

Newsletter

December 2021

Quote: The theme for International Day of Disabled Persons (IDPwD), 3 December, 2021 is **'Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world'**.

The annual observance of the IDPwD was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. <https://www.idpwd.com.au>

From the President, Ronniet Milliken

Annual Luncheon – Tuesday 23 November by ZOOM.

It was wonderful to see members entering into the spirit of the occasion with Elisabeth sporting a hat in the garden and sharing a table-centre featuring flowers from her garden.

Elida, Deborah, Barbara, Helen, Sheila, Rosalie, Sheridan, Pam, Eleanor, Beverley, Freda, Elisabeth, Anne, Coral, Nadia, Carol, Hean Bee, Norma and Sue caught up with one another's news while Ronniet fielded deliveries and barking dogs. Apologies received from Malvina, Edith, Terri, Alex, Jessie, Jan, Pam Webster, Robyn Byrne and Robyn Buccheri.

After a brief introduction, the highly acclaimed and entertaining Elida Brereton regaled us with her Adventures in the South Atlantic and what COVID-19 did to her cruise! Elida is our Vice-President and was a teacher and principal in government schools for over 43 years. To a legion of fans Elida was "Miss Margaret Murray in ABC's Summer Heights High" the no-nonsense principal in the mockumentary television series starring Chris Lilley.

Her talk took us from the French government owned cruise liner, featuring fabulous French fare and bilingual captain and crew, supporting passengers through rough seas and other wonderful experiences throughout the Antarctic Region, then complications towards the end as COVID struck worldwide.

In particular, Elida spoke of her hero the Antarctic leader Sir Ernest Shackleton, crew and their death-defying adventure *in this area* from December 1914 to 1917 as the British Imperial Trans Antarctic project. Their ship got stuck, crushed and sunk in unseasonable freezing weather, their overland and then sea escape to remote Elephant Island.

Later Shackleton and five crew made a 16-day rescue journey in a reinforced lifeboat across 1300kms of treacherous ocean to South Georgia. From there, Shackleton was eventually able to mount a rescue of the 22 men waiting on Elephant Island and bring them home without loss of life. The bosun repeated words to these 22 men each day for 4 months to keep order 'The Boss is returning today'. Elida had the opportunity to see these Islands and stand beside the grave of her hero. Elida brought the history of Shackleton and his crew to life. She also touched on the more recent history of the capture of South Georgia and 22 British marines in the Falklands War with Argentina and then retaking the British possession with a Summer population of 30 and Winter population of 4 including the British Governor and his wife – somewhat of a hardship posting!

When they heard of COVID, the Captain attempted to berth in several countries, as ports were closing. They eventually were the last boat into the Rio port, when they thought they were bound for France! Australians boarded the last plane out of Rio to Dubai and got home. Enduring quarantine at home [before the advent of hotel quarantine], complete with DJ meals, and home delivered groceries, she was supervised by surprised burley policeman when answering the door in a towel!

What shone through was Elida's positivity and sense of humour! Elida continues to enjoy her adventure as she recounts her travels and shares photographs - the wildlife (seals, penguins, whales), Antarctic summer scenery, seascapes, massive icebergs that dwarfed the ship and landscapes – interspersed with personalities, politics, history and geography. On this occasion we were the lucky audience. What an inspiring teacher and Principal Elida must have been sharing her passion for history and geography with student and colleagues!

We then screened again, by popular demand, the 1988 'Women in Politics' video introduced by the original interviewer now Dr Deborah Towns OAM.



I wish you a safe and joyful festive season. Hoping to see you on January 17th

Assistance needed by NCWV Committee

We are so pleased to have such competent, young, new Executive members, the Hon Treasurer, Sheridan Ingram and Hon. Secretary, Mary Mulhearn. They have many ideas about enhancing our communication strategy and would really value having input, in relation to social media and technology changes, from members, delegates or friends. This would need to be on a voluntary basis.

If you have some time to offer ideas and assistance **contact President, Ronniet Milliken, via NCWV email: info@ncwvic.org.au OR 0478783489**

CORRECTION to November Newsletter:

November Speaker: Shirley Reynolds, President Soroptimist International Melbourne Inc (SI) and **Chair, United Nations Association of Australia (Victoria) Status of Women Committee**. She does attend the UNAA Victoria Board meetings as liaison person for the SOWC, but is NOT a member of the Board. We apologise for the confusion.



