

Founded 1902 ~ Celebrated 123 years in 2025

## Newsletter

October 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:** *After nearly a decade walking the path to Treaty with our communities, and generations of resistance and activism from First Peoples, Australia's first Treaty is here. This is a chance for all Victorians to acknowledge our past, heal and move forward together.* First People's Assembly of Victoria

### From the President, Elida Brereton



Warm greetings to you as we move into spring and daylight saving.

I am aware that next week marks two years since Hamas terrorists attacked, murdered, tortured and kidnapped innocent women, children and male citizens of Israel, which began the current warfare and ongoing loss of lives. In remembering, we extend our ongoing sympathy to NCWV Jewish members, and their loved ones and all impacted by this awful event.

We also feel for our Ukrainian friends as that dreadful war continues.

On a positive note, Victoria has achieved an Australia first, with the First Nation Treaty being legislated. We were delighted to hear about the process from Zoe Upton (p 2).

NCWV members attended a service to celebrate the life of former member and past Vice-president **Anne Parton**, held at St David's Uniting Church, Geelong. Many attended with the NCWV Geelong Branch led by Nonie Crozier. Anne was a wonderfully loyal and hardworking member of the Geelong Branch, also NCWV Council and Individual Members, coming from Geelong to meetings, supporting the trading table and representing us in dealings with Ross House. I passed on the condolences of members who were unable to attend, all of whom spoke of Anne's goodwill, hard work and lasting legacy.

NCWV has been active via the Standing Committees led by Robyn Byrne OAM, assisted by Health Adviser Prof Cassandra Szoeki, and Adviser Sarah Barnbrook, in **advocating on behalf of women and girls and families**, in areas including better accessibility to Home Care packages, for protection against the evils of gambling by women, and for appropriate medical diagnosis and care of women over 50 years of age who are relatively invisible in society and in many occasions, in medical care. We are preparing for the Women's Health Forum that we are conducting at Government House in the late afternoon / early evening next March, led by Cassandra. We are excited by this opportunity to gain more extensive exposure – for NCWV and for women neglected by the medical world.

Our Adviser for Youth and ICT/ online Safety, **Sarah Barnbrook**, is proposing an online workshop for members and affiliates, on the coming regulations about Social Media and minimum age of access to it, as proposed by the Federal Government. Keep your eye on future emails and our Newsletter re the timing of this workshop, which will be of value to anyone involved with young people or organisations where Social Media access is relevant.

Finally, the **NCWV End of Year Luncheon** is back at William Angliss Restaurant, on **Thursday November 27<sup>th</sup>**. This delicious two course lunch plus a drink from the bar will be priced at \$60. I hope that you are happy with this and more importantly, that you will be there on November 27<sup>th</sup> with a friend and/or relative. Coral Ross AM will be our Keynote, she is an engaging speaker with extensive experience in Local Government and other involvements.

**NWCV Annual General Meeting, September 4<sup>th</sup>**, was attended by 23 members in person and 10 by ZOOM. President Elida welcomed everyone with business addressed before the election of Office bearers and Committee members.

**Returning Officer: Elisabeth Newman AM** informed the meeting that all of the following nominations were provided in accordance with the rules, and there was only one nomination for each of the Committee positions. She therefore declared as elected the following:

- |                                 |                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. President                    | <b>Elida Brereton</b>                                                                           |
| 2. Vice President               | <b>A June Anderson</b>                                                                          |
| 3. Vice President               | <b>B Pam Hammond</b>                                                                            |
| 4. Hon. Secretary               | <b>A Dr Julie Stevens</b>                                                                       |
| 5. Hon. Secretary B             | <b>Phoebe Swift</b>                                                                             |
| 6. Public Officer               | <b>Phoebe Swift</b>                                                                             |
| 5. Hon. Treasurer               | <b>Emma Fu</b>                                                                                  |
| 6. Convenor Standing Committees | <b>Robyn Byrne OAM</b>                                                                          |
| 7. General Members              | <b>Ronniel Milliken, Dr Deborah Towns OAM, Guosheng Chen, Sarah Barnbrook, Hean Bee Wee AM.</b> |

## Standing Committee

### Coordinator Status of Women

Adviser Implementation of Conventions **Robyn Byrne OAM**

Adviser Human Rights **Sarah Barnbrook**

### Coordinator General Wellbeing

Adviser Health **Prof Cassandra Szoek**

Adviser Nutrition **Maggie Baron**

Adviser Environment **Pam Robinson AM**

### Coordinator Sustainable Development **Dr Deborah Towns OAM**

Adviser Women and Employment **Dr Deborah Towns OAM**

Adviser Rural and Regional Women, **Sarah Barnbrook, Christine Rippon**

Coordinator Communications **Sarah Barnbrook**

Adviser Arts and Letters **Robyn Byrne OAM**

Adviser ICT, Social Media & Mass Media **Sarah Barnbrook**

Coordinator Social Issues **Dr Yee Man Louie**

Adviser Child and Family **Rumbi Nyanhoto**

Adviser Youth **Sarah Barnbrook**

Adviser Multicultural Affairs **June Anderson**

### **NCWV Note: Representative Committee Members**

- Individual Members Representative **Sheila Byard OAM**
- Geelong Branch Representative **Nonie Crozier**
- Young NCWV Representative **Vacant**  
**Phoebe Swift** Public Officer.



