

Founded 1902 ~ Celebrated 123 years in 2025

Newsletter

August 2025

## Acknowledgement

*National Council of Women of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Victoria and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. NCWV pays its respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.*



**NCWV Website:** <https://ncwvic.org.au/>

**QUOTE:** *A safe, secure home is the necessary foundation we all need to focus on our goals and build the future we want for ourselves.* [YWCA | Homelessness Support](#)

**From the President, Elida Brereton**



Thank you to Sheila Byard OAM for leading the Individual Members in 2024-25, also thank you Beverly Kannegiesser and Carol Robertson for your key roles. NCWV has always embraced the tradition and vital work done by Individual Members, while welcoming delegates of the organisations that also enrich this 123-year old body. We need a strong commitment from IMs if they are to continue as a separate group with their speakers and events.

**NCWV Annual General Meeting, September 4<sup>th</sup>**, a vital meeting as we fill our leadership positions. **We are head hunting passionate participants to advocate for Victorian women and girls.** With several members approaching their 10<sup>th</sup> year of volunteering on Committee, we are seeking passionate members to work with our valuable volunteer team members! If you have a passion for gender equality, we invite nominations by Members, Member Organisations and Delegates to be directly involved. You will contribute new ideas, work/life experience, communication skills, energy, with committee members to mentor new participants. Please access the nomination forms on our website <https://ncwvic.org.au/>

Our guest speaker (and NCWV member) will be Vivienne Nguyen, CEO of the Victorian Multicultural Commission. I hope that all of you will be present, in person or by ZOOM,

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Patron in Chief: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria

to hear Viv speak, as the multicultural nature of Victoria and issues flowing from this, are vital and of relevance to us all.

**“Cherish Democracy”** was held in Parliament House organised by Dr. Deborah Towns OAM with members of the League of Women Voters Vic. on their 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this body being established in Victoria. NCWV was a co-sponsor of this event which featured adult and student speakers plus the pleasure of seeing a movie made some time ago. Thank you Deborah, Sheila, Pam and all who helped make this a memorable and relevant event. Thank you all who attended and participated. See article p. 6

I was honoured to be invited as President of NCWV to morning tea with the **National Council of Jewish Women Victoria** on July 15th featuring highly respected Indigenous leader Prof Marcia Langton AO who amongst many wise remarks drew some parallels between Indigenous Australians and Jewish Australians, both minorities and both experiencing prejudice and rejection by ignorant people in Australian society. Marcia Langton was, as expected, most impressive.

**Advocacy from NCWV** comes mainly from the Advisers who comprise the NCWV Standing Committees, and I appreciate their work under the leadership of Robyn Byrne OAM. Recent advocacy includes letters to numerous politicians regarding the urgent need for the release of more Home Care packages, and for a review of gender equity in the workplace, as promised reforms are still unrealised.

**Renewals of existing NCWV memberships** is occurring now and I thank Ronniel Milliken for her excellent work in sending notices, and to you for your loyalty of this old, unique, and we hope, relevant and active organisation, in continuing your membership. Please ask friends and acquaintances to consider joining NCWV, as we need to grow and to gain “fresh blood”.

NCWV Melb. will be represented at the **Geelong Branch AGM**, August 18. Our Geelong Branch is active, loyal and yet different in some ways, which enriches us all. We congratulate them for their work in the Geelong community and as a vital branch of NCWV.

As always, our hearts go out to the victims of war in the Middle East and Ukraine, and in Sudan and other parts of this troubled world, and we are thinking of our Members, their families and friends experiencing ongoing prejudice and threatening behaviour in this city because of their religion and/or culture. There is no place for antisemitism or other racism and anti-Australians behaviour.

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS’ GENERAL MEETING and ELECTIONS, Ross House, Flinders Lane, Melbourne and ZOOM, 11.00 am – 11.50am. 7<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025**

This was attended, in person, by 14 Individual Members and by Zoom, disappointingly by only three.

**IM Convenor’s Report, Sheila Byard**

Vales – Birute Don, Barbara Brown, Gracia Baylor AM and past member Yvonne Tully

It is an honour to have served as the 2024-25 Convenor for the Individual Members Group, and as representative for the Individual Members on the monthly meetings of the NCWV Executive. Thanks especially to Beverly Kannegiesser who has served again as 'Bookkeeper'.

Individual Members were well represented at the 121<sup>st</sup> AGM of NCWV on 5 September 2024 at Ross House, Flinders Lane, Melbourne and by Zoom. We were pleased to be able to host a 'Bring and Buy' table on the day, and to restart the practice of a contributions basket to go towards off-setting the Ross House charges. The \$50 collected was banked by the Hon Treasurer. At the time of the 2025 ICW/CIF General Assembly in Morocco, the collection of money by the IMG on various occasions, enabled a donation of \$100 to be made in the name of Individual Members to the International Council of Women CIF Small Development Fund. The IM Group, no longer needing to fund the Ross House storage, is offering an award for the 2025 My Vote My Voice in honour of Gracia Baylor AM past NCWV President and MP.

The 2024 Millie Peden Excursion was to the Royal Children's Hospital on 11 September with a sum donated for the RCH Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Nursing Development Scholarship. Thanks to members Carole Lowens and Robyn Buccheri for liaison with the RCH Auxiliaries team and to Pam Robinson AM for her work in relation to the missing plaque from the NCWV Associates Bicentennial Grove of Honour. At the 2024 October meeting members heard Hon. Life Member, Elisabeth Newman AM speak on her trip to South America and how to "fish for Piranhas". At the June 2025 IMG meeting Coordinator of Standing Committees Robyn Byrne OAM clarified the relationship between ICW/CIF, NCWA and the constituent councils like NCW Victoria.

It is reassuring that the Individual Members Group continues to attract new members. Some join when they are recruited to work in different policy areas through the Standing Committees, some have been elected to serve on the NCWV Executive, and others help swell the numbers of attendees at Council meetings, and other activities.

We are delighted to have our member Hean Bee Wee AM at our 2024-25 General Meeting to speak about the ICW CIF General Assembly in Morocco.



**Guest Speaker: Hean Bee Wee AM, Honorary Life Vice-President of NCWA and NCWV Committee Member.** Hean Bee has served as Vice-President, Economic Adviser and NCWA President from 2006-2009. She was Vice-President of ICW-CIF, and is currently President of the Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRC).

Hean Bee attended the ICW CIF General Assembly at Marrakesh, Morocco in June, which was attended by Members of Parliament and Heads of Department from across Moroccan, which is one of the oldest Kingdoms in the world. She was impressed with the focus on women's welfare. The Morocco Government established three neighbour houses to support women. Two of these houses are training centres for women and the third is a hostel.

The Australian contingent was led by NCWA President, Fiona Dorman who presented an inspiring talk on '*No-one Left Behind*' and the advocacy of NCWA.

Hean Bee conducted a workshop with delegates countries around the Asia Pacific area. They were divided into regional groups and charged with listing what they wanted ICW CIF to focus on for them, then report back. Hopefully some of their needs will be addressed in future action plans.

