SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK



Newsletter November 2023

SWAN acknowledges the Bunurong / Boon Wurrung people, the Traditional Custodians of these lands and waters where we meet, work and live. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present. In line with our commitment to social justice, SWAN unequivocally supports First Nations People in their campaigns for sovereignty, self-determination, treaties and truth-telling.

Southern Women's Action Network

Women of the Mornington Peninsula and across the Southern Metropolitan suburbs of Melbourne striving for social justice.

A Message from our new Facilitator

DEAR SWAN MEMBERS,

I imagine that, like me and the other members of the SWAN Committee, you feel devastated by the tidal wave of negativity and misinformation that was aired during the referendum campaign and of the appalling outcome of the vote. This has exposed where we stand as a nation. There is so much work to be done to address this sad reality – to spread the truth of the incredible 65,000+ year history of this country and the tragic and continuing impact of colonisation on its First Peoples. No doubt SWAN members will want to play a role.

Like many of you I have been observing the request from First Nations leaders for a week of silence and reflection. It is not my intention here to say a great deal. Rather it is to acknowledge with deep sadness the hurt and pain that is being felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities all around Australia. And to recognise that while over 60% of voters overall said NO to the proposed Enshrinement an Indigenous Voice in the Constitution, over 72% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people voted YES.

For those of you who might not have seen it, I want to share with you the essence of a beautiful message that we received from Kayla Cartledge, a proud Gurindji Woman and

founding director of 'Our Songlines', who led the YES campaign here on the Mornington Peninsula. She rose above her own deep sorrow to write 'with a completely broken heart' of how she took some comfort in knowing that 'we are together in this shameful moment in history'. Kayla expressed her sincere gratitude for the allyship she has experienced from so many non-Indigenous people over the course of this past year, saying that this was beyond her 'wildest dreams'. She assured us that we are now bound to each other forever in this movement for justice and invites us to continue to walk with First Nations people here on the Peninsula and beyond.

I believe that the SWAN Committee speaks for all our members in firmly stating our commitment to taking up Kayla's offer and continuing to strengthen our advocacy and action to support to the social justice concerns of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In the short-term, we have allocated a component of our member's meeting in November to share how we are feeling in the aftermath of the Referendum and to begin to consider how we might move forward with renewed strength and positivity. We will take time in the coming weeks and months to listen to First Nations people and be guided by them. We will also look within ourselves to discern how best we can contribute, as individuals and as an organisation.

I look forward to SWAN members coming together on Sunday 19 November to share your views on this important discussion, within the context of our broader meeting.

DIANE MCDONALD SWAN Facilitator, on behalf of the SWAN Committee 25/10/2023

SWAN's Future

What kind of person is attracted to SWAN? How can we diversify? How do women find out about SWAN? How can we grow community relationships? What is SWAN's future?

Earlier this year in May, SWAN ran a workshop with members, facilitated by Dr Jean Ker Walsh, to determine and explore issues that impact on SWAN's future. This action followed recommendations voiced in SWAN's book 'When Women Meet' launched in March.

SWAN is intent on maintaining and building its vitality in progressing our social justice platform in the region. Three key themes emerged from the May workshop: 'Expand Advocacy & Action', 'Strengthen Promotion' & 'Broaden Diversity'.

This month, we're really keen for you to join in our second workshop about developing clear and engaging strategies based on your May workshop suggestions – *to plan and put into*

action now, in the short-term, and in the long-term. Your involvement is key! See the flyer here for details:



TAKING ACTION FOR SWAN'S FUTURE



Photo credit: Yanni

VENUE Mt Martha House 466 Esplanade (Cnr Dominion Rd) Mt Martha

For women interested in deepening their knowledge of community issues and promoting action for social justice.

SWAN thanks our raffle sponsors for their generous donations:

Rosebud Book Barn SiSCo Pizza Restaurant Rye

Since 1997 SWAN has proudly supported women to learn about social justice and equity issues and advocate for social change. At our May meeting, members reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen our social justice presence in this region. Key strategies to achieve this were identified, including the need to more actively engage with younger women.

At this final meeting for 2023, following initial input from one of our younger members, we'll workshop precisely how we will collectively implement these strategies in 2024.

The meeting will begin with an opportunity to share our thoughts post-referendum and express our ongoing solidarity with First Nations people.

Contribute your ideas and passion for SWAN's future by joining us in this important forum!

Diane McDonald, SWAN's Facilitator, author of SWAN's 'When Women Meet' and **Moz Lucas**, SWAN News Editor, Committee Member, will facilitate. Both Diane and Moz have extensive experience in community development and higher education.