**Keynote Speaker was Vivienne Nguyen AM, Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VWC).** Vivienne has held executive roles and led global diversity strategy. She was **President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia Victoria Chapter, 2016 – 2019.** In 2002, Vivienne was **inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll** for advocating for women's leadership, supporting young Vietnamese people was **awarded the 2003 Australian Centenary Medal**, and was **awarded the Australian Order in the AM division in 2021 for advancing multicultural Victoria.**

Viv began with condolences to the families of two Victorian Police officers who lost their lives in service.

She drew our attention to recent neo-Nazi activity in Melbourne and affirmed that such ideologies have no place in public life. Upon arriving in Australia, she learned from others about our democratic nation. Coming from an Asian cultural background, where modesty, keeping a low profile, and compliance are often valued, she came to understand the importance of also having a voice and speaking out. This was evident over the weekend, as many individuals expressed feeling unsafe, yet also proud of the country they have contributed to across environmental, social, and political spheres. It served as a strong acknowledgement of the vital contributions diverse communities make to the fabric of Australian society.

Multicultural Victoria, where over 50% have at least one parent born overseas or speak a language other than English at home, faces ongoing challenges. The VMC was formed in 1983 after the abolition of the White Australia Policy in 1975, serves as a conduit between communities and government, and engages closely with multicultural and multifaith groups to understand the challenges they face. Through collaboration, the Commission identifies and recommends practical solutions to government, policymakers, and community organisations, with the aim of making public services more inclusive, responsive, and accessible to all Victorians.

Capacity building with longstanding organisations such as NCWV plays an important role to foster relationships, mutual understanding, and trust. For the Victorian Multicultural Commission, a key challenge is ensuring there is a strong element of empowerment—particularly for newly arrived communities. Many individuals arrive with a sense of distrust or scepticism, often shaped by past experiences. Supporting their engagement with democratic systems and processes is essential to building confidence, inclusion, and long-term civic participation.



## NCWV October Individual Members and Council Meeting, Ross House, Flinders Lane & ZOOM, 11:00pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025



Speaker: Zoe Upton, Assembly Member for Metro Region.

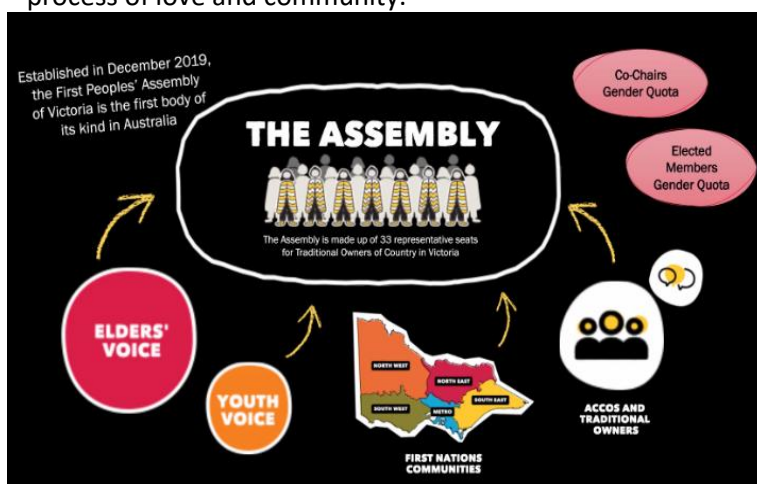
Zoe is a proud Bunurong woman, who has the privilege and honour to sit on the First People's Assembly of Victoria for the Bunurong Land Council. Zoe has extensive knowledge and experience in Government systems and is now working for a community organisation.

She is a mother and carer of beautiful children and brings them up with the knowledge and power of knowing who they are and being proud.

Zoe spoke about the treaty process in Victoria. She explained the structure of the First Nations Assembly, including its members, protocols, and decision-making processes. Zoe highlighted the importance of equality between males and females in the Assembly and mentioned her role as chair of the Traditional Owner Working Group. She also touched on the Assembly's ongoing consultation with Youth Voice and First Nations communities across the state.

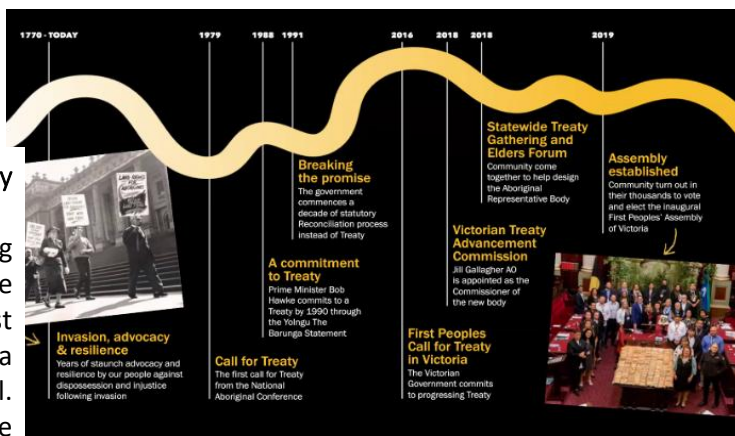
### Victoria Treaty Journey Overview

Zoe highlighted key milestones and the community's advocacy over the past 40 years. She explained that the treaty aims to recognise First Nations people as experts in their country, culture, and communities, with well established mechanisms for decision-making, accountability and infrastructure improvements. This is a process of love and community.