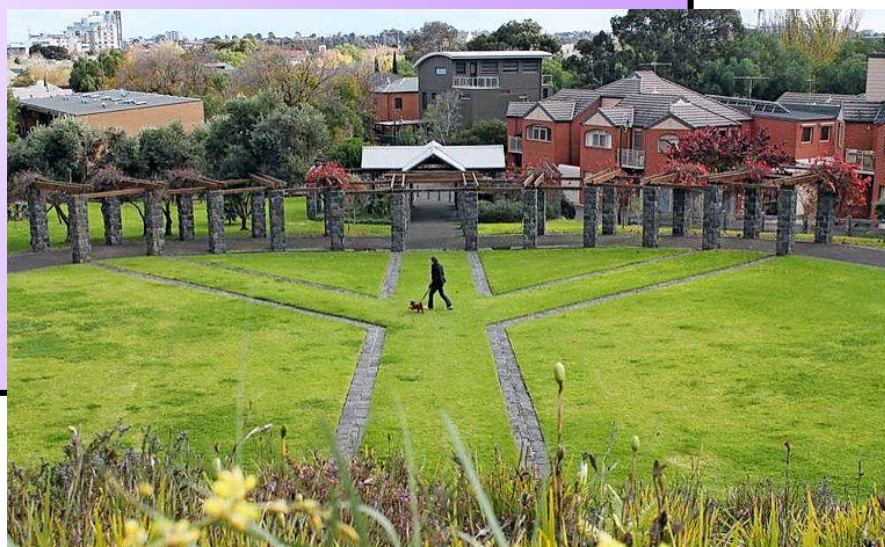
Congratulations to June Anderson, NCWV Committee member, on the Certificate of Appreciation from The Minister for Multicultural Affairs, The Hon. Ros Spence MP and Vivienne Nguyen AM, Chairperson and Commissioners of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) in recognition of her invaluable contribution as a member of the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Advisory Council for VMC.

61st Annual Australia Day Pioneer Women's Ceremony, Mon. January 17th 2022, 10:00–12:00pm

Women's Peace Garden, Epsom Road, Kensington, between Westbourne Road and Coopers Lane, a beautiful garden created by women in the International Year of Peace in 1986. This will celebrate Victorian Pioneer Women, conducted by the NCWV to acknowledge past and present women pioneers.

As 2022 is the 120th Anniversary of NCWV, the focus will be on pioneering women who established Victorian women organisations and those who have continued these organisations up until today. Dr Judith Smart, co-author of the history of the NCW Australia, *Stirrers with Style* will give an overview of the history of women's organisations, then a panel of speakers from some of the founding groups of NCWV will talk about their beginnings and where they are today.

This is a COVID safe event, with distancing and sanitising included. There will be a welcome by a First Nations woman, colour party by Girl Guides Victoria and the singing of the National Anthem with the flag-raising. Please notify NCWV of your attendance on info@ncwvic.org.au



Chief Executive Women President Sam Mostyn AO addressed the National Press Club of Australia outlining a vision for Australia's future which uses all of Australia's resources and talent, especially women, to create a vibrant and inclusive post-pandemic economy and society. [Watch the full address here via ABC iView](#)

Snippets from her speech per Ronnieta Milliken:

- **Central theme of my remarks is that CEW believes we need to put CARE at the centre of our economy.**
- We hear about economic growth, economic resilience and strategic competitive interests; about “muscling up to threats” and “building back better.” But what we rarely hear is how care and economic performance and success go hand in hand. They are inextricably linked as the foundations of our future prosperity.
- **What is the ‘infrastructure’ that has kept us alive and together through this pandemic?** It is the human and social infrastructure of the care economy, powered by women who are often underpaid, if they're paid at all. This care economy has accomplished extraordinary things, and we need to start valuing, maintaining and investing in it with the same energy and focus as any arterial road. These workforces are the arteries of our nation, regions, cities, suburbs, communities, families. We just don't give it the value we should, so is it any wonder that it is care professions we have neglected when investing in workforce planning, and it has taken Royal Commissions to bring to light the consequences.
- We need more women of all backgrounds and experiences shaping the narratives of this country; more diverse thinking informing leadership; people who embody the lived experience of millions of Australians, because “You can't be what you can't see.”
- In 1902 we were the first country to grant women both the right to vote and the right to run for political office. Aboriginal women were excluded from this. We were the leader on gender equality and yet this year Australia delivered one of its worst performances in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, falling to 50th in the world from 15th in 2006. Even worse in terms of economic participation and opportunity, in the past 15 years we fell from 12th to 70th place, despite being ranked NUMBER ONE in the world for women's education
- 2020 Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Miriam-Rose Merr Baumann presented the pathway to a Caring society, and what this might look and feel like. She reminded us that First Nations people had been living in this country for tens of thousands of years but only began interacting with white society for 230 years, and that people had to live and work in two worlds; but it is now the time for us to come closer to understand and respect community lives. And to listen deeply. If we begin to listen deeply and conceive a way forward emerging from the upheaval of the past two years and learn from the wisdom of First Nations people, we can listen to and respect the voices of women.