9:30am | SUNDAY 19 | NOV | 2023



SWAN's New Committee

We love our newly formed vibrant Committee!!! And we still have a couple of spots to fill:

COORDINATOR OF SWAN COMMUNICATIONS

What's involved? The tasks below are already in place, and retiring Communications Coordinator Vivienne Daniels will help you transition into the role.

- 1. Maintain and update our Register of SWAN Members via Excel.
 - **2.** Maintain a Record of Correspondence inwards and outwards.
- **3.** Respond to mail and email in a timely manner, with input from SWAN's Facilitator or Committee.
 - 4. Inform the SWAN NEWS Editor about upcoming meetings and community events.

If you are considering this role, please contact Diane McDonald via email, leave your phone number, and she will call you for a chat: dianemcdonald.consult@gmail.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE LIAISON

The role of Social Justice Liaison is still in development. In this role, you would act as a conduit between the Committee and those involved in Social Justice advocacy efforts, that is, individual SWAN members, external organisations and our own Social Justice Interest Groups, such as SWAN's Supporting First Nations Interest Group, and a fledgling Homelessness Advocacy Group. Tasks such as reporting at Committee Meetings on the progress of social justice actions of these groups and individuals, and assisting with advocacy letter-writing would be involved.

Committee Meetings are held every 2 months, over 5 - 6 meetings a year.

For more information and if you are interested, please contact <u>dianemcdonald.consult@gmail.com</u>

PLEASE COME & JOIN US!!! Position descriptions and a list of various tasks are on the SWAN website: https://swanwomen.org.au/about-us/committee-position-descriptions/.

Current position holders will be happy to provide support during the transition. Being away or on holidays for a period, as many of us are, is not an issue - someone will stand in for you.

16 Days of Activism: White Ribbon Day



Challenging Violence against Women

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 25/11/23 - 10/12/23

is a global campaign led annually by UN Women. It runs every year from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day).

During this period communities from around the world join the call to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.

SWAN fully supports 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. Here are some dates for your diaries of activities that are happening in our neck of the woods.

Events for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

- 23/11/23: Westernport Respectful Relationships Market Stall, High St. Hastings.
- 24/11/23: Walk Against Family Violence 11am, Parliament House Steps, Spring St. Melbourne.
- 25/11/23: White Ribbon Day lunch provided, see attached poster for details.
- **29/11/23:** Screening of 'Under Cover' 7pm at Rosebud Cinema, Rosebud Pde. Rosebud. 'Under Cover' shines a light on the devastating reality that women over 50 are the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness in Australia.

29/11/23: UPSTANDER TRAINING Women's Health In the South East (WHISE)

9.30 – 11.30am, Mornington Community House, 91 Wilsons Rd. Mornington. Contact Mandy Roche: Mandy.Roche@mornpen.vic.gov.au and let her know you are from SWAN.

Why is this workshop important?

- * Learn essential skills that will help you to make your community more safe, equal and respectful * Explore ways of having compassionate and empathetic conversations with each other
- * Find out the link between mental health, gender equality respect and preventing family violence.

By participating in this workshop, you will be better equipped to:

- * Recognise disrespectful behaviour and know when, and how to take action
 - * Have respectful and empathetic conversations
- * Create safer, more equal and respectful communities, where people feel supported.

Together, let's create a Tree of Respect



Thursday, November 23rd

Hastings Market Stall (outside Beach Hut Café) 9am - 1pm

Westernport Respectful Relationships Committee, invites you to participate in 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence by helping to create a Respect Tree.

Please write or draw what respect means to you on the wooden star supplied. Your star will be placed on a wooden tree, displayed at Hastings Market on November 23rd and then at Hastings Library from 25th November to 10th December.

This 16 Days of Activism and beyond, let's change the story and create a future where we are all safe, equal and respected.

#16Days

#16DaysOfActivism













SWAN Bursary

Report from Erica Churchill, Treasurer

Disappointingly, the 2023 SWAN Bursary was cancelled without notice to us. SWAN has recently been advised that Graduate Women Victoria has, like SWAN, had a reduction in funds during Covid. Due to this they have advised that they cannot support any named bursary with more than \$1,000. This means we need to raise at least \$2,500 from member donations and a contribution from funds for the SWAN Bursary to be awarded. We are hard pressed to do this with member donations to both SWAN and the Bursary down. Timings have also changed so we now need to advise late in the year whether or not we can contribute for the following year.