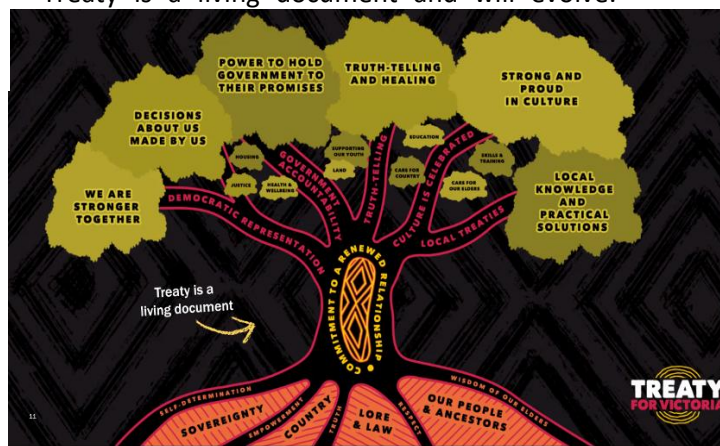


Treaty includes:

*Building knowledge, skills & leadership;  
Truth and Healing; Teach our true history;  
Power to hold government to its promises;  
Upgrade community infrastructure;  
More First peoples' place names;  
Celebrating/sharing our culture.*



Treaty is a living document and will evolve.



The discussion concluded with a call to action for attendees to educate others about treaty, take the treaty pledge, and contact MPs, to restore support for the treaty.

Treaty is HERE! On line via Zoom [Register now](#)

**Tue, October 21, 2025 1:00PM – 2:00PM**

Come along to our **Treaty NGO Briefing** to hear about Australia's first Treaty and how you can be part of it!

**Registrations are free but essential.**

**NCWV Individual Members Group 2025 excursion to the Exhibition 65,000 Years: A Short History of Australian Art, University of Melbourne, Potter Museum of Art: Corner Swanson St & Masson Rd**

**Date, time: Thursday 30 October from 12 noon-1 pm.**

**Trybooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/DGADN>**

**About the Exhibition:** From the website <https://potter-museum.unimelb.edu.au/whats-on/exhibitions/65000-years>

The exhibition celebrates the brilliance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art while confronting the dark heart of Australia's colonial history and proclaims the importance of Indigenous knowledge and agency. The exhibition features more than 400 works, including rarely-seen artworks and cultural objects from the University of Melbourne's collections, 194 important loans from 78 private and public lenders and six new commissions.

There will be a 15min introduction, providing insight into the curatorial vision and selected artworks prior to our self-guided walkthrough. Possible lunch afterwards.

Please confirm if you wish to join us for lunch.

Sheila Byard OAM Convenor IMG, M: 0439 365 688

**NCWV November Council Meeting, Ross House,  
Flinders Lane & ZOOM, 5:00pm. 6 Nov. 2025**



**Alexandra Pierce** was a history teacher for many years. She's on the board of the [Australian Living Peace Museum](#), and is secretary of Oral History Victoria. She splits her time between history research, history curriculum work, and science fiction.

She edits and publishes the journal [Speculative Insight](#).

**Peace work in Australia: a discussion of protesting the Vietnam War, and the Australian Living Peace Museum**

Alex's oral history project "Women, Conscription, War" started as an effort to develop student resources and then turned into an award-winning, 15-episode podcast.

In this talk, Alex will give an overview of the motivations and actions of Melbourne women who protested against the Vietnam War and conscription between 1965 and 1972, based on the nearly 60 interviews she conducted with women who were directly involved in those events.

Her Peace Project won the 2024 Community History Award. She will also discuss the work of the Australian Living Peace Museum, an online museum focused on championing Australian individuals and groups who have advocated for and worked towards peace over the decades.

**CONGRATULATIONS Sarah Barnbrook**



Sarah Barnbrook, NCWV Adviser, was named '*the woman amplifying regional voices in Victoria*' in the Seymour Telegraph, September 10. Sarah was presented with the '**Best volunteer**' as part of the Australian Women in Security Awards.

**VALE**



**NCWV Honorary Life Member Anne Parton nee Donaldson.**

died peacefully at the Epworth Hospital (Geelong) 12<sup>th</sup> September, after a stroke. Loved and respected wife of Ian for 64 years, loving mother of Julie, Kathryn, Andrew, Donald and partners John and Suzanne.

A Thanksgiving Service for Anne was offered at St David's Uniting Church, Newtown, September 30.

Anne was a high achiever at Presbyterian Ladies College in many areas. She later became the PLC Old Collegians' delegate to National Council of Women Victoria (NCWV), continuing until her death. She was on the NCWV Committee and became Vice-President, as well as long time Committee and the President of the National Council of Women Geelong for multiple terms.

Anne was such a constant, reliable, respected member of NCWV for a very long time. Always the first person you saw monthly as you walked through the door at Ross House with a ready smile and your membership badge. She represented NCWV at Ross House meetings, sent NCWV stories to the Ross House for the magazine, and made sure we had an annual window display facing Flinders Lane. Anne travelled so far each meeting and arrived early— while the rest of us "lived around the corner" and often arrived late! Anne was a highly valued member of NCWV Geelong and NCWV and her contributions were so numerous that if you start to count you would surely miss something!

