

Southern Women's Action Network Inc

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Donations: www.trybooking.com/au/donate/swan



SWAN NEWS August 2022

A New Government Here we are in August already, and the 47th Parliament resumed on the 26th July with a powerful Welcome to Country address by our new Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese.

If you missed it here is a Facebook link: <https://fb.watch/eu-LQ9-I58/>

EVENTS: Thank you to Janet Street, for providing details of two events coming up as follows:

- With fewer available housing options and rents going through the roof it's not hard to imagine that more of our citizens will find it difficult to find suitable accommodation.

What is Homelessness on the Mornington Peninsula is the title of a forum presented by Peninsula Voice on 24th August at 6.30pm at the Peninsula Theatre, 91 Wilson Road, Mornington. Booking details are via the following site:

<https://peninsulavoice.org.au/event/what-is-homelessness-on-the-mornington-peninsula/>

- **THE 30TH – AND FINAL – ANNUAL “ERNIE” AWARDS FOR SEXIST BEHAVIOUR.** Details incl booking through following link:
<https://mailchi.mp/1e2a068a960a/breaking-news-25th-annual-ernies-awards-date-is-21-september-9160825?e=cda87a72f8>

NOTE: To share matters of interest the deadline for next SWAN News issue is 1st September.

BURSARIES Thank you, Marilyn Godley, for the Graduate Women Victoria news regarding Nicole Holding, winner of the 2022 SWAN Bursary, who has just had her first journal article, **Prenatal Care in the Rural United States, 1912-1929**, accepted by *the Bulletin of History of Medicine*. This is what she said in response to her win:

“Throughout life I have been an avid scholar, particularly in women’s studies, whether that be in the field of science or history. Initially, I started my career as a Registered Nurse, working primarily in the operating theatre and midwifery, then moving on to breast cancer research. It was when I developed cancer myself, leaving me with mobility issues, that I needed to change careers. I went back to Monash University and focused on a history major. In 2020, I completed my honours

thesis in prenatal care in the rural United States 1910-1929, in which I was lucky enough to have access to a trove of letters written by poor, rural women to the US government demanding better access to prenatal care. The maternal and infant mortality rates in the US at that time were the highest in the industrial world and continue to this day to be among the worst. Currently, my Master's thesis expands on this topic by focusing on the faith-based practices of African American midwives and Black women in the same time period.

Despite my work focusing on the US my research and analysis is important for women of all societies, especially those living in rural areas and from minority groups. Research indicates that the monopolisation of childbirth by medical practitioners, a lack of midwifery-based care, and the undermining of women's faith in childbirth practices leads to greater birth trauma and higher death rates among mothers and babies, particularly in areas that have limited access to maternal care. I hope to continue with a PhD on birth control and abortion among African American women in the early twentieth century US. A pertinent topic considering the anti-abortion laws now dominating the US. I would like to thank GWV and SWAN for this bursary."

This is particularly interesting, bearing in mind what is currently happening in Victoria with the suspension of midwifery beds in rural areas due to a shortage of midwives. (The Age, May 26.)

AND, included in the GWV news is the Marilyn Godley Scholarship which was awarded to Nicola Portnick-Hokopu, an Australian Indigenous woman, living in Melbourne. Nicola writes "I am in my final year of university studying a Bachelor of Nursing and also a single parent to two young children. In 2020, I began studying and moved with my children from my family home to be closer to my university.

Throughout the duration of my studies my children and I have overcome many adversities due to financial hardship, domestic violence and health related issues, but I have never let my grades fall below 'Distinction' and made it through my second year of university with straight 'High Distinctions'. As an Indigenous female and the first in my family to attend university, I am extremely proud and see this as a great achievement. In 2021, I applied for an opportunity at the Royal Melbourne Hospital 'student to graduate program' and I was fortunate enough to win a position, where I will be completing all remaining placements previously delayed by Covid-19 restrictions. Academically, I wish to continue my studies after a graduate year as a registered nurse and strive to achieve a role as ultimately becoming a nurse practitioner specialising in diabetes education."

More about GWV can be found at <https://gradwomenvic.org.au>

SUPPORTING FIRST NATIONS (SFN) GROUP

EVENTS

SWAN members are contributing in various ways to the national community education program currently taking place across the nation. Two SWAN members recently facilitated an interactive and stimulating community forum at **Rye Community House** about The Uluru Statement and why a First Nations Voice to Parliament is so crucial. From the 25 who attended, it was agreed to meet again to continue to share ideas and spread the word.

Victoria's First People's Assembly Engagement Officers, STEPHANIE ROSS and ALICE UGLE, addressed SWAN's **2022 NAIDOC meeting** with a strong focus on Victoria's nation-leading treaty authority: the *Yoorrook Justice Commission*. Treaty possibilities the speakers referred to included: an elected Black parliament empowered to make laws and policies on First People's issues; a First People's Voice to the Victorian parliament; and dedicated First People's seats in the Victorian parliament.

THE ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

A number of SFN members have been busy printing, collating and distributing SWAN's '*Position Paper re the Constitutional Enshrinement of an Indigenous Voice*' to local politicians and councillors, media and community groups, and First Nations organisations. To our Position Paper, we attached a colour print of the 'Uluru Statement from The Heart'. To help make it readable, the Uluru Statement was printed in larger font on the verso. Your assistance in sharing *SWAN's Position Paper* and the *Uluru Statement* with your own networks is vital and appreciated.

The GARMA FESTIVAL for 2022, held in North-East Arnhem Land, has just wound up. The Uluru Statement was launched there in 2017. The ABC and SBS broadcast live over the festival, recording interviews and events for public on-line access. Here are some, worthy of checking out:

A PODCAST WORTH LISTENING TO:

This recent ABC CONVERSATIONS podcast about one man's journey and his key role with the Uluru Statement is revealing and inspiring: '*How Thomas Found His Voice on the Wharves*'. Thomas was involved from the beginning of the Voice process and has authored a children's book about The Uluru Statement from The Heart.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/conversations/thomas-mayor-darwin-wharfie-mua-uluru-statement-from-the-heart/13952260>

A BROADCAST WORTH LISTENING TO:

Powerful and passionate, importantly giving some detail and practical applications explained about Enshrinement of an Indigenous Voice in the Constitution: MARCIA LANGTON interviewed by Patricia Karvelas on ABC Radio National Friday 29 July. Marcia chaired the advisory group who produced the final report on the Voice process.

<https://www.abc.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/marcia-langton-says-details-on-the-voice-to-parliament/13993960>

PROGRAMS WORTH WATCHING:

- 'INSIDERS' ABC TV, recorded Sunday 31 July
- 'Q&A' ABC TV, recorded Monday 1 August
- 22ND GARMA FESTIVAL, NITV
- Also, the OPENING OF 47TH PARLIAMENT on YouTube

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

'Australia has everything to gain and nothing to lose from this', Thomas Mayor at this year's GARMA Festival, about the call for a constitutionally enshrined Indigenous Voice, ABC TV, 31/7/2022

YOUR HELP NEEDED

APPEAL BY AUNTY HELEN BNADS

Aunty Helen Bnads is a cultural elder and leader, works at the Peninsula Community Health Network and is a Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association board member. At SWAN's recent NAIDOC meeting, Helen spoke of the pressing need for toiletries for local homeless people. In response, a first load of requested items has been delivered to the Integrated Community Health Centre, Frankston Hospital. To enable further deliveries, your help with a financial donation can be made to MAUREEN DONELLY, SWAN and SFN member: 0423 806 525