At the Gala Dinner, Salome Bentinck was a guest at Hean Bee's table. Salome is the retiring head of LELAF which has funded many projects for ICW young members, including one in Samoa. This year LELAF funded a project in Madagascar. Linda Liu from Taiwan was elected President APRC ICW at the GA., as Hean Bee retired from the position.



Pam Hammond, Hean Bee Wee AM, Sheila Byard OAM, Beverly Kannegiesser, Elida Brereton

At the IM Election, Sheila Byard OAM was elected as President, Beverly agreed to be Book keeper; Notetaker is vacant.

### **NCWV August Council Meeting, Ross House, Flinders Lane and ZOOM, 12:15pm. 7<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025**

**Speaker: Professor Cassandra Szoeka, Health Adviser for NCWV, Professor of Medicine, Doctor, Scientist, and Clinical researcher,** an expert in women's health, an AMA Councillor and author of *Secrets of Women's Health Ageing*. Cassandra shared her experiences and learnings at the recent Asia Summit on Global Health in Hong Kong, focused on fostering global collaboration in the healthcare sector. Cassandra delivered a plenary lecture and panel at the conference with the after-hours lecture attracting over 100 attendees. One learning was that Chinese medicine (TCM) has always treated male and female health issues differently, recognising the difference in their bodies, unlike western medicine, which those attending found hard to believe. Many people chatted to her about her book and its findings.



The International Council of Women General Assembly in Morocco, had an emphasis on the directions being taken by the supreme ICW CIF body, hopefully for the improvement of the lives of women and girls around the world. Cassandra endorsed how Hean Bee's workshop was conducted and the resultant data. Cassandra shared that ICW CIF has set up a young group in Portugal focussing on Poverty, Body Image, Attending World meetings to foster positive change. This is expanding with other groups being set up across the World. Another session Cassandra attended was conducted by a Belgium Ambassador, Myriam Bacquellaine, who highlighted the lack of women in leadership roles across the World, saying that more women in these roles would result in peace. She quoted Liberia, where war had been going on for many years, until a woman Ellen Srileaf was elected as President in 2005. Peace resulted in a short period of time and was sustained, and Ellen was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011.

Visiting some of the women's projects was a highlight including production of Argan Oil, IT skill development, baking and creation of arts & crafts. Facilities are designed to support women in need with accommodation, retraining and employment. The earnings from the gift store run by Australia and New Zealand were donated to the women at this facility Photo: kitchen group-commercial baking.



Cassandra valued meeting up and sharing with delegates from across the World, especially from Asia/Pacific region.

## VALE

### Barbara Brown 1947 – July 2025



Barbara Brown was a foundation member of NCWV Goulburn Valley (Shepparton) Branch (GVB) from its formation following a meeting held in Wangaratta (October 1999) of women from North-Eastern Victoria, who would be the basis of an NCWV Branch in the area.

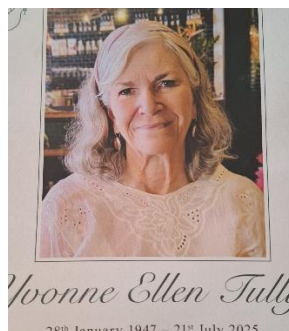
In early 2000 Barbara was appointed GVB Publicity Officer. She continued in until the GVB closed in 2013. Barbara was a member with enthusiasm to publicise the

GVB and its activities; also Individual Members and Council. She supported NCWV Awards e.g. Dame Phyllis Frost Award, Rural Women's Voice Workshop. The GVB hosted the Combined Women's Services Club Dinner (2003) when the Victorian Police Commissioner Christine Nixon was guest speaker.

Barbara was elected NCWV Regional Vice-President 2007-2012, and was GVB Delegate in 2008-2009. In 2014, as Regional Vice-President Barbara travelled to NCWV Branches, Central Gippsland and Geelong, for 50th Years and 70th Years celebrations. She became an NCWV Individual Member when GVB closed. Barbara was Convenor and Individual Members' Representative on NCWV Executive, Sept. 2013-2015. Since that time, Barbara regularly came to Melbourne to participate in Individual Members and Council Meetings until the pandemic hit. Barbara's support for NCWV remained a part of her life for more than 20 years.

Barbara is remembered as our friend, colleague and NCWV Honorary Life Member. We recall the massive amount of time and energy Barbara put into the Shepparton hosted biennial Australian National Piano Awards program which some of us used to attend.

### Yvonne Tully 28/01/1947 - 21/07/2025.



Yvonne, originally from Queensland, was an active Individual Member of NCWV through the pre-COVID years. She was a well-informed contributor to the Arts & Letters Standing Committee, and attended many NCWV activities.

Members will recall that after Geelong Branch member Jan Kinloch retired from running the trading table at NCWV monthly meetings, Yvonne took over that responsibility, encouraging members to share home cooked good, handwork & other valuable items - a way of maintaining a vital revenue stream for NCWV over and above subscriptions & cash donations. By Sheila Byard OAM

### Katrina Plekan 28/2/1937 – 14/7/2025



Katrina joined the Ukrainian Women's Association becoming an active member of the State Executive UWA, Victoria. She was appointed a NCWV representative. At meetings she attended Katrina met Sheila Byard. Sheila, Vasylyna Lewinski, Natalka Hrynewych and Kartina together produced the historical photographic booklet of Ukrainians in Newborough.

Katrina was one of the volunteers at the Ukrainian Museum in North Melbourne. Katrina was a gifted embroiderer. She will be sadly missed. Vale Katrina! Vichnaya Pamyat!

## ADVISER NEWS

Education Adviser: Pam Hammond **You are invited to join us at our 2025 student event:**

### **My Vote My Voice: *What is Special about Australian Democracy?***

**The Legislative Council Chamber, Parliament of Victoria, Spring Street, Melbourne**

**Friday 22 August, 2025; 9:00am for 9:15am start, finishing at 12:45pm**

The outstanding annual student event **My Vote My Voice**, is conducted by the National Council of Women of Victoria. Students from Victorian government and independent schools, will address the topic:

**What is Special about the Australian Democracy.** Students are encouraged to investigate issues related to topic and make a **group presentation** of their findings in the Legislative Council Chamber.

**The keynote speaker will be Lucy Skelton, Founder and CEO of FORE Australia**, a non-partisan social enterprise collaborating with experts, advocates, and policymakers to build and maintain tools that Australia's policy community can trust. Lucy was a presenter at My Vote My Voice events in 2018/19.

This is a wonderful opportunity to sit in this impressive Chamber and hear from inspiring young people about an issue that has been highlighted in the media and across the community.

