

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK



# Newsletter

## August 2024

*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.**

*SWAN aspires to be a supportive community for all self-identified cis\* or transgender women and for those who self-identify as non-binary or gender non-conforming. We are committed to encompassing greater gender diversity in our membership, practices, social justice actions and in the terminology that we use.*

\* cis: a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with the sex assigned to them at birth  
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>

## SWAN NEWS Notice

So you receive the NEWS on the first day of each month, the deadline date is the last Wednesday before the new month starts. Also, to keep you informed on what's happening in our area, check out Diary Dates near the end of this newsletter.

**CONTRIBUTION END DATES:** *last Wednesday of the month* -  
August 28, September 25, October 23, November 27.

We appreciate all contributions to SWAN NEWS and encourage members to provide information about events, activities and causes, including photos (as long as those photographed have given permission, and the photographer's name and/or source is included).

# SWAN Speaker Event: NAIDOC Week

At SWAN's July Speaker Meeting, members acknowledged and celebrated NAIDOC WEEK 2024 with guest speaker **Jillian West**, a proud Bunurong woman from Point Nepean and Palawa from the Islands of the Bass Strait.

## TRANSFORMATION THROUGH TRUTH AND RESPECT

We sat facing one another. Jillian highlighted how this way of coming together signifies the **Indigenous 'yarning circle'**. Jillian spoke highly of her late father **Japanangka Errol West** who rose from poverty and a Grade 5 education to achieving a PHD. Reiterating her dad's philosophy, Jillian conveyed the importance of **'teaching people respect, love and truth'** in a journey of walking together, of being allies. In this sense, education features in Jillian's focus for positive change, especially **CULTURE 'IN' EDUCATION** for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. *'Now more than ever ... we have a cultural obligation to understand, accept and connect'*. Jillian explained how her career centres on closing the gap via **self-determination** – by fostering community networks and in mentoring First Nations people for sustainable employment and in cultivating their life's purpose.



Before our Q&A where an **Indigenous 'talking stick'** was respectfully handed to each person who had a question, Jillian invited **Aunty Deb Mellett**, the General Manager of Nairm Marr Djambana Aboriginal Gathering Place to speak. Aunty Deb thanked those involved in the 'VOTE YES' VOICE campaign on the Mornington Peninsula and said how this year's NAIDOC theme **'Keep the Fire Burning'** is a direct response to the Referendum results and the enduring intergenerational trauma associated with colonisation.

Both speakers told of how **Indigenous women had been kidnapped by non-Indigenous sealers** from a beach near Point Nepean and taken to the islands in the Bass Strait where they were treated like slaves and forbidden to speak their language or engage in traditional cultural practices. They spoke too about the **massacres at Boona-djalong (Point Nepean)**, a sacred site for birthing and maternity practices.

To end our meeting, a proposal was made for a **‘Women’s Gathering’ led by Jillian**.

Jillian gifted her \$200 donation from SWAN to **DJIRRA**, a comprehensive domestic violence support service for First Nations Women and Children. Thank you to our raffle sponsors, Nairn Marr Djambana Frankston and Higher Ground Café Mt Martha, and to Secret Garden Mornington for flowers for our speaker.



Above Left:  
**Jillian West hands the Talking Stick to SWAN member Marg D'Arcy**

Above Right:  
**Auntie Deb Mellett addresses the meeting**

Left:  
**SWAN Speaker Coordinator Despi O'Connor thanks Jillian**

Photos: Melissa Kelly



## Donations instead of Gifts

Are you celebrating a special birthday this year?

**Have you thought about a donation to SWAN in lieu of gifts?**

This supports our work, including our Education Bursaries for young women to support their social justice journey.

Go to: [swanwomen.org.au](http://swanwomen.org.au) then 'Donate to SWAN'.

To help us keep track of donations, please also email: [swan.women@outlook.com](mailto:swan.women@outlook.com) with subject heading '**Birthday Donation**' and include date and amount in your email message.

Alternatively, cash donations can be given to SWAN Treasurer Erica Churchill.

\*Please note donations made to SWAN are not tax deductible.

## SWAN COFFEE CATCH-UPS

Come along and join us! Members are encouraged to bring friends and family, especially younger women, semi-retired and newly retired women to find out what SWAN is about.