She was a wonderful friend, a devoted, dedicated and an inspiring member of NCWV - her friendship and service will be missed greatly.

Anne has been a St John of God Geelong Hospital Auxiliary member since 2012. She has contributed numerous unpaid hours at many Victorian communities over the last 60 years. She has advocated for marginalized women, championed women's issues, and raised significant funds for families, social causes and communities. Anne was a member of the Geelong Lawn Tennis Club Committee for 13 years, a member of various Uniting Church Committees and President of Geelong Ladies Reading Circle for 13 years. Anne was a Hospitaller of the Geelong Commandery of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, responsible for the wellbeing of members. Anne has worked for Trading Partners for over 20 years, selling crafts of overseas artisans. In 2023 Anne was inducted in the Victorian Honour Roll of Women as a local champion.

We send our condolences to Ian and the extended family, her close friends and NCWV colleagues.

## ADVISER NEWS

### Education Adviser: Pam Hammond

MVMV started as a result of research finding that young people were disengaged with the democratic processes. We hope that the students who attend will go on to better grasp the intricacies of our democratic system. Since 2014, 40 different schools have participated, some many times, and a total of 600 students. These events have raised students' awareness of the rights and responsibilities of voting; gender issues in local and state governments; lack of diversity in local organisations and councils; attitudes of young people to voting; when women and First Nations people were able to vote; giving voice to students about the Role of Treaty in achieving Reconciliation and Social Media – a blessing or a curse.

The 2025 theme: *What is special about Australian Democracy* was designed to have students examining our democracy and comparing with other countries. The event commenced in Queen's Hall at 9:15, then moved into the Legislative Council Chamber, where Elida Brereton, President NCWV, welcomed guests, panel members, teachers, and students, then introduced the keynote speaker Lucy Skelton. She was part of the Melbourne Girls' College team and speaker at My Vote My Voice in 2018 and 2019. Lucy has had many interesting roles since then. She realised that being involved in politics was the way to influence change and show that young people should be there, so she ran for Parliament only losing by 3000 votes. With nearly a decade of experience in advocacy and volunteering Lucy is now a policy analyst, CEO and founder of FORE Australia, a social enterprise which assists organisations get ideas to decision makers. Last year, she joined the team at Global Voices, where she helps lead delegations of young Australians to international forums.

Lucy challenged the students *'What will you do after your speech?'* She outlined three steps: have a clear Ask – what is the issue; Identify who to approach, why reach out/trust them; what do you want them to do. Another factor is choosing the right level of government. We then played the Jurisdiction Game. She encouraged all to get politically involved and not to be concerned about their age. You gain more access when you are involved. Mentoring can also help in your development.

The schools participating were: Firbank Grammar, Jiayuan Charity Music School, Al Siraat College, Mullauna Secondary College, Melbourne Girls' Grammar School, MacRobertson Girls' High School, Star of the Sea College, Rosehill Secondary College, Melbourne Girls' College, Ringwood Secondary College. Most students spoke clearly, making eye contact with the audience, all addressed the theme extremely well, with different emphases, including compulsory voting; women voting/standing for parliament before other countries; preferential voting; access to parliamentarians; local govt system. The panel noted all of this and gave general feedback at the end. Their assessments of each group have been used to nominate Awards. Matt Fregon MP, Deputy Speaker, spoke about voting and the responsibility of MPs, congratulating the students and encouraging them to become involved.

Pam Robinson AM, NCWV Council Member: *Wow, what a great morning of Student Presentations. An absolute winner, which provided a valuable experience for the students presenting in Parliament House, and for their schools, as well as others attending. Leaving Parliament House, I wonderfully came across one of the boy students on his phone saying 'Hi Mum, it was really, really good' and at the bottom of the steps down to Spring Street, a bunch of the girls stopped me to say they were going to ask their teacher and parents if they can join NCWV, asking me 'it's free for us to join isn't it? Can we just come to some things if not all?'. My reply: Yes, Yes.*

From one of the guests: *May I congratulate you and your "National Council of Women" team for the wonderful session you organised from so many schools covering our youth view of explaining "Why our Democracy is special". The students were informed, passionate, articulate and all-round fantastic. Watch out world - here they come! And well equipped they are to do so.*



This is the image of the Legislative Council Chamber taken from the Speaker's Chair, Elida Brereton, Pam Hammond in front.



Lucy Skelton



MacRobertson Girls' College



Star of the Sea College



Melbourne Girls' College



Ringwood Secondary College



Mullauna SC



Pam Hammond, Ronnieta Milliken, Al Siraat College



Rosehill Secondary College



Jiayuan Cherity Music School, Elida Brereton, Guosheng Chen



Firbank Grammar



[esafety.gov.au](https://esafety.gov.au)

### Support for young people viewing violent and distressing online content

eSafety is aware that distressing material is circulating online showing the fatal shooting at Utah Valley University. Young people who encounter content like this online may be struggling to come to terms with what they have read and seen. It is normal for them to have questions or feel unsettled, and your support can make a big difference. If a child sees violent or distressing material, it is important to check in and talk to them about the content they have seen. We also recommend that children use devices in open areas of the home, rather than in their bedroom, so you can be attuned to how they are coping and what they are engaging with online.