The program is:

**9:00 Enter via security check, Spring Street entrance, Parliament of Victoria**

**9:15 Photos, welcome in Queen's Hall**

**9:20 Move to the Legislative Council Chamber.**

**9:25 Welcome to guests and speakers, Elida Brereton, President NCWV**

**9:30 Guest Speaker: Lucy Skelton, FORE Australia; Q&A**

**10:00 Student presentations begin**

**10:30 Refreshments in the Queen's Hall**

**11:00 Student presentations continue**

**12:20 Panel responses and plenary**

**12:40 Thanks and close**

**Students are free** thanks to the League of Women Voters, Victoria Bessie M. Rischbieth Trust grant.

**Costs for NCWV members, affiliates, guests, teachers and parents, will be \$20**

It is a requirement for all those attending to be listed with security, so payment and registration is via

TryBooking link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DEJWM> OR QR code:



**RSVP by 5:00pm Monday 18 August**

**President: Elida Brereton**

**0411 025 897**

**Convenor Civics and Citizenship: Pam Hammond**

**0417 326 847**



Three NCWV Advisers tuned into the webinar in July which we found most informative and inspiring. The two First Nations people who conducted the webinar took us through the history of Treaty – which goes back decades. There is another webinar planned: **Treaty webinar for allies: Will be held online via Zoom, Thursday 14 August 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM** <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/treaty-webinar-for-allies-tickets-1479197803449>

The Treaty Webinar for allies is tailored to individuals who want to learn more and support the journey to Treaty for Victoria. The journey to Treaty for Victoria has been led by First Peoples for decades, and allies are invited to walk alongside. Australia's first Treaty is currently being negotiated between the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and the Victorian Government. You'll hear from an elected Assembly Member about the Treaty journey so far, what the first Statewide Treaty will include and how you can get involved in this historic moment!

There will be a chance to ask questions and learn about actions you can take to support the Assembly and Treaty.

**This webinar is open to all allies who are not connected to an ally organisation/group but would still like to learn about and support Treaty for Victoria.**

### **NEWS ALERT!!! October Council Meeting First Nations Assembly Update**

For NCWV members and friends to learn more about the Assembly and the Path to Treaty, members of the Assembly have been invited to the **NCWV October Council Meeting on 2 October**. Please put this extremely important presentation in your diary. Details to follow.

### **Standing Committee Coordinator: Robyn Byrne OAM**

**State of Victoria's Public Health Sector Report by Victorian Healthcare Association is worth reading:**

<https://www.vha.org.au/public/184/files/VHA%20State%20of%20the%20Health%20Sector%202025%20Report.pdf>

The report has broken up Populations into Outer Region and Remote, Inner Regional, Major Cities with major health issues. Outer Region and Remote is higher than other regions in "Overweight or obese", "Insufficient physical activity", "alcohol risk" and "Daily smoker".

[Good news is] **80 Maternal and Child Health Centres** focus primarily on health promotion and prevention for families and babies- 97% of 2-week old children seen OR 70,000 Maternal and Child Health Service clients aged 0 to 1 year in 2023–24.

**Early Parenting Centres**– [but only] 1% of Victorian families with 0–4-year-olds received services. There are 10 Early Parenting Centres (EPCs) across the state with an additional three centres currently in the planning phase to expand service availability. An EPC delivers specialist support for Victorian families with children from birth to four years.

**AGED CARE** - Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services (PSRACS) are a unique feature of the Victorian health system. There are **171 services across Victoria** with most PSRACS embedded in Hospitals and Health Services. In 2024–25, approximately **5,600 aged care places** were delivered through PSRACS in Victoria. The Victorian Government is the largest public provider of residential aged care in Australia

**Women's Health Services** - There are 12 Women's Health Services in Victoria which operate under a primary prevention approach, addressing the social determinants of health...provide a range of services to advance women's health and equality, including health promotion and education, research, and monitoring and evaluation. Other sectors in the Report:

**Registered Community Health Services in Victoria**

**Bush Nursing Centres**

**Regional and Rural Victoria**

**Virtual Care Virtual healthcare**

**Regional and Rural Victoria**

Top three issues that were identified by the health sector: **Workforce, Funding, Capacity.**

### **Community Alert: Drive through Food donations for Foodbank August 16 and 17, between 10am and 3pm**

**4/2 Somerville Road, Yarraville** or drop urgently needed food into your local **Bendigo Bank** in metropolitan Melbourne during biz hours right throughout August. Foodbank are holding the biggest food drive on the planet - calling on every business, school, sporting club, community group, family or individual in Victoria to drop off food directly to Foodbank. Foodbank are looking SPECIFICALLY for eight staple items that are most in demand: Tuna, Pasta Sauce, Pasta, Rice, Cereal, UHT Milk, Canned Fruit and Canned Vegetables. Can't get to the Foodbank warehouse? You can fill a virtual cart anytime, day or night, in their Virtual Food Drive shop! Head to the link below for more info. <https://tinyurl.com/298d5hmw>

**Women and Employment Adviser: Dr Deborah Towns OAM: Cherishing and Challenging Democracy: Civics, Rights, Responsibilities, Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters Victoria (LWVV), and National Council of Women of Victoria (NCWV). 16 July, Queens Hall, Parliament House, East Melbourne.**

In impressive Queen's Hall, Parliament House, the event was opened by **Elida Brereton**, NCWV President, who acknowledged we were meeting on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Woiwurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We celebrate their contemporary culture as the world's oldest living culture, respect their elders, past and present. The event celebrated the 101 years since Victorian women gained the right to stand for parliament, the LWVV's 80<sup>th</sup> and Australia's democracy.

NCWV, is one of Victoria's oldest women's organisations beginning 123 years ago. At the first NCWV congress in 1903, subjects debated included, equal pay for equal work, rights of the child, and technical education for women. They continue as gender equality issues today. Elida reminded us of the indomitable, leading suffragist Vida Goldstein, an NCWV member when she stood for Federal Parliament at the election in 1903. It was not until 1984 that a Victorian seat was named 'Goldstein'. This was the first time Vida had been honoured by Australia.

**A short history of Australia's democracy by Deborah Towns** OAM President of the LWVV. The Parliament of Victoria ideal for a modern democracy is "Where no counsel is, people fall, but in the multitude of councillors there is safety", is in the entrance to Parliament House. This building honours the 'first' democracy in its architecture with statues of Greek goddesses, representing justice, mercy, architecture, fame, wisdom, unity, history, and plenty, in the Legislative Council Chamber. Melbourne was the temporary capital after Federation and this building served as the Parliament of Australia before the Federal government moved to Canberra in 1927.

Voting is one of the crucial indicators of how citizens participate in the governance of their country. Globally voter turnout is declining in democracies around the world. Australia's voting turnout is the envy of the world, though it has declined by five percent since the 1990s. However, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance found that lower participation in elections does not always mean citizens are less active in politics. Internationally there is a rise in citizen activism, mass protests, occupy movements, and the increased use of social media as a new form of political engagement.

**The LWVV began in 1945** with one of its aims to encourage the community to be responsible voters. Educational programs for children and adults have been organised by the LWVV over the decades, designed to encourage people to take their voting seriously. One major event was celebrating the centenary of women winning voting rights in Victoria in 2009. Opened by the Hon. Mary Wooldridge, then the Minister for Women, over 100 participants attended including students from eleven secondary schools, who made speeches in the Legislative Council.