For members, these catch-ups are a popular event as there is less time at our Speaker/Member Meetings to meet with and enjoy the company of like-minded members, established and new.

## NEXT COFFEE CATCH-UP

**Sunday 18 August 10.00am at Café PU17.**

Address: 2193 Point Nepean Rd, Rye.

**RSVP:** Moz Lucas by Sunday 11 August: [maureenfrances21@gmail.com](mailto:maureenfrances21@gmail.com)

Please let Moz know of your café suggestions - preferably cafés with large tables. For each Catch-Up, we are moving around to different Mornington Peninsula cafés. Future Coffee Catch-Ups will be in October and December this year.





# SPIRIT OF TRANSFORMATION

September - November 2024  
MORNINGTON PENINSULA

FREE  
WELLBEING  
PROGRAM



## Free Fitness, Health & Wellbeing Program

30 WOMEN | 15 MENTORS | 10 WEEKS

### Are you ready for change? Scan to apply

Are you recovering from isolation, mental health challenges, domestic or family violence, poverty, un(der)employment or other barriers? Do you live or work on the Mornington Peninsula and surrounding areas? Are you keen to start a new chapter in your life and able to commit half a day per week?

If this is you, apply to join our community of local women to transform your life.

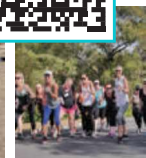
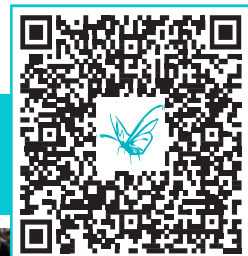
- ✔ Boost your wellbeing and improve your fitness
- ✔ Boost your self-esteem and resilience
- ✔ Learn tips and strategies to achieve your goals
- ✔ Build a community of support

### Mentors Needed

We are also seeking volunteers to mentor, empower and support our participants through the program.

Local women with a good listening ear, who are keen to motivate other women to participate in the program. If this is you, we would love to hear from you and discuss your suitability.

TO APPLY SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT  
[www.womensspiritproject.org](http://www.womensspiritproject.org)



  
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# Homelessness Week: 5 - 11 August 2024

## *'homelessness action now!'*

Show your support by attending these events during Homelessness Week and by dropping in much needed 'family-sized' donations to Southern Peninsula Community Support Centre in Rye (details below). Please keep up the letter writing to politicians and newspapers to keep this issue alive!

### Monday 5 August, 7 – 8.30pm

**'The Ranch'** documentary, Rosebud Cinema is a 30-minute film of stories about the lived experience of people in our community who are homeless. Since 2023, the Ranch Motel in Mornington has provided crisis accommodation for people doing it tough. The local community banded together to make this happen without any funding support from Government. This critical resource is under constant threat of closure. Tickets can be purchased at the cinema or go to: <https://www.mesc.au/the-ranch>

### Friday 9th August, 6 – 9pm

**Mornington Peninsula Shire Council are hosting 'Fair Share' at Mornington Park** to highlight that the Mornington Peninsula does not receive its 'fair share' of social housing or support service funding from the Federal and State governments. The evening includes a screening of the documentary 'The Ranch' followed by a Q&A with the CEOs of the three Community Support Centres on the Mornington Peninsula and speakers from Fusion and the Salvation Army. A free event.



### **DROP-IN DONATIONS**

#### **Location:**

Southern Peninsula Community Support Centre, 878 Point Nepean Rd, Rosebud. **Ph:** 03 5986 1285  
Mon-Fri: 9.30am-3.30pm.

#### **Toiletries:**

Family-sized please (*not the small guest-size*) of shampoo, conditioner, men's & women's deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap.

#### **Pantry:**

Packaged and tinned soup, baked beans, rice, pasta, casserole-style sauces, tea, coffee, long-life milk.

### **Thank You!**

# SWAN Women for Housing Justice Group

The SWAN Women for Housing Justice group will meet again on: **Tuesday 13 August** at 9.30am at Mt Martha Community House in Room 7. [Please let us know if you would like to join our discussion.](#) Email Erica Churchill: [churchill.eric@gmail.com](mailto:churchill.eric@gmail.com)

The SWAN Women for Housing Justice group is continuing to advocate for Zero Homelessness on the Mornington Peninsula. The situation is urgent.