Here are some practical steps Australians can take if they come across this type of material online:

- **Report it to the platform:** Most major services have reporting tools for violent and graphic content. Using these tools means harmful material can be flagged and removed quickly.
- **Report it to eSafety:** Australians can lodge a complaint via [esafety.gov.au](https://esafety.gov.au).
- **Do not share the video:** Even if your intent is to raise awareness, reposting graphic material increases the risk of trauma and amplifies harm.



We know that at challenging times, schools become hubs of support for their communities, with students, staff and families often seeking advice. eSafety has the necessary support and guidance, to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to responding to emerging issues. There are precautions that can be taken to prevent children seeing disturbing content online. eSafety has [a range of helpful resources](#).

### For parents and carers

- [How to get started with parental controls](#)
- [General online safety advice for parents](#)

### For kids and young people

- [I saw something online I didn't like](#) (for primary-school aged children)
- [Dealing with disturbing content](#) (for young people)

### For educators

eSafety's [Toolkit for Schools](#) supports schools to create safer online environments and be prepared with processes in place when incidents do happen.

The [Respond modules](#) provide guidance on reporting requirements, minimising harm and supporting wellbeing. By being informed and prepared, we can all contribute to reducing the risk of children and young people being exposed to this content, and support those who are.

Other resources include:

- [Inappropriate content \(Fact sheet\)](#)
- [Inappropriate content \(Scenarios\)](#)

If your child, student, or someone you know, has come across disturbing content online, there are a range of counselling services you can reach out to for help and support.

If a life is in danger call Triple Zero (000) right now.

- **Kids Helpline**, for 5–25-year-olds: 1800 55 1800 or [kidshelpline.com.au](https://kidshelpline.com.au) (webchat is also available).
- **headspace**: support for young people, professionals, educators and families
- **Lifeline**: 13 11 14 or [lifeline.org.au](https://lifeline.org.au)
- **Beyond Blue**: 1300 22 4636 or [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)

## **Human Rights | Rural and Regional Women | Youth | ICT | Communications Adviser: Sarah Barnbrook**

### **Submission to the Online Safety Inquiry**

As NCWV Adviser I am closely following the Senate inquiry into the Internet Search Engine Services Online Safety Code and the under-16 social media ban. While this was not a submission made on behalf of NCWV, I personally made a submission through my organisation Away from Keyboard (AFK) Inc., which is a member organisation of NCWV, titled 'Logged Out, Left Out: Closing the Gaps in Online Safety Codes'. Because this inquiry directly affects the communities and portfolios we represent, I'm sharing a summary with our members so you can stay informed and consider the implications for your own work.

#### **Why this inquiry matters to NCWV members**

- Human Rights: It addresses children's right to safety, privacy and participation online.
- Rural and Regional Women: Families in regional areas face lower digital literacy, patchy connectivity and fewer local support services. Without targeted measures, they risk being left behind.
- Youth: Young people are primary users impacted by age verification and filtering but are often excluded from policy design.
- ICT: The technical implementation of online safety measures must be transparent, privacy-preserving and accessible to low-literacy users and older Australians.
- Communications: Our role is to help members understand these issues and encourage informed engagement.

#### **Highlights from my AFK Submission**

- Privacy and data protection: Mandatory Child Rights and Privacy Impact Assessments, strict data minimisation, and privacy-preserving age assurance.
- Digital literacy and support: A National Digital Literacy & Age-Assurance Support Program for libraries, councils and schools, particularly in rural and regional communities.
- Safety by Design beyond log-ins: Apply protections to logged-out browsing, search and recommendations, plus independent testing of age checks, filters and AI features.
- Youth and survivor input: A Standing Youth Advisory Council under the Online Safety Act and survivor-led training for moderators.
- Scams, TFGBV and AI harms: A dedicated annex addressing scams, deepfakes, nudification and AI-driven harms that disproportionately affect carers, children and marginalised groups.

This inquiry is a chance to shape how Australia protects children, carers and communities online. It speaks directly to NCWV's priorities — gender equality, digital inclusion, community safety and youth empowerment. By understanding the changes proposed, members can better support communities, plan future programs and advocate for stronger safeguards. The Committee will report in November 2025. I will continue to monitor developments and keep members updated as new information becomes available.

#### **Youth Adviser: Sarah Barnbrook –**

##### **Young People Seeking Help in Their Own Right**

As part of my role as Youth Adviser, I have reviewed the new report *Seeking help in their own right* (Fitz-Gibbon, 2025), which examines how young people experience family violence crisis services in Victoria. The findings highlight that while reforms have advanced since the Royal Commission into Family Violence, young people are still too often overlooked and treated as secondary to adults.

Young people reported significant barriers in seeking help, including a lack of age-appropriate services, low awareness of supports, and frequent experiences of being excluded from decision-making. Many described feeling invisible, unsupported, or pushed into homelessness services rather than family violence responses.

The report calls for earlier intervention in schools, youth-specific crisis pathways, independent access to housing and financial support, and the development of youth-friendly online platforms. It also stresses the importance of embedding young people's voices into system design.

For NCWV, this is an urgent advocacy priority. We must continue to press for reforms that ensure children and young people are recognised as victim-survivors in their own right. By doing so, we can help deliver a safer, more responsive system that supports young people to heal, recover, and thrive.

## Launch of the World Food Forum Australian National Chapter, Sarah Barnbrook



On 17 September I had the privilege of attending the launch of the **World Food Forum Australian National Chapter (WFF AYC)** in Melbourne, representing the National Council of Women Victoria in my roles as Youth Adviser and Human Rights Adviser.