The Honourable **Judy Maddigan**, the first woman Speaker in the Victorian Parliament (2003-2006) presented a detailed history of early women voters and Parliamentarians. In 1884 the Victorian Women's Suffrage Society (VWSS) was formed by Henrietta Dugdale and Annie Lowe, the first such organisation in Australia. In only ten weeks, activist women gathered nearly 30 000 thousand signatures, demanding the right for women to vote. Known as the 'Great Petition' it was presented to the Victorian Parliament in 1891. Victorian women won the vote in 1909, but could not stand for election. It was 1924 before it became lawful for women to stand for election in Victoria. Alicia Katz was the first woman when she stood for the Legislative Assembly. Lady Millie Peacock was the first women elected to the Victorian Parliament in 1933. She won the by-election brought about by the death of her husband, Sir Alexander Peacock, a former Premier, who had held the seat of East Framlingham for 44 years. Whilst Ivy Weaver was the second woman to become a parliamentarian, winning the seat of Nunawading in 1937, she was the first woman to be elected in a Victorian General Election. She was re-elected in 1940 and 1943. Fanny Brownbill won the 1938 Geelong by-election for the Legislative Assembly, 1943, and was re-elected in 1945 to the same seat.

In Judy Maddigan's last year as a Member of Parliament in 2010 there were 5 women in Cabinet and 16 men. Today Jacinta Allen is Victoria's second woman Premier and her Cabinet is 65 per cent women. Gender parity for the Australian federal government is just about reached with 112 women and 114 men.

**Reconciliation is promoted through Emma Ross's** work as a curriculum writer at the Indigenous led Ngarrngga, in the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne. She works with First Nations knowledge holders to develop culturally responsive resources that support educators to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and knowledge. Fostering respectful relationships, she helps educators engage thoughtfully with First Nations perspectives to build a more inclusive national narrative.

**'Ngarrngga' is a Taungurung** word meaning 'to know, to hear, to understand'. The Ngarrngga project is a multifaceted, transdisciplinary program led by First Nations educators, supported by the University of Melbourne and BHP. Expanding on the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curricula Project led by Professor Marcia Langton AO, Ngarrngga goes beyond production of resources by diving deep into the Australian Curriculum to draw out and illustrate how Indigenous Knowledge complements and deepens our understanding of the world and relationships with one another.

**Professor Melitta Hogarth** is Ngarrngga's Director. In the introductory video we watched, she invited us "*to come along with us and explore. Let's become a truly united country...*" Continuing she said, "*We know that Education plays a key role*



*in shaping future Australian citizens. By having opportunity to actually hear the true shared histories of Australia, that has often been omitted from the Australian history record, it allows for non-indigenous to come to know, understand and hear the reasons why there is this kind of disconnect within Australian society at the moment."* <https://www.ngarrngga.org/>

**Active citizenship was on full show, when the Melbourne Girls' College students, Maddie van Vliet and Ellie Baxter** made their presentation. As Environment Co-captains, they focus on sustainability programs and connect to Indigenous culture, champion zero waste initiatives and inspire others to work towards ensuring an environmentally conscious future for the community. They impressed the audience with their passion and knowledge of global and local environmental matters. Their practical commitment to bring about change was shown through the many MGC projects they lead and organise.

**MGC's Murnong Patch Working Bee** is a monthly event, removing weeds and rubbish, mulching, check nestboxes, restore vegetation and generally improving the landscape. The project is named for the Murnong plant that was the staple food for the Wurundjeri people until the mid-1840s, when the land was destroyed by invasive agriculture. They host these working bees to work towards the restoration of Wurundjeri land. MGCs' Yarra bank is a significant site to traditional owners, and this is one of MGCs' initiatives acknowledging the enduring presence, and culture of Indigenous communities. Melbourne Girls College is proud to be 1 of 7 schools selected from around Australia to take part in the documentary *The Power of Activism's* educational impact strategy. A powerful film, it shines a positive light on a group of young Australians making a difference around the world engaging and inspiring communities to 'Get Involved!'. Their project and short film 'Accelerate' documented the behind-the-scenes of MGC's annual sustainability event, the *Pedal Power Cinema*, inspired by the film *The Power of Activism*. The 5 minute mini documentary, showed how an event like the Pedal Power Cinema can teach people that activism can be exciting, welcoming, community-building and most of all – fun! The Pedal Power Cinema brings students, families and communities together all in the name of doing good for our planet with students tangibly seeing the fruits of their peddling; powering the big screen!

**To minimise waste, MGC students** are doing this is by reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. The packaging of consumables today will not degrade fast enough releasing toxins into the environment. *"We must act as a society to stop this problem that will just not go away."* MGC, thanks to a generous donation from the MGC Parents Association, has a new fleet of waste stations that are helping staff and students sort their waste on site. They promote the Solar Cone Composters located at convenient locations all around the school grounds. These wonderful digestors-of-organic-materials can handle all sorts of food scraps and can digest the biodegradable packaging that our friends at the school Canteen, Bocca Foods, produce. There's no excuse to be putting any food scraps into landfill at MGC!

**Another speaker, Vivienne Nguyen AM**, has been Chairperson, of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), for five years. As the main link between communities and government, VMC engages with multicultural and multifaith groups to understand their issues. They work together to identify and recommend potential solutions to government, policymakers and community organisations to make public services more inclusive and accessible. Their Mission Statement: *We strengthen our community through support, celebrations and advocacy for culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians.*

Victoria has one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world. More than half of Victoria's population was born overseas or has at least one parent who was born overseas. Around 30 per cent of Victorians were born overseas, compared with the OECD average of approximately 12 per cent. Victorians speak more than 290 languages and dialects, and practise more than 135 faiths. The recent strategic review reconfirmed the Commission's strengths, including its deep knowledge of and connection with diverse communities.

Vivienne stated that the definition of democracy means different things to different people, but the starting point mostly is a low level of trust. Whilst this can be a positive factor in encouraging participation in politics, it is not the case for the majority. When there are discussions around elections for local, state, federal parliament, it is not necessary always the case that migrants and refugees know about how and what politicians do, what party, what person, what candidate?

*"We know that a healthy functioning democracy requires engagement and participation from the people, the grassroots. And given what I've heard from, listened to and reflect from my own personal, family and community's experience – the work of raising awareness, education, and the obvious, but sometimes not quite obvious, call it rationale/benefits/or another term for it, rights, and responsibilities of our democracy, our democratic system, is critical."*

An example Viv gave was that someone questioned, *'Why do I need to participate or engage when what I see is not what I expect or aspire; If I cannot be inspired by what I see in our democratic systems?'* It may be a matter of prioritising the necessities of life, or it could be lack of familiarity, understanding or seeing the impact of participation or engagement.