However, there is good news about the 2024 SWAN bursary. SWAN member Lyn Jones very generously offered a donation of \$1,000 after the recent AGM as she wanted to see the Bursary continued. Another member, Suzanne Rogers, asked that donations be made to SWAN in lieu of presents for her birthday. These donations amounted to \$465 and have been put towards the Bursary. With \$295 in donations from other SWAN members and a \$1,000 contribution from funds we have contributed \$2,760 towards the 2024 SWAN Bursary. Graduate Women Victoria (GWV) will only need to contribute \$740 to make up the full \$3,500 and this is less than the maximum they will contribute of \$1,000. We have been advised that the SWAN Bursary was included in the Proposed 2024 Scholarship Program and Budget presented to the GWV AGM.

A very big thanks to all SWAN members who contributed to the Bursary!

Congratulations NICOLE HOLDING! SWAN Bursary Winner

SWAN 2022 Bursary recipient Nicole Holding has shared with us her success in recently completing her Master of Arts and her appreciation of the value of SWAN's initiative. For her MA thesis: *Trust and Faith: African American Midwifery in the Southern United States, 1808–1950,* Nicole received 90% from Examiner A and 85% from Examiner B with an overall mark of 88%. A high achievement indeed, allowing Nicole to apply for a PhD at Monash University in history, commencing in 2024. Nicole's PhD proposal *African Americans and Birth Control in the United States South, 1930-1960* is particularly relevant to the history of women's rights and current anti-abortion laws in the US.

I just want to thank SWAN once again for their generosity. The money gave me the opportunity to complete my MA and achieve a great result without having to worry about my finances. It also allowed me to write and publish an article in the Bulletin of History of Medicine, a US journal. My result and article puts me in a very good position to receive a university scholarship for my PhD and for that I am eternally grateful.

Many thanks, Nicole, Oct 2023.

Supporting First Nations

Post-Referendum Event at Willum Warrain

On Sunday 15th October, the community and allies of Willum Warrain Aboriginal Gathering Place gathered together for a post-Referendum 'VOICE REFLECTION'.

Commencing with a smoking ceremony, the event was a heartfelt occasion, both sombre and re-affirming. Whilst community mourned the voting outcome, allies respectfully expressed their support for the challenging journey ahead. Aunty Helen Bnads, present at the event, affirmed: 'Look to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and move on, onto Treaty and Truth'.



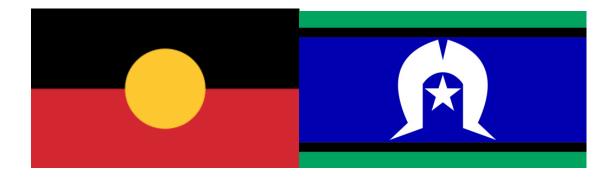
SWAN members are warmly invited to participate in the

WOMEN'S WEAVING
WORKSHOPS
at Willum Warrain Aboriginal
Gathering Place.

Next Women's Weaving Workshop: Saturday 11th November, 9.30am to 12noon.

RECOMMENDED READING

Both the 'Uluru Dialogues: Statement for Our People and Our Country' (22/10/2023) https://ulurustatement.org/statement-for-our-people-and-our-country/ and 'Liberals for Yes: Media Release' (17/10/2023) have published powerful and encouraging statements Post-Referendum - well worth a read.



SWAN'S VOICE

From the time of its release, SWAN firmly committed to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Along with an overwhelming majority of the Australian people, we celebrated when Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced that his government would implement the Statement's three pillars in full. We welcomed with much enthusiasm the decision to hold a Referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution in his government's first term.

During the past 18 months, SWAN members have strongly advocated in support of an Indigenous Voice in many different ways, both individually and as an organisation. **Despite** the devastating outcome of the vote, we can take pride in the fact that we gave what we could to promote a YES vote. We stood firmly on the right side of history. We should therefore celebrate the contribution that we made to raising community awareness, as evidenced in the information reported below.

The lead article published in MP Newspapers on 17 October reported that apart from a few pockets such as Mt Martha and Red Hill, 'NO votes dominated elsewhere' across the Peninsula https://www.mpnews.com.au/2023/10/16/peninsula-in-step-with-national-no/.

But a more recent analysis of the results show a more positive picture. Information provided by the MP YES23 campaign organisers confirm that the YES vote in the Federal Electorate of Flinders was 9.2% higher than the expected result should have been ie. based on polling and first preference results from the previous Federal Election.

