

### 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.



**QUOTE:** April 7 is World Health Day: 2024 Theme **'My health, my right'** was chosen to champion the right of everyone, to have access to quality health services, education, and information, as well as safe drinking water, clean air, good nutrition, quality housing, decent working and environmental conditions, and freedom from discrimination. UN WHO theme, 2024

**ALERT** To foster our relationship with RHSV, our postal address is now: 239 A'Beckett St Melbourne, 3000, our PO Box has been closed.

### From the President, Elida Breerton



With World Health Day, April 7, NCWV congratulates the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (PAEC) for conducting an inquiry into tobacco and e-cigarettes. We have long voiced health concerns about tobacco, and with the additional use of vaping and upper lip nicotine pillows, NCWV supports this being urgently addressed.

'Our Committee will conduct public hearings so we can listen directly to the relevant authorities and experts,' Committee Chair Sarah Connolly said. There will be a hearing on 15 April at Parklake, 481 Wyndham Street, Shepparton, 3630. <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-vaping-and-tobacco-controls/hearings>. The lived experiences and views of young Victorians will be vital, so they're also looking at holding a [youth roundtable](#).

PAEC is scrutinising efforts to prevent and reduce the harm related to these activities. The inquiry is evaluating the associated financial, health, social and environmental effects of tobacco and e-cigarette use on the wider community.

NCWV congratulates Australian Border Force for recently intercepting 27,000 cans of nicotine pouches, each containing 20 pouches, in air freight at Tullamarine.

Our Honorary Treasurer Deanne Baptista is stepping down, unfortunately for us, but is continuing to perform the tasks until her replacement is appointed. If you know anyone who could take on this role, which given we are "not-for-profit", finances is not very onerous, please let us know. We thank Deanne for the fine work she has done, and continues to do, and wish her well. I also thank former treasurer Hean Bee Wee AM for assisting Deanne.

It has been four decades since an inspirational group of determined women worked tirelessly, as volunteers, to establish a women's information and referral exchange (WIRE) on any issue for women across Victoria.

WIRE continues to provide support, information, training, advocacy and advice. What is the situation for women since the closure of the Family Violence Report Implementation Monitor – when there was still work to be done in addressing the changes identified by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence – still to be implemented and embedded across the public service and our community. Read what information CEO of WIRE, Jade Blakkarly, shared with us at our April Meeting (p.2).

### NCWV MAY FORUM, Thursday May 2, 12:00pm, Ross House, 247/251 Flinders Lane Domestic and Family Violence, a National Epidemic

We all have a role to play in ending family violence (FV). We hope our Forum can develop a shared understanding of actions being taken, how policy can be reformed, services improved and how effective strategies can be embedded in practice and innovation across the FV sector.

We are delighted that Tania Faha, CEO of **Safe and Equal**, a peak body for specialist FV services that provides support to victim survivors in Victoria, will speak. Their vision is a world beyond family and gender-based violence, where women, children and all people from marginalised communities are safe and respected.

Dr Deborah Towns will speak on the Elsie Conference and its outcomes in addressing reduction in FV.

We are awaiting confirmation of a woman Police Officer from the **Strategy, Policy and Reform - Family Violence Command at Victoria Police** to be a speaker.

Please spread the word as we all need to be informed. Members, friends and guests are welcome to attend in person (preferred) or via ZOOM.

RSVP for catering purposes 5pm Monday April 29 via the NCWV email: [info@ncwvic.org.au](mailto:info@ncwvic.org.au)

## April 4 Individual Members & Council Meeting

'Women's Information and Referral Exchange' Inc (WIRE) CEO Jade **Blakkarly** <https://www.wire.org.au>



We have extended our service to respond to needs of non-binary as well as gender-diverse people. We're the only Victoria-wide **free** information, support, referral service **by** women and gender diverse people, **for** women and gender diverse people. WIRE is dedicated to integrating diversity, inclusion, and equity into every aspect of our organisation, aiming to enhance the well-being of our clients and staff. We are steadfast in our commitment to identify and eliminate any instances of discrimination in the services we provide. Jade shared that WIRE has had many changes over the 40 years, learning along the way and listening to women whose voices have been silent, recognising the differences.