Also, *'how important it is for women to know what services are available to support them in times of need – be it maternity, employment, family violence services? How much more confidence and trust would we have in our institutions if we can call out racism and have these unacceptable behaviours dealt with fairly?'* Vivienne considers that these questions are why events like today are ever more important, and she said, *"more of these please, to ensure that engagement and participation from all citizens of Australia, where we all have a good chance of understanding the value of our votes, the impact of our engagement in policy discussions to build knowledge of our systems, to be empowered to take part in the process to improve, equity, to take conscious participation in what are our rights and with that, our responsibilities."*

The video, '**100 years of the Women's Vote**' was shown, produced over 20 years ago providing the opportunity to learn the history and reflect on issues that are current. Written by MGC students with their teacher Sheryl Kerwick it shows the parliamentary debates, community commentary and activism by Vida Goldstein and others around women's suffrage. It was made in the Legislative Council and produced with funding from the Discovering Democracy. LWVV provided advice.

**Adjunct Associate Professor Libby Tudball** worked in teacher education at Melbourne and Monash Universities for 35 years. She serves on the national committee of the Social & Citizenship Education Association of Australia and has presented her research on civics and citizenship internationally. Civics and Citizenship Education is in the current national goals for schooling, Australia, 2019-2029, for all young Australians to become active and informed members of community:

- ensure that education promotes and contributes to a socially cohesive society that values, respects and appreciates different points of view
- make informed decisions about their own lives and accept responsibility for their own actions
- have an understanding of Australia's system of government, its histories, religions and culture
- are committed to national values of democracy, equity and justice, and participate in Australia's civic life by connecting with community and contributing to local and national conversations.

Recently the National Assessment Program for Civics and Citizenship found a substantial drop in the level of achievement, with Years 6 and 10 students achieving proficient standard declining. A positive finding was that most students believed that learning about Australian history was important. Also, students expressed high levels of engagement regarding positive attitudes towards First Nations Australian's cultures. Younger students expressed a high degree of trust in civic institutions but showed considerably less trust in the media and social media.

Earlier this year the Australian Government's Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report, [From Classroom to Community: Civics education and political participation in Australia](#), recommended that there needs to be a strengthened and standardised approach to formal civics education for Australian students. It stated that 'the strength and stability of Australia's democracy depends on the capacity of our citizens to confidently engage with politics and cast an informed vote. Australia's system of compulsory voting means that all Australians need to be informed to participate in our democracy and elections. This is particularly important at a time when democracies around the world, including Australia, are facing rising disengagement, distrust, and misinformation and disinformation in an increasingly complex online information environment'. It emphasised that '*Effective civics education in schooling is vital to give young people the tools to be informed and responsible citizens.*'

As Libby explained one of the foremost philosophers of the early twentieth century John Dewey profoundly believed in democracy: in politics, education and people's lives. He asserted that *complete democracy is not achieved just by extending voting rights, but by ensuring that all citizens are active, informed, and can reflect on their actions.*

Libby concluded that there are drivers for Civics and Citizenship Education in the times ahead, the world is spinning! Young people deserve learning experiences that empower them to develop critical understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and the capabilities to be active and hopeful citizens in diverse contexts, in these uncertain times. Today our young presenters have shown us what can be achieved when students have agency and passion. I wish them well.

The event included stimulating panel discussions and enthusiastic audience participation. Freya Thompson, Humanities Captain at MGC, was an efficient and informed Panel Chair. Coral Ross OAM, former mayor and chair of the Australian Gender Equality Council gave valued advice about enabling greater democratic participation throughout our diverse communities. A popular activity with just over 100 registered. Overall, it showed that practicing democracy appears to be evolving. However, there are questions. How accessible are our 'democratic' institutions and how well do they represent most Australians in their decision making. Does everyone know how to have a voice? Why are fewer people voting?



A visitor, Guosheng Chen, Libby Tunball, Viv Nguyen, Emma Ross, Deb Towns, Freya Thompson, Ellie Baxter, Elida Brereton, Judy Maddigan



## Environment: Pam Robinsom AM

"Landcare is for Everyone and a Landcare Group rural and urban is somewhere near you".

The State Landcare Organisation contact is [info@landcarevictoria.org.au](mailto:info@landcarevictoria.org.au). There you will find lots of information in regards to activities, and a **Newsletter** setting out some upcoming events, including:

### Landcare Week: August 4-10

**Sunday 7 September** is a day of community, connection and culture, taking place at nine various locations across Melbourne in the morning, as well as at Federation Square in the afternoon.

Great news at a **National** level too, with the next **Landcare Australia National Conference** in September on the Gold Coast - a Conference with great speakers, on topics of Climate Change, Environment and Landcare generally, Australia wide.

**The National Landcare Awards** (overall winner from the State/Territory Awards) will be announced and presented at the Conference Dinner. The MC for the Conference is the energetic landscape architect, environmental educator, Landcare supporter and television presenter of Gardening Australia - **Costa Georgiadis**

The Conference is for all ages and one of the opening sessions is called "Next Generation Landcare"

Information about the National Conference and much much more can be found through **Landcare Australia newsletters@landcareaustralia.com.au**

## Health/Nutrition: Advice from the Jean Hailes

You're invited to get involved in this year's Women's Health Week



**Jean Hailes Women's Health Week (1–5 September 2025)** is a fantastic opportunity to support and celebrate the health and wellbeing of women in your workplace or community, and we'd love you to be part of it! The theme for this year's campaign is 'Say yes to you'. Each day of the week explores a different theme, covering topics like health checks, mental health, pain, heart health and migraine, all delivered in a fun, inclusive, and practical way. We'll provide free promotional materials, activity ideas, and digital resources to make it easy. You can register to host an event or promote the week [here](#).

Host an Event which can be as simple as a walk in the park with friends, a community education session, or even a morning tea to celebrate the women around you. If you would like more information, please visit the [Women's Health Week](#) website or feel free to contact the team [whw@jeanhailes.org.au](mailto:whw@jeanhailes.org.au)

**Renea Camilleri, Community Engagement & Partnerships Manager, Jean Hailes for Women's Health**

## Arts and Letters: Report by Ronniet Milliken

I am delighted to report that June Anderson and I met – by coincidence – at the production of **Yong** at the Arts Centre that ran from 30 July to 2 August! Highly recommended!

Set against the backdrop of the Australian Goldrush of 1857, *Yong* is an epic coming-of-age story that follows a young boy's journey from a small village in China to the goldfields of Ballarat.

Winner of the Sydney Theatre Award for Best Production for Children, *Yong* is a new Australian play by Jenevieve Chang blending historical fact with lyrical storytelling. Yong and his father leave their home and travel across the seas hoping to find their fortune in the goldfields of Ballarat. Faced with momentous change, Yong's courage and inner strength are tested as he discovers a resilience in himself that he never knew he had.

Directed by Monkey Baa's Artistic Director Eva Di Cesare, *Yong* brings to life a rarely told chapter of Australian history, one shaped by migration, family and the fight to belong. The production is based on 'Yong: the journey of an unworthy son' by Janeen Brian, published by Walker Books Australia Pty Ltd, Sydney.

