

## Newsletter

April 2020

**Quote:** *"The best protection any woman can have ... is courage."* – Elizabeth Cady Stanton

**From President, Elisabeth Newman AM** 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2020

Dear Members and Friends, who would have thought a month ago we would now be more or less confined to our homes with the advice to only go out for exercise, provisions and work that cannot be undertaken at home and not to meet in groups of more than two. In these difficult and uncertain times we need to spare a thought for our Indigenous sisters who, like all women, suffer the most in times of pestilence and economic hardship; we pay our respects to all the peoples of the Kulin Nation on whose land we live. And, in reflection, we think of the women who are suffering, or are at greater risk of suffering domestic violence during these difficult times. Unfortunately, there is evidence domestic violence is on the increase. Many women are suffering job losses, are having to keep children safe, take on greater caring responsibilities of elderly family members, and generally have the responsibility of keeping the household going.

NCWV Committee is reviewing how to conduct meetings as it will be several months before we meet in person.

Life must go on even if the routine is different. The NCWV Committee is committed to see that the work of NCWV continues as best it can whilst ensuring members are kept safe and informed about activities of Council. There is much to be done in preparation for the end of the NCWV year, viz 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020, then preparation for the A.G.M., hopefully, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020.

The Secretary and I are working from our respective homes. We can still be contacted via the NCWV email or phone. If you need to send anything by post, kindly address it to my private address: **PO Box 5160, Middle Park, 3206** to avoid a trip to NCWV PO Box in the City.

The City of Melbourne held Women's Walks marking IWD over a fortnight in March, highlighting women who have influenced the development of the City. A most interesting amble from Parliament House crisscrossing Bourke and Collins streets, ending at Federation Square. I and some other members enjoyed one of these.

We congratulated our Patron The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sally Capp for receiving the award as the 2019 McKinnon Emerging Political leader of the Year.

The Governor sent letters to organisations who have her patronage expressing her and Mr. Howard's distress about the present crisis and stressing the importance of keeping

in touch, especially with those known to be very isolated. Letters of appreciation for her concern have been sent, and hoping that she, Mr. Howard and all staff at Government House remain well and safe. Since, after saying NCWV would be interested in letter writing, information has been received about the program. If interested in the letter writing program, simply connect with those in the community who may appreciate a letter. For more information see website ([click here to view](#)). On a bright note, I had a lovely surprise, a letter arrived from the Governor with the lapel pin for my AM Honour.

I've heard over the past weeks from ICW-CIF colleagues in Milan, Rome, South Korea, NY and other parts of the world that they are well, but conditions are dire.

Information has been received from NCWA to say the mid-term Adelaide conference has been postponed to 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2020. The ICW-CIF Executive meeting is postponed until 28<sup>th</sup> Sept - 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2020, still in Avignon.

I can clearly remember post war Britain, when provisions were in short supply, though not due to greed of others stockpiling, but strict rationing. There was also pestilence in the early 1950s – smallpox and polio greatly curtailed our movements. We came through all of that and so we will come through this present crisis. Take courage, keep safe and well and don't lose your sense of humour.

## VALE



John Cain, Victoria's longest-serving Labor premier, died in December 2019 aged 88. He was a state Labor MP for 16 years and premier from 1982-90.

NCWV acknowledges the life and work of John Cain, who, while Premier of Victoria, was interested in and supportive of the work of NCWV. His many reforms included the state's occupational health and safety laws, women's rights, extended shop hours and liquor licensing reform.

John Cain was hugely important in the lives of women and girls across the state. As premier his contribution to gender equality was stunning, paving the way for others to follow. On behalf of NCWV, condolences were sent to Nancye Cain who, as Patron of NCWV, was extremely supportive of the Council's work, attending most events and many Council meetings. She maintained her interest for many years after her term as Patron had ended.

## Speaker at March Council Meeting:



### **Alice Gomez, Team Leader for Youth Leadership, Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY); and Emmanuela Noi, Intern**

CMY began in the late 1980s to fill the gap in support services for young people from migrant backgrounds, especially refugees.

As Team Leader, Alice oversees various staff and programs at CMY, focusing on initiatives that support young people to develop leadership skills, have their voices heard, and lead positive change in the community. This includes programs for leadership training, female empowerment, sports participation, education and settlement pathways, social cohesion and more.

CMY produces research and policy papers that inform advocacy work to Government and others.

This evidence also assists in the design of programs, which include:

- Developing youth leadership;
- Youth support for those at risk of homelessness and of dropping out of education;
- Support for youth refugees to become familiar with 'new' culture;
- Capacity building with government schools and organisations to be culturally responsive;
- Shine Out – youth developing public speaking skills to go onto a speaker register;
- Youth initiative workshops for them to develop programs focussing on social cohesion;
- Sports programs to engage male and female youth from all cultures both in playing and in support roles.

All programs are free, with funds coming from grants, donations and philanthropy. There are volunteering opportunities in assisting with English, cultural awareness, mentoring, supporting youth in the criminal justice system by being with them during interviews etc. with training given for these roles.