OTHER NEWS



Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins' [report](#), *Set the Standard*, is the culmination of a seven-month review of the workplace culture in federal parliament. The review found that one in three people working in a federal parliamentary workplace have experienced sexual harassment and more than half (51 per cent) of all people currently working in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces – including parliament house and electorate offices – have experienced at least one incident of bullying, sexual harassment or actual or attempted sexual assault. The report indicates that women have experienced sexual harassment at a higher rate (40 per cent) compared with men (26 per cent). Women also experience bullying at a higher rate (42 per cent) compared to men (32 per cent).

People who identify as LGBTIQ+ experienced sexual harassment at a higher rate than those who identify as heterosexual. When it comes to parliamentarians themselves, 63 per cent of female parliamentarians reported they have experienced sexual harassment, compared to 24 per cent of male parliamentarians.

Jenkins' report makes 28 recommendations to the government that are designed to bring parliament into line with the standards expected of all workplaces in Australia. Some key recommendations include:

- Specific actions to achieve gender balance among MPs and staff
- Specific actions to increase representation of First Nations people, people with disability, LGBTIQ+ people and people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Public reporting of progress on these specific actions
- Two new codes of conduct, one for parliamentarians and one for staff
- The establishment of an Independent Parliamentary Standards Commission
- New alcohol policies
- Expand the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service
- A review of the parliamentary sitting calendar with a view to enhance wellbeing
- Develop and deliver mandatory best practice training for parliamentarians and staff, focusing on respectful workplace behaviour
- Review of physical infrastructure to ensure accessibility and inclusion

“A lack of clear standards of conduct, limited accountability and power imbalances, combine with the high intensity, high stakes nature of the work, the pursuit of political power and advantage, the frequent blurring of personal and professional life and the intense loyalty to political parties, to create specific risk factors unique to this workplace. There is a stark contrast between the complexity and gravity of work being done in parliamentary offices and the lack of sophisticated workplace structures and practices to support this work. This can and should change.” Jenkins said.



We are thrilled to share that we've won an [Australian Museums and Galleries Association award](#) for our exhibition *Unmasked!* The awards recognise outstanding achievements and service in the museum, gallery, and collecting sector. The exhibition also received a commendation for a Victorian Community History Award - Collaborative Community History Award. *Unmasked* began as a special exhibition to celebrate the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife in 2020. COVID-19 saw us not only shift the exhibition dates but it presented an opportunity to think differently about the exhibition. The unfolding events of 2020 and 2021 were woven into the exhibition, giving us a chance to highlight the extraordinary and courageous work of nurses and midwives both past and currently. A huge thank you to the Australian Museums and Galleries Association for this award, as well as Dr Madonna Grehan, Professor Odette Best, Department of Human Services, Safer Care Victoria, and the Australian Nurses and Midwifery Federation, ANMF (Vic Branch). ***Unmasked*, the digital exhibition, will soon be available online thanks to the generosity of the Victorian Branch of the ANMF. Watch out for its launch before Christmas.**

Her Place Museum has partnered with [MindTribes](#) – a diversity and inclusion consultancy – to build a road map for how the museum plans to create a culturally diverse, inclusive, contemporary public space to honour all women and girls. By nature of being a museum, we have an inherent power to construct national identity and legitimise individuals, groups of people and ideologies. We're a place where identity is consumed, and identity gets created.

Royal Historical Society Victoria <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/rhsv-events/>



ZOOM, Join from anywhere in the world: **December 9 @ 10:30 am-12:00 pm**, **Free** 36 spots left. [RSVP Now!](#)

London, 1913: A wealthy young woman from a stately country home falls in love with and secretly marries a handsome young diplomat from the Turkish Embassy. It sounds like a plot line from British period drama Downton Abbey ... but it is the real-life story of Melbourne socialite Florence Winter-Irving.

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/search-collection/rhsv-womens-biographical-dictionary/>

This is the link to the RHSV Women's Biographical Dictionary which is a project being organised by Cheryl Griffin. The names with little crosses beside them have longer PDF bios attached. There is a lot of work to be done. Another cache of biographies to be added soon. Cheryl can be contacted on women@historyvictoria.org.au

Respect Victoria partners with Domestic Violence Victoria and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria for this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. DV Vic will partner with the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Council of Social Services, No to Violence, Gender Equity Victoria which supports Health Services Council on the project. They also partner with Safe Steps to support the Walk Against Family Violence on the first day of the 16 Days of Activism against family violence and the importance of prevention. **16 Days of Activism: November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, until December 10, Human Rights Day.**



SHOP LIKE A FEMINIST

Queen Victoria Women's Centre makes it easy to shop for everyone on your list with our [pricepoint gift edits](#), or if you're looking for a fun, end of year activity to do with your workmates or bestie, why not come along to our [festive craft workshop](#) for an afternoon of feminist-inspired crafting.