WIRE assists women navigate the language and structure of the system, including online. They are funded by the State Government to provide a minimum of 12,000 supports per year; 2024 it was 47,000!!

Most common contacts are on Family Violence, ongoing monitoring of safety, legal issues, addressing stress/anxiety.

They conduct free information sessions and workshops locally and regionally. WIRE also offers training and capacity building to organisations dealing with women needing support, for example banks, as 75% of women in financial difficulties go to their bank first, so staff need to know how to offer empathetic support and strategies. Jade stressed *"we focus on how we can make change in economically stressful situations."*

The release of the *Workplace Gender Equality Agency Report* highlighted the progress and lack thereof for almost 5,000 Australian private sector employers. The key headlines were that half of employers have a gender pay gap over 9.1%, nearly a third have a gender pay gap in the target range of + or -5%, and that men are nearly twice as likely to be in the top earning quartile, while women are 50% more likely to be in the lowest. What also needs to be focussed on are the issues for gender diverse and women with disabilities. There is more reporting than in the past, with increased accountability, but funding on prevention and recovery needs to increase. Some funding is coming to an end, has ended or reduced. There seems to be an attitude in some areas of "done that". Availability of support is also a problem, with long waiting lists at many support services.

WIRE is linking with other support services like Victorian Women's Trust and Victorian Multicultural Commission to develop resources and services in multicultural languages and for diverse communities.



NCWV Members and Friends enjoying Jade's informative talk.

## ADVISER NEWS

### Elsie Conference, by Dr Deborah Towns OAM



<https://www.facebook.com/ElsieConference/videos/736520301938241>



Christine Robinson, a Bundjalung woman

It was a celebration (of sorts) of 50 years of Elsie, and the aims were to shine a light on domestic and family violence, exploring how we need to respond, and to honour the many thousands of women who kept the women's refuge movement alive. I attended for two days, caught up with friends and made new friends/contacts and learnt a lot about the victims and survivors of domestic violence in Australia, the many issues, carers, laws, grassroots and community people, government departments, lawyers, academics from a range of speakers who informed us about what is happening, and discussed what could be happening. A welcome from Anthony Albanese by video who called domestic and family violence (DFV) 'a national epidemic' and is committed to ending it in ten years. There were 450 women (less than 10 men) who attended at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), organised by Professor Anne Summers, professor of domestic and family violence, hosted by the Vice chancellor Professor Andrew Parfitt, the Business School and Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion. Many organisations, ministers and individuals paid for travel and tickets for women to attend from all over Australia, who would not have been able to attend otherwise, including women from northern Australia who work in refuges and have survived domestic violence.

Anne and others told the story of Elsie, when Women's Liberationists who had spent a weekend at a domestic violence conference, broke into two derelict houses in Glebe and claimed 'squatters' rights'. One house was called Elsie. It was a radical grass roots movement with them determined to change the lives of abused women. In a few weeks women and children moved in. Local women and men helped to get the houses liveable. Local businesses provided free food and furniture. In 6 weeks, 48 women and 35 children were safely housed. It was not easy and it's still not easy. After 18 months there were 13 around Australia. In 50 years, 800 refugees have saved countless lives.

Anne reflected, "It's a growing business and I have mixed feelings about that. Its great there's somewhere for women to go but I wish we didn't still need them." She has provided disturbing data in her publication, *The Choice, Poverty or Violence*, that shows how many women face extreme financial hardship because of domestic and family violence. Being forced into poverty leads to devastating implications for themselves and their children that may last for generations.

The opening address was delivered by Christine Robinson, a Bundjalung woman, and CEO of the Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre in NSW. She gave a graphic, brave, and inspiring speech about surviving domestic violence as a younger woman. Her lived experience and leadership skills are supporting and inspiring others today. Speakers and topics were impressive. There were approximately 70 speakers in keynotes, panels and workshops. One of the most disturbing workshops that I attended was about Technology as the 'next frontier in domestic violence to be conquered'. It's the fastest growing form of abuse in Australia, with cyberstalking and control of current and former partners using technology, including tracking devices in toys. Domestic violence behaviours and physical violence is only one part of it. Perpetrators use many types of 'abuse' to control their current or former partners.



