Dr K Jardine-Brown  
Ms A McVittie, Mrs R Parr

**Secretary** Miss Jane Hampson  
11 Church Street, Marton, Rugby, Warwicks CV23 9RL  
[futuresforwomen@btinternet.com](mailto:futuresforwomen@btinternet.com)

If you would like to support Futures for Women please forward your donation to the address above. Alternatively we can accept donations direct into our bank account:

**Barclays Bank**  
**Branch Sort Code: 20 – 81 – 20**  
**General Fund**  
**Account No: 70982032**

If you are a UK tax payer please consider completing a Gift Aid form which allows the charity to increase your donation by 20%. Please contact the Secretary for details.