WHEN: Saturday 11 Dec, 10:30am - 6:00pm (1 hour sessions); \$10. Includes all materials and a drink on arrival.

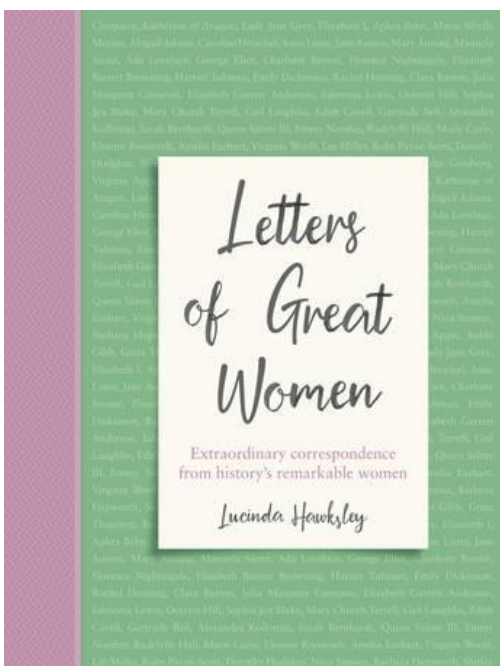
WHERE: Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne.

Presented by The [Queen Victoria Women's Centre](#) and [City of Melbourne](#).

We're open every day until Christmas for in-store browsing, click and collect and free gift wrapping.

ORDER EARLY FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON! AUST POST ORDER CUT-OFF DECEMBER 13. [TAKE ME SHOPPING](#)

[Women's Agenda](#)



Thinking about the romance of letter writing? What ever happened to the good old letter, cursive writing, nice stationary paper? As we wind down towards the end of the year, take time for yourself and schedule in some me time with this beautiful book of letters, from some of our favourite authors and thinkers. Read Amelia Earhart's letter to President Franklin Roosevelt in 1936. See the original handwriting of Marie Curie, as she penned a letter to President Herbert Hoover in 1929, thanking him for the opportunities his country has afforded her research.

Marvel at the intelligence of Greta Thunberg, in her 2019 world-changing Tweets, and be inspired by the words of Nina Simone. Grab your copy today, for yourself, or for an excellent Christmas gift.

NCWV – 120th Anniversary Celebrations in 2022

2022 promises to be a special year celebrating the 120th anniversary of our inauguration in 1902. The four original affiliates who met on 19 March 1902 were:

- the Austral Salon of Music, Literature and the Arts;
- the Melbourne Jewish Women's Guild;
- the Young Women's Christian Association – Y.W.C.A; and
- the Women's Christian Temperance Union – WCTU.

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."*

NCWV Dates for 2022

January Monday 17th 61st Annual Australia Day Pioneer Women's Ceremony,
Women's Peace Garden, Epsom Road, Kensington, 10:00am – 12:00pm

February Council Meeting - Thursday 3 February, 12:15 - 2:00pm – Speaker: Coral Ross OAM,
in person and by zoom to maximize accessibility and participation

Our speaker at the first Council Meeting for 2022, will be the outstanding Coral Ross OAM, honoured in 2021 for her service to local government and to gender equality. Coral will speak about her 2020 Churchill Fellowship research and recommendations to improve gender equality. Coral, a founding Director of **Australian Gender Equality Council (AGEC)**, was appointed Chair in November 2020. Responding to the unacceptably slow pace of change towards gender equality in Australia, leading organisations, which represent over 500,000 women in the workplace, have come together to form the AGECE, a national not-for-profit organisation.

Coral has had an esteemed career in local government and was previously the National President of the Australian Local Government Women's Association and ALGWA Victorian President – she is currently the National Vice President. A professional journalist with more than 20 years' experience, Coral was a local government councillor at the City of Boroondara, in metropolitan Melbourne for more than 18 years and served as Mayor of the City of Boroondara three times. Until October 2020 Coral was the President of the Municipal Association of Victoria – Victoria's peak body for local government - and is on the Board of the Australian Local Government Association, the peak body for local government in Australia. She has also served as a Director of the National Rural Women's Coalition. This will be a most interesting session.

NCWA Triennial Conference Due to COVID restrictions has been postponed until March 31-April 1, 2022, to be held in Canberra, ACT.