**Emmanuela Noi** is the current CMY Mary Danckert Youth Intern and came to Australia in 2002 as a child. She completed a Bachelor of International Development in 2018 and is currently completing a Master of Professional Writing. Representing the South Sudanese community, she has been an Adviser on the Victoria Police Multifaith Youth Council, and is a passionate youth advocate with a particular interest in community access to services, gender equity, youth mental health and social justice. She believes that young people need to gain social capital and is being mentored in advocacy, service delivery, youth programs, criminal justice, youth unemployment and submission writing. She finds the programs enable the sharing and learning about other cultures.

## **Bush Fire Relief**

Many of our affiliated organisations have been active in supporting communities who suffered so badly in the bushfires earlier in the year. This is one example from the National Council of Jewish Women Vic Inc:

In view of the bushfires that devastated our country, it was decided that NCJWA Vic should make a donation directly to one of the agencies involved in crisis support. The Board agreed to make a donation to Foodbank Victoria as it was felt that money didn't require resources to sort or distribute and giving directly to an established agency experienced in disaster relief would mean that the money could be used quickly and effectively. In addition, 33 toiletry kits plus a large box of assorted toiletries were delivered to Operation Angel who supported those working on the fire frontlines and evacuees. According to the report from Foodbank Victoria, "the donation has directly helped people devastated by the bushfires that have ravished our State. Under the State's disaster plan, Foodbank Victoria is responsible for emergency food relief. When disaster struck on New Year's Eve, we immediately went into action and worked around the clock to organise the delivery of food and water directly to evacuation centres and exhausted firefighters. In the first 6 days we were able to provide 68,500 kilograms of food relief - enough to feed 18,400 people for 4 days".

## **Austral Salon of Music, 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Beverley Kannegiesser** <https://www.australsalon.org/>

In the 1800's women were looking for opportunities to discuss their ideas and gain intellectual stimulation. In Melbourne, a group of women journalists had been discussing ways to bring professional women together. Mary Hirst Browne called a preliminary meeting in 1889. This was followed on 23 January 1890 by the First meeting of the Austral Salon. Mrs Sidney Dickinson was elected executive vice-president, Miss Conor O'Brien, of the Evening Standard as secretary, and Miss M Hirst Browne as treasurer. The Countess of Hopetoun '*graciously accepted the honorary presidency*'. The Salon's objective was '*the intellectual advancement of women by social intercourse, by the formation of a library, by lectures, concerts, dramatic entertainments, a debating circle, a sewing bee, readings, and the delivery of original papers and essays on the special subjects of the arts, literature and science*'.

Full membership was restricted to professional women '*who were actively engaged in literary, artistic, scientific, or dramatic work,*' and Associates, who could be men or women.

Typical early activities included lectures by Mrs Dickinson on Hindu philosophy; music written for the Salon concerts by Signor Zelman; song with words by Prof. Dickinson, music by Mrs Emery Gould a founding journalist; a paper on 'Women's Work in War' by Lt Col Argyle; and awarding of an elocution medal in a 1904 Bendigo competition. In 1891 the Austral Salon raised money to send Tilly Aston, a young blind girl, to University. Aston became a prolific writer and poet, a teacher who became head of the Victorian Education Department's School for the Blind. In October 1915, the Austral Salon presented a bas-relief tablet to St Paul's Cathedral, to commemorate British nurse Edith Cavell who was executed by a German firing squad in 1915. This bronze bas-relief is the work of Margaret Baskerville, also a member of the Austral Salon. Baskerville also sculpted a bust of Cavell which is in the King's Domain, initiated by Mrs Thomas Baker a NCWV and Austral President.

With a strong philanthropic focus, for their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Salon established beds in hospitals; contributed to appeals during both wars; contributed to building of the Vic Artists Society and the Old Colonists. The Lord Mayor's Fund was strongly supported as was the new Arts Centre. Founding journalists were an interesting group of women. They were Mrs Sidney Dickinson, Florence and Lily Blair, Mary Hirst Browne, Conor O'Brien, Catherine Hay Thomson, Ethel Castilla, Mrs Charles Bright, Agnes Murphy and Aimee Moore. A newspaper article said of the club, '*The ruin of it was when the last two dragged in their sassiety pals and let impudence subjugate intelligence*'. Ethel Castilla chose the name Austral Salon for the club reflecting use of the word Austral to denote southerners or Australians in the 1800s. In 1886 Catherine Hay Thomson wrote articles for the *Argus* on her undercover work in the Melbourne Hospital and Kew Asylum. She became known as the 'Female Vagabond of Melbourne' due to this work, often done at night.

On 19 March 1902, Janet, Lady Clarke, a leading member of the Austral Salon and a later President, called a meeting of women's societies at the Austral Salon for the purpose of "*considering the advisability of forming a National Council of Women*". So began the NCWV. Austral Salon members who were on the first executive of the NCWV were Mrs Joseph Sadler and Mrs Evelyn Gough with Miss Catherine Hay Thomson on the committee. Besides Janet, Lady Clarke, other outstanding presidents of both the Austral and NCWV were Lady Talbot and Mrs Thomas Baker OBE.