The WFF AYC is a youth-led platform dedicated to transforming food systems in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. Born from the first Australian youth delegation to the World Food Forum in Rome, 2024, the Chapter serves as a national hub for education, advocacy, research, and policy on food security and sustainability. It will also host a side event at the World Food Forum flagship gathering in Rome this October, ensuring Australian youth voices are heard on the global stage.

The launch event featured vibrant discussions about the future of our food systems, an expert panel sharing international insights, and a zero-waste dinner provided by OzHarvest. The evening connected government, civil society, academia, and industry with a dynamic group of young leaders driving change in agriculture and nutrition security.

I attended the event with my 13-year-old daughter Aurora, whose passion for sustainability and leadership reflects the intergenerational nature of this work. Seeing her engage with other young people underscored how vital it is to build pathways for youth participation early.

I had the privilege of meeting Mr Edward Boggart, World Food Forum Coordinator from the FAO in Rome, to discuss his attendance at the launch. He expressed how important it was for him personally and professionally to travel to Australia to mark this milestone: “Travelling to Australia for the launch was essential for me. It demonstrates to the world how significant this Chapter is in shaping the future of our food systems.” – Edward Boggart, WFF Coordinator, FAO

This meeting felt especially meaningful because last year I attended the FAO in Geneva, where I heard from the FAO’s Youth Adviser on the inaugural World Food Forum and was struck by his passion for sustainability. Seeing that passion translated into a thriving youth-led movement here in Australia is both inspiring and affirming.

Why It Matters for NCWV: For NCWV, this launch highlights the power of youth-led action, the importance of embedding human rights – including the right to food – into national policy, and the opportunity for organisations like ours to support mentoring, partnerships and advocacy. This work aligns directly with NCWV’s commitment to advancing women’s leadership, human rights, and sustainable development.

The launch of the WFF AYC is an inspiring moment for Australian young people and for all who care about sustainability, gender equality and intergenerational leadership. It demonstrates how collaboration between youth, civil society, and international organisations can drive systemic change, and how NCWV can be part of that journey.

### Environment Adviser: Pam Robinsom AM

**The Government released its first-National Climate Risk Assessment and accompanying National Adaptation Plan. (15/9/25):** [Australia's first National Climate Risk Assessment](#); [australias-national-climate-risk-assessment-an-overview-2025.pdf \(PDF 6.94 MB\)](#)

In delivering the National Climate Risk Assessment (National Assessment), the Australian Climate Service has provided an assessment of risk across 8 key systems and 11 regions, prioritising key risks both within each system and across systems.

This approach has provided an understanding of who or what might be at risk from a changing climate, across different areas of the country and paints a national picture for decision makers, to help them prioritise adaptation actions.

The National Assessment provides new data and analyses assembled in a nationally consistent way that can be used by governments, communities, industries and businesses, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to drive adaption at national, regional and local scales.

Learn details of each nationally significant climate risk and how they may affect Australia in different ways. <https://www.acs.gov.au/pages/feature-article-1>

For decades, Australia's leading climate agencies, the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, have led the way in understanding our climate science and natural hazards. The Australian Climate Service (ACS) has built on this work. It has drawn on these agencies to develop a better understanding of the future climate and for the first time to develop insights based on how we will experience future hazards. This new integrated approach provides a consistent national view of hazards. This allows industries, communities, individuals and governments to make informed decisions based on how hazards are likely to change. [Hazard insights | Australian Climate Service](#)

## Health Adviser: Dr Cassandra Szoeki

From -Women's Agenda [Women Health News](#)

**NCWV lauds this focus, but Adviser Cassandra Szoeki is disappointed that the Gates Foundation (which has a priority in dementia) has made this announcement but if you look at detail - Nothing for women over 50!!**

The Gates Foundation has announced it will spend \$2.5 billion by 2030 on women's health, in an effort to advance chronically underfunded areas for women globally. The pledge is more than triple the amount the Gates Foundation has spent on women's health innovation over the past five years. "For too long, women have suffered from health conditions that are misunderstood, misdiagnosed or ignored," said Dr Anita Zaidi, president of Gates Foundation's Gender Equality Division. "We want this investment to spark a new era of women-centred innovation- one where women's lives, bodies and voices are prioritised in health R&D (research and development)."

Just one per cent of healthcare research and innovation is invested in female-specific conditions beyond oncology, according to a [2021 analysis](#), led by McKinsey & Company, which the Foundation cited. This leaves critical issues such as preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, heavy menstrual bleeding, endometriosis and menopause without the research they need to support the hundreds of millions of women affected.

The Gates Foundation's investment will advance innovation across these five 'high-impact' areas, including obstetric care and maternal immunisation, maternal health and nutrition, gynaecological and menstrual health, contraceptive innovation and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). These priority areas were selected on a combination of data and evidence about where innovation can save and improve the most lives, according to the Foundation.

This \$2.5 billion investment signals the Foundation's intent to continue to invest in the cause following the 2024 departure of Melinda French Gates, who led the Foundation's support of girls' and women's health. Since her divorce from Bill Gates, French Gates has committed more than [\\$1 billion](#) to support women and families around the world, particularly in areas of reproductive rights. The Gates Foundations are calling on governments, philanthropists, investors and the private sector to co-invest in women's health innovations to help close persistent gaps in funding and research.