**At the end of the production there was time for Q&A. June modestly spoke of participating in the 22 day re-enactment of the trek of 46,000 Chinese from Robe to Ballarat during the gold rush era - a 22 day commemorative trek in 2017!**

Subsequently, in 2017 Premier Daniel Andrews issued an apology to the Chinese community - [Victoria apologises to Chinese community for racist policies during gold rush era - ABC News](#) [Walk-From-Robe-Book-Scan.pdf](#)

[Historical Trek - Robe To Ballarat | Chinese Australian Cultural Society Ballarat Inc](#)

[Chinese gold miners' historic 500km trek from Robe to Ballarat in the 19th century - ABC News](#)

June is certainly a quiet achiever!

## Social Issues

**Sarah Barnbrook Reporting on:** Workshop - Combating Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, 24 July 2025

Organised by: National Council of Women of Great Britain

Overview: I attended an international Zoom workshop hosted by the National Council of Women of Great Britain, focused on the urgent global issue of modern slavery and human trafficking. The event convened over 75 participants from diverse regions and sectors and featured presentations from leaders in anti-slavery policy, gender-based violence prevention, and international research. **It was a privilege to attend alongside Fiona Dorman, National President of the National Council of Women Australia, who represented our region in this global dialogue and reinforced the importance of Australia's engagement in addressing exploitation.**

Keynote Presentation – Eleanor Lyons, the UK Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, delivered a powerful address on the UK's national response. She highlighted the importance of cross-sector partnerships, early identification of risk, and survivor-informed care. Notably, she explained that in the UK, individuals cannot self-refer as victims of modern slavery, they must be identified by designated first responder organisations. This restrictive model raises serious concerns around access to justice and trauma-informed support.

Ms Lyons also drew attention to the use of Adult Services Websites in the UK, where women, often trafficked, are purchased for sexual services. This points to the digital normalisation of exploitation and the need for tighter oversight and accountability.

Guest Presentations from the United States: Two speakers from a collaboration between Apne Aap and New York University shared US-based insights on trafficking prevention and governance.

Dr Sylvia Maier discussed honour-based violence, gender-sensitive urban design, and the use of social media platforms to exploit women and girls. She also highlighted how major sporting events often increase demand for trafficking and recommended a zero-tolerance policy for complicity in modern slavery.

Nidhi Jariwala presented research on corruption as a driver of trafficking in the US and India, calling for greater corporate transparency and community-led solutions. While informative, both presentations were largely focused on US contexts with little engagement with Asia-Pacific realities.

Observations on Regional Gaps: Despite its global framing, the workshop lacked any data or discussion on the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, home to the highest number of people living in modern slavery globally, over 29 million victims. I raised this gap during the session to advocate for better representation of APAC experiences and more region-specific strategies.

Key Themes and Takeaways:

- \* Victim referral systems must be accessible and trauma-informed
- \* Adult Services Websites are enabling exploitation in plain sight
- \* Social media is a key platform for grooming and trafficking
- \* Major events must adopt zero-tolerance policies toward trafficking
- \* Corruption and systemic failures are persistent enablers
- \* APAC perspectives must be central to global responses

**Australian Engagement and Opportunity:**

**Fiona's presence strengthened our region's visibility. For Australian advocates, this workshop reveals opportunities to:**

- \* Champion self-referral options for victims
- \* Strengthen regulation of digital exploitation platforms
- \* Advocate for ethical supply chain legislation
- \* Support zero-tolerance event standards
- \* Elevate Asia-Pacific voices in global forums

**Conclusion:**

This workshop underscored the urgent need for inclusive, survivor-centred, and regionally relevant approaches to modern slavery. I will also be attending the ICMEC Australia Symposium 2025: Convergence in Sydney, an in-person event exploring how child sexual exploitation intersects with business, technology, and financial systems. With more than one in four Australians having experienced child sexual abuse (ACMS, 2023), and the increasing misuse of technology to cause harm, the Symposium represents an important opportunity to build a whole-of-system response.

**While I did not attend the workshop as a formal representative of the National Council of Women Victoria, I remain committed to supporting their priorities and would be honoured to represent them officially in future forums.**

## OTHER NEWS



Upcoming webinars and training sessions dive into practical AI tools, ethical implementation and essential cyber security practices, designed specifically for not-for-profits. Browse the latest sessions and offers below and if you're unsure which tools or training are right for your organisation, their team is here to help with tailored advice.

### AI and Cyber security webinars on Digital Transformation Hub:

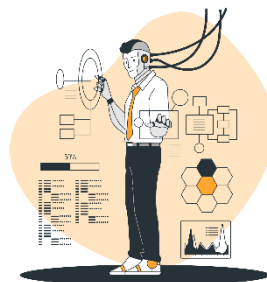


#### [Before the Breach: Building Your Incident Response Plan](#)

Cyber Security

19 August 2025, 2.00 – 3.00 pm AEST

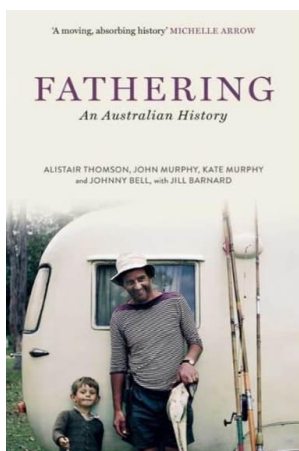
[Browse all software offers](#)



#### [CARE'ing about AI & ethics](#)

Artificial Intelligence

14 August 2025, 2.00 – 3.00 pm AEST



### [BOOK LAUNCH & PANEL DISCUSSION](#)

**FRIDAY 29 AUGUST 3:30PM - 7PM**

We are delighted to be launching several books at the RHSV over the coming months, across a wide variety of topics. Click below to book your tickets for the events and to pre-order your copy of the books!

The 21st-century father is expected to be actively engaged in the everyday care of his children, as epitomised by the celebrated dad of children's cartoon Bluey, the Blue Heeler Bandit.

*Fathering: An Australian History* explores why men often struggle to meet social and cultural expectations. The author's groundbreaking research reveals the forces that have shaped Australian family life and fathering since the early twentieth century, demonstrates how Australian fathers have managed the evolving role and its responsibilities, and shows how fathers from diverse backgrounds, including migrant and Indigenous dads, have negotiated their role in changing circumstances.

[CLICK HERE FOR EVENT TICKETS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO PRE-ORDER BOOK](#)



From Amelia Pickering

**Prison Network secured funding from the Australian Government's Crisis and Transitional Accommodation Program to purchase three new transitional homes in Melbourne's East for older women leaving prison.**

If you've journeyed with Prison Network (PN) for any length of time, you'll know PN is not a stranger to the long road. Theirs is a story of persistence, of quiet faithfulness, of showing up again and again, even when the odds are stacked against PN. Years of building trust, strengthening compliance, and growing systems and processes behind the scenes, which meant PN was ready for such a huge opportunity. Alongside the extraordinary work PN Support Workers do, PN reports they were able to show the government something remarkable: *That when a woman is supported by Prison Network in one of our homes, 95% don't return to prison.*

When you compare that to the state's average, where 39% of women return to prison within two years, the impact is undeniable. PN were also able to show that this work isn't done in isolation. That PN **community, volunteers, and donors are a vital part of it.** When women move into our homes, they're moving into a space held up by dignity, by hope, by people who believe in second chances.