From its inception, the Austral Salon supported and encouraged artists and musicians. Two early artists who were helped were Amy Castles and Ada Crossley. From 1948 through to 1986 annual Austral Salon scholarships were awarded to music students at the Melbourne University. From 1991 through to 2005, the Austral Salon held vocal and instrumental competitions. Winners include mezzosoprano Deborah Humble, baritone Warwick Fyfe and violinist Emma Jardine. Many other winners are living and performing overseas. In 2011 the Austral Salon began giving awards at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School, main categories being for Outstanding Soloist and Vocal Award. 130 years later, the Austral Salon continues to support and encourage young musicians with regular monthly concerts at St Peter's, East Melbourne. The 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert on 14<sup>th</sup> March was a major highlight of 2020.

## Other News

**Shrine of Remembrance** Due to the global outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Australians are encouraged to privately commemorate Anzac Day, in-line with the latest health advice, and to watch the service at the Australian War Memorial. While the Service is not open to public attendance, the Service will be nationally broadcast, to enable the public to watch from their own homes. There will be a range of commemorative activities that will be broadcast throughout the day. The Department of Veteran Affairs is working with state and territory governments as they finalise their Anzac Day plans. More will be posted on website: <https://www.dva.gov.au/>

## Royal Historical Society Victoria

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/rhsv-events/>

A proverb which is proving even more powerful than that old curse is, 'necessity is the mother of invention'. We are all seeing the world through new eyes and adapting extraordinarily quickly. The RHSV will be holding several regular groups through Zoom, e.g. the history bookclub in April. Our AGM will be a virtual meeting and we are busy uploading podcasts of [lectures](#) and [walking tours](#) to our website. One group of volunteers is developing a series of simple history-based activities for all ages, designed to bridge our social isolation. This is a crucial time to look after one another, albeit by necessity, our caring will be at arms-length through our phones and computers.



Two significant Yorta Yorta elders, **Aunty Geraldine Briggs** and the late **Aunty Elizabeth Morgan** will be [honoured in a mural by renowned painter Matt Adnate](#), as part of [an ongoing Shepparton Aboriginal street art project](#).

Both women are highly regarded community leaders, well known for their work in advocating for Aboriginal rights.

**Victorian Multicultural Commission:** The Multifaith Advisory Group comprises representatives of almost 30 faith organisations in Victoria and is facilitated and supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission. We recognise our political and community leaders are in an extraordinarily demanding period, responding to coronavirus so soon after the devastating summer bushfires. Our faith communities are raising questions, many of which we and other leaders have never had to consider! Questions, in fact, that we never ever thought we would have to consider in our wonderful State of Victoria! We recognise it will take time to answer every question and to integrate the best advice.

Our prayers and meditations, and our community work for the common good will continue in support. That includes the safe provision of food, counselling and just a friendly phone call to people needing encouragement and company. While living this life we are now given, which is so different to what we planned for 2020, we want to convey, in this statement, our unity of purpose. As faith communities of Victoria, we will do our best together in this window of opportunity. The bonds of friendship and trust we have built up over many years in our multi-faith Victoria have been beneficial at other times of crisis. We offer our unified leadership at this unprecedented time.



Practising gratitude can be a great help in times of uncertainty. With that in mind, we're kicking off Grateful in April again and we would love to share the journey with you! It's the beginning of our 11th annual Grateful in April initiative! We just love this month-long global campaign which is designed to help people feel good about what they already have in their life. When you sign-up (for free) you'll receive a tip each morning for the next 30 days with ideas for how to focus on ways to make you feel good about yourself and others. [www.gratefulinapril.com](http://www.gratefulinapril.com). It can help with developing positive-thinking habits, ultimately aiming to establish an on-going 'attitude of gratitude' in everyday life. Melina Schamroth, Founder & CEO, P.O. Box 250 Prahran VIC 3181.

**Alannah & Madeline Foundation and Dolly's Dream working together**

Many parents feel teaching their kids about online safety is important, but they don't quite know how to go about it. That's why we're here: <https://parenthub.dollysdream.org.au/>

**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 and raising awareness of gender equality; act as a voice on issues and concerns of women and girls at a 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 the 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."*

**NCWV Dates for 2020**

**NCWA:** Mid-term meeting in Adelaide 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Registration details available via [info@ncwvic.org.au](mailto:info@ncwvic.org.au)  
**ICW-CIF:** Mid-term Executive meeting in Avignon, France, 28 Sept-2<sup>nd</sup> October. Registration details to follow.

<b>April</b>	<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Individual Members Meeting, 10:15-11:30am</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
		<b>Council Meeting, 12:15-2:00pm</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Standing Committee Meeting, 4:30-6:00pm</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Committee Meeting, 10am-12 noon</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>May Forum, 9:45-11:30am</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
		<b>Council Meeting, 12:15-2:00pm</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Committee Meeting, 10am-12 noon</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Individual Members Meeting &amp; AGM, 10:15-11:30am</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
		<b>Council Meeting, 12:15-2:00pm</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Standing Committee Meeting, 4:30-6:00pm</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Committee Meeting, 10am-12 noon</b>	<b>Virtual</b>