## OTHER NEWS

### COUNTERPART



Women supporting women with cancer



**Audience for this event:** Women who have experienced a cancer diagnosis, either recently or in the past, are invited to join us for a relaxed day of wellbeing activities and connection with others in the community. Feel free to bring along someone close to you—a friend, partner, family member or carer. Our wellbeing days give you a chance to learn new ways to look after your wellbeing and meet other women who have experienced cancer. Counterpart staff and Peer Support Volunteers will be available to chat on the day.

Whether you are a local, have family or friends in the west or are happy to travel for a day of activities, we would love to see you at our wellbeing day at the **Whitten Oval in Footscray on Tuesday 28 October.**

Registrations close on 21 October!

[Book now](#)



From Amelia Pickering:

### 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!

## Victorian Multicultural Commission Newsletter

[Victorian Multicultural Review, the Government's response](#). The Review contains 41 recommendations that aim to bolster unity and inclusion, and support a refreshed whole-of-government approach to multicultural affairs. The Victorian Government's response to the Review was rapid, broad and genuine.

In coming weeks, the criminal reforms of the [Justice Legislation Amendment \(Anti-vilification and Social Cohesion\) Act 2025](#) take effect. These amendments increase safeguards to protect more Victorians from vilification. See the changes via the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission [here](#).

### **Save the date! Saturday 8 November: From dumplings to dialogue—let's talk mental wellbeing.**

Presented by the Victorian Multicultural Commission in partnership with Solis and funded by the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Dumplings Against Depression is a community gathering where we'll share delicious dishes and have open, inclusive conversations about mental health and wellbeing.

**Date:** **Saturday 8 November 2025**

**Venue:** Long Room, Immigration Museum, 400 Flinders St, Melbourne

**Time:** 11:15 am to 3:00 pm

Join us to hear from panels of multicultural mental health experts and community voices. Browse stalls and meet local service providers to discover culturally safe and community-based mental health supports.

Dumplings are a cherished dish in many cultures—from Asia to Europe, Africa to the Caribbean— making them the perfect symbol for connection and shared understanding across our diverse communities. Together we can break down mental health stigma and sector silos—one dumpling at a time. [Add the date to your calendar](#)

Until every Victorian is safe – Victoria's third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025-2027 Family violence remains widespread across Victoria. It is fuelled by gender inequality and harmful gender stereotypes, in a society where women are still treated as unequal to men on many levels. Ending family violence involves everyone. We all have a role to play – at home, at work and in our communities. The Victorian Government has committed to 106 actions to help prevent and respond to family and sexual violence over the next three years. This plan was informed by extensive stakeholder engagement, reflecting a diverse range of perspectives and priorities. For more information about *Until every Victorian is safe* and what the Victorian Government has committed to, visit [www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2025-2027](http://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2025-2027).

### **New Trial to Help Prevent Gambling Harm**

### **Media Release**

The Allan Labor Government is rolling out its landmark gambling reforms, with a trial of mandatory account-based play to kick off at select venues from September. Following consultation with industry and stakeholders, the trial will run across all 43 venues with gaming machines in Monash, Greater Dandenong and Ballarat from September to November.

People gambling at these venues will need to use a **YourPlay** card to play electronic gaming machines and set loss limits – putting power back into the hands of patrons and prevent money laundering. Cards can be obtained on-the-spot. Mandatory account-based play will offer people more control over their gambling habits and can provide them with greater insight into how much they spend gambling.

Venues and their staff will be supported throughout the trial with training, communication materials and support. The trial builds on the Labor Government's existing gambling reforms, including:

- Mandatory closure periods from 4am to 10am for gaming areas in all Victorian hotels and clubs
- Slowing spin rates of new gaming machines
- Limiting EFTPOS cash withdrawals to \$500 per card in 24 hours
- Capping the number of gaming machines in the state at the current level until 2042
- Introducing a new code of conduct to strengthen obligations of venues to respond to problem gambling.

These reforms also build on the nation-leading protections introduced at Crown and the establishment of the state's tough regulator – the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission.

## **CHOICE**

A new CHOICE investigation has revealed that 5 out of 14 cots failed to meet basic safety standards. These failures could put children at risk of serious harm, yet gaps in the law mean that online marketplaces are able to get away with selling unsafe products in Australia. After years of highlighting unsafe children's sleep products and advocating for stronger protections, **a new mandatory infant sleep standard will come into effect in January next year.**

Choice will monitor progress to win stronger laws that make it illegal to sell unsafe products.

## WIRE Women's Information and Referral Exchange

Our weekly *Separation & Property Clinic* gives you access to a free, once off, one hour appointment with a family lawyer via phone. Book an appointment to have a supportive chat with one of our Support and Information Workers.

**When:** Every Friday

**Where:** Face-to-face or via Zoom

**Phone:** 1300 134 130 **Cost:** Free

**WIRE's 'Financial Guidance Clinic'** is starting back on Thursday, 25 September!

### TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Post-separation finances
- Superannuation
- Financial security
- Tax
- Retirement planning
- Investments
- Small business advice

Do you know your money options? Reach out to talk with a financial professional for a free hour appointment.

📞 Call 1300 134 130 to learn more.