On July 23, several members met with **Liberal member for Mornington Chris Crewther MP** to discuss the local housing and homelessness crisis. [We discussed our advocacy campaign and our efforts to meet with Housing Minister Harriet Shing MP and to get her to personally visit the Peninsula.](#)

[We also discussed some of Chris' potential solutions such as tiny houses supported by government incentives and a Room2Share option, matching young people needing a room with vacant rooms in local homes. We gained his commitment to support our aim to schedule a broad-based, non-political action-oriented meeting with community leaders to discuss further potential solutions. We also asked him to assist with our advocacy by utilising some of his allocated time to speak in Parliament to highlight the critical issues on the Peninsula, including how taking action will benefit the economy in the long term.](#)



**SWAN Women for Housing Justice meeting with Chris Crewther MP, 23 July 2024**  
L-R: Diane McDonald, Chris Crewther MP, Beck Cridland, Erica Churchill, Belinda Rodman.  
Photo: Chris Crewther.

You may have read our recent media releases and letters in the Mornington Peninsula News (July 10; July 17), including our advocacy meeting with **Labor member Tom McIntosh MP**,



our representative in the Victorian Legislative Council. He expressed concern and commitment to follow-up on issues below with relevant Ministers:

- a) the urgent need for extra funding for our 3 Community Support Centres;
- b) funding for Mornington Peninsula's only Homeless Outreach Worker;
- c) funds to employ more housing workers given the ever-increasing number of people sleeping rough;
- d) urgent repair and refurbishment of the many empty public housing buildings (there are 600 on the Mornington Peninsula); and
- e) support for a solution to the likely closure of 'The Ranch' which provides crisis accommodation.



**SWAN Women for Housing Justice meeting with Tom McIntosh MP, 9 July 2024**

L-R: Diane McDonald, Erica Churchill, Tom McIntosh MP, Judith Graley,  
Belinda Rodman, Gillian Adam, Susan Hillman-Stolz.

Photo: Rebecca Cridland.

Our advocacy continues – next up Jodie Belyea and hopefully Harriet Shing!

- Scheduled meeting with Jodie Belyea MP Federal Member for Dunkley on August 27.
- Awaiting a date from Victorian Minister for Housing Harriet Shing MP to visit the Mornington Peninsula to meet key local people here in her own electorate engaged in the housing and homelessness support sector.
- Meetings requested with Sam Groth MP Nepean in the Victorian Government and Zoe McKenzie MP Federal member for Flinders.

*During Homelessness Week, call into your local Community House, Library, Youth Hub or Shire office to fold an **origami house** for the **Houses at Parliament Campaign**. The aim is to fold 4,000 origami houses to represent those waiting for social housing. At **'Fair Share' Mornington Park** on August 9, **postcards will be handed out** for people to fill in and send to politicians to alert them to this escalating crisis*

**Your ongoing letters to the media and to politicians still matter.** They feed into the issues we will discuss in forthcoming meetings with our politicians. Please keep them coming and tell us of responses you receive, including the 'no reply'! Email: [churchill.ERICA@gmail.com](mailto:churchill.ERICA@gmail.com)

## Supporting First Nations



NAIDOC POSTER 2024

TITLE Urapun Muy

ARTIST Deb Belyea

**NAIDOC WEEK 7 – 14 JULY, 2024**  
**'Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud'**

*‘NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920’s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.’*

Source: [naidoc.org.au](http://naidoc.org.au)