In front of over 400 people, an almost silent but riveting spectacle provided by 15 women in white bridal frocks slowly walking from the back of the hall to the stage. They were the 'ghosts' of women already killed this year in Australia by current or former partner. The name of each woman and how she was murdered was quietly read out. On average one woman is killed every nine days. Often these women's deaths were not treated with respect in the media. According to Anne, "nothing will change dramatically until governments have a more informed approach to tackling domestic and family violence...we need better data than what we've got". She called for a ten-year longitudinal study of perpetrators and victims, to understand patterns, who is doing this and why.



**A happy ending:** The 50 women who won 'Elsies' were from all over Australia. Winners in Victoria were Maggie Tong, Nyibol Deng, Rokaya Nabulsi, Kellyanne Andy, Diane Beaton, and the Women's Liberation Halfway House Founders. They worked in current and past refuges, including multicultural and First Nations communities. Women who work in refuges are determined to keep women safe and thriving. Larissa Ellis, an Esie winner said, "So privileged to have worked in this area for so long and to stand amongst so many spectacular women". Larissa works in Women's Safety Services of Central Australia. "Here lives are saved, changed, and empowered through women's shelters".



Moderator:  
Virginia  
Haussegger  
McFerran AM

Panel:  
Dame Quentin  
Bryce

Lauren  
Callaway,  
Assistant  
Commissioner  
Family Violence  
Command  
(Victoria)

Micaela Cronin,  
Domestic, Family and  
Sexual Violence  
Commissioner

Jess Hill,  
Author

Antoinette  
Braybrook AM,  
CEO Djira

Julie Inman Grant,  
eSafety Commissioner



We clapped, laughed, cheered, hugged, and cried as we left.

Deborah Towns; Lisa Smajlov, FAMS, Sector Development Officer.

**State Coordinator of Standing Committees: Robyn Byrne OAM**

The state Government has put out three surveys on Women's pain. One for women and girls, one for healthcare clinicians and one for carers. I think that to get a wide range of views it would be good for as many people as possible to respond.

[https://engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-into-womens-pain-survey?fbclid=IwAR0Yn7To9HGZ67KpZd4yJ\\_AcWvYkdjY7mp7h2zPLYoDonkoQ0F4omV0QSBk\\_aem\\_AUHAMS-ypSdsyNgwDasINnK4MfDtcs59DgBbL7-V2ee65PWecQ\\_93qzKWmbMXWZ8IY8Xh92Ph31NCGodvDuOagLM](https://engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-into-womens-pain-survey?fbclid=IwAR0Yn7To9HGZ67KpZd4yJ_AcWvYkdjY7mp7h2zPLYoDonkoQ0F4omV0QSBk_aem_AUHAMS-ypSdsyNgwDasINnK4MfDtcs59DgBbL7-V2ee65PWecQ_93qzKWmbMXWZ8IY8Xh92Ph31NCGodvDuOagLM)

The NCWV Standing Committee had confirmation that NCWA has submitted a response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee on Issues related to Menopause and Perimenopause. A number of researchers in Victoria and at the Federal level worked on the submission that had been written by Prof Cassandra Szoeki, NCWV Health Adviser. I thank all those who contributed and in particular Prof Cassandra Szoeki. Once it has been officially accepted and published on the Committee's website, we will create a link from the NCWV website.

**State education Inquiry announces hearing dates: [Hearings \(parliament.vic.gov.au\)](https://parliament.vic.gov.au/hearings)**

The Inquiry will look at trends in student learning outcomes, disparities associated with geography and socio-economic disadvantage; the state of the teaching profession, including the administrative burden on teachers; and student wellbeing, including measures to address poor mental health, school refusal and student disengagement. The Committee will consider best practice models and educational settings used to improve student learning outcomes and wellbeing. The schedule for hearings continues: **16 April 2024 Bendigo; 17 April 2024 Shepparton; 8 & 9 May 2024 Melbourne.**

More information on the hearings will be provided on website when available.



## Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference 2024 registrations open!

**Date:** 11 - 14 June 2024; **Location:** Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Register for the AIFS Conference 2024 and hear from the experts about the big challenges and emerging issues for Australian families.

Secure your early bird tickets today by clicking on the button. [Register now](#)

A select number of scholarships are available. Click [here](#) to find out more.

## Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) welcomes the release of *Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality*

Australia's largest alliance of women's organisations, ERA, has congratulated the Albanese Government and the Minister for Women, Katy Gallagher, on the release of *Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality*. "ERA welcomes the release of the National Strategy for Gender Equality, which is Australia's first in more than 30 years," said Helen Dalley-Fisher, Convenor of the Equality Rights Alliance. "After decades of neglect, we finally have a coordinated national approach to addressing gender inequality." Progress to gender equality in Australia has been slow, with women still lagging behind men on a wide range of indicators across health, education, earnings, economic stability, unpaid work, safety and discrimination. A comprehensive National Strategy on Gender Equality was a recommendation of the UN's CEDAW Committee in 2018, and comes at a time when women in Australia and internationally are calling for deep structural change to our economies, our workforces and our legal, health and education systems to eliminate in-built inequalities.

"Over the last 20 years we have had a piecemeal approach to gender equality in Australia. As women have identified specific problems, individual policies and laws have been created with mixed results. We've had Women's Health Plans, workforce strategies, skills strategies, housing targets, gender responsive budgeting and two National Plans to End Violence Against Women and Their Children," said Helen Dalley-Fisher. "Each of these are vital and were hard won, but each effectively operates in a silo. A National Strategy is a chance to bring this work together."

ERA welcomes the commitment to change in focus areas of women's economic security and leadership. "This Strategy has the potential to improve engagement with gender equality across all federal ministries and build a Parliament and a public service which have the necessary skills to understand and address the needs of women. Many Departments currently have a limited ability to identify and address gender-blindness in their policies and legislation. The regular reporting requirements in the Strategy will be key to building gender capacity across government," said Helen Dalley-Fisher. "We also welcome the Strategy's recognition of the important role to be played by communities, particularly women's organisations."

ERA is looking forward to the next essential steps on the road to gender equality in Australia. "We now need to see action plans across government to make the goals of the National Strategy a reality. Those actions need to be funded adequately, which means no gender-gaps in funding, especially for wages for women workers. We also need to see a national charter of human rights, which will bring the work on gender equality into a broader framework which supports a fairer Australia."

## Women with Disabilities Victoria's Gender and Disability Workforce Development Team

is excited to offer our updated professional development program on the Prevention of Violence Against Women with Disabilities (PVAWD) in **April and May 2024**. **Registrations close Tuesday 9 April 2024**; **Location: Online via Zoom**.

Registrations are now open for a series of three (3) online workshops, for social and community service professionals, to learn about how gender and disability inequality drives violence, and how you can prevent it. **Details:**

### Session 1: Introduction to Prevention of Violence against Women with Disabilities

**Tuesday 23 April, 12:30pm–3:30pm** (Prerequisite for Sessions 2 and 3)

### Session 2: Gender and Disability Drivers of Violence

**Tuesday 30 April, 12:30pm–3:30pm** (Prerequisite for Session 3)

### Session 3: Prevention in Action

**Tuesday 7 May, 12:30pm–3:30pm**

**Cost: All 3 sessions: \$350 employed professionals/ \$250 student/ concession**

**Individual sessions: \$125 employed professionals/ \$90 student/ concession**

The series is facilitated by women with lived experience of disabilities and centres the voices of lived experience. It is evidence-based, aligning with the latest research on disability, Our Watch's *Changing the Landscape*, and the Preventing Family Violence & Violence against Women Capability Framework.

For more information contact the Gender and Disability Workforce Development Team (03) 9286 7800 or

[GandD@wdv.org.au](mailto:GandD@wdv.org.au). **Register here:** <https://wwdv.wildapricot.org/event-5569925>

## THRIVE BY FIVE



*"I've just landed back in Perth after a whirlwind trip to Canberra that I'm really excited to tell you about.*

*Inside Parliament House, where it was impossible for MPs from all sides to miss us, we launched a draft bill that would create a universal entitlement to early childhood education and care and preschool for all Australian children."*

*"Our draft bill would:*

- cap the cost of early learning at \$10 a day – or free for low-income families,*
- expand paid parental leave to 52 weeks, shared between parents,*
- and set up a commission to oversee the implementation of these entitlements.*