Join our free 4-part online workshop to explore your money story, gain clarity, and take practical steps toward financial wellbeing through engaging, interactive sessions.

Upcoming Dates: Wednesdays 8 Oct 🕒 Time: 10:00–11:00 AM (AEST)

Location: Online via Zoom 💰 Cost: Free [Register](#)

## Research news from Victoria Law Foundation from Ronnieta Milliken

We will be launching two new companions from Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) In brief publications with an online launch. *Prevalence and impact of family problems* and *Resolution and outcomes of family problems* investigate how Victorians experience and resolve their family problems, drawing on data from PULS.

Our Senior Researchers, Yolanda Mansfield and Bethia Burgess, discuss what the new publications reveal about the complexity of navigating and resolving family problems, including the links to disadvantage and high unmet legal need.

*"Family problems aren't just legal issues. They are life events that can shape a person's health, relationships, and financial stability for years."* – Yolanda Mansfield

Register your spot for the launch on Thursday 9 October at 11:00 am [Register now](#)

## Geelong Manufacturing Council - Manufacturing the Future: women, work, the new economy



Join us for a powerful evening celebrating the achievements of GMC's Seed2STEM program and the Women in Manufacturing Network, two initiatives driving real change for gender equity our industry. We're thrilled to welcome **Narelle Hooper** – advisor, author, non executive director of The Ethics Centre and former Editor-in-Chief of Company Director Magazine, as our keynote speaker. Narelle will share insights on the evolving landscape of gender diversity and inclusion in Australia's economy, reflecting on the impact of her influential book *New Women, New Men, New Economy*, co-author Rodin Genoff.

This event is a chance to connect, reflect, and take action, bringing together women working in manufacturing and industry leaders committed to building a more inclusive future.

**Date & Time:** Wednesday 8 October 2025 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM (UTC+10)

**Venue:** Geelong Arts Centre, The Open House, 50 Little Malop St, Geelong

**Cost:** \$55.00 (incl GST) [Manufacturing the Future: Women, Work & the New Economy Tickets, Geelong Arts Centre, Geelong](#) | [TryBooking Australia](#)

## National Women's Equality Alliance

### NEWSLETTER

All the latest news from  
the women's equality  
sector



Extracted from 10/9/2025 edition

An Invitation to join an online focus session exploring how gender shapes experiences across work, education, skills, and training: **Wednesday, October 15 · 11:30am - 12:30pm ACDT.**

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/nwe-presents-october-members-forum-tickets-1579718784409>

Speakers will be NWE Director Gemma Killen joined by Dr. Emma Cannen, Director of the Gender Economic Equality study and Kit McMahon, CEO of Women's Health in the South East.

### 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 2026**



## Australian Human Rights Commission

**You're invited to attend the Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture**

• **Wednesday 29 October | 12:00pm - 1:15pm**

• **FREE online event**

Join us as we mark 50 years since the passage of Australia's Racial Discrimination Act at our annual Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture. A keynote will be delivered by Race Discrimination Commissioner Giridharan Sivaraman, followed by a lively panel discussion about legal and policy reform needed to address racism across workplaces, the education and justice sectors.

Panelists will include:

- Sally McManus, Secretary Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Jeswynn Yogaratnam, Commissioner, Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
- Nareen Young, Associate Dean (Indigenous Leadership & Engagement), Professor Indigenous Policy, UTS Business School, Jumbunna Institute.

The Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture returns in 2025 to mark the 50th anniversary of the passage of Australia's Racial Discrimination Act (RDA). This landmark legislation laid the foundation for racial equality in Australia, but after half a century is it time for reform?

This year's lecture will spotlight racism in workplaces and explore the structural and often invisible nature of racism. It will illustrate how legal and policy reform can drive meaningful change, particularly with the roadmap provided by the National Anti-Racism Framework. A key theme will be the Race Discrimination Commissioner's recent call for a positive duty in the Racial Discrimination Act, an approach that requires organisations to actively prevent racism, not just respond to it.

The annual Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture advances public understanding and debate about the Racial Discrimination Act, racism and human rights. It honours the Hon. Kep Enderby QC (1926-2015) who as Attorney-General, introduced into Parliament the Bill which would become the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth).

**Information and registration:** [Tickets for Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture 2025](#)

The lecture will be delivered online via Zoom. Auslan interpretation and live captioning will be available.

## Victorian Seniors Festival 2025

[Learn more about the festival](#)

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

October is a big month for seniors in Victoria, with the Victorian Seniors Festival bringing a huge variety of events, activities, and special offers. Celebrating its forty-third year, the Victorian Seniors Festival returns with a fabulous month-long program full of free or low cost events and activities.

This major state-wide festival is spearheaded by the **Victorian Government**, bolstered by all of Victoria's 79 local councils alongside community, groups, clubs, and organisations including COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria.

Remember to check your local council's Seniors Festival program! You'll likely find a whole range of fun events and experiences close to home.

[Download our free printable PDF highlight guide to the Victorian Seniors Festival 2025](#)

**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 2025

| Month    | Date             | Day      | Meeting Type                                                | Time         | Method                        |
|----------|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| October  | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings                       | 11:00, 12:15 | Ross House                    |
| October  | 20 <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 | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Monday   | Standing Committee Meeting                                  | 16:30        | ZOOM                          |
| 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<br>Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden | 11:00 – 2:00 | King's Domain,<br>St Kilda Rd |

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