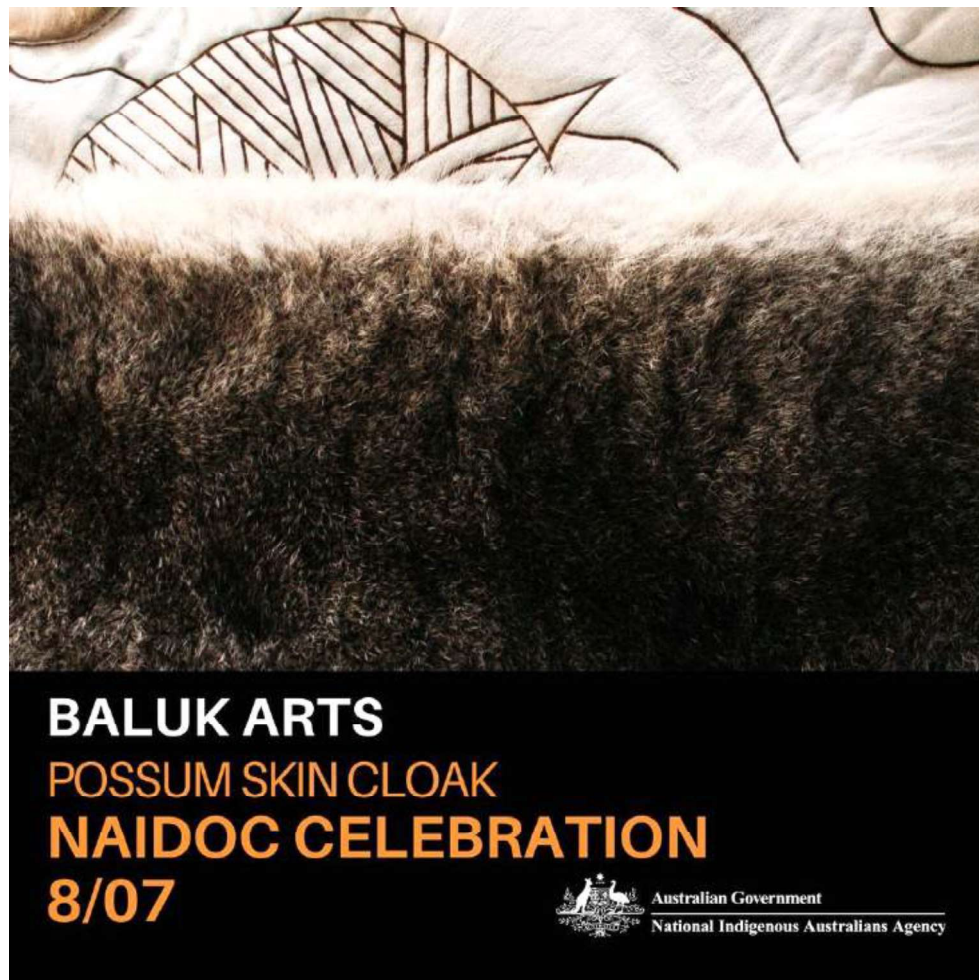
Source: [naidoc.org.au](http://naidoc.org.au)

**NAIDOC Week provided a significant opportunity for us all to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.** The theme for 2024 is *'Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud'* to celebrate resilience and unity in a fire symbol of connection to Country, to each other and to a rich cultural tapestry of traditions that define First Nations.

**SWAN members attended several NAIDOC WEEK celebrations held across the Mornington Peninsula and in Frankston, including flag raising at Willum**



Warrain and at Nairm Marr Djambana, as well as Nairm's family day and annual NAIDOC dinner dance, Our Songlines Tree Planting, and NAIDOC Fest at Flinders.



**Current Exhibition at BALUK ARTS: 5 Davies Avenue, Mount Eliza**  
**Open: Tues-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-3pm**

## **POSSUM SKIN CLOAK, Baluk Arts 2024**

A special NAIDOC WEEK event at Baluk Arts brought to the fore a collaborative project of creating a possum skin cloak. **Uncle Lionel Lauch** from Living Culture sounded the powerful vibrations of the yidaki (didgeridoo), marking the event's commencement and bringing everyone together, followed by a cleansing smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country by **Josh West** from Bunurong Land Council who spoke about the strength of moving forward together, of keeping the fire burning. **Aunty Yvonne Luke** along with the gallery's Program Coordinator **Tabatha Glanville** and Taungurung artist and project director **Iluka Sax-Williams** introduced the artists involved and the story and process behind this precious artefact.





**Eliza Mango, Aunty Patsy Smith, Aunty Yvonne Luke, Iluka Sax-Williams  
with the Possum Skin Cloak, Baluk Arts, 8 July 2024** Photo: Moz Lucas

*'When Aboriginal children are born in the South Eastern Region, they are swaddled with a possum skin. As the child grows, more skins are sewn on; a ritual that continues until they pass into Dreaming. Cloaks can gather more than sixty skins over a person's lifetime. It becomes kin to the owner. Culturally marking onto skins was traditionally done with shell edges, kangaroo incisors, or sharp bone. In the contemporary, cultural practitioners use pyrography pens.'*