*To make our bill a reality, we're calling on all sides of politics to support it. We're asking them to be part of history by making early childhood education a universal right in Australia, just as Medicare made healthcare a universal right."*

[Will you add your voice to the call, by signing the open letter calling on our leaders to Make it Law? Click here to sign it now.](#)



*"Our draft bill is already on the radars of decision-makers in Canberra. We were joined in front of the TV cameras by independent MP Zoe Daniel, as well as our friends from The Parenthood, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, Brotherhood of St. Laurence and Welcoming Australia.*

*Now that we've launched the draft bill, the next step is to get as many MPs as possible to support it. Together we can make this happen by showing our leaders that thousands of parents, educators and carers want them to support draft bill.*

[Will you add your name to the open letter now? Click here to sign now - it only takes a moment. "](#)

*Thank you for all that you do, Jay Weatherill*



### CEO REFLECTION: Disconnect to Connect

When a woman goes into prison, she loses connection in a matter of moments. She is disconnected from her family, disconnected from her community, disconnected from society. She has no mobile phone, no access to the internet, and very limited access to her loved ones. Imprisonment, by its nature, is isolating and can impact her mental and physical health and reduce capacity to create change. For women who have already experienced significant hardship this isolation can be a traumatic experience.

**But there's hope.** Research shows that when a person in prison receives regular and positive connection from 'the outside' they are three times more likely to turn their lives around. We have experienced this firsthand. One woman told us *"prison is like a tree in winter, no leaves, no colour, barren. **When the Prison Network team arrives, it feels like spring has come.** The tree begins to bloom and there is life, hope, and a reason to keep going".* Prison Network is committed to bringing hope, dignity and purpose into women's prisons through a regular and reliable presence. Through this presence we see trusted relationships established and long term change created. And just as importantly, we are a consistent connection during a dark and difficult time.

In support of this vital in-prison work we are launching our first ever purpose designed fundraiser: **UNPLUGGED**. As our friends and supporters, we are inviting you to 'disconnect' from the internet for 48 hours. Disconnect from your devices to allow us to connect with more women. Simply:

1. Sign up to the UNPLUGGED challenge
2. Kick off your fundraising with a \$40 registration fee (A woman in jail is charged \$8 for a 12-minute phone call. Your \$40 registration fee will allow a woman in prison to connect with her loved ones for an hour)
3. Ask your friends and family to sponsor you to take on the challenge (it will be a challenge!)
4. **DISCONNECT from your wifi and turn off data from 5pm Friday 12 April until 5pm Sunday 14 April.**

It is an opportunity to experience a device free weekend and create meaningful change. Hope you'll join us!

*Amelia*

[\*\*REGISTER FOR THE UNPLUGGED CHALLENGE\*\*](#)

## Opportunity to join the Mental Health Mentoring Program in 2024

While registrations have officially closed, we understand that plans can change, leading to participants not being available to attend the program. We encourage interested individuals to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) if they wish to be placed on a waiting list and to be considered for these potential spots. This unique program offers invaluable training in mentoring and coaching, designed to support the mental health and wellbeing workforce within your service setting.

With a few spots possibly becoming available for cohorts starting **on 18 April, 23 April, and 8 May 2024**, submitting an EOI could be your opportunity to join this transformative program. More information and to express your interest, [click here](#).

VHA CEO Leigh Clarke highlights that any attempts to reform the Victorian public healthcare system must be driven by the evidence with patient needs at the centre of the conversation. Substantial changes will require greater investment, not efficiencies. [Read the full article on the VHA website](#)



## EXHIBITION LAUNCH: MELBOURNE'S STORIED LANEWAYS

[EXHIBITION LAUNCH: MELBOURNE'S STORIED LANEWAYS - Royal Historical Society of Victoria \(historyvictoria.org.au\)](https://historyvictoria.org.au)



Please join us for the launch of the exhibition

# MELBOURNE'S STORIED LANEWAYS

Curated by David Thompson

Thursday 11 April 2024,  
5:30pm – 7pm  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria

Click on this image to RSVP through our website or  
ph 03 9326 9288  
[office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au)



RHSV  
239 A'Beckett Street,  
Melbourne 3000  
[historyvictoria.org.au](https://historyvictoria.org.au)

IMAGE: TONY IRVING'S ETCHING, BREWERY LANE MELBOURNE, 1900. ADAPTED BY EXHIBITION DESIGNER, DAISY SEARLS

We all have our favourite Melbourne laneway and curator, David Thompson, has chosen his favourites which reveal some intriguing Melbourne stories. When we think of today's gussied-up tourist-friendly laneways like Guilford Lane and Hosier Lane, it is hard to imagine that a mere 50 years ago the laneways were workaday places full of small factories and light industry. And earlier still there was the desperation of Little Lon. Today we get just glimpses of those rough and ready laneways that serviced the city.