You can access the entire spreadsheet that has the over-performance of each booth. See the spreadsheet attachment emailed with this newsletter:

Flinders Yes Vote & Model

Since SWAN's foundation, a countless number of members have publicly expressed their social justice concerns by sending articles, letters and comments to the media. Following the Voice Referendum, several **SWAN members have written heartfelt letters** and commented on articles published in various media outlets, such as the letter below.

'As a new post-referendum era dawns in our country's relations with its First Peoples, I would like to thank Willum Warrain and Nairm Mar Djambana Aboriginal Associations, the Bunurong Land Council, and other local First Nations organisations / businesses like Our Songlines, Kooee Cafe, and Living Culture for enriching my life. You have allowed me to share in your ancient cultural knowledge, wisdom and values, making me a much better developed person. All Australians have the same precious experience if only they would engage with opportunities like this'.

Maureen Donelly, 17/10/2023

If you are putting pen to paper or fingers to computer keys to **express your views and advocate** against inequality and injustice on any matter of deep concern to you – PLEASE SEND A COPY to: <u>SWANwomen@outlook.com</u>

DIANE MCDONALD, SWAN Facilitator 1/11/2023



Raise the Age Campaign



The Victorian Government is planning to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 12 years of age in 2024, with a possible review to go to 14 with carve outs in 2027. This planned legislation will continue to fail in protecting the rights of very young children.

Click the link below to read about **DUJUAN'S STORY**



Take Action! Contact your local MP, Premier and Attorney General to let them know that the age must be raised to at least 14 years of age NOW, with no carve outs.

Contact details for the Premier, Jacinta Allan:

jacinta.allan@parliament.vic.gov.au

Contact details for the Attorney General: Jaclyn Symes: jaclyn.symes@parliament.vic.gov.au

If you live in the Frankston electorate contact Paul Edbrooke: paul.edbrooke@parliament.vic.gov.au

If you live in the Mornington electorate contact Chris Crewther: chris.crewther@parliament.vic.gov.au

If you live in the Hastings electorate, contact Paul Mecurio: paul.mercurio@parliament.vic.gov.au

Latest News !!!

Legislation has just passed in the ACT raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 12, and later on July 1st 2025 to 14, with possible exceptions for serious crimes.

For the full article, search: *The Canberra Times, ACT Politics, November* 1st 2023

If you live in the Nepean electorate, contact Sam Groth: sam.groth@parliament.vic.gov.au

LINK for DUJUAN'S STORY and 'Raise the Age' Campaign: https://raisetheage.org.au

Another Update on Homelessness

Belinda and Miranda have added these **urgently needed items** to the list published in SWAN's October Newsletter. For drop-off, Southern Peninsula's Community Support Centre's contact details are below.

Southern Peninsula Community Support

Belinda Rodman

President Board of Management

Miranda Gillespi

Program Coordinator

878 Point Nepean Rd, Rosebud, VIC 3939
belinda@spcsic.org
03 5986 1285
0415 721 317
www.spcsic.org

"It would be great if you could communicate to SWAN that toiletries are the most needed as we have zero budget for those. The things we desperately need right now are:

Shampoo Conditioner Toothpaste Toothbrushes Deodorant – men's and women's

All of the above are either completely empty or almost empty! It's also good to let people know that one thing **we DON'T ever need is pads and tampons** as we have a steady supply through Share the Dignity".



Positive Ageing on the Peninsula



Transport available if needed. Book your free tickets over the phone or online:

mornpen.vic.gov.au/positiveageingconversations

9 5950 1695



SWAN Discussion 'Get-Together'

On Sunday 15 October, we met again at 'The House' in Mornington for our second Discussion 'Get-Together', the day after the Referendum vote ... This time, the mood was more sober as we debriefed our thoughts and feelings of dismay, anger, frustration and shame about the VOICE result. We were all in agreement to rally in support of our First Nations sisters and brothers, and to continue with enacting SWAN's Supporting First Nations (SFN) social justice platform in liaison with our local Indigenous communities.

On a positive note, we enjoyed each other's company, some yummy cake (thank you Val!) and personal anecdotes, bringing laughter and companionship to warm an especially sad, cold and windy day.







SUGO CAFÉ MORNINGTON where we'll have our next Get-Together in January 2024

Held in the months between SWAN's Speaker Meetings, the focus of these get-togethers is in getting to know other SWAN members in a friendly, informal way as there's not usually much time for this at the Sunday Speaker Meetings. It's also a great opportunity to invite potential members to meet and enjoy the company of like-minded women.