Source: Possum Skin Cloak exhibition, Baluk Arts, July 2024



**L-R: Uncle Lionel Lauch sounding the yidaki; and  
Josh West conducting a Smoking Ceremony, out front of Baluk Arts** Photos: Moz Lucas



## NAIDOC FAMILY DAY

Nairm Marr Djambana, Frankston

**Left:** Flag Raising

**Right:** SWAN's Rosemarie Draper with Raquel Neofit at Djambana's Native Bush Foods stall

Photos: Diane McDonald



## NAIDOC TREE PLANTING

**Above:** Kayla Cartledge OUR SONGLINES event organiser with SWAN's Rosemarie Draper

**Left:** Sarah Russell, SWAN

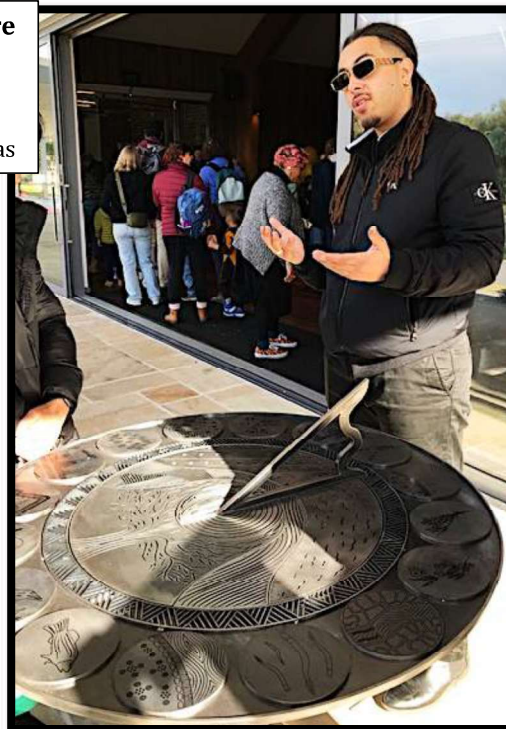
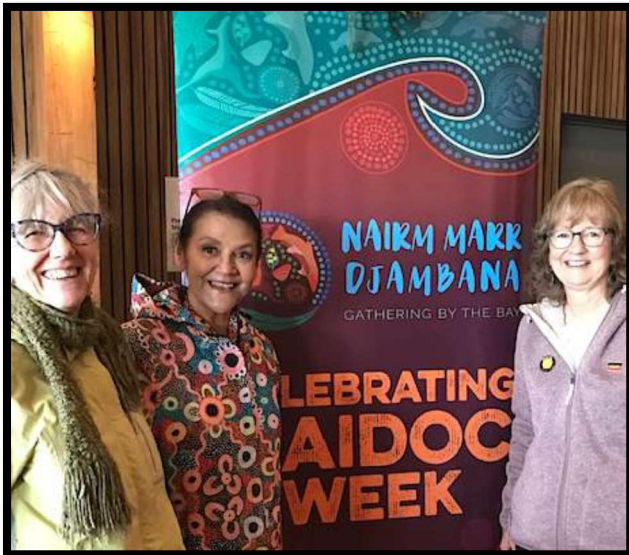
Photos: Rosemarie Draper



Artist Iluka (BALUK ARTS) with his sculpture

Moz Lucas (SWAN), Deb Mellett (NAIRM MARR  
DJAMBANA) & Deb Child (WALKING TOGETHER)

Photos: Moz Lucas



**NAIDOC FEST at FLINDERS** a community event sponsored by MPSC, was a truly joyous occasion that brought together local First Peoples and allies in strength and love.

A talented Aboriginal dance troupe performed a fusion of hip hop, rap and traditional Aboriginal dance and had everyone up out of their seats, having fun and moving under their skilled guidance. A beautiful array of crafts and goods by **local Mornington**



**Peninsula First Nations' stall holders** also featured, along with the launch of Baluk Arts '**Kulin Seasonal Dial**', a public sculpture by **Iluka Sax-Williams**, proud Taungurung man. This stunning sculpture in the form of a sun-dial provides 16 totemic seasonal representations of the Winter and Summer solstices and marks the cross-cultural kinship between Victoria's Kulin and Tasmania's Palawa peoples. A collaborative work led by

Iluka with other artists from Baluk Arts, '**Kulin Seasonal Dial**' is currently on display at **Baluk Arts** in Mt Eliza. Festival goers were well satiated by delicious native-inspired canapes on offer, along with plenty of hot tea, coffee and chocolate to warm up with.