The exhibition will be launched by Julian O'Shea a popular online creator with millions of views across YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Julian recently won the 2023 Victorian Community History Award for best Digital Storytelling Award. Julian has performed at Melbourne Fringe and various comedy storytelling events and recently shared stories of the city with Julia Zemiro on Great Australian Walks.

## **SOUTH YARRA WATER WORKS COMPANY (1854 – 1863)**

**Thursday 18 April; Time: 5:30pm for 6pm lecture; Hybrid - in person & on Zoom; Cost: \$10 | \$20**

[Click to book for South Yarra Waterworks lecture](#)

Our first co-presentation with Engineering Heritage Victoria in 2024 will be by Ken McInnes who will explore the history, the entrepreneurs, the engineers, the operations, the expansion and the demise of the short lived South Yarra Water Works Company (1854 – 1863). In 1854, 170 years ago, Yan Yean Reservoir was completed. Over the following ten years water was progressively reticulated to the houses and businesses of Melbourne and its suburbs.

As we embrace the diversity within our community, I extend warm wishes to all those observing Ramadan, Nowruz, Holi and Easter. May this season of reflection bring a sense of renewal to all members of our vibrant multicultural family.

21st of March marked the United Nations [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#).

At CMY, we want to see a world where all young people are connected, feel a sense of belonging, and can contribute to their families and the community. As one of our core strategic focus areas, we know this is only achievable if we collectively work to deconstruct and dismantle the structural and systemic barriers that exist in our society.

CMY is committed to our anti-racism efforts through a range of initiatives: from our external work in the education space with [Schools Standing Up To Racism](#); to addressing the lack of representation of young women of colour in leadership and governance roles through a [Seat at the Table](#) program; to establishing new partnerships focused on [tackling racism in community sport](#) through CMSport. From Carmel Guerra OAM, CEO CMY

Are you over 18 and involved in playing or the delivery of community sport? Share your voice in the project **Examining Racism in Community Sport**, as part of CMSport's [partnership](#) with Koorie Heritage Trust. [Complete the survey](#).

### State Library Victoria What's On: [State Library Victoria \(slv.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Discover the fascinating history of this iconic building and explore some of the many iconic spaces with a one-hour tour hosted by our friendly and passionate volunteers. The spaces you'll visit include:

- Our magnificent heritage reading rooms (La Trobe Reading Room and Redmond Barry Reading Room) where visitors can browse collections of books, magazines and music
- Our renowned galleries and The Ian Potter Queens Hall
- The new display of Ned Kelly's armour, alongside his colourfully worded Jerilderie letter.

Each tour can facilitate 10 people, bookings are essential. **Tours run 10.45-11.45 am and 1.45-2.45pm on most days (except public holidays)**. To book: [History of the Library Tour | State Library Victoria \(slv.vic.gov.au\)](#)

### Do you know the story of Fanny Finch?

A single mother of 4 and businesswoman, Fanny Finch was one of the first women in Australia to vote –over 50 years before it was legalised in Victoria.

But how did she do it? And what made Fanny take a stand? As Women's History Month closes, learn about her remarkable life in this episode of [The Chapters](#) podcast. [Listen now](#)

Plus, you can delve a little deeper into Fanny's life with this [blog post](#).

As Women's History Month closes, ramp up your reading with books that celebrate and explore women's history.