We plan to continue these into 2024.

The next meeting is scheduled during the weekend of 20-21 JANUARY at 'SUGO Café' 67

Main St. Mornington for great coffee and a friendly social vibe. It would be great if you could bring along a friend or relative who may be interested in SWAN.

Details of the exact day and time will be in the next Newsletter in December.

Dates for your Diary



- WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER, 10am 1pm: 'Positive Ageing on the Peninsula: a Community Conversation' at Hastings Community Hub, free transport & lunch provided. See enclosed poster for booking and contact details.
- WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER, 1 2pm: 'Grandmothers for Refugees' Dunkley are holding a vigil outside the office of their local member, Peta Murphy MP, 37 Playne St. Frankston. A vivid display of purple from those coming would be welcome. Inquiries: candace.ormerod@gmail.com
- **SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER,** 9.30am 12pm: '*Women's Weaving Workshop'* Willum Warrain Gathering Place, 10c Pound Rd. Hastings. Contact: Karsten 0403 528 034 or visit willumwarrain.org.au
- MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER, 10am 1pm: 'Positive Ageing on the Peninsula: a Community Conversation' at Rye Civic Hall, free transport & lunch provided. See enclosed poster.
- WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER, 10am 1pm: 'Positive Ageing on the Peninsula: a Community Conversation' at Peninsula Community Theatre, Mornington, free transport & lunch provided. See enclosed poster for booking and contact details.
- SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER, 10am 3pm: 'Blak Market & Launch of the Women's Boomerang Art Installation' Nairm Marr Djambana 32 Nursery Ave Frankston. Details: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=713632114131629&set=pcb.713632200798287
- SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER, 9.30am morning tea, 10am 12.00pm: 'SWAN Special Event: Taking Action for SWAN's Future', Mt Martha House, cnr The Esplanade & Dominion Rd. Mt Martha. See enclosed flyer for details.
- FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER, 11am 1.00pm: 'Big Mob Cook-Up', Willum Warrain Gathering Place, 10c Pound Rd. Hastings. Contact: Karsten 0403 528 034 or visit willumwarrain.org.au
- **SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER,** 11am 3pm: 'White Ribbon Day', Mt Martha Uniting Church, 109 Bay Rd Mt Martha. Lunch provided. See enclosed poster for booking and contact details.
- SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER: '16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence', details on pages 5 7 of this newsletter.
- FRIDAY 15 DECEMBER, 11am 2pm: 'Big Mob Kristmas Cook-Up', Willum Warrain Gathering Place, 10c Pound Rd. Hastings. Contact: Karsten 0403 528 034 or visit willumwarrain.org.au

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK

Contact Us

SWAN News Editor: Moz Lucas



OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER aims to inform readers of current issues and matters of interest.

NEWLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS If you have information of interest to our members, please ensure you let the editor Moz Lucas know via the email below by the first of the month. **Deadline for our next issue 1**st **December**.

FACEBOOK AND WEBPAGE Recent events and photos may appear on both the SWAN Facebook page and the website, as well as details of future meetings.

PHOTO/VIDEO PERMISSION Please advise swanwomen@outlook.com or at the door at a meeting if you do not wish to be included in photographs or videos, otherwise we will take it that you are happy to have your photo included.

CONTACT

Postal: PO Box 72 BITTERN VIC 3918
Email: swanwomen@outlook.com
Website: https://swanwomen.org.au/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/spwswan/

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHua3ynobWOxAUEfOPLt1yQ

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

Our Sponsors

- * Blackbird Café: 2D Empire St Mornington (03) 5976 8632 blackbird-café.edan.io
- * Bodhi & Me Florist: 5A Bay Rd Mt Martha (03) 5916 1270 bodhiandme.com.au
- * Farrells Bookshop: 143 Main Street (corner of Barkly St) Mornington (03) 5975 5034 farrells.com.au
- * Higher Ground Café: 5/5 Howey Rd Mt Martha (03) 5974 4733
- * Rosebud Book Barn: 891 Point Nepean Rd (03) 5986 6770 info@rosebudbookbarn.com.au
- * Secret Garden: 81 Main Street Mornington (03) 5975 0977 secretgardenflowers.com.au
- * SiSCo Pizza Restaurant: 2113 Point Nepean Rd Rye (03) 5985 3967 melgow3@gmail.com
- * Zen Living: 70 Main St Mornington (03) 5975 1013 zenlivingmornington.com.au

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