Receiving funding for three new homes is exciting, but it also creates more funding needs. PN provide *more than a home* for the women they support. The houses need to be furnished and maintained, and a Support Worker on their side is the crucial piece that creates long-term change. It's why PN raised funds in the Mid Year Appeal to grow the Support Worker team from four to five, and it's why ongoing donations are crucial to help their work succeed. They are deeply grateful to the Australian Government for recognising the need, and even more grateful to our community for standing with PN.

#### **SAVE THE DATE - Trivia with a difference**

A night of fun, facts, and fundraising at the **Prison Network Trivia Night on Friday, November 21.**

Join PN for an evening of friendly competition, great food, and an exciting silent auction all in support of women rebuilding their lives after prison. Stay tuned for more details, mark your calendar and gather your trivia dream team!



# Amplify.

The newsletter for Victoria's social and community sector. **Scope of Child Safety Rapid Review released.** Extracted from the 28/7 edition

The Victorian Government has announced the terms of reference for its rapid review to protect children in early childhood education and care settings. The review will run across five weeks, led by Jay Weatherill AO and Pam White PSM, and will report its findings no later than **Friday, 15 August**. It will look at ways to strengthen the Working With Children Check framework, as well as how to improve the sharing of information between different regulators and agencies, both within Victoria and across jurisdictions, and the possibility of fast-tracking actions from the national child safety reform program.

[You can read the full Terms of Reference here.](#)

VCOSS welcomes this important review and will be engaging with it throughout the coming weeks. Members who would like to express their views are invited to contact [Deborah Fewster](#), Director, Policy and Advocacy, or [Melissa Hale](#), Acting Director, Community and Sector Development.

VCOSS is also aware of the distress recent abuse allegations have caused for many members of our community, including parents and carers, others working in early childhood education and care, and those from right across the social and community services sector who work to uplift children's safety and wellbeing every day. The Victorian Government has established a **dedicated phone line for people working in early childhood education and care**, through TELUS Health by calling [1800 971 573](#). This phone line is available for anyone working in the early childhood sector.

Extracted from the Women's Agenda Daily of 5/8/2025

This Homelessness Week, the annual awareness campaign by [Homelessness Australia](#), has the theme “Homelessness Action Now”, stating the reality that change can't wait for the people in need of support.

Women in Australia are disproportionately vulnerable to housing insecurity and domestic violence, with the two issues grossly interlinked. An Australian [public health study](#) estimates that nearly 9,120 women become homeless each year due to domestic violence. Women are particularly vulnerable to [housing insecurity](#), and [older women](#) are the fastest growing group of Australians facing homelessness.

For many women the threat of homelessness can shape their choices and ability to leave coercive control situations. Not having access to adequate and stable housing means women are less likely to leave a perpetrator of domestic and family violence, or more likely to return if they do.

In 2023–24, [six out of 10 people](#) assisted by homelessness services had experienced family and domestic violence. Australia's specialist homelessness services are also underfunded and unable to meet the high demand of support, with the average unassisted requests sitting at nearly 295 per day, according to 2022-23 research from the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre.

In Victoria, [a new report](#) this week showed 20 per cent of family violence survivors are missing out on crisis accommodation. For one in five women and children leaving family violence in the state, they're left with no crisis bed at all, after being moved between family-violence and homelessness services.

First Nations women, in particular, disproportionately represent the homeless population, often caused by the significantly higher rates of family and domestic violence (FDV) they experience compared to non-Indigenous women. Aboriginal women are up to [35 times more likely](#) to experience DFV than non-Aboriginal women. This accounts for much of the homelessness experienced by Aboriginal families, according to the NSW government, reported in a [2022-23 report](#) that nearly 500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women per 10,000 sought assistance from specialist homelessness services due to FDV, a rate that has increased since 2018-19.

The problem is affecting younger women, as [almost half of all people](#) receiving support from specialist homelessness services are younger than 25 years. Young people presenting alone are also most likely to be female (65 per cent).

Addressing the homelessness and domestic violence crisis

In Melbourne, the charity Bridge has announced a second 'Cocoon' housing to support young women and gender diverse people experiencing homelessness. The 15-studio apartment building in St Kilda follows the success of the original Cocoon launched in 2021, in collaboration with community housing provider HousingFirst.

Cocoon is a program that includes lived experience mentoring and skills development along with housing support. Founder of Bridge It, Carla Raynes said “it's a place to call home for 12-18 months and provides our young people aged 16–21 with time and space to stabilise and recover from trauma.”

Supporting homelessness as well, [YWCA Australia](#) has just released their Gender Responsive Design Guidelines, offering a blueprint for safer and more inclusive housing. Developed in consultation with Dr Samantha Donnelly from UTS, the guidelines build on the Women's Housing Framework and embed gendered considerations into the design of homes for those at risk of homelessness. The guidelines take into consideration that trauma informed spaces keep women and children safe, along with designing spaces to foster wellbeing and community. By [Brianna Boecker](#)

**Presented by Women's Agenda, 2025 Women's Health & Wellbeing Summit, Tue, 2 Sep, 8am - 5pm AEST,**

Telstra Customer Insights Centre, 2/400 George St, Sydney

While policy and awareness have progressed, too many women's health issues remain misunderstood, misdiagnosed, or dismissed—especially under the growing weight of social, economic, and environmental pressures. As more women look to their workplaces and communities for support, the need for inclusive, evidence-informed, and proactive strategies has never been more urgent. This year's summit will broaden the conversation around what it means to care for all women and gender-diverse people across every stage of life. The Summit will be exploring timely and pressing topics including medical misinformation, menopause, mental resilience, violence prevention, neurodiversity, addiction, and the frontiers of women's health research.

Expect a full day of powerful keynotes, interactive panels, lived-experience storytelling, and expert insights—hosted by our brilliant MC, Yasmin London. Whether you're a policymaker, employer, healthcare provider, or advocate, this is your opportunity to help shape a more equitable and holistic future for women's health and wellbeing.

*Speakers to be announced.*

[Get tickets](#)

Powered by **Tickets for good, not greed.** Humanitix dedicates 100% of profits from booking fees to charity

## National Women's Equality Alliance



Extracted from 10/7/2025 edition

The beginning of July brought in some long-awaited policies for women. The minimum wage has risen, as has the superannuation guarantee. Government paid parental leave has been extended to 24 weeks and will, for the first time, [include superannuation](#). The government has also begun paying eligible students doing [practical placements](#) in teaching, nursing, midwifery and social work; the payments are based on Austudy rates so they are definitely not high enough, but it's a start. New items were added to Medicare Benefits Schedule this month as well, including for [menopause health assessment services](#), as part of the government's women's health package.