Take a tour of Dewey 304.52 (also known as 'Women, role in society, status') and see what we discovered in this blog post. [Read more](#)



### [Women in digital health leadership program 2024 – Apply](#)

Applications are now open until 17 April 2024 for the Institute's Women in Digital Health (WiDH) leadership and professional development program. This six-month leadership program is built to support emerging leaders and established leaders to realise and develop their leadership potential. The program is open for up to 27 select women, running from **10 May – 22 October 2024**. [Continue Reading](#)

AFMW President, Dr Coll is interviewing Prof Manjula O'Connor on the **24th of April at 8pm**. AFMW members and non-members are invited to attend this Zoom session. Professor Manjula Datta O'Connor is an Indian-born award winning psychiatrist, author, researcher, reviewer, teacher and campaigner, community leader, changemaker, advocate with special interest in migrant women's mental health, complex trauma and family violence.

[President's Chat with Prof Manjula O'Connor - 24 April - Australian Federation of Medical Women \(afmw.org.au\)](#)





We invite you to celebrate the launch of our new Children's book collection at



**Her Place Children's Open Day**

Saturday 13 April 2024  
10 - 2pm

The Feminist Reading Room  
Her Place Women's Museum  
210 Clarendon Street  
East Melbourne

Free activities  
ages 6 - 12

Readings by childrens  
Author Nelly Thomas



Children's book recommendations





**"ALL KIDS CAN BE WHOEVER THEY WANT"**



Readings by childrens  
Author Nelly Thomas

Nelly Thomas is a multi-talented, award-winning Australian comedian, author and broadcaster.

Nelly is the author of four books including three highly successful children's books - Some Girls (2017), Some Boys (2018) and Some Brains: a book celebrating neurodiversity (2019).

These books have been lauded for their contribution to diversity and humour in children's literature and one was nominated for the 2022 International Outstanding Books on Disability.





[\*\*CHILDREN'S OPEN DAY BOOKINGS HERE\*\*](#)

**Women's contribution to Australian defence forces recognised in new Violet Town mural**



On the 82nd anniversary of the Bangka Island Massacre, in which 21 unarmed Australian nurses were killed during World War II, a 17 metre long artwork honouring women's contribution to the Australian defence forces has been unveiled in north-east Victoria. The steel mural was officially unveiled in Violet Town by the Regimental Sergeant Major, the most senior warrant officer in the Army. Warrant Officer Felmingham, who is the first woman to have served in the role, delivered an emotional speech.

It was painted by well-known Benalla artist Tim Bowtell, with Violet Town RSL and community members helping bring the project together. The figures in the mostly monochrome artwork include local women such as Sister Frances Mackay, who worked overseas in the Australian Army Nursing Service, and Alicia Lindrum, who served as a driver to United States General Douglas MacArthur in Melbourne in 1942. The mural tells a story stretching from the Boer War to today. One of the figures included is Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel — the sole surviving Australian nurse following the Bangka Island Massacre. Her red nursing cape is the lone piece of colour in the painting.

Aunty Lorraine Hatton, the second-ever official Indigenous Elder of the Australian Army, was also present at the unveiling. She retired as a Warrant Officer Class 2 in 2007 after 20 years' service in the Signals Corps, said it was fantastic to see the mural highlighting the military stories of women and the important history of women's involvement in war.



AUSTRALIAN NURSES  
MEMORIAL CENTRE

*Honouring Australian war nurses through  
scholarships and commemorative events.*

## ANZAC Commemorative Service 2024

Sunday 21st April 2024

2pm to 3pm

Commemorative  
Service & Wreath  
laying at the  
Nurses'  
Memorial  
Fawcner Towers  
forecourt