## NAIDOC WEEK Flag Raising & Smoking Ceremony at Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association, Hastings

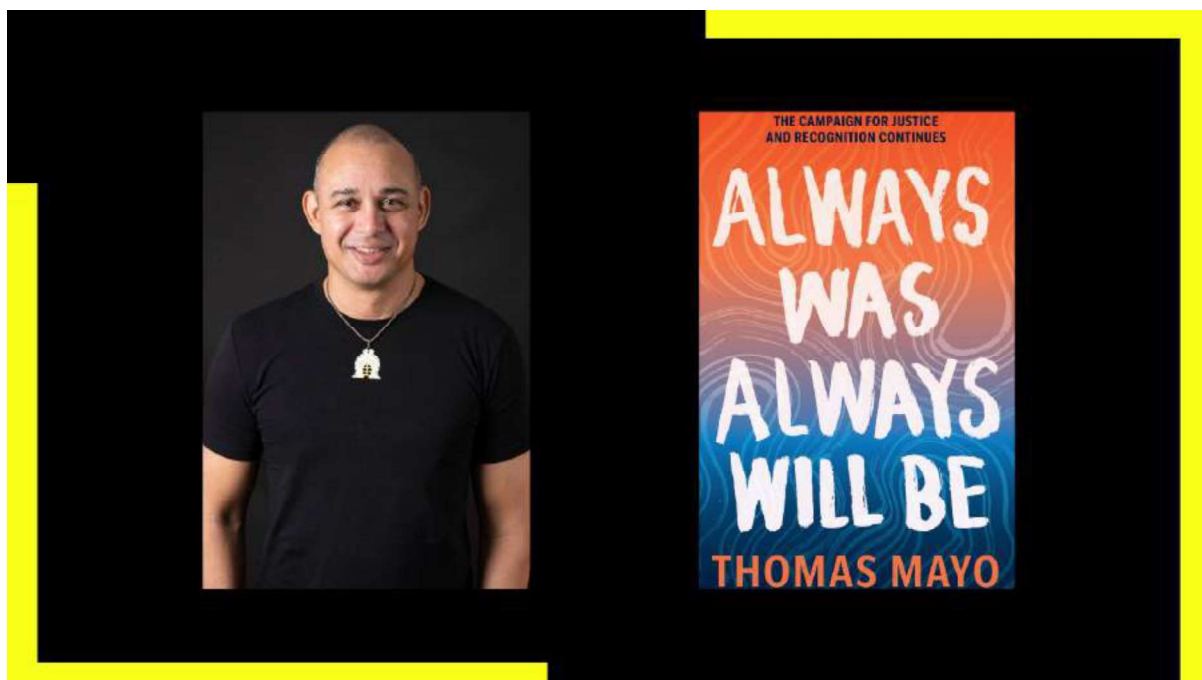


Uncle Mark Brown (*in possum skin cloak*) conducted the Welcome to Country, followed by speakers Willum Warrain Elder and Yaran woman Auntie Jennine Armistead (*Auntie Jen in possum skin cloak*) and Jeanette Kaindel, Willum Warrain board president. Paul Mercurio MP (*right*) speaking at the event; and Peter Alderhoven CEO overseeing the flag raising (*below right*). Photos: Rosemarie Draper



## INDIGENOUS LITERACY DAY

As we approach one year since the Voice to Parliament referendum, [Thomas Mayo](#) reflects on what's next for reconciliation in Australia.



At this special event on [Indigenous Literacy Day](#), activist Thomas Mayo will share a powerful address reflecting on the ongoing fight for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the wake of the failed Voice to Parliament referendum.

Mayo will draw on the messages outlined in his new book, [Always Was, Always Will Be: The Campaign for Justice and Recognition Continues](#), which maps the path forward for Indigenous and non-Indigenous supporters of the Voice towards a better future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Then, Mayo will be joined by a commissioner from the [Yoorrook Justice Commission](#), the first formal truth-telling process into injustices experienced by First Peoples in Victoria, to discuss pathways to treaty and how we can renew the momentum of reconciliation in Australia.