The Alliance is attending the Minister for Women's Economic Reform Roundtable, ahead of the Treasurer's Roundtable in August. We have a laundry list of issues we want to raise, but please reach out with any policy ideas you think should be on the table in order for economic reform to truly benefit women in all their diversity.

For a taster of our work on productivity, read our policy brief on [Artificial Intelligence, Gender and Economic Equality](#), where we argue that any gains in productivity made through the use of AI must be balanced against the potential risks for women's economic security. In solidarity, Gemma, Director, National Women's Equality Alliance

## SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

### EUCALYPTS OF HODOGAYA OPENING 15 AUGUST

Marking the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, *Eucalypts of Hodogaya* reflects on a remarkable story of post-war reconciliation and remembrance.

Nestled among cherry blossoms and hinoki pines on the outskirts of Yokohama, Hodogaya, Japan, lies a breathtaking war cemetery—the final resting place for over 1,500 Commonwealth service personnel. Designed and built by Melbourne's Anzac Agency—now the Office of Australian War Graves—the Yokohama cemetery is considered one of the most exceptional examples of funereal landscape architecture ever created.

This exhibition explores how Australian and Japanese architects, gardeners, and builders overcame cultural divides after the Second World War to collaborate on a site that blends Eastern and Western traditions in a garden of peace.

**Opening 15 August      Galleries of Remembrance      Free Entry**



### Save the Date for Quarterly Conversations

WDV members are invited to join WDV at the end of August for the next WDV Quarterly Conversations event!

For those who have yet to attend one, Quarterly Conversations are FREE online events with a guest speaker or panel discussion, talking about topics and ideas of interest to our members.

With more information to come, WDV note that the date of the upcoming Quarterly Conversations will be **Wednesday the 27th of August**. This event will also be the first one held in the new webinar format, which WDV are excited to bring to members! Keep an eye on WDV social media platforms and the WDV website for updates on registration.

## [Multicultural Affairs Victoria](#)

### Awards Open for Victorian Multicultural Champions

The Victorian Multicultural Commission is inviting Victorians to shine a spotlight on individuals and organisations who strengthen Victoria through leadership and commitment to diversity. Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt has opened nominations for the 2025 Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence, now in their 24th year. The annual awards celebrate outstanding contributions that promote inclusion, build community connections and support a fair and welcoming Victoria for everyone.

Nominees can be recognised for both paid and voluntary work, with winners celebrated at a special ceremony later this year. There are 14 award categories, including the Arts, Business and Employment, Emergency Services, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Sport, Youth Leadership, the Multicultural Honour Roll and the Premier's Award for Community Harmony.

**Nominations will close at 11.59pm on 27 August 2025.** For more information and to submit a nomination, visit [multiculturalcommission.vic.gov.au/multicultural-awards-for-excellence](https://multiculturalcommission.vic.gov.au/multicultural-awards-for-excellence).



## Parliamentary Inquiry: Inquiry examines coercion by cults and other groups

The harmful tactics used by some cults and other groups to control their members are the primary focus of a [new parliamentary inquiry](#) which has opened for input from the community.

The Legislative Assembly Legal and Social Issues Committee is looking into the methods used to recruit people and the impacts of coercive behaviours. The Committee is [calling for submissions](#) from the public who wish to have their say.

It is also giving people the option to share their personal experience by filling out a short [anonymous questionnaire online](#).

Public hearings are expected to start later this year and a final report is due in September 2022



### Education Report 28/6/2025 edition

New data released in the *On Track 2024 Destinations of Victorian School Leavers* report shows that 96 per cent of students who complete year 12 will go on to further education and training or find employment the following year.

The annual survey tracks the destination outcomes of Year 12 completers six months after leaving school. The data shows three in four (75.6 per cent) Year 12 completers advance to further education and training, while one in five (20.1 per cent) enter the workforce.

More than half of students who complete Year 12 and continue their education will pursue a bachelor's degree at university, with Health the most popular field of study.

Year 12 completers who go straight into employment are most likely to find jobs in the Food, Hospitality or Tourism sectors, or as a sales assistant or store person.

Forty-two per cent of Aboriginal students who completed year 12 pursued higher education including a bachelor's degree (29.7 per cent) or a certificate/diploma (12.3 per cent), while one in five (20.8 per cent) undertook an apprenticeship or traineeship.

More than 26,600 Year 11 and year 12 students were enrolled in the VCE Vocational Major in 2024 – a 19.3 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

Victoria is the only state to record continued VET enrolment growth in schools for the last four years, last year, for the first time, more than 30 per cent of year 11 and 12 students in Victorian government schools chose vocational education.



**Australian Human Rights Commission**



### New resources challenge myths and misconceptions about racism

Widespread myths and misconceptions about racism can prevent us from coming together to understand and identify racism, and to take meaningful action.

[The](#) Commission has released [new](#) factsheets that explain and address 5 common myths and misconceptions about racism, from the myth of meritocracy to the misconception of 'not seeing race'. Each factsheet unpacks where these ideas come from, why they're misleading and what we can do instead.

[Resources: Myths and misconceptions about racism | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[See the story](#)

**Our Purposes:** to provide a non-party political, non-sectarian, not-for-profit, umbrella organisation with broadly humanitarian and educational objectives, empowering women and girls; raising awareness of gender equality; act as a voice on issues and concerns of women and girls at State level; develop policies and responses on behalf of women and girls on a State-wide basis; maintain and strengthen the Association's relationship with all members; link with women in Australia and International Council of Women through the National Council of Women of Australia and contribute to the implementation of their plans of action and policies.

**Our motto:** The Preamble to the original ICW Constitution said "We, women of all Nations, in the conviction that the good of humanity will be best advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, and that an organised movement will serve to promote the highest good of the family and of the Nation, do hereby band ourselves together in a federation of women of all races, nations and creeds, to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom and law: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

## NOTICE OF THE NCWV GEELONG BRANCH AGM

Members are formally advised that the Geelong Branch AGM will be held on

**Monday August 18th 2025 commencing at 1.30pm**

**in the Peg Hook Meeting Room, St David's Uniting Church Hall.**

**This meeting precedes the Ordinary August Meeting 18 August 2025**

## National Council of Women of Victoria Meeting Dates for 2025

Month	Date	Day	Meeting Type	Time	Method
August	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Friday	My Vote My Voice	9:15	Parliament
August	21 <sup>st</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
September	4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	AGM	12:15	Zoom/Ross Hse
September	8 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
September	18 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
October	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meetings	11:00, 12:15	Ross House
October	13 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
October	16 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	6 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Council Meeting	17:15	Ross House
November	20 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	27 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Annual Luncheon	12:00	William Angliss
December	4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meetings	11:00, 12:15	Ross House
December	18 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
February	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday	Pioneer Women's Ceremony Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden	11:00 – 2:00	King's Domain, St Kilda Rd

This publication is compiled and edited by Pam Hammond, Vice-President NCWV, with support from President, Elida Brereton.