431 St Kilda Rd  
Melb, VIC 3004

In lieu of laying a wreath, we  
welcome donations to the  
scholarship fund

Donate here

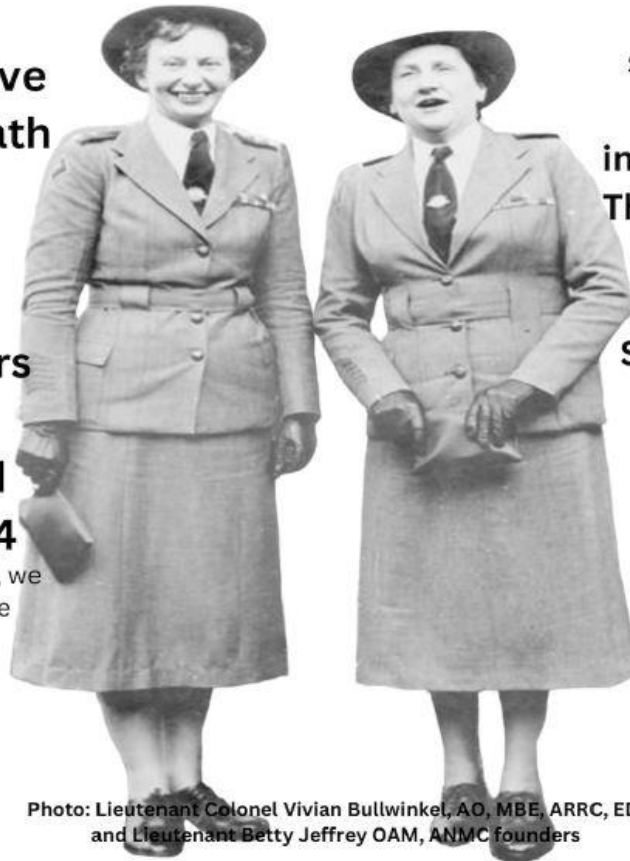


Photo: Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel, AO, MBE, ARRC, ED  
and Lieutenant Betty Jeffrey OAM, ANMC founders

Following the  
service afternoon  
tea will be served  
in the ANMC venue  
The ANMC Board is  
pleased to  
introduce  
Stephanie Sprogis  
ANMC 2021  
Vivian Bullwinkel  
Scholar as our  
guest speaker  
RSVP required

RSVP here



## CHOICE

Have you noticed products at the supermarket getting smaller, but the price stays the same or actually increases? This practice is known as 'shrinkflation', and it's one of the sneaky pricing tactics that CHOICE supporters have told us you're frustrated about. [Now, a new CHOICE investigation has revealed 10 grocery items that have been hit by this dodgy pricing tactic](#) – including hot cross buns, cereals, chips and cleaning products. Together, we can put an end to these sneaky pricing tricks.

With several inquiries into supermarket prices underway, all eyes are on the supermarkets right now – which means we have a crucial opportunity to hold the supermarkets to account. If we can show the government there's widespread support for changes that would force the supermarkets to make their prices fair and transparent, we can make sure these changes make it over the line. **It should be easy to work out which products are the best value.**

To prevent supermarkets from obscuring endless price increases, supermarkets should be required to let consumers know when a product has changed in size and value. During a cost of living crisis, it's more important than ever that supermarkets are upfront about their prices. Bea Sherwood, CHOICE

[Will you help us reach 20,000 signatures by signing the petition for fair and transparent grocery prices?](#)

I'll add my name

**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."*

### National Council of Women of Victoria Meeting Dates for 2024

| Month     | Date             | Day      | Meeting Type   | Time         | Method                   |
|-----------|------------------|----------|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| April     | 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings                | 11:00, 12:15 | ZOOM                     |
| April     | 18 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| May       | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Thursday | May Forum & Council Meeting                          | 12:00        | Zoom and Ross House (RH) |
| May       | 16 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| June      | 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | Combined Individual Members & Council Meetings       | 12:15        | Zoom                     |
| June      | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Monday   | Standing Committee Meeting                           | 16:30        | Zoom                     |
| June      | 20 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| July      | 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | Council Meeting                                      | 17:15        | Zoom and RH              |
| July      | 18 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| August    | 1 <sup>st</sup>  | Thursday | Individual Members Annual Meeting; & Council Meeting | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH              |
| August    | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Friday   | My Vote My Voice                                     | 9:00         | Parliament               |
| August    | 12 <sup>th</sup> | Monday   | Standing Committee Meeting                           | 16:30        | Zoom                     |
| August    | 15 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| September | 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | AGM  | 12:15        | Zoom and RH              |
| September | 19 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| October   | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings                | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH              |
| October   | 14 <sup>th</sup> | Monday   | Standing Committee Meeting                           | 16:30        | Zoom                     |
| October   | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| November  | 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | Council Meeting                                      | 17:15        | Zoom and RH              |
| November  | 15 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Committee Meeting                                    | 10:00        | RHSV                     |
| November  | 28 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday | Annual Luncheon                                      | 12:00        | In person                |
| December  | 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings                | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH              |