**The Wheeler Centre, 176 Little Lonsdale Street Melbourne**

**Wednesday, 4 Sep 2024, 06:30pm - 07:30pm**

<https://www.wheelercentre.com/events/always-was-always-will-be/>

# Dates for your Diary



- **FRIDAY 2 AUGUST, 10 – 11.30am:** *‘Grandmothers for Refugees meeting: Dunkley & Flinders’*, Frankston Library, 60 Playne St. Frankston. More Info: Maryanne 0400 201 689 or [maryannebarclay5@gmail.com](mailto:maryannebarclay5@gmail.com)
- **MONDAY 5 AUGUST, 7 - 8.30pm:** *‘The Ranch’* documentary, Peninsula Cinema, Rosebud Parade, Rosebud. Tickets: <https://www.mcsc.au/the-ranch> or from the cinema
- **TUESDAY 6 AUGUST, 7.30pm:** *‘The Visitors’*, Frankston Arts Centre. Bookings: <https://artscentre.frankston.vic.gov.au/Whats-On/Season-Shows/The-Visitors>
- **FRIDAY 9 AUGUST, 6 - 9pm:** *‘Fair Share’*, MPSC free event including ‘The Ranch’ screening, live music and food stalls, Mornington Park, Esplanade & Schnapper Drive, Mornington. More Info: 0497 004 179
- **TUESDAY 13 AUGUST, 9.30am:** *‘SWAN Women for Housing Justice meeting’*, Mt. Martha House, Room 7, cnr. Dominion Rd. & Esplanade, Mt. Martha. Contact: Erica Churchill [churchill.eric@gmail.com](mailto:churchill.eric@gmail.com)
- **SUNDAY 18 AUGUST, 10am:** *‘SWAN Coffee Catch-Up’* Café PU17, 2193 Point Nepean Rd. Rye. RSVP: Moz Lucas [maureenfrances21@gmail.com](mailto:maureenfrances21@gmail.com) by August 11
- **FRIDAY 30 AUGUST, 11am – 1pm:** *‘Big Mob Cook Up’*, Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association, 10 Pound Rd Hastings. More Info: Karsten 0403 528 034
- **WEDNESDAY 4 SEPT, 6.30 - 7.30pm:** *‘Thomas Mayo: Always Was Always Will Be - The Campaign for Justice and Recognition Continues,’* The Wheeler Centre, 176 Little Lonsdale St. Melbourne. Bookings: <https://www.wheelercentre.com/events/always-was-always-will-be/>
- **FRIDAY 11 – SUNDAY 13 OCT:** *‘Rural Australians for Refugees Conference 2024’*, Kyneton. Book your accommodation early. Conference Bookings: <https://ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au/2024-conference>



# Contact Us

SWAN News Editor:  
Moz Lucas



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

**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS** If you have information of interest to our members, please ensure you let the editor Moz Lucas know via the email below.

**Deadline for our next issue Wednesday 28 August 2024**

**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 at the door of a SWAN 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](mailto: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](http://www.trybooking.com/au/donate/swan)

## **Our Sponsors**

- \* Blackbird Café: 2D Empire St Mornington (03) 5976 8632 [blackbird-café.edan.io](http://blackbird-café.edan.io)
- \* Cape Merchants: 96 Ocean Beach Rd Sorrento (03) 5984 4641 [capemerchants.com.au](http://capemerchants.com.au)
- \* Farrells Bookshop: 143 Main Street Mornington (03) 5975 5034 [farrells.com.au](http://farrells.com.au)
- \* Higher Ground Café: 5/5 Howey Rd Mt Martha (03) 5974 4733
- \* Nairm Marr Djambana: 32 Nursery Ave, Frankston <https://www.djambana.org.au>
- \* Rosebud Book Barn: 891 Point Nepean Rd (03) 5986 6770 [info@rosebudbookbarn.com.au](mailto:info@rosebudbookbarn.com.au)
- \* Secret Garden: 81 Main Street Mornington (03) 5975 0977 [secretgardenflowers.com.au](http://secretgardenflowers.com.au)
- \* SiSCo Pizza Restaurant: 2113 Point Nepean Rd Rye (03) 5985 3967 [melgow3@gmail.com](mailto:melgow3@gmail.com)
- \* Zen Living: 70 Main St Mornington (03) 5975 1013 [zenlivingmornington.com.au](http://zenlivingmornington.com.au)

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